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Reciprocal Relationships and Creative Expression in Literacy Learning: Ameliorating Disability Circumstances and Empowering Individuals

Laurel Ann Lane

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**RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIPS AND CREATIVE EXPRESSION IN
LITERACY LEARNING: AMELIORATING DISABILITY CIRCUMSTANCES
BY EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS**

by

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B.A., Education, University of New Mexico, 2006
M.A., Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Studies, University of
New Mexico, 2009

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Special Education

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

July, 2015

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work, and all the sleepless nights, the tears, and the seemingly endless hours of focused attention that went into its completion to my grandma, Eileen Ubert. Grandma, I credit you for nearly everything that is good, and strong about me. You always knew what to say, and when not to say anything at all—when your presence was enough. You were my enlightened witness and you left this world way too soon. I miss you every day. I hope you're proud of me. Thank you, Grandma. I love you. I hope you and Grandpa are hanging out with James Garner in heaven. Until we meet again...

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Days spent in the Center for Southwest Research at Zimmerman Library on the campus of the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, were made not only fruitful in terms of my research, but enjoyable for the encouragement, assistance, good humor, and interest from the men and women who organize, maintain, retrieve, restock, and generally care for the archival collections that we are so fortunate to have available for our use as researchers. While the physical space of the Center for Southwest Research is a beautiful one within which to work, the real beauty of it comes from the people, and I hope to see more of them as I delve more deeply into the past in an effort to better understand how those who came before us can teach us in the present. Thank you: Samuel Sisneros, Chris Geherin, Nancy Brown-Martinez, Terry Gugliotta, Katherine Catanach, Sabrina Dominguez, Francesca Glaspell, Anna Kebler, Claudia Mitchell, and Moriah Montoya. You are all amazing. I am honored to know you, and hope to know you better.

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ABSTRACT

Individuals engaged in the production of art, who are untrained, and marginalized by disability, are known as outsider or visionary artists. With them in mind I sought to better understand the relationship between art-making and meaning-making. Students with disability attributes in my classroom were motivated by arts-based activities, prompting me to include art in the content I taught. My own art-making grew out of those efforts, and in order to better understand how to implement my classroom practices, I began an autoethnographic study that evolved into phenomenology, positioning myself in the disability culture first, and then conducting an archival document search seeking evidence of the use of arts-based activities in teaching students with disabilities. I located extensive records on two community schools in Depression-era New Mexico. The schools were progressivist experiments in curricular reform initially focused on bilingual education. Art projects and lesson plans included in teacher diaries spanned seven years, evidencing reciprocal relationships, along with focus on creative expression as central in the culturally-based literacy pedagogy of the reforms being implemented. Contextually, this work is grounded primarily within the ideologies of John Dewey, and Paolo Freire.

Data were collected and reported using narrative storytelling, observations, and reflections, personal art making, and archival document searches with research journaling. This research contributes to evolving perceptions about the value of reciprocal relationships in literacy pedagogy, and suggests the need to expand scholarship regarding engagement in arts-based activities with persons with disabilities, and the community school as a means to reach underserved populations.

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Reciprocal Relationships and Creative Expression in Literacy Learning: Ameliorating
Disability Circumstances by Empowering Individuals

Chapter One: A Context for Art, Literacy, and Disability in Society

Disability's Presence

A 1991 Institute of Medicine federal health survey found that approximately one in seven Americans lives with disabilities severe enough “to interfere with daily activities like work or keeping house” (Shapiro, 1993, p. 6). These disabilities are inclusive of physical, mental, and emotional types. Disabilities encompassing mental and emotional disorders are often co-occurring with issues of substance abuse, and depression and anxiety are nearly always co-occurring for people living with long-term, chronic physical disabilities. Smith (1997), used figures from The National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression (NARSAD), and cited the following:

- In any six-month period, one in every five adult Americans, more than 30 million people, suffers from a diagnosable mental disorder.
- More than 17 million Americans suffer from severe mental illness, including more than seven million children and adolescents.
- A fourth of all hospital beds in this country are occupied by people with mental illness – more than those occupied by patients with heart disease, cancer and respiratory illness combined.
- Thirty-five percent of homeless people are mentally ill, suffering primarily from schizophrenia or depression.

As well, Smith stated that every 15 minutes, an American commits suicide.

While these figures are stunning, Shapiro noted that exact numbers are difficult to ascertain because there is not one concise definition as to what constitutes disability; therefore, the numbers vary greatly from state to state due to definitive variations. It is a sad truth that persons with disabilities have been marginalized, stigmatized, and subjected to unorthodox, even dangerous medical procedures-- e.g., the “icepick lobotomy” popular in the 1940s and 1950s in which the frontal lobe was mutilated by entry through the eye socket with an ice pick to the extent that many patients had to be taught to eat and use the bathroom again, if they survived (Dully, 2007). Of course, institutionalization was often a first choice for persons with any manner of disability, physical, or mental, if for no other reason than society’s refusal to accommodate individual needs—hence the references to the invisibility of disability.

More recent information compiled from The National Survey on Drug Use and Health, commonly referenced as The NSDUH Report, published periodically by the federal Office of Applied Studies, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) indicated the following:

- In 2004 and 2005 nearly eight percent of adults between the ages of 18 and 64 experienced a major depressive episode (MDE) in the previous year. (MDE “specifies a period of 2 weeks or longer in which there is either depressed mood or loss of interest or pleasure and at least four other symptoms that reflect a change in functioning, such as problems with sleep, eating, energy, concentration, and self-image.”) (*Co-Occurring MDE*, February 16, 2007).

- Over two million adolescents, representing roughly 9 percent of adolescents aged 12 to 17 in 2005, experienced at least one MDE in the previous year (*Depression Among Adolescents*, December 30, 2005).
- An NSDUH Report on adults with co-occurring serious mental illness and a substance use disorder found that as of 2002, more than half of all adults diagnosed with a mental illness and co-occurring substance abuse issues received neither treatment for the mental illness, nor for the substance abuse (*Adults with Co-Occurring Serious Mental Illness*, June 23, 2004).

Additionally, the Drug and Alcohol Services Information System, commonly, The DASIS Report, and published periodically by SAMHSA, has statistics specific to adolescents:

- Co-occurring psychiatric disorders were found to be present in 38 percent of female admissions and 28 percent of male admissions.
- Three-fourths of adolescents admitted for psychiatric treatment of co-occurring disorders were white as compared to just over one-half for other races and ethnicities.
- Most referrals for admissions for adolescents with (48 percent) and without (57 percent) co-occurring disorders come from the criminal justice system.

(*Adolescents with Co-Occurring Psychiatric Disorders*, December 23, 2005).

Both SAMHSA and Whiffen and Demidenko (2006) cited a prevalence for female mood disturbances—including, depression, generalized anxiety, separation anxiety, and phobias—as being between two and three times higher than for males.

In public schools, segregation of children with disabilities represents the origins of least restrictive environment (LRE) (Moores, 2010; Rueda, Gallego, & Moll, 2000; Shapiro, 1993; Villa & Thousand, 2000). LRE is understood generally to be the placement of children with disabilities alongside their nondisabled peers in the education setting, to the largest extent possible, in order for the child to make appropriate educational gains. LRE is a term that is frequently used in conjunction with inclusion, and mainstreaming (Moores, 2010; Semsch, 2011b).

What of adults with disabilities? While laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are in effect, and have as a critical objective, the prevention of discrimination on the basis of disability or perceived disability, these do not have the effect of functional parity in our society. Some would argue that inequality and discrimination hold to be even more true for persons with mental and emotional disorders (variously referenced as mentally ill, unstable, mad, insane, psychotic, lunatic, imbecilic, deranged, maniacal, unbalanced, delusional, crazy, and unsound, to name only some), due to fear and lack of understanding about the nature and likely manifestations of mental illnesses like schizophrenia and manic depression (also known as bipolar disorder). But the names attached to persons with physical or intellectual disabilities are no less stigmatizing and are still, in the twenty-first century, inclusive of: handicapped, crippled, and retarded just to name a few. Regardless of the nature of the disability—whether physical, mental, emotional, intellectual, or a combination—persons with disabilities are marginalized on a daily basis, not only by our actions and the social construction within which they do not fit in one or more ways, but also by our words.

The names and perpetuation of misconceptions serve as a means for the larger culture to feel comfortable and separate from those who live with illness and disability. Anthony Stevens, in the Foreword to Adamson (1984/1990), noted that mental hospitals, for example, were designed intentionally to be impersonal and were located in isolated settings precisely because as a society, we see persons with mental illness as an embarrassment and wish to keep them “out of sight and out of mind” (unnumbered page). Adamson, himself noted that the labeling of persons as “patients” and other, more specific names (e.g., “schizophrenic”) serves to set them apart, and remove from them the identity by which those of us not so labeled consider our own individuality and place in the world. This “dividing line between ‘them’ and ‘us’ is just a matter of degree,” however (Adamson, 1984/1990, p. 1).

I would suggest that the same—the separation of *us* and *them*—is also true with regard to the art made by persons with disabilities. Sacks (1970/2006) discussed this in regard to both children and adults living with disabilities, noting as an example, the common belief among physicians treating patients with autism that “proficiencies and performances... were apparently based on calculation and memory alone, never on anything imaginative or personal... No allowance is made for an individual, let alone a creative personality” (p. 219). Sacks, Adamson (1984/1990), and a handful of other enlightened specialists came to recognize, as early as the 1940s and 1950s, that perhaps art might do what words could not for some people. For persons with disabilities, words often serve to confine and to relegate with their emphasis on rules and labels, whereas meaning may be formulated without words, through art. This is not to say that the art does not lead to words (the speaking to the art, the questioning, the critiquing, the

descriptions of it rendered by the artist both verbally and in writing), or that words (as in the generating of ideas, for example) do not lead to art, but for some, the art itself is the language with which they speak. This is true for the patient as well as the student and Adamson's views, in which he described his role in the hospital's art studio as that of a facilitator, rather than a director, are not coincidentally tied to those of Freire (1994) and Vygotsky (1962) with regard to the role of the teacher.

The SAMHSA data above indicate that we have not made much progress since Adamson (1984/1990) observed the ways in which we disengage from persons with illness by separating ourselves from them, nor have we successfully moved forward with regard to the care and treatment of persons with mental and emotional disabilities since Shapiro (1993) or Smith (1997) compiled their figures. Therefore, we must ask ourselves why it is that over decades, and considering all the advances in psychopharmacology and psychotherapy, we have not made more progress toward reducing: the number of adolescents with mental disorders who find themselves in the criminal justice system, the number of persons with mental disorders who are homeless, and the high rates of suicide among persons suffering disabilities—especially depression. Additionally, we have not made progress toward increasing: the numbers of adults with mental disorders who are able to retain employment, and (most importantly) the numbers of people with all manner of disabilities—mental, emotional, intellectual, developmental, or physical—who are living fulfilling, and contributory lives in which their disabilities are not the most prominent factor dictating life satisfaction and acceptance by others.

The prevalence of disability is a daily fact of life impacting literally tens of millions of people in America. We live in a society that very much prizes one's ability to

perform in an independent and exemplary fashion, and despite the fact that one might argue that there is no consensus for *normal* any more than there is a consensus for disability, the expectation exists nonetheless. I do not propose to define normal, nor do I propose a panacea that will make disability acceptable to the masses. Instead, I seek, through self-examination and the documents of others that may contribute to my research, to show how artistic creativity may serve to better inform us with regard to the ways in which persons with disabilities may be communicating through their art (e.g., through archetypal themes and symbols), as well as the ways in which the viewing and making of art may supplement current treatments that represent the standard of care for these many millions of people. Medication, psychotherapy, and other treatments in their various forms, are resisted by some, and unavailable to millions of uninsured Americans, who exist marginally, yet do not qualify for federal or state healthcare assistance necessary in order to acquire treatment—that is, when it is even available. This remains true despite the federal government’s current rollout of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Therefore, alternatives must be considered.

Because this paper proposes the consideration of art making as an alternative or supplemental standard of care for persons with disability, I will explore, throughout, the ways in which the creative process can serve to heal, to enhance and broaden a definition of literacy for people with disabilities across school and community settings, to empower individuals toward functionality so that they may be contributing members in their work, living, and social environments, and to create resiliency that might lead to something more like flourishing rather than merely surviving. This is important not only for persons and families living with disabilities directly, but for our larger society as well. We should

all seek a humane society that supports and embraces all of its members. Participation in one's community is a human right, and social interaction is a key component to participation. For persons with disabilities, the sense of belonging—their *presence*—within the larger social culture is often missing. This sense of belonging is often fed by creative processes and communication. What if these two could be complementary? What if they already are? Or, perhaps even more *earth shattering*, what if they are sometimes one and the same? The absence of due consideration by others in society toward persons with disabilities as having the potential for creativity serves to dehumanize them. When this happens, it does not matter what laws are in place to protect them, or the progress we have made in recent decades with regard to including persons with disabilities in our general education classrooms. When someone is denied acknowledgment as creative, their *presence* is also denied. It is as if they are not present at all.

I propose the act of making art to be, at its most basic, the act of making meaning, which is central to many definitions of literacy. Therefore, by extension, the allowance for one's creativity, as central to the act of meaning making, must also be a fundamental right for all persons, just as conventional literacy is considered to be. I sought to discover what some of the research says about the ways in which art making and literacy serve to complement and inform one another. This must first begin with a discussion about the way in which we actually define literacy.

A Definition of Literacy

What exactly do we mean when we speak of literacy? Many would insist that the conventions of reading and writing must be included in a definition of literacy, but in doing so, persons with severe disabilities, as well as others for whom reading and writing

are unlikely or impossible, are forever relegated to the illiterate side of the dichotomy that is *literate* on one side, and *illiterate* on the other. Keefe and Copeland (2011) discussed this as specifically problematic for persons with extensive needs for support. According to the authors, this population “represent the last group of people routinely denied opportunities for literacy instruction” (Keefe & Copeland, p. 92).

In denying any person the right to the experience of literacy, we are, in essence denying them a fundamental human right. Luckasson (2006) maintained that while the United Nations has some 180 human rights documents, there is a truth about human rights that goes to conditionality. We must ask ourselves if we believe in human rights for everyone, or if we believe that specific conditions may preclude some people from certain of those rights. With regard to this discussion, we should ask whether we believe persons with disabilities severe enough to prevent them from participating in conventional literacy frameworks in which reading and/or writing are incorporated, still have the right to literacy instruction.

Luckasson (2006) discussed the role of schools in terms of the lessons taught there—not just those that are formalized academic lessons, but those that go to “justice, fairness, disability and democracy” (p. 14). She further asserted that there are certain “nonnegotiables of being human—life, liberty, property, and equality” (p. 14) and that these take form in schools, just as they do in the larger culture beyond them. Therefore, the conceptualization of literacy as a human right precludes the denial of the freedoms it contains. But, what conceptualization of literacy must we embrace in order that human rights of everyone may be respected and served?

There are some very practical, physiological reasons that conventional literacy may not be achievable for persons with disabilities—even those perceived as having moderate disabilities. Many of these are discussed in the excellent text by Berninger and Richards (2002), who cited the different language systems that develop in a separate, but overlapping fashion, adding that if any one of these systems fails to develop, then the reading and/or writing aspects of literacy may be impaired. These systems are explained by the authors as Language by Ear (the first to develop, as it begins in utero), Language by Mouth (which begins in the first moments of a newborn's life), Language by Eye (which begins with the very first book an adult shares with an infant), and Language by Hand (beginning with the very first mark an infant or toddler makes with a writing implement). Additionally, these systems all require interaction with non-language brain structures (e.g., visual systems, and memory systems), and all of these continue to develop over time. That something might go amiss, would seem more likely than not. Yet, we continue to carry literacy expectations for students as if each of them had a perfectly functioning brain in the myriad aspects that must be necessarily in place for conventional reading and writing to be learned.

Berninger and Richards (2002) spoke further to some of why the ways we deal with literacy teaching and learning may be ineffective. The authors noted that we must move beyond phoneme awareness in identifying children who may be “impaired in speech perception... due to auditory processing problems... or subtle difficulties in storage or retrieval of articulatory representations of speech” (p. 119). Without this, our corrective reading programs lead to more failure, which places a heavy emotional burden on children who are already struggling in other ways.

Where reading is concerned, Berninger and Richards (2002) shared findings that oral reading, specifically, may be extremely difficult for students despite the possibility that silent reading may be occurring. This is due to “an oral motor output stage and an auditory feedback loop for monitoring oral reading” (p. 142) as additional requirements in the process of oral reading. And where writing is concerned, the authors suggested that we must move past the widespread misbelief that the writing brain evolves from the reading brain; it does not. And in fact, it requires not only all of the other language systems, but the non-language systems of the brain as well. Therefore, for students with severe cognitive and developmental disabilities, we are asking something of them (when we ask them to write) that may be quite literally impossible. Berninger’s 1994 assertion, as cited in Berninger and Richards, reminded us that “beginning writing is not a scaled down version of expert writing, just as children are not miniature adults” (p. 175), the latter portion of that statement being long-accepted by educators.

What of other conceptualizations of literacy? Specifically, is there a broad enough framework of literacy that might allow persons with severe disabilities acknowledgment as literate persons even if they cannot read and/or write in the conventional sense? While some definitions do incorporate a broadened definition that allows for the ways literacy enables participation in one’s community—Keefe and Copeland (2011), cited as two such examples the literacy definitions from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)—even these are, according to the authors, “problematic for individuals with extensive needs for support who often do not read and write in conventional ways” (p. 93). The framework for what matters in literacy may best be found in the UNICEF

Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990) definition as cited in Keefe and Copeland. Here, the authors cited Article 13's language, which I quote in part as "The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas *of all kinds* [emphasis added]... either orally... *in the form of art* [emphasis added], or through any other media..." (Keefe & Copeland, pp. 94-95). There it is—art—used in an official capacity, and at an international level, as one of many ways that one may express what one knows.

An Expanded View of Both Literacy *and* Art—The Philosophies of Some Theorists and Scholars

Freire (1994) spoke to this illusive thing we call literacy, and ways of knowing. He noted that when an adult enrolls in a literacy course, the expectation is that there will be reading and writing involved. The author then expanded upon that, adding his ideas about reading the world to his definition of what it means to be literate. Freire posited specifically, that "the reading and writing of words comes by way of the reading of the world," with the reading of the world as "an antecedent act vis-à-vis the reading of the word" (p. 78). Freire took it a step further, suggesting that without the presence of the cyclical reading and rereading of the world, the reading and writing of the word is crippled across scientific, political, and pedagogical contexts.

Freire (1994) also addressed directivity in the sense that schools promote literacy as they do everything involved in the practice of education—directively. He suggested, that this directivity interferes with a student's ability to create, to formulate, and to investigate the world. The student's meaning making is thwarted, then, by the models and practices traditionally utilized by educators to teach literacy—namely, the readiness

model, which allows progression from lower level skills to higher level skills only after each previous one has been reached, regardless of the relative importance of the earlier skill sets in terms of one's functionality within the community. Ultimately, students with disabilities are labeled within the dichotomous literate/illiterate definition of literacy based upon these readiness models of literacy, which include reading and writing skills. Why do we adhere to these narrow definitions of literacy? Freire, while being known for "radical" thinking, is not the only person of merit to pose the consideration of ways of knowing that exist outside of what is typical.

Conceptualizing meaning making in nontraditional ways was also proposed by Dewey (1934) who posited that "the needs of daily life have given superior practical importance to one mode of communication, that of speech" (p. 110). For those excluded from this mode of communication, then what? Dewey asserted that each separate object of art, created as it was within the framework of a specific medium, "says something that cannot be uttered as well or as completely in any other tongue" (p. 110). Important to a discussion regarding the interrelationship between art and literacy is Dewey's aesthetically oriented philosophy, as asserted by Eisner (1998) who discussed Dewey's "attendance to the ways in which *qualitative, artistically crafted form* [emphasis added] can convey meaning" (p. 31). According to Eisner, Dewey differentiated between "forms that state meaning and those that express them," citing as examples the stated meanings within science and the expressed meanings in the arts (p. 31). The way this looks in written form is the difference between the prosaic, matter-of-fact presentation of the scientist, versus the expressive emotions of the poet. Dewey also noted that expression was distinctly different from statement in that the latter may lead to an experience while

the former “constitutes one” (Dewey, 1934, as cited in Eisner, p. 31). So, what might this mean for one’s view of education as it relates to students with disabilities?

Dewey was, according to Popkin and Stroll (1993), and Jones and Wilson (1987/2006), a Progressivist where both politics and education is concerned. That is to say, he favored experiential, problem solving to rote memorization. Popkin and Stroll, also shared Dewey’s philosophies about schools as notable for “cramming” students “with the experience of the past” instead of preparing them for the future (p. 280). Jones and Wilson considered Dewey as intellectual, “robust, practical, down-to-earth, zealous, and democratic” and found “no personal gossip” (pp. 330-331) about him (important to anyone whose philosophies are being espoused a century after he first shared them). Dewey’s theories about education centered around problem-solving (and are discussed in more detail in Chapter Three). While not specifically speaking to students with disabilities, Dewey was one of the first to acknowledge a need for differentiated instruction based on many factors including economic status, and culture. When this premise is considered alongside his ideas about art, inasmuch as he referenced “qualitative, artistically crafted form to convey meaning” I envision—by Dewey’s standards—the student with disabilities being provided with the freedom and guidance (when necessary) to learn, *and* to be creative, *and* to be self-governing, *and* to be prepared to be an active contributing member of society... the same hopes one has for all our students and citizens, but one which is taken for granted by those considered *typical* within the mainstream.

Rubin (1984) spoke of the language of art as well, noting that “...in creative expression there can be no true order without some experience of genuine freedom” (p.

24). Also, Andrus (2006), shared a story about a student whose literacy showed in the self-portrait he had created. The portrait spoke in a way the student could not of his deep anger and, because he was allowed to express that anger in a symbolic way, he was able to verbalize the story of a painful experience in his family that led to the emotions portrayed in the portrait. Freire (1994), and Wix (2009) would say he was sharing his world. Similarly, Wexler (2002), in describing the way in which Bill Richards runs the Harlem Horizon Art Studio (HHAS), noted that he believes teaching art (formally) may be counter-productive for the young people he serves because they are not yet aware of who they are, and how the disability confronting them may change the ways they function in the world.

The notion of being free to discover one's own identity in the face of extreme and terrifying circumstances was also central to the progressive teaching of Friedl Dicker Brandeis, and is cited in an excellent text edited by Anne Dutlinger (2001). Because teachers at Theresienstadt (Terezín) were also "role models and surrogate parents," they took it upon themselves to guide the children to express themselves and their experiences through "the symbolic language of art" (p. 30), according to Dutlinger. Dicker-Brandeis, and others "facilitated education for life. The children painted and drew freely, using art as an outlet..." and thus, "gaining control of their own personal space and time" (Dutlinger, p. 30). It is this allowance which, for me, separates the mere teacher from the mentor. Palmer (1998) also noted the power inherent in our mentors as "their capacity to awaken a truth within us, a truth we can reclaim years later by recalling their impact in our lives" (p. 21).

Recently, the acknowledgment of art as a form of *visual literacy* has become more prevalent in the literature. Such literacy was defined by Eisner in the late 1970s, but has enjoyed a resurgence of interest by educators and scholars today due to the increasingly visual nature of our culture in which (especially) adolescents and young adults are saturated with a constant bombardment of visual imagery. However, this inculcation does not mean that the receiver of the visual message understands it and is able to think critically about it, make his own interpretation about its meaning, and decide if it is worthy of further attention; all of these skills demand being visually literate. Johnson (2008) cited Eisner's definition of visual literacy as "...the ability to 'read' messages contained in visual communications, to perceive, understand, interpret, and, ultimately, to evaluate one's visual environment" (p. 74). Johnson went on to explain that within the aesthetic domain, visual literacy includes being able to "talk about art," which serves to enhance the visual messages that children are exposed to "through media such as film, advertising, and, of course, works of art" (p. 74). The viewing of the art of others and making of art personally helps us to understand our own identities in relation to others, and an expanded view of literacy includes the allowance for one's identity to be shared within social contexts. Bradshaw (2003) spoke to homophobia and the power differential that exists between teachers and students, suggesting that in order "to move beyond tolerance and fully embrace respect and inclusion, it is necessary to incorporate teachers' and students' identities...." (p. 55). If a person's identity is shared through the creation of art, it should not be deemed any more or less valid than the person whose identity is shared in the form of a poem or a narrative story.

I note that all of the research referenced above includes the critical social component as a defining characteristic of literacy. Keefe and Copeland (2011) spoke to literacy learning as involving interaction within one's community, and cited Scribner's (1984) assertion of literacy as "a social phenomenon" (p. 96). Therein lays the key to literacy for me. It is that our identities, and our meaning making, shaped as they are through our reading of the world and our interactions with others, are inexorably intertwined. This identity-literacy connection (extrapolating from the original context again) is asserted in Eisner (1978) as well. Eisner's contention that what we know shows up in our work if we are allowed the freedom to show it, rings as synonymous with Freire's positing that a reading of the world must precede any reading of the word, and with Dewey's (1900/2009) contentions that the only way for a school to function as a whole is through the interaction of each part of its system with the life that we live in the world outside its walls.

My grandma (and many grandmas and moms) used to say "you are what you eat," which was actually my first lesson in metaphor. I recall that once I understood the metaphor, I thought it was hysterically funny to tell her she was an ear of corn, and I was a pancake, and that we laughed at Grandpa's being a hard roll. Recently, I have been thinking about Grandma and that metaphor and I believe it's time to expand it to "you are what you create" (*and* what you eat).

Two Divergent Examples of Literacy

I would like to draw comparisons between the literacy experiences of two notable women, both with disabilities (in fact, both with Down Syndrome), each with her own unique way of "reading the world," and of sharing her experience of it with the rest of us.

The first woman is Judith Scott (1943 – 2005), who was born without hearing, without a voice, and with Down Syndrome. Judith was institutionalized at the age of seven (as recalled by her fraternal twin, Joyce), and spent the next 35 years of her life in that institution. Judith never learned to read, or write, but she had an early interest in the making of art, according to Borofsky (2012). Her sister Joyce, after becoming her legal guardian and moving Judith out of the institution, needed a place for her to be while she (Joyce) worked. So, Joyce enrolled her sister in the Creative Growth Art Center in Oakland. Judy did not like painting; Judy did not like sewing, or sculpture, or interacting with other people. But when Judy took a fiber arts class from textile artist Sylvia Seventy, something awoke in her. What began as simply wrapping with yarn became Judy's voice.



Figure 1. Judith Scott, *untitled, (n.d.)*
Photograph by Leon Borensztein

Judith Scott became internationally renowned for her fiber art, which is now displayed in museums and galleries across the world, and which is worthy of inclusion (see Figures 1 and 2) in this introduction because it speaks to the ways in which art making and literacy are sometimes one and the same. Ilana, Joyce Scott's daughter and Judith's niece, recalls visiting her in the institution and that she (Ilana) could only weep throughout the entire

visit. Clinical records painted Judy as out of touch with her environment and unable to get along with others.

The second notable woman is Ann Forts. Ann's recollections of public school are primarily about being segregated in classes for people who "were special and needed help" (Forts & Luckasson, 2011, p. 122). When Ann was around 6 years old, she

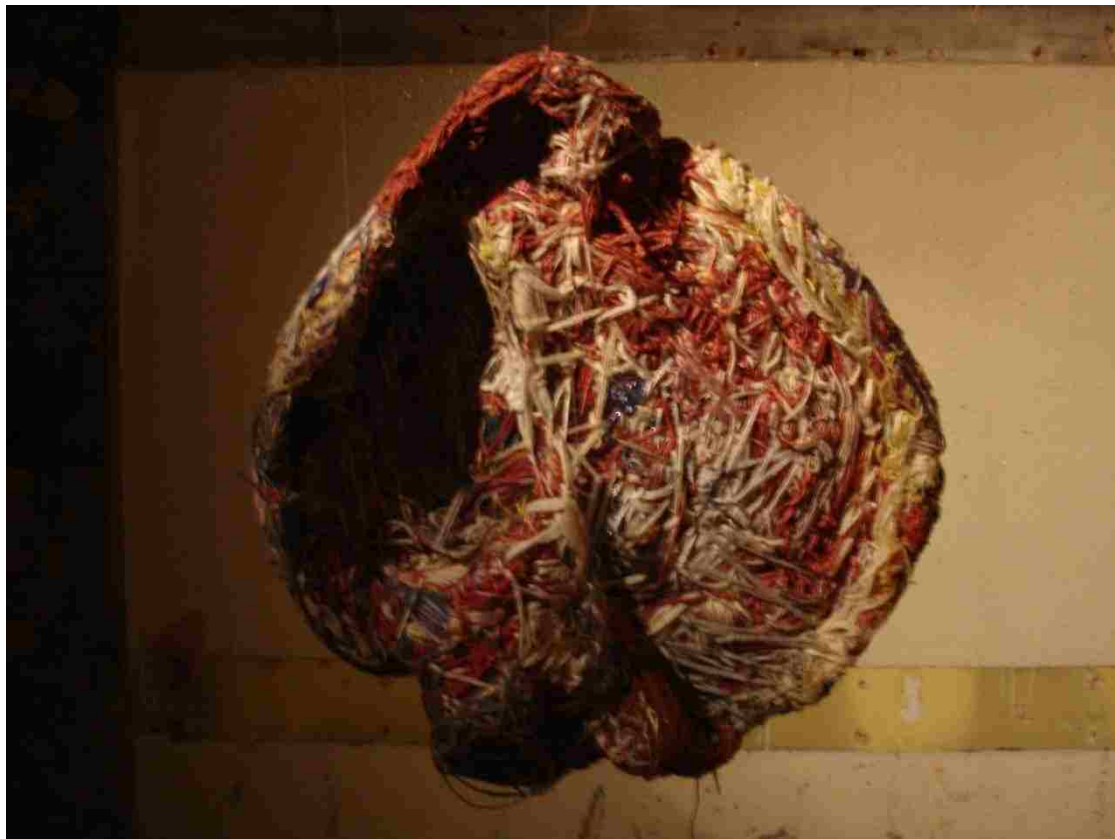


Figure 2. Judith Scott, *untitled*, (n.d.). On Display at The Museum of Everything, Selfridges Hotel, October 2011.

became aware of Down syndrome and its connotations. She thought the term for her condition to be too negative, so whenever she encountered it, she crossed out the *Down* and replaced it with *Up*. Thus, Ann became someone living with *Up* syndrome. For Ann Forts, a personal goal for her own learning was to be able to compose letters and notes and cards for people whom she cared about in her life. There was much Ann would have to overcome to learn to read and write, but she persevered. In high school, she learned

some research skills, and later, Ann learned editing, which became very important as her foundation, Annie Forts UP Syndrome, grew. For Annie, the importance of communicating with friends and loved ones, the continuation of the important work carried on through her foundation, and the ability she has—through her speaking engagements-- to inspire, are all reasons that reading and writing are so valued in her life.

Now, after sharing the stories of both Judith Scott and Ann Forts—each, clearly amazing in her own right—I pose the question: *Which of these two women is literate, Judy, or Annie?* Adherence to an “old school,” narrow view of literacy as necessarily including reading and writing would mean that Judy would be classified as illiterate, while Annie would meet the criteria for literacy. While Ann Forts is certainly literate by most conventional definitions, Judith Scott, in order to be considered as literate, requires an expanded notion of what that means. If, like Paolo Freire, we believe that literacy must be first and foremost about reading the world, then Judith Scott is most definitely a literate person; her reading of the world involves string, and yarn, and wrapping, but is that not a way to read the world? I join with all of those (Freire, 1994; Keefe and Copeland, 2011; Kliewer et al., 2006; Luckasson, 2006; and others) who call for an expanded view of literacy. By embracing and respecting multiple ways of knowing, we open the door for participation in one’s community, which is central to a socially constructed literacy framework, and is essential for the elements of human rights spoken to by Luckasson (2006).

Berninger and Richards (2002) asserted that “we know more about where babies come from than we do about where ideas come from in the brain. When Dr. Seuss was

asked where his ideas came from, he purportedly speculated that they may arise from the desert” (p. 185). That is where many of our antiquated notions of literacy should be relegated—to the desert.

As art and art-making are central components in this research, considered alone and in conjunction with conventional literacy, they are also central to the literature review presented in the next chapter. For the edification of the reader in preparing to read the literature review, it is divided into three separate sections, all of which are reunited again at the end of Chapter Two. These three sections comprise the research problems I sought to better understand and to use as the basis for my study. Each section consists of a general overview, the methods I used to conduct the literature review for that section (e.g., databases, search terms, and qualifiers), and subsets of information within the sections that serve to more readily focus the research. I present the literature review as

- the ways in which the art of persons with disabilities has been characterized historically;
- the relationships between and among art making and literacy—with a focus on adolescents and adults in school and community settings;
- the consideration of visual art as language, and worthy of consideration as such within the context of discussions about literacy.

The separate section for visual art as language was not included with the studies that examine the correlations between and among art making, literacy, and disability because the studies and related texts about art as language are not directed at disability populations, but I propose that the work should be considered in the context of those populations. Here, I explain this further.

An Introduction to Art as Language—Archetypes, Icons, and Semiotics

Art as comprising its own language has become vexing to me for the fact that there is ample discussion of it with regard to learners generally, but little aimed at disability populations specifically. The phrase *visual literacy* is used where the classroom is concerned. I also found much concerning the merits of visual arts teaching and learning in the development of critical thinking skills, of conventional literacy, and as an aid in understanding concepts across contents.

Unfortunately, all of these studies and texts are focused upon typically developing students and community members. Adolescents and young adults with disabilities live in the same world as those who are not so identified. They are exposed to the same amount of visual content within the larger culture, and yet there is very little research addressing the use of visual art in teaching literacy to students—especially older students—with disabilities. Therefore, I hope to contribute to the scholarship in this area. One way this may occur is through the use of archival document searches, and one piece I will look for is evidence of archetypes (archetypal themes and symbols). It is my hope that there are examples of artwork created by persons with disabilities that speak to archetypes—that is, from a Jungian perspective, inherited and collective unconscious patterns that make up the fundamental structure of the mind, and which are visible in recurring universal themes, or symbols, or patterns, including the Hero, the Mother-Goddess, the Wise Old Man, and some version of Heaven and Hell. Robertson (1963/1982) suggested that while the meaning of certain “motifs,” is lost over time, “adolescents may gain an extraordinary satisfaction in using archetypal themes which they do not recognize *consciously*” (p. 133). These Jungian concepts were referenced, as well, in Adamson (1984/1990).

Robertson (1963/1982) saw, in particular, the presence of the archetypal symbols of the rosegarden and the labyrinth, which she described as “the yearning for real fulfilment hedged about with the difficulties and renunciations of growing up” (p. 193); thus its recurring presence in adolescent art. Robertson posited that “certain human conditions are thrown into relief at this period by its very extremism” (p. 133). Therefore, the study of artwork produced by adolescents and young adults with disabilities, may speak to certain themes that can then inform this scholarly inquiry, which might then inform educators as to what it is that their students may be *saying*. When we understand and open ourselves to receiving what is being communicated to us, we can then tailor what we teach from that point forward. I agree with Robertson’s assessment that education should be a fulfillment of our students’ hopes and dreams and aspirations, present at whatever stages of development they happen to be when we are with them. She further noted that while preparation for adult life is important, we should never “ignore the *renunciations* that every life calls,” stressing that “quality is worth sacrifice, and the possibility of a final synthesis, ‘for the fire and the rose are one’” (p. 193).

The viewing of archetypes as a basis for inquiry is certainly not new. Robertson referenced Maud Bodkin’s *Archetypal Images in Poetry*, noting that Bodkin investigated a thesis “thrown out by Jung that the fundamental appeal of certain great poems rests on their evocation of an archetypal theme: for instance in *The Ancient Mariner* and *The Waste Land*, the rebirth theme, and in *Paradise Lost*, the Paradise-Hades image” (pp. 83-84). Robertson asserted further that Bodkin’s research verified the presence of such themes and that these patterns correspond to the emotional responses “in the minds of those who are stirred by the themes.” In related discussions of the presence of themes in

art, Tobin and Dobard (1999) discuss iconography, which differs from archetypes in terms of universality, as it is considered to be the meaning of images in culturally-specific contexts. Towell and Smilan (2009), on the other hand, reference semiotics, or the study of signs, as propounded by Smith-Shank, and the ways in which these signs relate to and influence one another. Thus, theme-based symbology is understood at both the cultural and universal levels to be present in the language of art.

Adamson (1984/1990) noted that a knowledge of these themes served to inform the treatment of persons with mental illnesses in the hospital where he conducted his art therapy. For example, he noted that a woman who had experienced much tragedy throughout her life created a painting that contained many archetypal symbols of death and dying, and because of this, he showed the work to her psychiatrist, who recognized it as representing the woman's thoughts of harming herself, and took immediate action. As Adamson observed "her painting had saved her" (p. 37). Adamson also spoke to paintings heavy in black and red as "forebodings of future tragedy," as well as recurring archetypal symbols in the artwork of patients, including: the eye, metamorphosis, reintegration, and rebirth. I found it an affirmation that one of the paintings in the book, was a "rose garden," (p. 36) created by a patient who loved Dr. Adamson (and therefore wanted to protect that love).

Our students, our friends, and our family members with disabilities may or may not have the words to speak to what they know, but they do, in fact, have language.

Chapter Two: A Review of the Literature in Three Sections

How the Art of Persons with Disabilities has been Characterized Historically

Overview to this section. Art—regardless of its maker, the era in which it was produced, the medium through which it was brought forth, or the style through which it was expressed—has a long history of being controversial and considered by many in the larger culture to be less valuable than other fields of study. Feldman (2012) noted that Michelangelo (1475–1564) was shunned throughout most of his earlier artistic career spanning from the late fifteenth and into the early sixteenth centuries. He is thought by some scholars to have been a clinically depressed obsessive, and according to Feldman, while he was commissioned to complete twelve figures on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, he produced more than 300. It was not until around age 60 (he lived to a then remarkable age of 90) that he found an acceptance—a niche if you will. According to Feldman during his adolescent and young adult career, and despite his passion and talent for the art of the Italian Renaissance, the young artist was subjected to beatings and humiliation when, at the age of 13, he left school for an apprenticeship with a painter. This rejection continued throughout his life, in which “he endured physical pain, privation, and the quixotic disfavor of governing popes” (Feldman, pp. 115-116). During the last decades of his life, however, he was recognized as nothing short of an “artistic genius,” and the title “Michelangelo the Divine” was bestowed upon him (Feldman, p. 116).

In the nineteenth century, Vincent Van Gogh (1853 – 1890) also suffered for his art, and likely for the mental illness that is blamed for his self-injurious behaviors (ergo, the lopped ear), failed (and ultimately successful, according to some) suicide attempts,

and limited success as an artist while alive (Gayford, 2013). The disrespect for the artist and his work was present until after his passing at the young age of 37. Perhaps he himself best understood the scorn that society too-often perpetuated toward its artists since he attempted numerous other careers, including art dealing in a family-run business (he was fired), a stint as schoolmaster in more than one less-than-charming private school (also fired), and a clergyman—whose own “prospective congregates wanted nothing to do with him,” and to which he responded by “mortifying himself like a medieval saint” (Gayford, p. 2), before finally settling in to his artistic endeavors which he pursued for the remainder of his working days.

Certainly there is room for debate as to whether the public’s rejection of a specific artist is about the person, or about the person’s art. However, there can be no doubt that persons with mental and emotional disorders are regularly stigmatized by society, and have been throughout history. Therefore, for the artist with mental illness, on what grounds the public rejects him or her becomes almost irrelevant as the lines between art and artist blur—both being stigmatized and marginalized. In addition to Michelangelo and Van Gogh, a sampling of artists and writers for whom mental illness was an issue includes: Charles Dickens, Edgar Allen Poe, and Hans Christian Anderson. A supplemental list offered by Styron (1990) includes, in part, Virginia Woolf, Romain Gary, Sylvia Plath, Mark Rothko, Jack London, Ernest Hemingway, Diane Arbus, Paul Celan, and Anne Sexton. Styron referred to the list—not complete by any means—as “a sad but scintillant roll call,” (p. 35) of brilliant souls whose lives ended in suicide, arguably, because the pain of mental illness was too much to bear.

Many of these artists would not fit into the realm of Art Brut, or Outsider Art because both adhere to a self-taught framework, regardless of the interchangeability of some of the other ascriptions. Still, they were most certainly marginalized by disability if not by the public then, by themselves personally, as there is a great deal of secrecy and shame that accompany mental illness. Perhaps *that* is the reason for suicide. Such a secret is far too burdensome to bear. Styron noted further that “it has been demonstrated with fair convincingness that artistic types (especially poets) are particularly vulnerable to the disorder—which, in its graver, clinical manifestation takes upward of twenty percent of its victims by way of suicide” (Styron, 1990, p. 35). When I ponder that, I think of all the brilliance that we will never know—the visual art we will never view and appreciate, the writing we will never be able to snuggle up with under the covers at night, the profundity and atypical views we will not share with friends over coffee. I weep for the loss.

Two names are worth discussing here not only because both artists suffered mental illness, but also in that the art of each might be said to represent two oppositional faces of mental disability. The first, Edvard Munch (1863 – 1944), perhaps best known for *The Scream*, was said to suffer acute anxiety and depression throughout his life. His prolific body of work contains elements that support many of the characteristic stereotypes of mental illness, as exemplified in the painting, *Anxiety*, (Figure 3). Munch’s work is credited with having a great influence on German Expressionism, yet when I asked three people (friends who are well-educated and enjoy art) what they thought of when they heard the name Munch, they all said *The Scream*, and two added the word “schizophrenic.” Why? None had specifically studied the artist, but all cited his work as being characteristic of mental illness. In the twentieth century, later in his career,

Munch did suffer a breakdown said to be caused by acute anxiety and alcoholism. Does that show in his work? If one subscribes to the notion that an artist paints that which is deepest within him, then, according to Rhodes (2000), and Russell (2011), we are in



Figure 3. Edvard Munch. *Anxiety*. (1894)

agreement with Doctors Walter Morgenthaler and Hans Prinzhorn, who are credited as being among the first to complete a comprehensive study of the art of psychiatric patients, according to Russell (2011). As well, Jean Dubuffet, with whom the precursor to Outsider Art came to reside in the form of *Art Brut*, must be acknowledged for our current understandings of the genre (Rhodes, 2000).

A second, though lesser known artist, also said to have been diagnosed with schizophrenia, Louis Wain (1860 – 1939), is worth mentioning for the fact that his body of work is almost entirely inclusive of cats, many anthropomorphized, participating in all

manner of human activities, from gardening to throwing parties. An example, *The Bachelor Party*, (Figure 4) depicts cats drinking at a bar, and was completed in 1939, the last year of Wain's life. In my opinion, this image is not characteristic of stereotypical imagery of schizophrenia, and begs the question, is the psychopathology of persons living with mental illness truly visible in their art work as asserted by Morgenthaler, Prinzhorn, and more recently, many others in the psychiatric profession? It is worth noting that there is disagreement among experts as to whether Wain was actually schizophrenic. Despite

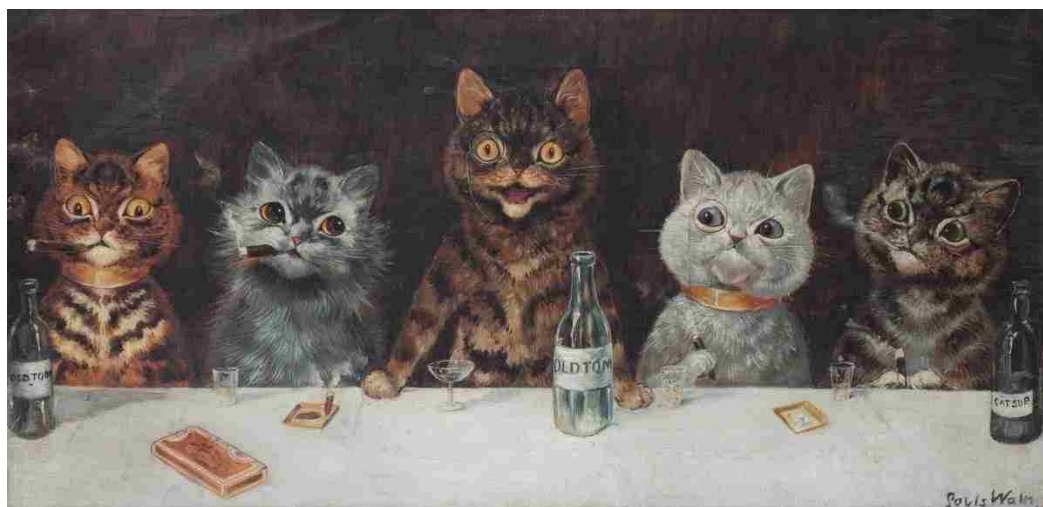


Figure 4. Louis Wain. *The Bachelor Party*. (1939).

this, a Google search using the term “artists with schizophrenia,” finds him at the top of the list. Wain's painting of cats is said to have originated as a means of cheering his wife who was stricken with cancer and dearly loved their cat, Peter (a subject of many of Wain's early works). Therefore, the artist may have simply continued painting cats because he missed his wife and they were cherished by her (“Louis Wain,” 2012). The reasons this is not likely, however, are discussed further in this section, under the subheading “The Art of ‘the Insane.’” When I asked the same three friends about the art of Louis Wain, none of them had ever heard of him, nor were there memories jogged by

my prompts about his being the artist who painted cats—whether anthropomorphized or not.

I chose to use these two disparate examples because they are illustrative of the faces of mental illness (that is to say, there *is* no *one* face), yet Munch's *Anxiety* and *The Scream*, among others of his paintings would be characterized as proof of his madness, whereas it is doubtful that Wain's work would be seen in the same way, in my view.

More recently, Rubin (1984) suggested that we are perhaps too puritanical to consider art generally in the same way that we consider work, or the hard sciences. Art, according to Rubin, seems to us too much like play, and therefore cannot be nearly as important as work. It may be that simple, but therein lays a particularly poignant tragedy for the artist outsider, who already often exists on the fringes of society due to a disheveled mind and tortured soul. If we cannot celebrate the Michelangelos, or the Van Goghs, the Munches or the Wains, without feeling compelled to attribute sound reason to our appreciation, how then are we to celebrate other lesser-known artists who exist outside of society's normative cultural schema? How are we to appreciate the artistry of persons like Adolf Wölfli, August Natterer, Henry Darger, Martín Ramirez, and Madge Gill (Rhodes, 2000; Russell, 2011)? These are artists all known to varying degrees in the world of Outsider Art, but unknown to the vast majority of the world *outside* the Outside.

Appreciation can only grow with knowledge, so this paper begins with a discussion about the portrayal, through art, *of* persons with mental disabilities, after which the origins of the practice of art making *by* persons with mental disabilities (best known as Outsider Art) is shared, followed by an examination of some of the specific Outsider artists themselves. Finally, the art making by persons with other disability types,

not related to mental or emotional illness, is examined as well. There is much promising research affirming creative endeavors as a means for self-expression, for communicating and connecting to the larger world, and for maintaining one's sense of community belonging and purpose. Many of these artists' gifts to the world are no less important than those of Michelangelo, Van Gogh, Munch, and Wain, and indeed may be, arguably, more so because their very existences and their passion for art making led to further research by those influential to the extent that their perceptions influenced others who followed. In the process, we are coming to better understand the ways that art can fuel the soul and give voice to those who may otherwise go unheard. There are myriad ways of knowing and sharing what one knows. For some, the picture, or the dramatic role, or the music exist where words do not, and I propose that these contributions should be deemed as valid as any other language, written, vocalized, or contained within the hands. John Dewey (1934), in fact, referenced art as "many languages," suggesting that each medium "is especially fitted for one kind of communication. Each medium says something that cannot be uttered as well or as completely in any other tongue... each art speaks an idiom that conveys what cannot be said in another language..." (p. 110).

Research approaches specific to this section of the literature review. An examination of the art of persons with disabilities and the ways in which it has been characterized historically requires a response that goes beyond a review of the literature. Research into the literature was, however, necessary to establish a historical context. I, therefore, examined two texts by Kay Redfield Jamison (1993, 1995), a professor of medicine, and widely-respected authority on manic depression, as well as William Styron's (1990) memoir of his personal journey through depression, and Nell Casey's

(2001) collection of essays by writers living with the disease. Each of these texts, in addition to several related to inclusion and special education contained information about depressive-type illnesses generally, as well as connections between mental illness and the making of art. I also found very useful Rhodes' (2000), text on Outsider Art, and Russell's (2011) text on self-taught and Outsider artists. To these, I have added numerous additional online resources.

I conducted extensive searches for relevant literature within electronic databases through the university library system. I utilized the databases within EBSCO, ProQuest, and Google Scholar and was able to locate considerable information about the historical characterization of the art of persons with disabilities from each of them. Experimenting with a variety of search terms and qualifiers, I found the most success through Education Research Complete, ERIC and PsycInfo. I conducted the search using concurrent search terms. For example, *art making OR history of art making AND disability*. There were over ten thousand results (too many). What I found when reviewing the first fifty or so, was that few actually offered a historical perspective, and the ones that did, tended to be primarily related to mental and/or emotional disorders.

I then narrowed my search again using the terms *art making OR history of art making AND physical disab* OR mental disab**, with 700 plus results. Two or three of the first 50 results had some reference to disabilities other than mental or emotional types, but again, none of them went to the historical context of the characterization of art and people with disabilities. However, when I narrowed my search further to peer reviewed articles, the list results list was reduced to eight, of which four were relevant.

I next used the same concurrent search terms in the ProQuest databases, selecting peer reviewed and full text options, and found 39 results, of which eight were relevant to this specific research problem, and several were found to be useful for my two additional research problems concerning the relationship between art making and literacy, and the methodologies used to guide the research in the realm of art making and disability.

Further searches using the search terms *mental disorders* AND *art making* in several education and psychology-related EBSCO databases, concurrently, led to 48 results, three of which I will use. *Mental disorders* AND *outsider art* resulted in 17 peer-reviewed articles, of which six were very relevant and will be used. The lesser used term, *visionary artist*, did not yield any results. In sum, between fifteen and twenty of the articles located via electronic database searches will be included in this paper, and specifically with regard to this research problem.

By connecting to Google Scholar's databases through the university, I was able to link directly to references of the work of others, and thus find more relevant information. When full text articles, books, and dissertations or theses were not available directly, I was able to order several that were relevant to my research, from the university's inter-library loan service (ILLIAD).

Like John Dewey, and Paolo Freire, I believe that the experience of learning occurs through the lens of one's own life experience. An expanded view of that suggests to me that if this is true for learners, is it also true for researchers and teachers. Therefore, my experience of teaching also manifests through the lens of my life experience. My ways of knowing the world are directly and indirectly correlated to my own experiences of various disability attributes, and the marginalization that accompanied them. These

have an impact on my interpretations with regard to this portion of my literature review. To begin the process of reciprocity—important to my research—I note here what I mean when I reference as disability attributes and marginalization. First, in January of 2005, the first day of the new school semester, I suffered a head injury severe enough that I was unconscious for a period of hours. The results of this injury in the short term were fairly extreme in that I was violently ill for days, had no short term memory, experienced severe vertigo when standing for more than a few minutes, and suffered double vision of a three-dimensional sort in which a duplicate set of letters rose off the page and floated in the air (thus, reading became a headache-inducing tricky business, involving reading only the letters in the air, and not on the page itself). In the long term, I never regained my vision to its former state, though for a brief period, it “restored itself” to near perfect. I also have sporadic issues with short term memory, and until the past few years, my electroencephalograms (EEGs)—the tracing of brain waves made by an electroencephalograph, and used in the diagnosis of brain disorders—were abnormal, indicating damage to my brain. I am extremely fortunate that my brain appears to have recovered fully, but the experience changed the ways in which I functioned in the world, and the kind of teacher I became.

Additionally, mental and emotional disability attributes are prevalent within both my immediate and extended family, and a male first cousin was diagnosed at a young age with severe cognitive and developmental disabilities and at age 41 is living in a residential facility, where he will likely spend the remainder of his adult life.

Addiction also runs its insidious thread through the tapestry of my family, leading to general chaos, loss of employment, incarceration, and even the deaths of two family

members (a first cousin and an aunt by marriage) at the hands of others. Their murders were, I maintain, the result of lifestyles that had moved beyond their personal control.

Personally, I have battled clinical depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress (PTSD), which grew more disabling when I was exposed to trauma in my work environment. During this time, art-making and research saved me, quite literally. Without it, I am certain I would not have been able to continue this doctoral journey.

These disability attributes have wreaked havoc in various ways beginning in early childhood and continuing throughout my adult life. As with all mental and emotional disorders, they are grown stronger through family dysfunction and the refusal to acknowledge them. The secrets, guilt, and shame inherent in any afflicted family assure the perpetuation of the dysfunction from one generation to the next, and I see this happening in my own. This is, I am sure, the origin of my interest in this research.

My parents' dysfunction, the stress of poverty and other risk factors, and the behaviors that accompanied them have forever changed my own life and the lives of my siblings. They changed *who we are* and stole from us our true human potential. That I am able to share this is both a testament to hope and possibility that come with treatment, and hard work. That I have more recently discovered art making as one of the means to my own healing process is not a coincidence, I think.

Therefore, there is a *method* to my madness—pardon the pun. I hesitated to include my family history and personal information, but it is my belief that my own experiences serve to enhance my research, and the rise of qualitative research in which phenomenological approaches are included would seem to bear out this opinion. It will certainly mean that I may read differently the words of others on the topic of disability. If

I desire—and I do—to give voice to the voiceless in this and future work, I should start with my own. It has been silent for a very long time.

Early perceptions of disability and mental illness. Before any discussion about the art created *by* persons with disabilities, I felt it important to establish a historical context for popular perceptions of persons *with* disabilities. The current perceptions of the public where disability is concerned are largely a result of information gleaned from artists, writers, and the media, whose portrayals of such persons are besotted with misconceptions, exaggerations, and ill will over time. Call it vituperative expression, or artistic license, but it is relevant, in my view.

Beveridge (2001) suggested that two factors contributed to early interest in so-called “art of the insane,” both taking place in the early nineteenth century. First, the Romantic movement contributed because it saw madness as an exalted state, and its sufferers as being able to tap into “hidden realms” (p. 595). The second factor was the birth of the asylum, which provided a place within which to house persons with all manner of disabilities, but especially, mental disorders. To the Romantics, according to Beveridge, the madman was “hero,” and they readily recalled Plato’s madness-genius connection in their cultural discourse. Beveridge posited that the Romantics saw logic in the presumption that those suffering madness would, by extension, create works of genius via Plato’s proposition of a connection.

Dr. Philippe Pinel, according to Beveridge (2001) was likely the first to write about art and mental illness in his *Medical Treatise on Mental Disorder or Mania*, which was published in 1801. This was followed shortly thereafter by the written assertions of Benjamin Rush that artistic talents were sometimes actually uncovered by the onset of

mental illness. The renown of Dr. Pinel is showcased in an 1876 painting by Tony Robert-Fleury, entitled *Pinel Freeing the Insane* (Figure 5). In this painting, “the tradition of asylum art” was carried through, according to Fee and Brown (2006), with “stock figures,” including “a woman (on the ground) tearing at her clothing, 2 huddled melancholics, a tense maniac, and a woman (at right) with a vacant stare chained to the wall” (p. 1743). The scene was taken from an asylum for women during the French Revolution (which occurred roughly 75 years before the painting was created).



Figure 5. Tony Robert-Fleury. *Pinel Freeing the Insane*. (1876)

According to Fee and Brown, the piece served two distinct purposes. First, it celebrated Dr. Philippe Pinel, a French alienist (a psychiatrist accepted by the court as an expert on mental competence) (Beveridge). Pinel, according to Fee and brown, was famed for liberating mentally ill asylum patients from the chains in which many lived their daily lives while institutionalized. Fee and Brown asserted the second purpose of the painting as serving a basis for the characterization of persons with mental disorders common at the time in spite of the changing philosophies inherent in the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century (best known for the movement’s critical examination of its institutions).

Dr. Pinel, according to Fee and Brown (2006), spent a great deal of time with his patients, listening to them and learning their life histories so that he might be better able to “rationally reconstruct their mental world and... lead them back to sanity” (p. 1743). In this period of revolution and enlightenment, Dr. Pinel and others developed what came to be known as moral therapy, which was “based on the idea of freeing mental patients’ trapped humanity” (Fee & Brown, p. 1743). Later, famed physician and psychoanalyst, Sigmund Freud (1856 – 1939) would credit Pinel and his contemporaries with spearheading one of the most humane revolutions to date, while in the midst of the horrors of the French Revolution itself.

Later in the nineteenth century an Italian alienist, Cesare Lombroso, took a great interest in the art of the insane (Beveridge, 2001). Lombroso viewed insanity as atavistic in nature—that is, as having reemerged after a period of dormancy—believing that it represented a regression back to the savage (Beveridge). Lombroso saw genius as an actual type of madness, specifically, a “degenerative psychosis,” so unlike the Romantics, he saw both madness and genius as “degenerate,” and unworthy of celebration (Beveridge, p. 596). The doctor agreed with Rush that insanity was capable of transforming persons into artists. Despite the fact that Morgenthaler and Prinzhorn are credited with being the first to conduct a comprehensive examination of the art of mental patients, Lombroso, in the nineteenth century, included the work of 108 artistic patients in his book, in which he examined the work for “distinctive features” that might identify it as being emblematic of insanity (Beveridge).

Klein (1998) addressed the medical profession’s fascination with mental illness during the Enlightenment, noting that it sought to better understand the relationships

among “insanity, reason, nature, and society” (p. 198). The author discussed two different approaches, one which sought to consider mental illness in an enlightened and scientific way that allowed for the possibility of its sufferers as curable, and the other in a more romantic and idealized way that was representative of the Romantic movement itself. It was the latter view, according to Klein, that successfully united the characteristics of madness with those of genius, a view that is still held by many today.

Klein’s (1998) essay is an extensive examination of the work of the Spanish painter, Francisco Goya (1746 – 1828), considered central within the circle of enlightened intellectuals and artists. Goya’s paintings had, as their frequent subject matter, insanity and its sufferers. Goya, himself was seriously ill in 1792 and 1793, during which time—it is thought by some—he began to identify more seriously with his fellow citizens who were incarcerated due to illness. Regardless, Goya’s depictions of asylums and their residents, as seen in his 1793 painting, *Yard with Lunatics* (Figure 6), were violent and disquieting even after changes were made to the institutions themselves. One of these institutions was the Saragossa asylum, an institution founded in 1425 when Spain became the first country in the world to separately house mental patients. The institution was known for its advanced therapies, including “games, entertainment, special diets, hygiene and the opportunity to move about freely; therefore, the cradle of modern psychiatry is to be found in Spain” (Klein, p. 206).

Despite setbacks during the reign of Philip II when hospitals were again large prison-like affairs, according to Klein, mental institutions as separate facilities were predominant as the preferred institutional type during the Enlightenment. At Valencia—the second largest in size and reputation to Saragossa—patients were offered work

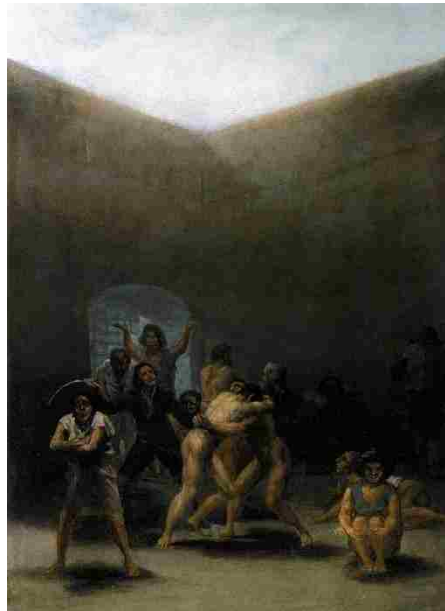


Figure 6. Francisco Goya, *Yard with Lunatics*. (1793)

therapy in which all manner of occupations were options, including agriculture, horticulture, and animal husbandry. As well, the hospital had its own doctors and was one of the first to house children separately from adults.

Goya's asylum paintings stood in sharp contrast to the near legendary status of Dr. Pinel and his treatise, which extolled the importance of "mechanical activity" in curing patients (Klein, 1998, p. 207). Dr. Pinel himself praised Saragossa for its advanced treatments of the diseased and "lunatics of all nations, governments and religions," (Klein, p. 207), while Goya's paintings depicted naked wretches in chains, the contorted faces of mania and idiocy, and background notes of chaos. White (2009), asserted that Goya was "one of the earliest artists to see beneath the façade of rationality and expose the mind as the seat of *irrationality*" [emphasis added] (p. 2), adding that the artist's employment by "the corrupt court of the Spanish king Charles IV" (p. 2) likely shaped his philosophical views. White further asserted that Goya likely developed a bestial view

of humanity after experiencing “the brutality of Napoleon’s forces on the Spanish people” (p. 2).

According to Klein (1998), four recognized forms of madness originating with Dr. Pinel formed the basis of all diagnoses beginning in the period of the Enlightenment and continuing well into the nineteenth century; they were: mania, melancholy, dementia, and idiocy (p. 216). As to melancholy, this depressive state was often depicted by the painter as feeble souls sitting on the ground while chaos reigned all around them.

The view shared by apologists of Dr. Pinel is exemplified in a leaflet (Figure 7) thought to have been created in order to solicit charitable donations for Saragossa. According to Klein (1998), it is beautifully illustrated to show different sections inside the institution as well as the activities present within each. It contains small, carefully drawn pictures with captions (in French), noting that the Saragossa Hospital “regularly housed 500 sick patients, 300 mentally ill patients, 700 foundlings and seventy persons with scab” (Klein, pp. 208-210). Again, it is noteworthy that Goya’s asylum paintings depict nothing of this progressive stance.

The disparity between the work of these two artists begs the question, which version of reality—where persons with mental illness are concerned—would a member of the “unenlightened” public be likely to hold as truth —Dr. Pinel’s, or Francisco Goya’s?

It is my personal belief that Goya may not have ever intended to depict reality where mental patients were concerned—unless one finds credence in White’s (2009) contention that Goya took a general view of humanity as bestial. Many of Goya’s paintings on all subject matter tend toward the fantastical and frightening. Regardless,

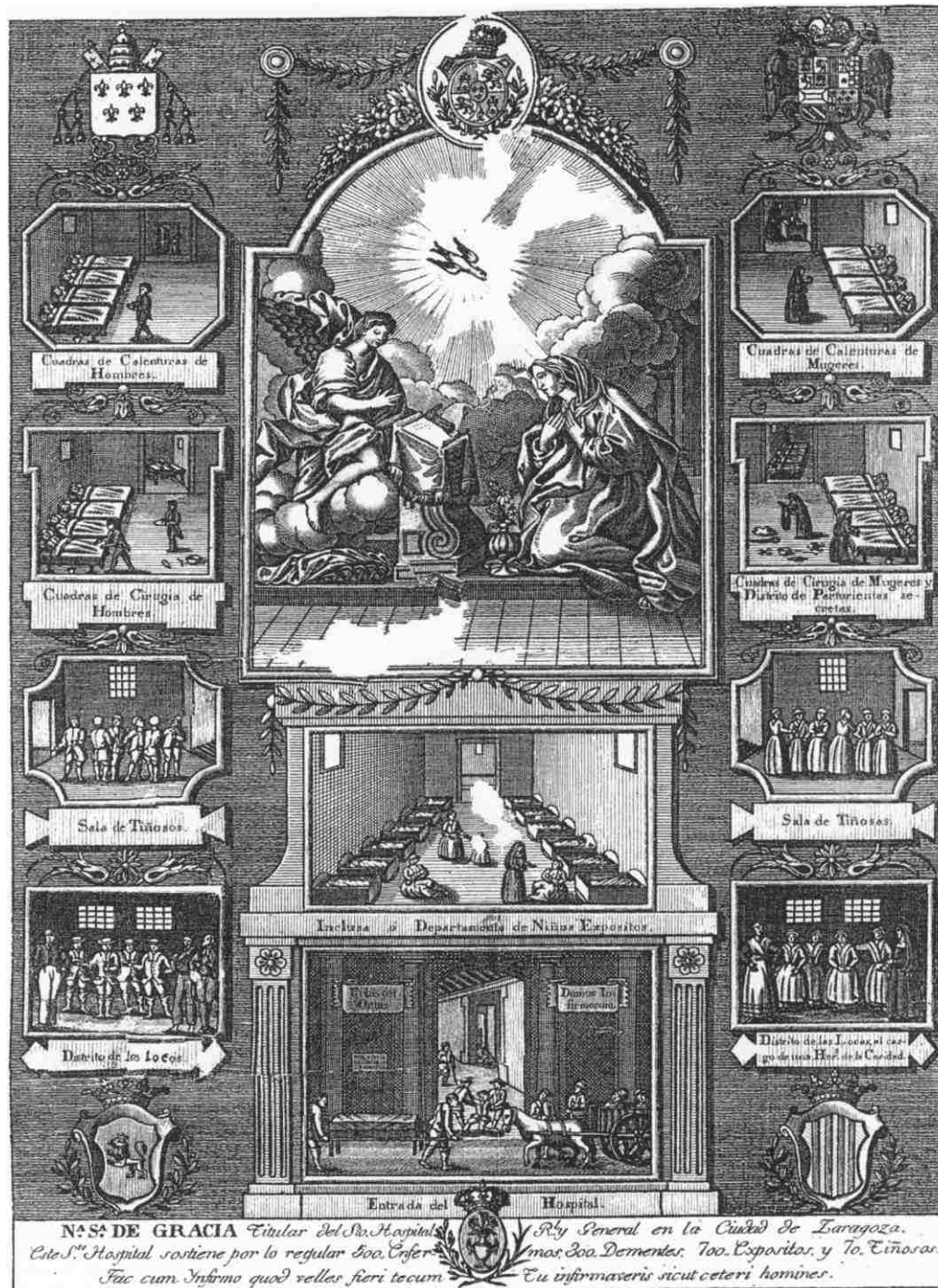


Figure 7. Hospital Real y General en la Ciudad de Zaragoza, engraving, end of the 18th century.

From (Klein, 1998, p. 209).

because Goya was a central figure in enlightened circles of intellectuals, writers, artists and others held in high societal esteem, I believe his paintings were more influential than

perhaps those of lesser known artists, and the subject matter, therefore, more likely to be taken as truth. In my mind, Goya served a role that was not dissimilar to that of the news media, or the Internet in the twenty-first century in that opinions of the public were formed as a result of his influence. Therefore, despite the fact that many advancements were being made behind the walls of the hospitals themselves, it is likely that the public too often knew only that with which it was presented by those whom it revered the most—namely, its artists and writers.

Goya's work, while preceding any consideration of art as created by sufferers of mental illness themselves, was certainly an important precursor to it because it served as a vehicle which brought mental illness out of the closet and into the light of day. And because his paintings were often gruesome and controversial, people were talking, not just about the quality of the painting, but about what was depicted in them, namely mental illness in the form of frightening-looking, disconnected souls who were different from those who viewed themselves as normal.

Unfortunately, the work of Goya, Fleury, and a host of others became representative of truth to a public that was less educated (less literate) than the intellectuals who embodied the Enlightenment. By extension, then, any art that was created by the residents of the institutions would, in my opinion, be more likely ill-received, regardless of the subject matter, because of the stigma perpetuated by both intellectuals and the general public toward those who suffered disability and mental illness. It is, however, a moot point to discuss the art making of persons with mental illness at this point in history because while work therapy, mechanical therapy, and all manner of entertainment took place inside institutions existing to serve persons with

disability, there is no reference to art therapy in 1800, though it may have existed in some form. Art as a therapeutic tool for those who existed behind institutional walls was not to be until the early 20th century.

The self-taught artist with disabilities. “The Chinese believe that before you can conquer a beast you first must make it beautiful” (Jamison, 1993, p. 5). The beast to which Jamison referred was manic-depressive illness, but the metaphor—and similarly dark ones such as *the demon*, or *the devil*—is commonly ascribed not only to manic depressive illness, but also schizophrenia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and clinical depression. In order to tame the beast, many persons suffering mental disorders have found solace in art making.

While art therapy as it is practiced today was not in existence during the Enlightenment, relationships between artistic genius and madness certainly were being established. Esquirol, a psychiatrist and contemporary of Dr. Pinel’s “establishes a relationship between madness and creativity when he remarks briefly that ‘the delirium of the maniac has certain connections with the high excitement of the genius’” (Klein, 1998, p. 218). While two positions were taken in the French *Encyclopédie*, which served both the “enlightened aristocracy” and the public (Klein, p. 219), both established a relationship between genius and madness. Many of the so-called enlightened warned that genius could actually threaten art “by its unrestrained imagination and passions” (Klein, p. 220). Perhaps the most truly enlightened take on the genius-madness link can be found in the words of the philosopher, Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778). According to Rousseau, “excessive sensitivity and unbridled emotions form the main prerequisites for artistic genius, and it is a matter of chance whether a man is celebrated as a genius or

whether he lands in the madhouse” (Klein, p. 220). Indeed, whether one considers mental instability as the impetus for creative genius or creative genius as the impetus for mental instability, the world is rife with examples of the two in coexistence.

Early interest in the therapeutic context of untrained artists. Two psychiatrists, Walter Morgenthaler of the Waldau Mental Asylum in Bern Switzerland and Hans Prinzhorn, of the psychiatric clinic at Heidelberg University in Germany, are credited as being the first to investigate art—both the nature of it and its manifestations—in persons who were considered to be among either “ordinary” people, or the mentally ill, according to Russell (2011). Their (Morgenthaler and Prinzhorn’s) prerequisite was that the artist be untrained, and therefore, working on an instinctual level, where art was concerned. This was very early in the twentieth century. According to Russell, both men were culturally aware, art-educated doctors. Morgenthaler’s brother was, in fact, a professional artist, while Prinzhorn’s experience was derived through a doctorate in art history (Russell, p. 12). Their renown in the world of psychiatry surrounds their contributions to psychoanalytic theory where normative behavior is concerned. Both men were driven to better understand what the artwork of persons being treated for mental illness might reveal about individual psychopathology, as well as “the psychology of art in general” (Russell, p. 12). Further, the doctors were interested in the differences that might exist between the art produced by their patients, and that produced by trained, professional artists within the context of the larger culturally-influenced world, according to Russell.

Beveridge (2001) asserted that Morgenthaler wished to get to the roots of artistic creativity, which he believed to be more accessible through persons suffering mental

illness simply because they operated on a more instinctual level. Thus, Morgenthaler's view by necessity, involved a social context. Prinzhorn, on the other hand, and according to Beveridge, "held a more Romantic picture of the asylum artist," hailing the schizophrenic artist, in particular, as "the most profound and creative" (p. 597), despite the fact that not all the patients studied for his book, *Artistry of the Mentally Ill*, were schizophrenic. Beveridge also asserted that Prinzhorn ignored the social context of the artistry of his patients, despite the fact that most had been institutionalized for years, a factor that would have surely impacted their art.

Morgenthaler and Prinzhorn ultimately arrived at their conclusions by divergent paths, Dr. Morgenthaler's work involving a 13-year study of one single patient, Adolf Wölfli—now, a virtual star in the world of Outsider Art, according to Russell (2011). Dr. Prinzhorn's work, *Artistry of the Mentally Ill*, included over 5,000 pieces of artwork created by roughly 435 patients housed in institutions across Europe (Russell). Prinzhorn's work was more immediately influential than the work of Dr. Morgenthaler, though Morgenthaler's patient (Wölfli)—discussed at greater length below—would ultimately enjoy more fame than any of the patient/ artists studied by Dr. Prinzhorn.

In the end, despite Beveridge's (2001) contention that Dr. Prinzhorn neglected to include social context in the way he chose to contextualize the art of the patients studied, his assertions, nevertheless, surrounded artistic creativity as a means toward self-actualization and connection with the larger world for the artist patient, according to Russell (2011). Prinzhorn further identified what he called "six recurring patterns of configuration" in visual art which he considered to be derivative of the instinct that drives the art of institutionalized patients. The six drives are inclusive of: "self-expression; play;

ornamentation; ordering and arranging; imitation; and creating symbolic meaning” (Russell, p. 13).

According to Russell (2011), Doctors Morgenthaler and Prinzhorn both held that while human instinct and its resultant behavior was present in both the mentally stable and the mentally ill, the differences in the manifestations of those behaviors was due to the inability of persons with mental illness to adhere to society’s codes of conduct and morality. Because Morgenthaler and Prinzhorn were psychiatrists first, and thus scientific thinkers, they were not as inclined to idealize the conditions of persons with mental illness as were others who would come later. Still, according to Russell, both men “shared with many of the artists and intellectuals of their time a critical attitude toward the repressive forces inherent in modern society” (p. 13). Prinzhorn, in particular, with his background in art history, was sympathetic to the visions of untrained artists, believing that cultural influence over art made it “virtually colorless” and subject to society’s “extraneous ends” (Russell, p. 14).

The “art of the insane.” Not everyone is an artist. This holds true for persons with disability attributes just as it does for everyone else. Therefore, like all art, when viewed for its merits, some Outsider Art is more technically mastered than others. The difference between a professional artist living in the culture at-large and an artist outsider are, centrally contained within the elements of marginalization, isolation, and self-teaching present in the latter. Regardless of whether or not a technical mastery is ever achieved by an outsider artist, it must always be derived from self-teaching (Rhodes, 2000; Russell, 2011). That said, for many, the term Outsider Art is synonymous with mental illness, and there is a long history of interest in the art of persons with mental

illness (alternately referenced as *psychiatric art*, *asylum art*, *psychotic art*, or *the art of the insane*).

According to Beveridge (2001) and Rhodes (2000), interest that is specifically drawn to the art of psychiatric patients took hold within the artistic community in the early twentieth century, despite the popularity of so-called asylum art that originated in the institutions themselves much earlier. Beveridge cited “disaffection with western culture” as the root of this interest, and suggested that it was the impetus for seeking “new modes of expression” (p. 598). Among artists seeking such new modes, Beveridge included the Expressionist painter, Paul Klee, whom she asserted was particularly drawn to the work of Prinzhorn.

Beveridge (2001) also asserted that the work of Surrealist, Max Ernst, was influenced by the art of the insane, and posited that he is the likely source of introducing Prinzhorn’s work into Surrealist circles. The Surrealists were also greatly influenced by Sigmund Freud for his exploration of the unconscious and dreams. According to Beveridge, the Surrealists sought access to the “dark and disturbing territory” represented by madness (p. 598). The author cited, as evidence, the first *Surrealist Manifesto*, authored by André Breton, the movement’s leading theorist. Breton wrote: “The confidences of madmen: I would spend my life in provoking them. They are people of a scrupulous honesty, and whose innocence is equaled only by mine. Columbus had to sail with madmen to discover America” (Beveridge, p. 598). This, according to the author, anchors the Surrealists alongside the Romantics, wherein madness is freedom and a journey to the unconscious not to be avoided.

One case in point where art and madness are concerned is illustrated, according to Rhodes (2000) in the work of Andrew Kennedy (1825 – 1899). Kennedy was a patient at the Glasgow and Crichton Royal Asylums in Edinburgh, Scotland. Mr. Kennedy, according to Rhodes, “suffered religious and sexual delusions” (p. 48). He became a patient of the asylums around age 52, and was already 57 years old when he began drawing. Case notes that survived indicate that Mr. Kennedy was prolific, producing not only drawings, but three or four volumes of philosophy as well. Staff notes, according to Rhodes, described Mr. Kennedy’s work as “rambling nonsense, illustrated by designs of his own,” (p. 48). (See Figure 8.) This attitude was a prevailing one at the time, served to perpetuate stereotypes of persons with mental disorders, and was, in my view, the likely reason why Mr. Kennedy’s doctors saved nothing of his work.

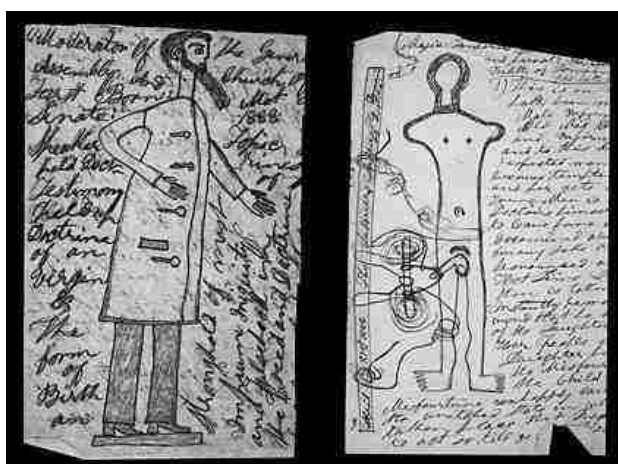


Figure 8. Andrew Kennedy. Pages from a volume of his illustrated work completed in the asylum. (n.d.)

Thirty-four pictures did manage to survive thanks to another psychiatrist, Thomas Clouston. According to Rhodes, Clouston used Kennedy’s drawings for lectures he gave, to illustrate what different forms of insanity looked like. Records kept by Clouston do not indicate any perception of potential value of Mr. Kennedy’s work. Sadly, as noted by Rhodes, the art and prose of many other psychiatric patients was lost forever due to its

being characterized as without merit, and, therefore, valueless. Almost none preceding the twentieth century survived. According to Rhodes, “in the nineteenth century the only examples of patient art made visible belonged to individuals who had been professional artists or writers before becoming insane” (p. 51). Beveridge (2001) contended that the early dismissal and later acceptance of Andrew Kennedy and others go directly to “the changing perceptions of what is considered art” (p. 600).

Two artists of note, Jonathan Martin (1782 – 1838) and Richard Dadd (1817 – 1886) have been celebrated for the work they produced while incarcerated in a ward for the criminally insane at Bethlam Royal Hospital in London. Rhodes (2000) suggested



Figure 9. Jonathan Martin. *London's Overthrow*. (ca. 1830)

Martin's *London's Overthrow* (Figure 9), produced during his time in Bedlam (an archaic term for an insane asylum), was “informed by the artist's psychological condition,” (p. 51). He asserted the same with regard to the work of Dadd. Martin was

sentenced for setting fire to York Minster—perhaps the reason that “the official York Minster website now calls him a madman, not an artist,” according to the Other Projects link at roddickinson.net. While the detail is difficult to see in the illustration (all were similar), I thought it worth viewing for its intricate detail of the city in flames, and would personally find obvious what Rhodes meant by this particular piece being informed by Martin’s psychological condition (seeing as how he set the fire that landed him in the asylum—art imitating life?). As to Richard Dadd, he enjoyed success as a painter before killing his father and then attacking a second person while attempting to flee. Subsequently, he was tried for murder and sentenced to Bethlem as a “criminal lunatic,” according to Byatt (2011). While Rhodes’ (2000) assessment of Dadd’s *The Fairy Feller’s Master-Stroke* (Figure 10) as being psychologically informed may be accurate, the epic poem Dadd wrote *about* the painting goes more specifically to his psychological



Figure 10. Richard Dadd. Detail of *The Fairy Feller's Master-Stroke*. (1855-64)

State, in my opinion. Byatt (2011) asserted that Dadd wrote the poem because he was not satisfied with the painting, though the head of the hospital for whom it was commissioned was, according to Rhodes, very pleased with its intricate detail. The poem, entitled

Elimination of a Picture & Its Subject—called *The Fellers' Master Stroke* assigns a name to each of the characters in the painting and gives each a purpose as well, many of which are relative to old English folklore and Shakespeare, according to the author. Also, while I am no expert, taking nine years to complete a painting is likely also something that informs the psychological condition of Dadd. Regardless, neither Martin, nor Dadd held true to Jean Dubuffet's cultural separateness (discussed below) because the work of both artists, according to Rhodes (2000) and Byatt (2011) reflected the training received by the artists before their incarceration. The same, Rhodes asserted, held true for Louis Wain, whose cats took on an arabesque appearance—intricate geometric and floral designs (see Figure 11, untitled)—following his 1924 diagnosis of schizophrenia. This style was distinctly different, according to Rhodes, from the life-like (albeit *anthropomorphized*) cats that marked his work prior to the diagnosis (see figure 2, p. 15).



Figure 11. Louis Wain's (untitled) arabesque cats inform his psychological condition following his diagnosis of schizophrenia

The cats in Figure 11 sometimes referenced as the “kaleidoscope cats,” informed the artist's psychological condition, according to Rhodes.

Beveridge (2001), however, contended that Wain's later work did not inform his psychological condition. The author cited the work of Dale, whose 1991 book devoted to

Wain, contended that Wain served as an example of “how clinicians misinterpreted Wain’s experiments with design as evidence of psychotic disintegration” (p. 600). I tend to agree with Dale (as cited in Beveridge) and use as support for my opinion, the example of *The Bachelor Party* (Figure 4), which was completed in 1939, the last year of Wain’s life, and fully 15 years after his diagnosis. The painting is much more comparable to his pre-diagnosis work, than it is to the “kaleidoscope cats,” used for evidence of his psychosis. But we can never know for certain since we cannot ask Wain himself.

Rhodes (2000) asserted that at the same time the interest in the art of persons with mental illness, primitive art, and child art was occurring in America during the early twentieth century—concurrently with the Surrealist movement—Europeans were “discovering” tribal art (p. 53). Therefore, the art of persons institutionalized became more visible during this period, according to the author. There were more than a few public exhibitions with a focus on so-called “psychotic art.” Among these, the Bethlem Royal Hospital of London (where both Jonathan Martin and Richard Dadd were housed), had public exhibitions of Psychotic Art in 1900 and again in 1913. As well, Rhodes cited similar exhibitions in Berlin (1913), and Moscow (1914). As early as 1905, the first (of many) so-named “mad museums” was opened at the hospital at Villejuif, France by Dr. Auguste Marie. (Rhodes added that Marie’s collection was ultimately donated by his widow to Dubuffet’s Collection de l’Art Brut in 1966.) Marie’s events were among the most well-publicized, according to Rhodes.

In addition to public exhibitions, the art of psychiatric patients was also being published in books during the early twentieth century. There was great interest in the art of institutionalized patients both within the artist community and among the public at

large. Rhodes (2000) discussed, for example, the publication of the first such book, entitled *L'Art chez les fous (Art by the Mad)*, which was published as early as 1907, and included many illustrations of art that had at one time been part of Marie's collection. The author of that book was a physician and psychiatrist, Dr. Paul Meunier (1873 – 1957), who used the pseudonym Marcel Réja.

In his book, Rhodes (2000) contended, Dr. Meunier did not veer from the prevailing “medico-scientific views” of the time, evaluating the art as characteristically primitive. The difference, however, between the view held by the doctor and that of many others (including Jean Dubuffet of Art Brut fame) whose interest in psychiatric art leaned toward the aesthetic, was in the pathology itself. Dr. Meunier saw the art of persons with mental illness as “an elementary form through which one might approach an understanding of artistic creativity in general” (p. 53). Where he *did* agree with aestheticians was in his assessment that the mentally ill were, unlike children, adults who were “possessed with a contemporary and adult mentality, and driven by emotional necessity...” their “intellect conforming with their pathological state, they write and draw most of the time, without any technical training,” said Dr. Meunier (Rhodes, p. 53). The doctor noted further that the artistic product of persons with mental illness may appear simple, but the process was indicative of something so unique, as to go directly to the origins of art making itself.

Interestingly, according to Rhodes (2000) and others, it is believed that many modern artists of the time who identified as so-called primitives—including Matisse, Picasso, Kandinsky, and the writer, Guillaume Apollinaire (1880 – 1918)—were in some contact with Meunier, or at the very least were aware of his theories where psychiatric art

were concerned by virtue of his book (published under the pseudonym Réja). Because of this, an interesting question might be whether it was the modern painters who influenced Réja's theoretical framework about the art of persons with mental illness, or whether instead, it was the patients themselves who influenced the work of these modern artists.

Doctor Meunier, according to Rhodes (2000) was very careful about keeping a professional distance between the art of his patients and the artists involved in the modern art movement, but by 1913, the year of the London exhibition showing the work of the Bethlam hospital patients, there were regularly-made comparisons between the two groups. According to Rhodes, those who were not fans of modern art, and whom were generally considered conservative in the world of art criticism, pounced on the idea that the so-called avant-garde might actually be mimicking the work of madmen. The front page in a leading newspaper at the time of the exhibit showed six illustrations of pieces created by hospital patients to be included in the show with the following headline: "Strange pictures drawn by inmates of an asylum for the insane: are they more artistic than cubists' work?" (Rhodes, p. 56). *The Times*, however, took a less critical position in their review of the show, noting that while many of the pieces in the exhibit appealed because of the connection between the artists and madness, it did not necessarily mean that all artists are mad (Rhodes, p. 56), a point that is still discussed today with regularity among scholars, educators, critics, and the medical profession.

For me, it is not difficult to imagine that work produced in the context of an institution might have an influence outside that institution, especially when one considers that most patients had some lived experience in the outside culture. The case of Louis Soutter (1871 – 1942) comes to mind here (and he is discussed again later in terms of

Dubuffet's Art Brut). Soutter was an artist before experiencing the breakdown that would lead to his hospitalization. According to Rhodes (2000), "his work was entirely transformed by mental illness" (p. 51). Also, von Uthmann (2012) contended that there is much debate about whether or not Soutter was mentally ill, or merely eccentric. Regardless, Soutter had a life well-lived, studying first violin, and later fine arts in the best schools in Switzerland. For a time, he was married and teaching in the United States, but he divorced and returned to Switzerland where he played in symphonies until, according to von Uthmann, something went terribly wrong. He was forced to quit his job, and went into such deep debt that his violin was confiscated to cover some of what he owed. He returned to drawing, but because he was broke, he worked with discarded papers, and used wrapping paper, tossed envelopes, the books he was reading, and other materials as his canvases (again... I think of Friedl Dicker Brandeis and her students). He even stole ink, according to von Uthmann, from the local post office.

Soutter's work following his breakdown in 1923 is informed by his loneliness and sense of isolation, noted von Uthmann, the drawings abounding with "... masks and grotesque faces, mostly of women" (von Uthmann, para. 8). Prior to that time, his work was considered conventional, while the work post-breakdown, took on similarities to German Expressionism. One example of Soutter's work, post-diagnosis, is the painting *Trois têtes Tropiques* (Figure 12), 1936. In this image, I see pain and anxiety, personally. It is worth noting that were it not for the fame of his cousin, Le Corbusier (a pseudonym), Soutter's work would have likely been thrown away like the art and writings of so many other artist-patients. Le Corbusier was not only instrumental in salvaging his cousin's



Figure 12. Louis Soutter. *Trois têtes tropiques*. (1936)

work, but in arranging an exhibition of it in 1936 (von Uthmann). The relationship with his cousin came to an end, however, when age and arthritis took a toll on Soutter; he began painting with his fingers, images that were perhaps too primitive for Le Corbusier. Ironically, it is these finger-painted primitive images, painted in his last years, (see *Games*, Figure 13) with which many identify Soutter.

Already 52 years old when he was institutionalized, Louis Soutter would spend his remaining two decades institutionalized.

In another sad ironical paradox to the wanton destruction of the work of so many psychiatric patients, art created by patients within some European institutions in the late 1930s and early 1940s sometimes survived, while their creators did not. One such example is in the artist, Josef Heinrich Grebing, whose specialty—prior to suffering the breakdown that would lead to his hospitalization—was calendars, and especially ornate

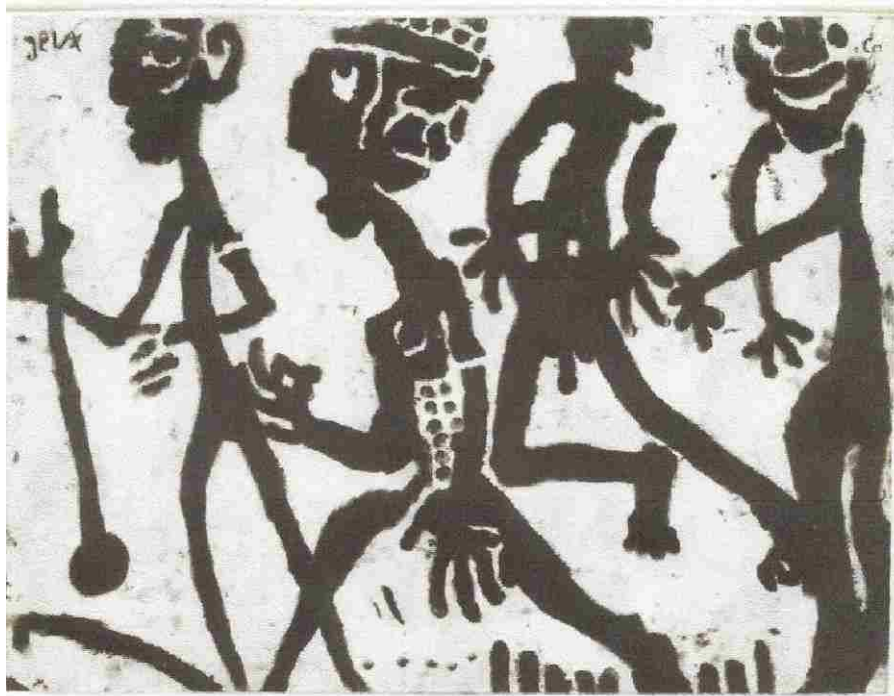


Figure 13. Louis Soutter. *Games*. (1937-42).

and beautifully detailed hundred-year calendars. One of Grebing's calendars, *Calendar of my 20th Century – Chronology for Catholic Youths and Maidens (Hundred-year Calendar)* reveals a hidden photo beneath his artwork. In Rhodes (p. 49) the calendar contains the face of Kaiser Wilhelm II at lower right, beside the calendar dates. The same calendar (Figure 14), found in a Google image search, using the name Josef Heinrich Grebing, shows a portrait of (I believe) Tsar Nicholas II beneath that of Kaiser Wilhelm. Kaiser Wilhelm, grandson of Queen Victoria, was the last ruling Emperor of Russia. His poor military leadership forced his abdication of the throne in 1918. Ultimately, he was blamed by many for Germany being forced into World War I—which, of course was an indirect cause for the rise of Hitler and Germany's role in World War II. I make this note because it is fortuitous that Grebing would include the Kaiser in his calendar, since the events of history ultimately led to the artist's own untimely death at Hitler's behest.

Hitler's eugenics movement began with the elimination of persons with mental illness.

(Again, art imitates life... tragically.) Like many of his fellow German citizens who were

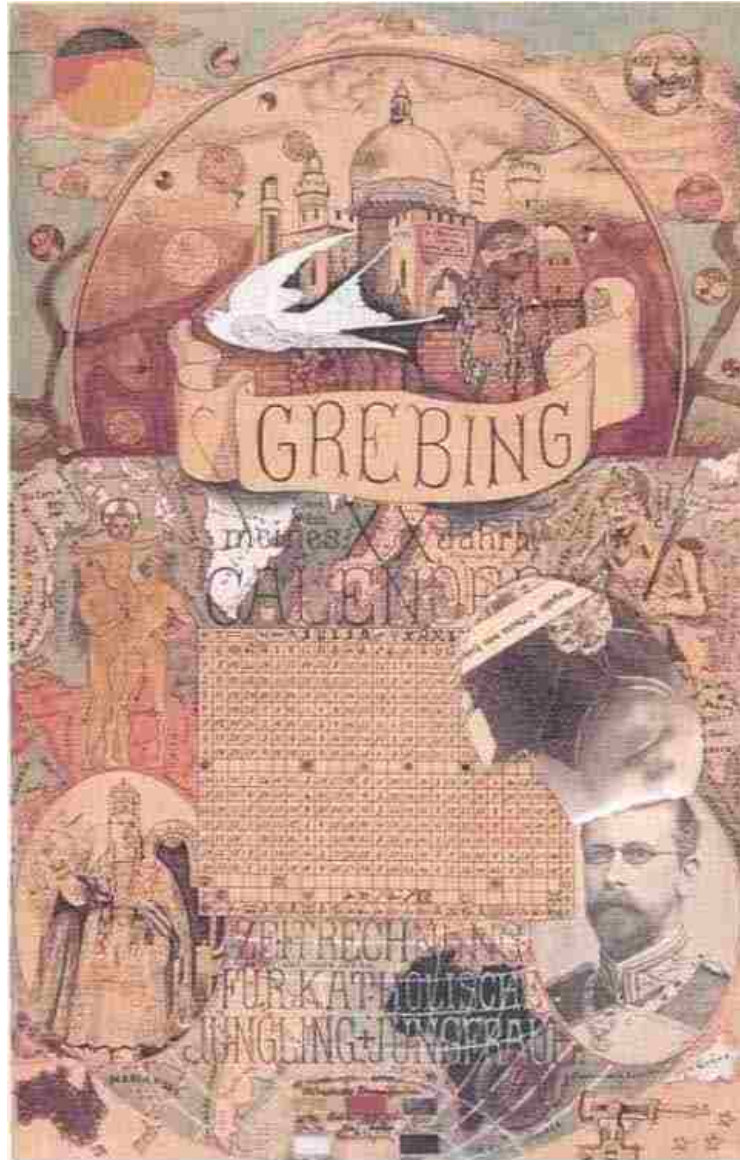


Figure 14. Grebing's *Calendar of my 20th Century – Chronology for Catholic Youths and Maidens (Hundred-Year Calendar)*, a version of which is seen in Rhodes (2000)

long-term psychiatric patients, Grebing died at the hands of the Nazis in 1940. Again, I am reminded of the great potential for the world that existed not only through Mr.

Grebing and his contemporaries, but in Friedl Dicker Brandeis and her Terezín students who suffered the same fate as Mr. Grebing.

Were some of the child artists of Terezín alive today, they would not meet the Art Brut or Outsider criterion of self-teaching, just as Mr. Grebing did not. However, in my opinion, their art, created as it was under the extreme circumstances present in the psychiatric institutions of the time, and certainly within Nazi concentration camps, merits a discussion about the view of the artist outsider. For no one, perhaps ever in the history of the world, was as marginalized, as those whom Hitler deemed less than human, regardless of art training surrounding the art of persons with mental illness was becoming better known worldwide following the first World War. However, while much of the previous interest had a therapeutic basis, there was a new appreciation for its aesthetics as the world moved beyond World War I, and years just prior to the Great Depression.

Aesthetics and the self-taught artist. Events unfolding in Europe in the years following World War I, and into the 1930s led to a growth in the movement toward acceptance and celebration of the vision of the untrained artist. In particular, during the Great Depression of the 1930s, there was an upsurge in interest of the self-taught artist, with discussions taking place across a wide variety of venues and discourses, according to Russell (2011). It was during this time that the modern art movement was gaining in popularity both in Europe and the United States.

American folk art. The modern art movement had been for decades positioning American folk art alongside the art of mainstream European art, according to Russell (2011). In the midst of the Great Depression, folk art's creators held appeal for a public being ravaged by economic hardship and loss because of their status as untrained, generally rural, "ordinary folk." By extension, according to Russell, "self-taught artists such as Morris Hirshfield, John Kane, Joseph Pickett, Horace Pippin, and Anna Mary

Robertson ‘Grandma’ Moses, among others” designated as “‘naïve’ artists and ‘modern primitives’” (p. 14), took their places among the newly-growing folk art movement. While folk artists are not generally considered alongside other artists for whom disability was prevalent, they were certainly, especially in the early years of the movement, marginalized and stigmatized as being illiterates. According to Muri (1999), folk art is now a frequent “catchall term,” for art that is representative of any created by untrained artists who are referenced as “naïve, primitive, and ‘Sunday’ painters,” (p. 36) and inclusive of eccentrics of all manner, hobbyists, those in recovery, senior citizens new to the experience of art-making, and incarcerated individuals—early nuances of the Outsider artist label which would not appear until the early 1970s.

It did not hurt the cause of art as envisioned by the common man, when in 1939 the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) organized the exhibition, *Unknown American Painters*. This was followed by the publication in 1942 of *They Taught Themselves: American Primitive Painters of the Twentieth Century*. Both the exhibition and the book shone a light on self-taught artists (regardless of the name ascribed to them) and celebrated the “refreshingly innocent” qualities of the art. The art was appreciated by many Americans, in part, because it was considered accessible to everyone.

MoMA’s Sidney Janis, and its first director, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., both believed in naturalistic art and thought the work to be “worthy of attention and appreciation” (Russell, p. 15), and so it came to pass that it received both, but not readily at first, as Barr’s “belief in the aesthetic value of self-taught art... was not widely shared” in formal art’s inner circles (Russell, p. 17). This initial rejection of self-taught artists by those inhabiting the mainstream art world, according to Russell, “signaled the growing

hegemony of a formalist innovation as the marker of modernity, and subsequently post-modernity” (p. 17). Meanwhile, in the world beyond, there began the emergence of still another view of the self-taught, artist outsider as one who stood intentionally against the mainstream. Before it became known by the term most readily recognized today as Outsider Art, the term *Art Brut* was coined.

Dubuffet’s Art Brut. According to Tansella (2007), Jean Dubuffet (1901 – 1985) should be credited with the first “comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon” of Outsider Art (p. 134). Like Morgenthaler and Prinzhorn, Dubuffet was also drawn to the art of psychiatric patients. However, his interest was in the aesthetics, rather than the therapeutic. In giving it a name, according to Tansella, Dubuffet ensured Art Brut a rightful place in the history of art.

As discussed earlier, a search for artistic expression that was unsullied by training and “high-art precedents” (Rhodes, 2000, p. 26), was an important consideration for modern artists whose interests went the way of the primitive. At first, the art of children became central to this desire for primitive directness. (e.g., Kandinsky’s *Blue Rider Almanac*, which celebrated the creativity of children and emphasized the purity of their art as important owing to the art’s “position outside culture,” p. 27). Three decades later, Dubuffet—himself a painter—coined the term *Art Brut* as representative of the work of untrained adult artists who were (not unlike children) positioned outside of culture. The term itself is French in origin, and *brut* is, according to Rhodes, not easily translated to one literal English meaning. Larousse’s French-English dictionary (1976), defines the word *brut* as an adjective meaning “raw, unworked; in the rough” (p. 60), in the most connotatively broad sense that may be applicable to art. At its heart, according to Rhodes,

Art Brut “is set in opposition to ‘culture’” (p. 24). Therefore, the word *brut*, as it is used here is about art that is most untouched by outside culture. By one translation—there are slight differences in word choice, among three variations of the attributed quote that follows—Dubuffet said of Art Brut artists:

These artists derive all, subjects, the choice of materials, symbologies, rhythms, style etc., from the personal interiority and not from the conventions of the traditional and fashionable art. We find ourselves head to head with a pure, completely crude artistic operation... This is an art that manifests an incomparable creative power, different from the cultural art in its chameleonic and grotesque aspects. (Tansella, 2007, p. 134)

Rhodes (2000) suggested that despite ready comparison between child art and the art of adult outsiders, there was a marked difference in the work of the adult artists composing in Dubuffet’s Art Brut tradition. This difference centered upon what Dubuffet perceived as the ability of the adult to go further in his artistic expression due to a broader knowledge of life, what he referenced as “the base facts of existence” (Rhodes, 2000, p. 41). This, in my thinking, is reminiscent of Jean Jacques Rousseau’s eighteenth century admonition to the enlightened aristocracy and the general public alike, that children are not “imperfect adults,” but entities unto themselves with great potential. Of adult outsiders, Dubuffet cautioned that while displaying “idiosyncratic technical achievement... this is not to be confused with ineptitude” (Rhodes, p. 37).

Dubuffet was rigid and uncompromising in his belief that the artists representative of Art Brut remain untouched by the reality of the larger world and culture. Dubuffet did not believe that Art Brut had to be confined to that originating in mental institutions, but

at a very minimum, in those places that remained “untouched by (mainstream) culture, as mental institutions were supposed to be” (Tansella, 2007, p. 134). It is suggested in Muri (1999), that one reason Dubuffet applied the name Art Brut to the work of these individuals was as an attempt to protect it from the stigma that was generally present with psychiatric labels (“art of the insane,” and “asylum art,” to name just two). Dubuffet himself spoke to the requirement of cultural isolation, and affirmed that the term Art Brut should be applied only to “works produced by persons unscathed by artistic culture, where mimicry plays little or no part (contrary to the activities of intellectuals)” (Russell, 2011, p. 18).

Rhodes (2000) further asserted that Dubuffet shared some of his beliefs about artists with the German philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche, who saw all artists as inherently asocial, and believed that creativity sprung from this opposition to society. Dubuffet did not, however, agree with psychiatrists about the pathological nature of art created within institutions. Said he, “The notion of psychotic art is absolutely false! Psychiatrists emphasize it because they wish to believe they are in a position to differentiate, to tell who is sane and who isn’t” (Rhodes, p. 46). Those who favor the aesthetic appeal of the self-taught artist over its therapeutic value would likely agree with Dubuffet’s pronouncement.

Over the course of four decades, Dubuffet worked tirelessly to amass his Art Brut collection. The collection was centered around the art of psychiatric patients, mediumistic artists (who believed they had a special relationship and could communicate through a spiritual realm), and self-taught obsessives all of whom had been institutionalized. This latter element to Art Brut, likely came about because of the way that Dubuffet’s

collection originated, which was, in fact, by chance. On a three-week trip to Switzerland in 1945, Dubuffet had originally intended to collect information for a planned publication on “the art of the insane” which was to be published in France (Rhodes, p. 43). He hoped to return with some photographs of the original work as well. However, when he realized that the art was being destroyed, he became convinced that he must start a collection of original art so that it would be preserved.

I am again reminded of Friedl Dicker Brandeis, artist and teacher of art to the children of Terezín Concentration Camp whose “presence of mind as she was summoned for transport to Auschwitz” (John-Steiner, in Wix, 2010, p. xi) ultimately led to over 5,000 of the children’s artworks being saved in suitcases and hidden away. Friedl’s act paved the way for art therapy as it is practiced today, as well as contributing to our understandings about art making as a tool of resiliency, and the concept of aesthetic empathy (Wix). Somehow, Friedl understood the value of the children’s art, in much the same way, perhaps, as Dubuffet understood the value of the patient art he salvaged.

Some artists whose work would later become well-known within the world of Outsider Art, were those whose work was “discovered” in Dubuffet’s trips to Switzerland, including Martín Ramirez (1895 – 1963)—discussed later in the section entitled, “Names of Repute Within the World of Outsider Art”—an artist central to Dubuffet’s massive collection of over 5,000 pieces of art, which he accumulated over decades. Initially, according to Rhodes, the art produced by Ramirez and other institutionalized souls was not viewed as valuable, and was literally thrown away by staff at the institutions where it was created, an assertion validated in Dubuffet’s findings on his 1945 trip to Switzerland.

Dubuffet's collection and the increasing rigidity of the Art Brut label ran into some trouble when some of the artists in his own collection had interactions with the larger culture, marking them as *insiders* by Dubuffet's own strict criteria. Two such examples include Gaston Chaissac, an outsider artist who became professional, and Louis Soutter, an artist discussed earlier in the subsection, "The 'Art of the Insane,'" who had already lived as a professional artist before he was institutionalized, though his work, according to Rhodes (2000), "was entirely transformed by mental illness" (p. 47). Dubuffet's answer to this problem was to create a new category for such artists who traversed the line between outside and inside. He called their work *Neuve Invention* (Fresh Invention).

The new name was, at least in part, necessitated by the first exposure of so-called "Brut artists" to the world in 1972. At that time, the architect and Art Brut collector, Alain Bourbonnais, made the decision to include in his collection (amassed under the supervision of Dubuffet) the work of self-taught artists who had never been institutionalized. Bourbonnais referred to his collection as *hors the normes*, "beyond the norm," and the pieces were, according to Maizels, and cited in Tansella (2007), "mainly representative of French rural Expressionism, and almost none was the creation of an artist affected by mental disease" (p. 134). Dubuffet, therefore, saw an increasingly broad definition of Art Brut being applied.

Russell (2011) asserted that Dubuffet, despite attaching Romantic ideals to the untrained artist as a "uniquely sensitive and passionate visionary" doing battle with "a false culture" (p. 18) was, at least correct in his assessment of the strong art being produced by such artists, and the depth of engagement representative of an inner life as it

was depicted within the art itself. Beveridge (2001) also contended that Dubuffet's views were, "like those of the Surrealists," (p. 599) tied to the Romantic movement. Beveridge also posited a paradox within the writings of Dubuffet in which he credits the mentally ill with great inner vision, while at the same time denying the fact of their mental illness.

Beveridge (2001) contended that Dubuffet's influence can be seen much later in the work of others who expound on the art of the mentally ill, namely, Michel Thevoz. In a kind of reversal of the views of the mentally ill as compared to those of the larger society, Thevoz sees society itself as sick, and insanity as standing in opposition to that sickness by the refusal of those diagnosed insane, to adapt to it. Like Dubuffet, Thevoz questioned whether psychiatry helped or hindered the art of the mentally ill. However, unlike Dubuffet, Thevoz raised the issue of ethics, noting that it is better for a patient to be uninspired, but feeling better, as opposed to "tormented but creative" (Beveridge, p. 599).

Outsider art: the birth of a name. While Dubuffet clung to the rigid criteria for his Art Brut, a new term was brought to the world by virtue of the title of Roger Cardinal's book, *Outsider Art*, which was published in 1972, (Beveridge, 2001; Cardinal, 2009; Kidd, 2009; Muri, 1999; Rustin, 2008; Sinason, (2007); Tansella, 2007) the same year that Bourbonnais' first exposed Brut artists to the world. Cardinal was a British humanities professor who, according to Muri, became fascinated with the art of the outsider, which he viewed as transcendent, allowing its viewer a peek inside the instinctual world of its maker. In seeking to apply a critical definition to the Outsider artist, Cardinal wrote in 1972 that "...he or she should be possessed of an expressive impulse and should then externalize that impulse in an unmonitored way which defies

conventional art-historical contextualization” (as cited in Tansella, 2007, p. 133).

According to Tansella, Cardinal did not see his newly coined term as a departure from Dubuffet’s Art Brut, but rather, thought it “the most faithful translation” (p. 133) of what Dubuffet had intended when the term was first created. Others are not in agreement.

According to Maizels (2001), some of the problem where a clear definition of Outsider Art is concerned is based in the translation of the French *Art Brut* to the English. While there is general agreement that the term Art Brut defies concise definition, the parameters of it began to blur when it arrived in the United States, according to Tansella (2007). Jane Kallir, a New York writer and art dealer (cited in Tansella) suggested that “the kind of theoretical hair-splitting so dear to the Europeans – between naïve and brut, between true brut and Neuve Invention – never had much appeal in the United States. Without this theoretical rigor, the term ‘outsider’ became increasingly meaningless” (p. 134). “Outsider” may be meaningless if one’s purpose is to compel a specific theoretical framework to it in the context of Outsider Art, however, in my view, it is precisely *because* Outsider Art defies definition and is not connected with a specific style or ideology, that it *is* Outsider Art. I agree with Tansella, that we should be more interested in “the (marginalized) status of the persons who created it” (p. 133) than we are to the creation of an inflexible definition grounded in a theory that by necessity, would serve the purpose of exclusion—something with which the Outsider artist is already too familiar.

Whether one sees a lack of theoretical underpinnings in the concept of Outsider Art or not, there is general agreement, that a precise definition does not exist. Like Tansella (2007), however, I tend to believe that the categorization of Outsider Art, or

Outsider artists should not be the focus of art historians (as is still too often the case). Rather, Tansella suggested that the possibility for wide exposure and visibility now available to the Outsider Artist (owing to technological advancements which allow for an audience that includes virtually the entire world) should be a prominent consideration, because it may serve the purpose of demarginalization as artists come to recognize their own gifts through the eyes (and wallets) of the art-buying public.

While the identity of Dubuffet's Art Brut was clear (at least to him), the same could not be said for Outsider Art, according to Tansella (2007). Rhodes (2000) noted that at the heart of early definitions of Outsider Art, there exist "psychiatric patients, self-taught visionaries, and mediums" (p. 8)—common to both Outsider Art and Art Brut. Inherent in both is also the element of chance insofar as the discovery of the art itself is concerned (although I believe this to be true of *all* art, and not unique to Outsider Art). Perhaps most important to the identity of each, is the focus upon the self-taught artist, regardless of mental health status.

Dubuffet—and Morgenthaler and Prinzhorn before him—were pioneers in the world of Outsider Art as it is broadly understood today. They each recognized something of an opportunity being presented through the art. Despite their different objectives in its study, all three men recognized that the art itself was a revelation insofar as it allowed the viewer an opportunity to experience firsthand the inner lives of its creators. In essence, the art became voice to those who had previously gone unheard. Rhodes (2000) noted further that "the abiding power of Outsider Art lies precisely in its elusiveness, a characteristic dear to Surrealism" (p. 22), a popular cornerstone of twentieth century art and literature, discussed at some length above.

If 1972 may be hailed as the genesis of the term Outsider Art, then 1979 proved to be a watershed year for its artists. Tansella (2007) referenced as “the most important exhibition of Outsider Art” (p. 134) that which was organized by Roger Cardinal and Victor Musgrave and presented to the world at the Hayward Gallery in London on February 5, 1979. Musgrave himself—in the exhibit’s catalogue—referenced the work as “art without precedent” (Tansella, p. 134). This exhibit was attended by over 40,000 people.

Also in 1979, the Third Eye Centre, in Glasgow, Scotland, organized an exhibit of Outsider Art called *Another World*. According to Tansella, “all the artworks excluded from the Art Brut that had lived a clandestine life under the shadow of the official art now found visibility” (p. 134). The exposure of the self-taught artist outsider, from these two shows alone, was enough to secure Outsider Art as a category in its own right, though Tansella asserted that the definition of the term itself continued to broaden after the 1970s, until it eventually encompassed virtually any art that was “born far from the fine arts,” and according to the author, began losing Dubuffet’s “original meaning” once it appeared in the United States (p. 134).

Like child artists, Outsider Artists are, according to Rhodes (2000), often viewed as “ciphers” existing outside of culture. However, for the adult Outsider artist, there is no longer the promise of “cultural redemption” (p. 34), as there is for most children. Despite this lack of redemptive promise, many consider Outsider artists to be similar to child artists for their uninhibited expression, which allows for “a body of work that articulates a complex and self-contained world system” (Rhodes, 2000, p. 34). One difference, however, is that as children age into adults, the meaning of their artwork is lost to the

transitory nature of time, for the Outsider artist, there is often no such transition. For those passionate about the work, this intransitory depth of meaning, alongside the broad definition of what constitutes Outsider Art, is what fuels their interest in the work of the adult outsider.

Names of repute within the world of outsider art. As stated earlier in this paper, Dr. Morgenthaler's research consisted of a 13-year study of one man, Adolf Wölfli, who is today, one of the best known artists within the realm of Outsider Art (Rhodes, 2000; Russell, 2011). Others came to public awareness as well, however, many through the House of Artists of Gugging, near Vienna, founded by Dr. Leo Navratil in 1981, and which Tansella (2007) referred to as "the most well-known *atelier* for artist patients in the international panorama" (p. 135). Dr. Navratil envisioned it as a studio in which patients who were so inclined, could express themselves through art (Tansella, p. 135).

Here, however, it is worth noting that despite the House of Artists of Gugging being considered as an atelier for artists who have come to fall under the category of Outsider artists, for many who consider themselves Outsider Art purists, the death of true Outsider Art came at the hands of art therapy and pharmacological interventions (which were, of course, present in Dr. Navratil's atelier) because they were thought to interfere with the instinctual, unpremeditated drive of the artist (Rhodes, 2000; Russell; 2011; Tansella, 2007). Of course, Dubuffet would agree, as both art therapy and pharmaceuticals were seen as interference from the larger culture (Rhodes, 2000). Others, however, take a different view according to Tansella. She cited the example of Van Gogh, whose defining masterpieces, created in the last years of his life, were made *after*

his hospitalization for mental illness. Tansella further asserted the position of Goldberg et al. with regard to the more pragmatic point that patients in the throes of schizophrenia, in particular, are not at all interested in daily activities, let alone capable of making art. The authors noted further that in the case of psychosis, sufferers are often so incoherent as to render any art that they may produce incoherent as well (as cited in Tansella).

In my thinking, whether one sees therapeutic interventions of any sort as friend or foe to the world of the Outsider artist is merely a matter of opinion since there is no way in which to establish an absolute *truth* on the subject unless one asks the artist directly—which should be done, I believe, whenever possible, and is in Jenkins (2011) extensive work with Anthony Mannix, an Outsider artists whose own voice about the experience of schizophrenia encompasses over 80 artist books. Regardless, each artist would provide an individual response, rendering unachievable a generalizable understanding of the experience of schizophrenia. What I, as a viewer of art *know*, is only the truth as I see it, and for me, part of the greatness of art regardless of the maker, is in the freedom I enjoy to interpret it. Therefore, I will share some of the work of four artists, beginning with Adolf Wölfli, as well as some discussion about several other notable Outsider artists. I will include biographical information about the artists along with some of the insights of others as to the importance of the art, or the ways in which it serves to characterize disability as it is contextualized within the realm of Outsider Art. I have my own thoughts on it, and would hope that anyone reading this paper would also.

Adolf Wölfli (1864 – 1930). I choose to begin with Adolf Wölfli for two reasons. First, according to Russell (2011), he is perhaps the most prolific Outsider artist in the history of the name, having created over the course of his lifetime a 25,000-page fictional

autobiography (encompassing narrative, song lyrics, poetry and musical notation), and inclusive of some 3,200 plus drawings and collages (Russell, p. 23). Because it is what I do, I calculated this as representing the completion of more than a page per day, every day (if Wölfli began his work on the first day of his life and continued until the last). The second reason I am personally drawn to Wölfli is for the myriad ways he *shows* us what he knows and makes meaning of the world as he sees it. It is as if no one single genre could possibly be enough to say all that he needed to communicate. I see Wölfli as personifying all of literacy's multi-modal components (which I will elaborate upon more in the section of this paper that investigates the relationship between art making and literacy) often, in one work.

One example of Wölfli's omnigenre work exists in a piece that marks the beginning of the section on the artist in Russell (2011), entitled *Skt. Adolf-Diamantt-Ring*, 1913 (Figure 15). I see the drawing as an homage to color, line, geometry, music, math, geography, and most important to me, to the vision of the artist. According to Russell, among Wölfli's volumes, this drawing was located in the series, *Geographic and Algebraic Books*. I do not know what the "skt." references, and it is not explained by Russell, but the rest refers to Adolf's diamond ring, and, like many of his works, I am reminded of a labyrinth. Regardless, it is not for me to interpret this or any of the other works of Wölfli, but rather, to appreciate them for the wonder that I find them to be.

Despite the fact that Wölfli worked, according to Russell, "without assistance from straight- or curved-edge tools" (p. 23), the precision in this and other drawings, in my opinion, defies comprehension. Russell (2011) noted that Dr. Morgenthaler was particularly puzzled by Wölfli (perhaps the reason he spent thirteen years studying him),

who despite spending 35 years housed at the Waldau Mental Asylum, was possessed of so many of the formal constructs of art. I personally love this work for its defiance of the stereotypical view that characterizes the art of many persons with disability attributes as

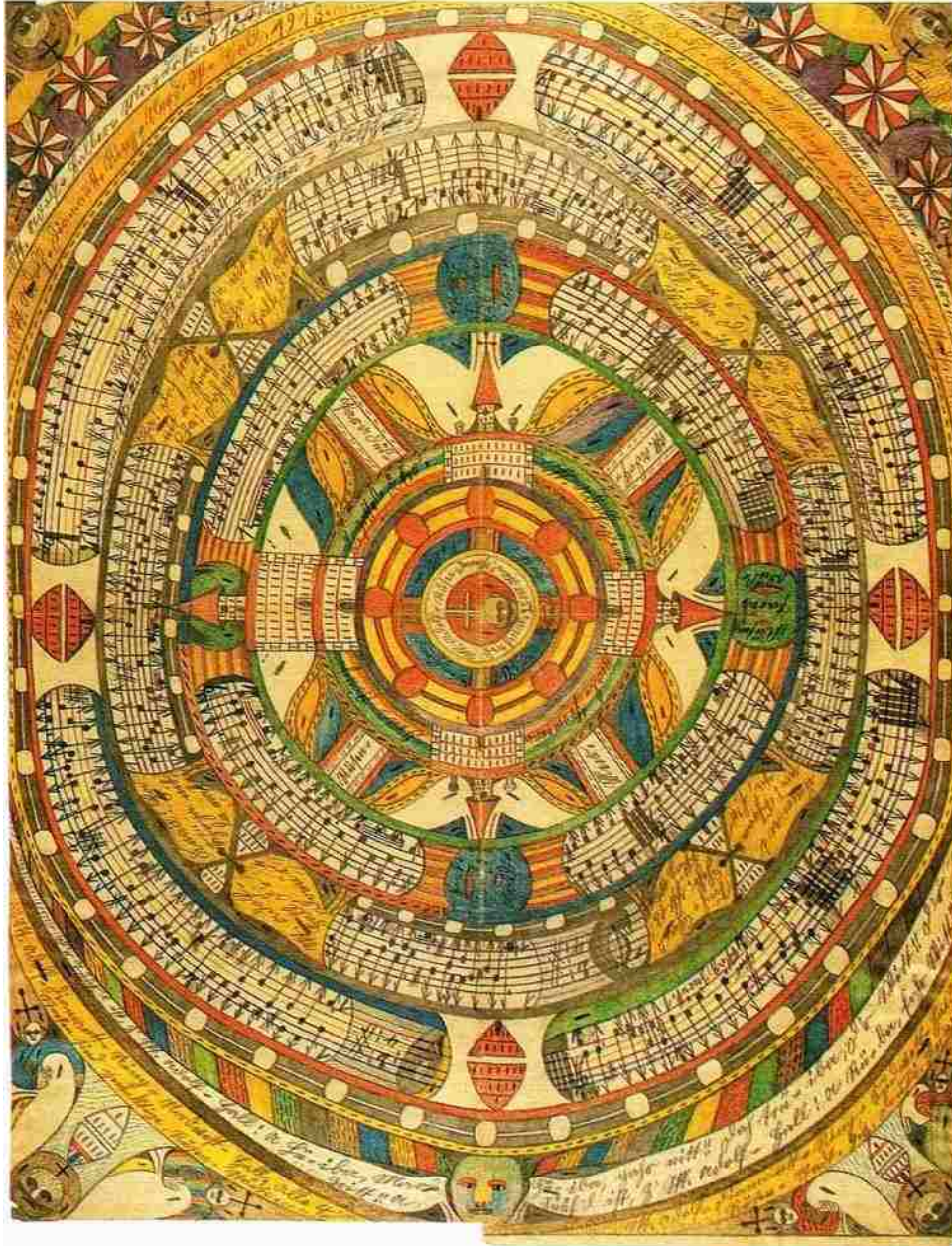


Figure 15. Adolf Wölfli's 1913 *Skt. Adolf-Diamant-Ring*. Pencil and Colored Pencil on Newsprint

to their capabilities. Clearly, technical achievement and aesthetic appeal are present in this and, in my opinion, all of Wölfli's work.

Additionally, I see in many of Wölfli's representations (not just the piece shown as Figure 15), the presence of both the rosegarden and the labyrinth, considered by Robertson (1982) as universal symbols to be found repeatedly in art and literature throughout history. Though I could not find these works available for reprinting online, in *Glas-Perl-Egg*, 1905, (Russell, 2011, p. 25), I see recurring themes represented by rows of plants in well-groomed gardens, and in *Felsenau Bern*, 1907, (Russell, p. 24), I find numerous small gardens tucked within a community complete with buildings, roads, and fences. Additionally, like many of Wölfli's drawings, the use of primary colors is prevalent and, in my opinion, invites the viewer in because the colors are "friendly." I like to think that Wölfli returned to these themes again and again because they gave him what he did not have in life—a home. According to Robertson, the labyrinth may symbolize "conditional entry" or, in the case of the closed labyrinth, as indicated in *Skt. Adolf-Diamantt-Ring* (Figure 15), "no way out—the hell of repetition..." (pp. 188-189). Robertson also suggested that the entirety of one's spiritual journey may be summed up within the labyrinth, something I saw again and again as I looked through page after page of Wölfli imagery both in Russell, and online.

As to the rosegarden, Robertson (1982) reminded her reader that it has a long history as a symbol of fulfillment, whether the rose garden is literal, or metaphorical. To my untrained eye, I saw many images of Wölfli's "rosegarden" surrounded by labyrinths, which according to Robertson, may symbolize one's desire to keep intruders out of that which is personally valued and, therefore, worth protecting. The author also noted that "a rosegarden often surrounds a castle or a keep where the loved one is held" (Robertson, p. 191). Wölfli, again and again, includes castles amid what I see as rosegarden-esque

surroundings. I certainly see this in *Skt. Adolf-Diamant-Ring* (Figure 15), with castle turrets pointing outward in each of the four directions from the center, and always (or nearly so) there is the face of a man, looking out from the painting—in this case from the center of the castle’s keep. Is he hoping someone might find and save him?

Finally, in *Saint-Mary-Castle-Giant-Grape*, (Figure 16) a 1915 Wölfli drawing, I am amazed to see all the elements of Robertson’s notes about rosegardens and labyrinths, castles and time, come together in one piece, the complexity of which compels me to look further and deeper into it, if for no other reason than the discovery that each new viewing brings. In both of the Wölfli drawings I chose to use as illustrations (it was difficult to choose). The element of music permeates, weaving its way in curved swaths throughout the piece. I love that the title of this drawing (Figure 16) seems to fit it so well; it is as if the artist himself recognized that it has so much within it, there could be no simple title. I wish I could read music, because I would play the notes that appear as Wölfli intended (at least, according to Russell, 2011). Maybe then, I might better understand.

Russell (2011) contended that Wölfli considered his works (comprising the 25,000 pages referenced earlier, and including over 1,620 drawings and 1,640 collages) as a coherent whole. He hand stitched the volumes together and assigned each piece to one of five volumes that were each completed in a specific time frame. They include: *From the Cradle to the Grave* (1908 – 16); *Geographic and Algebraic Books* (1912 – 16); *Books with Songs and Dances* (1917 – 22); *Album Books with Dances and Marches* (1924 – 28); and the unfinished *Funeral March* (1928 – 30), the latter being unfinished due to the artist’s death in 1930 (title of this series, a premonition?). As Wölfli’s

psychosis progressed, according to Russell, he renamed himself “St. Adolf II,” (p. 31). St. Adolf was a very large and imposing figure, and he was able to transform everything according to his desires and owing to his great wealth.



Figure 16. Adolf Wölfli's 1915 *Saint-Mary-Castle-Giant-Grape*, Pencil and Color Pencil on Newsprint.

Russell (2011) posited that Wölfli's mental state is nearly always exhibited within his works, especially his early ones, in which he described great personal trauma and collapse in the narrative portions. Near the end, the artist created very little, instead preferring to glue pictures from magazines into pages which were accompanied by Wölfli's narratives. Russell asserted that this change was indicative of the artist having reached “a state of ecstatic glorification,” something I cannot speak to, and believe only the artist could, were he still with us.

Madge Gill (1882 – 1961). As is the case with all artists and writers, becoming known for a specific *kind* of art or *style* of writing is often part of the process, and Outsider artists are no exception. The artist, Madge Gill, a mediumistic artist, according to Russell (2011), is best known for her often abstract ink drawings of female faces—frequently, many faces densely packed into each piece. Russell and others asserted that Gill’s work is evidence of her intense connection with the spirit world. The author also stated that Gill lived in “opposing worlds,” wherein the bulk of her creative endeavors took place at night and in private, while in public, she carried herself “as a figure of special and mysterious powers” (p. 55), and in a way that called attention. Gill is best known for her “captivating but disorienting” work, according to Russell (p. 55). Each abstract piece, many very large, contains numerous female figures “floating” in front of chaotic backgrounds. Almost always, the faces of these women have small, ill-defined features, and peer out of the drawings from varying angles. One such example is seen in the untitled ink drawing (Figure 17), which typifies the style for which Madge Gill was best known. Nearly all of Madge Gill’s work was untitled, and much undated.

Russell (2011) noted that Gill’s work is especially interesting for its geometry, which also happens to be why I chose her as an artist to feature in this paper. Much of her work actually reminds me of the black and white checkerboard-patterned tiles that were popular once, and which I dreamed of having in my future kitchen when I was a little girl. Russell further asserted that “the geometric shapes and planes seem to suggest steps, floors, or arcades through which one could move, we find ourselves reading the complex ground as architectural elements that might define a graspable figural space” (p. 57).



Figure 17. Madge Gill. *Untitled*. (n.d.)
Abstract Ink on Newsprint

Such is the case with most of Madge Gill's work that I was able to locate. Most were done in black India ink, but there is some use of colored ink as well. Some of the largest ones—an untitled scrolled linen piece measures over 66 x 308 inches, for example—were created in near darkness, according to the accounts of her son, Laurie—whose devotion to his mother's work and her mediumistic abilities lasted throughout his lifetime. One of Madge Gill's sons created the specially-designed easel which accommodated many of Gill's larger pieces and allowed for much of the work to be folded over it, according to Russell (2011). Because of this, Gill did not see her largest compositions in their entirety until after they were completed and hung. Russell (2011) maintained that Gill's work, while coherent, considering her strategic use of lines and patterns, "harbors a deeply unsettled and disorienting tension" (p. 59). And, as with Wölfli's work, I noted evidence of the labyrinth frequently in the background of Gill's drawings. Of this symbolic representation, Russell further suggested that the "unstable labyrinthine ground" (p. 59),

ensures that the viewer will be uncertain with regard to perspective. For me, I am comfortable believing that Gill was deliberately using the labyrinth to protect her “rosegarden,” which, according to Robertson (1982), is representative of that which is most fulfilling in one’s life. Additionally, wanting a way to keep others out fits with her hermit-like behaviors. Per Russell, in Gill’s “obsessively defined space,” there may be observed the “sense of focus, intensity, and lack of guile that are implicit in the private dramas of Outsider artists” (p. 59). The author lends credence, however, to Madge Gill’s explicit interactions with the outside world as well. Regardless, her behaviors ensured that those around her would recognize her mysterious and other-worldly powers that enabled her to connect with the spirit world.

Russell (2011) averred that Gill was introduced to spiritualism by an aunt with whom she lived as a child. Later, after losing an eight-year old son in a flu pandemic, and giving birth to a stillborn daughter—nearly dying, herself in the process—Gill began drawing in earnest, according to Russell (2011). This goes to art as a means toward resiliency, in my opinion. Of this period, she said she felt like she “was definitely guided by an unseen force” (Russell, p. 60). Her son, Laurie, recalled March 3, 1920, as the specific date his mother first experienced a trance and became the medium, “or *Myrminerest*,” the name which would appear on Gill’s cards from that point forward. Throughout the decade of the 1920s, Gill withdrew more and more into her “trancelike state of creativity” (Russell, p. 60). Upon her death, hundreds of Gill’s drawings were found, some as small as postcards, and others quite large, indicating a life filled with art making.

Russell (2011) asserted that Gill's work is representative of a life lived in another dimension as well as serving to express her "enraptured psychic state" as represented by "constantly shifting planes, and fragmented, disorienting compositions" (p. 60). I cannot personally speak to these components, but I do see walls, and pain, and what feels to me like an effort to keep the rest of us at arm's length while still inviting us in (the stairs being a way to move about). In my personal experience, this is implicit in depression—a desire for connection, but an inability to achieve it in the social ways that others seem to find so easy.

Martín Ramirez (1895 – 1963). As discussed earlier, Martín Ramirez's work was central to Jean Dubuffet's original *Art Brut* collection, as it was initially composed of the work of institutionalized psychiatric patients (Rhodes, 2000). According to Russell (2011), Ramirez's work was highly stylized, and composed of a combination of figures and architectural spaces that held "personal iconic value" for the artist (p. 117). Russell further asserted that the world created by Ramirez was precise in its order and structure, something also common in the work of artist outsiders. Further, Ramirez's work is seen as "psychologically intense," and "expressed through an aesthetic that greatly prizes order and balance," according to Russell (p. 117).

Russell (2011) noted the cowboy (or *charro*) figure as being particularly important in the work of Ramirez, with over 80 known works of the artist containing the iconic figure, thought to represent tradition in the Jalisco region of Mexico where Ramirez was born (p. 117). Because the charro is often carrying a bandolier of bullets and a weapon, Russell asserted that the figure is suggestive of the turbulence in early twentieth century Mexico, and perhaps, represents Ramirez's need for protection and

self-preservation. I located several of these images both in Russell, and online, and was struck by the variation in the cowboy's appearance, ranging from humble to ornate. This, in my mind, may go to Ramirez's fluctuating psychological condition, feeling at times like the servant, and at others, more in control of his life. Ramirez's work is also replete with religious icons, another element common among artist outsiders (Rhodes, 2000; Russell, 2011; Tansella, 2007). Both cowboy, and Madonna are often framed in a stage-like setting. However, many know Ramirez for his later work, completed while in the DeWitt State Hospital in Auburn, California, where he lived for the last 15 years of his life. His art, during this time, became increasingly more geometric, according to Russell (2011) and often included elements of tunnels, trains, and other modes of transportation, as in the untitled work dating from around 1954, which depicts automobiles moving into a tunnel (Figure 18). The layered arch patterns surrounding the tunnel are also common images in many of the artist's drawings. I am clearly untrained in the language of art, but Ramirez's arch components remind me of the layered, symmetrical patterns of feathers on a bird (a desire to fly away?). Anderson (*n.d.*), noted that while institutionalized at DeWitt, Ramirez was forced to hide his drawings under his mattress because personnel at the hospital were ordered to clean the ward each night, so much of the art of Ramirez and other patients was destroyed on a daily basis (para. 3) prior to his figuring out that he needed to hide them.



Figure 18. Martín Ramirez. *Untitled*. (ca. 1954). Auburn, CA. Pencil and colored pencil.

An online news article from the site, BanderasNews, and dated from April of 2007, hailed Ramirez as a self-taught, schizophrenic artist, whose art was critically acclaimed to the extent that the 96 works included in a three-month retrospective at the American Folk Art Museum was extended by two weeks due to popular demand (para. 3). The article noted further that “visitor attendance... is the highest in the museum’s history,” with “1,000 visitors a day” on weekends, according to the museum’s spokesperson (para. 4). This article offered unique insights into the artist not contained in Rhodes (2000), or Russell (2011). It stated, for instance, that there were public showings several times before Ramirez’s death in 1963, but they were “viewed as curiosities from a mute ‘schizophrenic artist.’” (BanderasNews, para. 8). In my opinion, the evolution of Outsider Art in terms of its appeal as something more than “schizophrenic art,” is encapsulated by that statement.

Between the nineteenth century's Romantic movement, and 2007, the year of Ramirez's show, there was a constant shifting of our ideas about what constitutes art, according to Beveridge (2001) and especially what encompasses the characteristics contained within the art of persons with disabilities. That Ramirez's work was ignored and referenced as "schizophrenic art" in 1963, but was hailed for its contributions to postmodern art in 2007 is evidence of that shift. It is unfortunate for Ramirez and many other artist outsiders, that the recognition was so long in coming, and that he did not live long enough to enjoy the accolades, and especially the success of the retrospective at the American Folk Art Museum.

Anthony Mannix (1953 -). One Outsider Artist who has given voice to the experience of schizophrenia is Anthony Mannix, whose 80 artist-books comprising over 6,000 pages have been digitally archived and researched by Jenkins (2011). According to Jenkins, over 30 years, Mannix sought to bring the experience of his psychosis to the larger culture through multi-genre media that include text, sound, and visual image. Jenkins contended that Mannix was well-versed (and thus able to speak in the language of) "psychiatry, anti-psychiatry, shamanism, *Art Brut/Outsider Art*, avant-garde literature and fine art" (p. 243). Mannix, as per Jenkins, embraces his psychosis for allowing him access to his own unconscious, and he continues to seek a way to describe for the rest of us, the experience of schizophrenia through his creations. Further, Mannix sees his psychosis as central to his creativity, and does not seek to have it ameliorated through therapeutic measures, or medication. His first diagnosis of schizophrenia, according to Jenkins, came in the 1980s, and Mannix has worked since that time to document the experience of it.

Mannix's hand-written novel, *The Lightbulb Eaters*, explains that his desire, at its essence, is to understand his own unconscious "via psychosis and chaos" (Jenkins, 2011, p. 244). Jenkins posited that Mannix's "sense of legitimacy" (p. 246) with regard to his illness may have been influenced by his cultural experience in South East Asia, where he lived in his twenties. According to Mannix, in South East Asia, people who acted differently were not censored for their behaviors. He thought this might perhaps be due to the culture's animistic elements, which ascribe psychic concepts and the presence of souls to all natural objects—animate or not—and so he embraced the concepts of animism. Once back in America, however, Mannix was again *abnormal*.

Mannix frames psychiatry as the oppressor/silencer of the insane, and credits art making as not only a means of coping with schizophrenia, but a way of recording his history and experiences. He seeks, according to some, to recreate a world that in his mind is preferable to the real one he must inhabit. I appreciate knowing that there is an account from someone who lives with disease about the experience of that disease. It is unfortunate that because he is schizophrenic, it is likely that the medical profession often consider his insights as nothing more than the rantings of an unmedicated psychotic. However, I am inclined to believe that much of what Mannix relays through his work, might be relatable by others who are also schizophrenic. Unfortunately, the nature of schizophrenia likely makes much of Mannix's experience inaccessible to most of us.

Implications for future conceptualizations of outsider art. As I near the end of this portion of the paper with its focus on Outsider Art, I am left with unanswered questions, but I am okay with that, and tend to agree with Rhodes (2000) that we are perhaps misguided to try to narrow the defining characteristics of what constitutes

Outsider Art. I do not know who is qualified, really, to offer a definition of Outsider Art because I do not know that anyone can speak to disability, or mental illness, or marginalization, or the psychopathology that may or may not be inherent in a piece of art, unless they have lived the experience of it. The psychiatrist is of course qualified to ascribe certain behaviors to mental illness, but whether those ascriptions can be extended beyond the disease and to the art created by the person with it, I am not as certain. What is sane? What is insane? How does insanity *look* in art?

There are, of course, many more Outsider artists whose names I did not include in this section, despite the fact that they would also be considered artists of note, or repute. I chose the illustrated narrative examples of Wölfli, Gill, and Ramirez because they were perhaps three of the best known artists in the world of Outsider Art, and because despite my own lack of formal art training, I was able to *see* some things in their work that were relatable. As to Mannix, I read Jenkins (2011) in hopes that I would glean something that helped me to better understand my sister's experience of schizophrenia, but that did not happen. The excerpts that were directly quoted in Jenkins left me still puzzled and at a loss to ever know what her interiority, or that of my brother-in-law might be.

I did, however, find commonalities within the work of the three artists included here, as well as in so many others. I was a little surprised by this, frankly. I expected to perhaps recognize components of art that informed the psychological condition of the artist in the work discussed in the subsection, "The 'Art of the Insane,'" though I must admit that I was not successful, and do not often see what the scholars and critics see. However, because I have learned that Outsider Art is so broad in its scope, and so ill-defined, I did not expect to find so many commonalities; yet I did.

The work of Wölfli, Gill, Ramirez and many of the Outsider artists I examined for this paper often contained—at least in my view—an intricacy of pattern, finely detailed lines and geometry, a clear attention to the most minute detail, and an order that was clearly planned, even if I cannot speak to its intent. On a more emotional level, I felt like the faces peering out from many of the works of the three artists featured (regardless of whether or not those faces were the entirety of the drawing, or an “aside,” far from the main focus) went to the secrets, loneliness and sense of isolation that accompanies mental and emotional disorders.. It was as if each artist had placed him- or herself in the picture, hoping that someone on the outside would find and save the artist. I also see the artists’ efforts to recreate some semblance of whatever home was for them—whatever the “rosegarden,” (Robertson, 1982) was for each of them. For Wölfli, his town (Bern?), the stately buildings within it, and especially the castles were prominent. Gill, while primarily focused on women, had, I believe, a sense of style and fashion that were important to her. This was evidenced by the styles of the hair and the clothing (when visible) that each wore. Ramirez loved both the cowboy and, later, buildings and tunnels and trains. And each used often, the labyrinthine pattern (noted as a universal archetypal symbol by Robertson) in order to protect their personal *gardens*. In my opinion, it goes to another universal condition—that of human experience, and of human suffering. Still, many choose to characterize the artist outsider—both the art and the person—as somehow different from most. Misconceptions and misrepresentations abound.

Whatever may be said of Outsider Art, it *is* being discussed, and that makes it viable, whatever one’s view of it. Kidd (2009) brought it up in her research involving art making and homeless youth; Rustin (2008) invoked it as a means to understand mental

illness; Muri (1999) suggested it as important to social justice in the classroom; Hall (2013) shared the experience of artist outsiders with Down Syndrome whose experience of art making extends to the gifting of it. It seems appropriate to invoke Cardinal (2009), whose book, *Outsider Art*, marked the origin of the term in 1972. Cardinal argued that “the surest sign of an Outsider artist working at full stretch is that we are affected by the bustling dynamism and coherence of a visual (perhaps even a visionary system), orchestrated by the individual performer” (p. 1464).

Dubious pronouncements and blatant misconceptions about outsider art(ists). While Tansella (2007) referenced Outsider artist Johann Hauser as an example that therapy does not squelch creativity in Outsider artists, Rhodes (2000) included Hauser in his text on Outsider Art, as being an example of the prevalence of sexuality among Outsider artists. Three additional artists (in addition to Hauser) are tied by Rhodes to prevalent sexuality among Outsider artists. These include: Malcolm McKesson, Philipp Schöpke, and Wim van de Sluis, the latter an Outsider artist with Down Syndrome whose medium is ceramic sculpture. In the case of McKesson, according to Rhodes, the artist’s renderings are “sublimations of the artist’s heightened state of sexual excitement when engaged in the act of drawing” (p. 39). This reads as a statement of fact, yet Rhodes does not credit a source for this information, and I do not know its origins. How could he possibly know this?

I raise, here, the issue of Rhodes’ (2000) pronouncement about highly sexualized art among Outsider artists as prevalent because it is my belief that this is an example of a characteristic stereotype perpetuated toward not only Outsider artists, but persons with disabilities generally. I understand that Rhodes as the author of a book on the subject of

Outsider Art may be considered an authority, but citing four names after asserting that “sexuality plays a prominent role in *many* [emphasis added] outsider works” is irresponsible, in my view, and serves to perpetuate the notion of persons with disabilities generally, and mental illness, specifically, as over-sexed. In writing this paper, I have viewed hundreds of examples of Outsider art, and sexuality, while definitely playing a role in the work of a few artists, is certainly not predominant among the majority.

Another characteristic that is often attached to the work of Outsider artists is that of *darkness*. Certainly, artists and writers who suffer depression experience what may be best referenced as a dark place. Indeed, the entirety of Casey’s (2001) text is devoted to the topic of depression as told by some two dozen writers with personal experience on the subject, but in my mind, like the reference above to a disproportionately large number of Outsider artists being sexually focused, we (all of us) should be very careful, lest we become inadvertent perpetrators of misinformation, exaggeration, stereotype, and bias where the art of persons with disabilities is concerned. As a case in point, Patsy and Hal Hollister, founders of NARSAD Artworks, an organization they reference as “the nation’s largest recipient of art created by persons with severe mental illnesses” (Smith, 1997, p. 9), made a statement that serves to stereotype the very people they purport to serve. The Hollisters, in disclosing the history of the text *Sunshine from Darkness: The Other Side of Outsider Art*, stated the following:

Very little of what we receive shows any of the *disturbed* [emphasis added] quality or *abberance* [sic] [emphasis added] so often associated with so-called “outsider art.” Instead, our artists simply produce quality, well-executed original art by any standard. (Smith, p. 9)

I take issue with words like *disturbed* and *abberance*, and with the implied suggestion that art work of this nature—disturbed and abberant [*sic*—may not also be well-executed, or quality. Certainly, they speak to that which many believe; but, they should speak in a way that sets an example to follow, not in one that characterizes persons with mental illness as disturbed.

Finally, Cardinal (2009) discussed at length the oft-interchangeable use of the terms *Outsider artist* and *autistic artist*. According to Cardinal, this mis-naming is a result of “non-medical commentators” and their attempts “to identify a certain quality of secretiveness” of manner, “and his or her seeming reluctance to communicate in a direct fashion” (p. 1459). Further, Cardinal posited that because the characteristic styles of Outsider artists tend toward eccentric, they often “embody a *Fremdheitsgefühl* (‘a sense of strangeness’, as Prinzhorn put it), which could be construed as congruent with one of the recognized features of autism” (p. 1459). Cardinal added that because Outsider Art is reflective of strong impulses to create—impulses that run amok from traditional communication conventions—it may be said that (in the loosest, non-clinical sense of the word) the styles of expression of the Outsider artist are autistic. Finally, Cardinal did not deny that there are some artists for whom a clinical diagnosis of autism had been made and who distinguished themselves in the world of art. However, he does not connect the fact of the Outsider with the fact of the autistic. Nor does the author wish to perpetuate a notion that all autistic artists are Outsider artists; they are not. That Cardinal is responsible for the origins of the term *Outsider Art* makes him an authority, in my view.

Labels abound, and throughout my reading on Outsider art and its creators, I saw over and over again words like: *nonsensical*, *mad*, *psychotic*, *deviant*, *rambling*, and

curiosities (in reference to those who suffer mental illness). Personally, I do not believe that most people say such things from a place of hostility, but rather ignorance. I also believe that most people would have no idea that I live with what are likely the permanent effects of brain trauma, or that I am clinically depressed, or that I suffer such high anxiety that a panic attack is readily possible, or that I do not sleep some nights because past trauma rears its insidious head as the lights go out.

I know I am no different than many persons with disabilities—whether mental, physical, or emotional—in that I do not show visible signs (most of the time). Therefore, I would suggest that we should conduct ourselves appropriately, and speak to each person we meet as though they too may be living with an invisible disability. In other words, we should treat everyone the same, just like our mothers (hopefully) taught us.

A final word on “the outsider.” Muri (1999) asserted that art allows for making visible “the aspects of society that are hidden by the barriers of classism and sexism” (p. 41). To this, I would add that art makes visible the aspects of society with which we are most uncomfortable, the parts of ourselves and those we love that are frightening because we do not understand them, and the parts of society that are readily relegated to the sidelines because we do not know what to say or do in response to being confronted.

Muri (1999) also elicited a caution about the potential for abuse of artist outsiders, noting that both Outsider Art and Folk Art are now marketing terms as such, used in the mainstream world. This can be a positive thing because it may empower and give voice to people who have been stigmatized and isolated who do not wish to be, but it can also open the door for abuses by those in power, as evidenced by the on-camera provocation

of Outsider artist Ben Wilson, and discussed in Sinason (2007). Whenever there is a power differential, there is the potential for abuse of the disempowered.

Regarding the popularity of Outsider Art, Rustin (2008) posited a thought worth sharing. “Outsider artists have become the victims of a perverse irony: their disdain for the mainstream world of art has made them an object of great interest within that art world” (pp. 6-7). He further noted the encouragement being received by Outsider artists from professionals to market their work. To that end, Rustin added that there is now a national organization that promotes exhibitions of artists—but only those with mental illness.

It would seem that Dubuffet’s ideal for *Art Brut/Outsider Art*—that it should be untouched by larger culture—is quite impossible.

Art making beyond the outsider artist label. What of the people with disabilities that are not invisible? There are many examples of what I see as an evolving understanding about the ways in which art making can serve to supplement the standards of care for persons with disabilities of all types. Some of these examples will be explored more deeply in later sections of this paper as they relate to literacy or the research guiding art making and disability, but the ways in which the art of persons with disabilities is—and has been, historically—characterized, go directly to the ways in which the individual is characterized, and therefore merit a discussion here. There is some amazing work going on in many communities.

Breaking through antiquated perceptions of art and disability. Adolescents and adults with disabilities are often perceived as being less capable than their typically developing peers. Shapiro (1993) noted that disability is often the main identifying factor

from mainstream society toward persons living with a disability. The author cited the early poster child campaigns of the 1940s and 1950s as examples of one of the ways that disability was paraded to the public. According to Marilyn Phillips, professor of folklore at Morgan State University (and cited in Shapiro), these images were always of children and their purpose was to “evoke images of cure” (p. 15). However, there were never poster adults, because, according to Phillips, disability was too intolerable, and pity was the hope; pity could only be gleaned through the cute images of children, never adults. Adults, according to Phillips, and especially in the post-war era, were supposed to overcome. When they could not, a new image of disability showed its face—that of the “inspirational disabled person” (Shapiro, p. 16). Many persons with disabilities refer to such imagery of disability—still propounded in movies, and media stories usually tagged on to the end of a news segment—with the derisive term “supercrip” (p. 16). According to Shapiro, the “supercrip” is the opposite of the pitiable poster child, but it is really no different because underlying it is the notion that a person with a disability is a person to be pitied, rather than respected.

Disability rights activist, Judy Heumann, stated that for her, disability is only tragic when society “fails to provide the things we need to lead our lives—job opportunities, or barrier-free buildings...” (Shapiro, 1993, p. 20). The characterization of persons with disabilities as pitiable and tragic still exists today, but there are many examples of ways in which art can serve as a bridge between disability and mainstream society.

I sought to find out how the art of people with disabilities has been characterized over the years. While there was a plethora of historical information that served as a

response to that research problem where people with mental and emotional disabilities was concerned, there is less that speaks directly to the historical characterization of persons with disabilities other than mental and emotional. One eye-opening exception exists in Feiner (1941), pieces of which are offensive, but the thinking with regard to dramatic art with special education students was in some respects, ahead of its time and is outlined below. That being said, there is much that is happening in schools and communities. Some of it will be used more readily with regard to my second research problem—the relationship between art making and literacy—but it is worthy of mention here, because it is changing the face of how that research problem may be answered by someone like me in the future.

In school. Gerber and Guay (2006) have devoted an entire book to the ways in which educators can serve their students with special needs through art. They are both teachers who advocate for art as a means of liberation and empowerment for students of all ability levels. Students who may have difficulty reading, or writing, or generally communicating, can be empowered to find their own creative voices, to problem-solve, and to move beyond “the cycle of failure” (p. 30). Art-making, they noted, may serve as the only opportunity for enjoyment for a student with a disability to experience what amounts to a reward that is purely aesthetic, rather than tied to a grade. Especially for students with severe disabilities who may spend much of each day in segregated settings, art making can, according to Gerber and Guay, serve as a great equalizer, allowing them to participate in a school community from which they are often excluded. While the standard curriculum in the core content areas may have little room for creative exchange,

art making is readily adaptable within the contexts of the school environment, schedule and the way(s) in which the lesson is presented.

Some would acknowledge Gerber and Guay (2006) as well-intentioned, but not going quite far enough in their thinking with regard to art making and students with disabilities. Hence the following quote:

There are fashions in thoughts as surely there are in clothes. When you buy a new dress or a new suit, it is not always because the old ones are totally worn out, but rather you have an instinct that something new is needed. (Hermon & Prentice, 2003)

The above is from an article that focuses on an art and design program set in a special education school, but certainly it is valuable for its double meaning, addressing the need to sometimes make changes because we instinctually recognize that they should be made. Such is the case with art making in special education settings.

Hermon and Prentice (2003) quoted above discussed a year-long class in which students aged 13 to 16 created “a different identity” (p. 270) in the context of art and fashion design. The authors cited, as positive outcomes for this experience, the potential for students to become enabled, empowered, engaged, and extended so that optimally, they would synthesize what was learned in the class and take it out into the world to be applied to other purposes. Hermon and Prentice asserted the importance of this project as being relative to the prevailing media characterizations of persons with disabilities, which remain negative, in part, because people with disabilities are either invisible, or rejected by the larger culture for their appearance, which is different from those who exist in the mainstream. The idea behind the design project was to allow students to lose the

invisibility, to develop a positive body image, and ultimately, to assert their presence as different within the context of the larger culture. It was thought that because the art inherent in fashion tends to be eclectic, such a project would allow for a wider range of difference both in the product and in the person designing it.

Hermon and Prentice (2003) further asserted the project as being framed in a postmodernist perspective, because it celebrated and placed emphasis upon difference and diversity, as opposed to merely seeking inclusion in a realm that does not make room for such difference. Further, according to the authors, in doing such an art project, students were forced to challenge the status quo and take risks that addressed intellect, intuition, and innovation. They also posited that a recognition of one's difference positively impacts "autonomy, enquiry and creative opportunity for teachers and learners" (p. 273). Further, "the making and wearing of clothes are processes by which presence, thought, meaning and form are transported through garments" (Hermon & Prentice, p. 274).

The project shared by Hermon and Prentice (2003) was one that changed the characterization of the art of the disabled from one of a merely inclusive practice to one that fully embraced difference, and self-identity, and provided students the opportunity to directly impact their own education.

While Gerber and Guay (2006), and certainly Hermon and Prentice (2003) are representative of an evolving twenty-first century thinking where art making possibilities for students with disabilities are concerned, there were pioneers who sought to move beyond the mere inclusion of students decades earlier. One such teacher was Augusta L. Feiner (1941), who extolled the virtues of dramatic art in a Detroit special education

class, and despite language that was decidedly *not* person first, the objectives were sound and the thinking advanced. The article began:

To create a richer, more ample and abundant life dramatics is placed in the formal school program for normal children. With intelligent children, theatricals is a natural outlet for original character interpretation and spontaneous motor activity... Dramatization is also worthwhile for the mentally retarded child for then he can play a new exciting part in life and can rise above the inadequate person he knows himself to be. (Feiner, 1941, p. 230)

Feiner even went so far as to advocate for inclusion, noting that “the dull child... is retiring because he seldom has an opportunity to be included in a regular grade performance” (p. 230).

Perhaps in *Feiner* I inadvertently found the reason for the paucity of information about how the art of persons with disabilities has been characterized historically. The answer, quite simply: they were excluded from participation. This lack of opportunity where art making is concerned was also specifically noted in Hoggard (2006), who found in her art psychotherapy work with patients who were deaf or hearing impaired, that those patients who were over age 40 had experienced little or no access to the arts in school, with those between the ages of 30 and 40 showing some evidence of being exposed to creative activities. This in comparison to patients between the ages of 18 and 30 who had clearly experienced access to artistic activities in school, as evidenced by their “approach to a variety of media, confidence in presentation and evidence of art tuition (e.g. tonal/linear work)” (Hoggard, p. 8).

In Feiner (1941) we see early recognition that education should serve all students, not just those who were not identified as having disabilities. I will speak to this article in my research review as well, but in my opinion, because the actual students with disabilities were characterized as “dull,” “inadequate,” “slovenly,” and “mentally defective,” it is a safe guess that any art produced by students with disabilities would have been characterized in the same stereotypical fashion. However, it is somewhat comforting to know that it was not just students with disabilities who were characterized in ways that were unkind at best. Feiner was, in fact, also sexist, and not fond of the extrovert, whom she deemed as needing to learn self-control, “that which he likes least in life” (p. 232). I imagine the extroverts to which Feiner referred would be diagnosed with ADHD today.

Hoggard (2006), an art psychotherapist, spoke to the historical characterizations attached to children who were deaf or hearing impaired. The author cited, for example, Aristotle, who thought children who were deaf to be “incapable of reason,” while in medieval Britain, “deaf people without speech were classed as idiots and prevented from managing their own affairs or bequeathing their property” (p. 2). Hoggard, for her part, asserted that in 1933, Helen Keller, having neither hearing nor vision, was known to say that deafness was “the far greater misfortune” (p. 3). Especially difficult to treat, according to Hoggard (2006), are those twice exceptional, for whom both hearing impairment and mental illness are issues. This is because of the difficulty in communication between physician and patient that often impairs both diagnosis and treatment. Best, in 1943, (as cited in Hoggard) contended that the public’s attitudes

toward disability may often be found in mainstream culture's humor, and noted that "the blind are only to be seen in tragedies" while "the deaf are often seen in comedies" (p. 3).

All is not bleak, however, in terms of the use of art making as part of the educational process for the deaf and hearing impaired, according to Hoggard (2006). The author cited evidence that art has been used for many years as a means of bringing the hearing world to the child who lived in silence. Further, Hoggard stated that the use of art was implicit rather than explicit in that there is little documentation that goes specifically to art as a therapeutic tool. However, Hoggard posited that it may have had an implicit therapeutic value in that it served as a tool to gain access to a student's feelings and thoughts. Like the art of persons who lived with mental illness, persons who were deaf or hearing impaired were often incarcerated in asylums. Denmark (as cited in Hoggard), suggested that this was possibly due to misdiagnoses, wherein persons who were without hearing were thought mad due to an inability to communicate.

Hoggard (2006) cited an example of a man who was in his 60s and profoundly deaf. He related to the author what his experience of school had been and noted that in addition to the usual reading, writing and arithmetic, they played football sometimes. Of art, he noted that there was none because it was not important. Like many of Hoggard's other clients, he had been sent away to a boarding school for the deaf at a very young age. Hoggard noted that these schools were particularly traumatic because they were usually far from a child's home, so feelings of abandonment were common, as was depression carrying forward into adulthood. As noted earlier, for older clients especially, there was little or no exposure to the arts in school. The improvement in access to the arts over the past decades is anecdotal evidence, per Hoggard, that creative activities for persons with

hearing impairment are being valued for their contribution to non-verbal communication. Currently, new approaches to art psychotherapy with the deaf and hearing impaired are being developed, but unfortunately, I have little more to offer regarding a historical context.

Within the community. Schools are integral to communities, and as such the work being done in the classroom should extend beyond school walls and into the communities in which they are a part. Both Hermon and Prentice (2006), and Muri (1999) recognized this important connection. In the case of the former, the art and design project within which students with disabilities participated had components involving the community by virtue of visits to a local gallery, and a culminating fashion show presented to community members. Muri also extended her lessons on folk art and Outsider art in the interest of both social justice and to bring together the school and the community. She did this by displaying the art of neighborhood folk and Outsider artists in the school, by inviting community elders to share stories and art objects that brought a sense of pride and placed their community in a historical context, and by inviting a 90-year-old local painter to school to share her memories of the scenes in the neighborhood she had depicted in her landscapes as well as her creative process itself with the students.

Joosa (2012) studied the impact of art making in a community setting as well. She tapped into her work as a visual arts educator in an Adult Enhancement Program (AEP) connected with the Down Syndrome Association in Singapore (DSA) in order to do her ethnographic study—which will be discussed at more length as it relates to my two remaining research problems. Joosa noted that despite the fact that the experience of Down Syndrome is different for each individual, persons affected by the disorder are

often presumed the same for the fact that they share the trisomy of the 21st chromosome. The author noted that there is a dearth of qualitative research that goes to the unique social and cultural nature of the lives of patients with Down Syndrome, and how those life factors might influence the relationship between art making and social interactions. She also recognized that historically, persons with Down syndrome have been stigmatized and marginalized. As a group they have a long history of service within the community, but generally such interactions have been limited and menial—sorting papers and arranging shelves were specifically referenced.

Joosa (2012) sought to better understand how specific pedagogies and practices might be altered and improved upon in order to better understand how art making may be influenced by “spaces of expression” (p. 26) for those living with Down Syndrome, and for whom verbal communication is difficult. Much of Joosa’s work will be examined further with regard to the relationships among art making and literacy, but it is important here, as well, because it serves to change historical stereotypes of persons with Down Syndrome as merely disabled. Joosa confirmed a socio-cultural connection within the artwork produced by Billy, the young man with whom the author worked. She contended that her study’s results, while not generalizable, provided her with a better understanding of how the arts might serve Billy in his future. This could represent an important step in changing the way the art of persons with Down Syndrome is received in the future.

Hall (2013) also worked with young adults with learning disabilities in two creative arts organizations in Edinburgh, Scotland. ¹ Hall averred that creative arts are

¹ Hall (2013) uses the term *learning disabilities* in a way not compatible with usage in the U.S. Generally, learning disabilities are considered to be those not associated with congenital disorders, including Down syndrome. Photos within the text indicate that at least some of the young adults in his study are those with Down syndrome, which is not classified as a learning disability.

understood to be a mediator between social inclusion and exclusion for persons already marginalized by disability. He conducted two case studies in which young adults participated in community arts programs. Hall's arguments for the research included three. First, that the art making provided participants with an opportunity for creative and emotional expression and a sense of belonging with peers also involved in the program. Second, Hall suggested that the act of gifting the art objects and dramatic performances to people in the broader mainstream culture was in essence a means for transferring the "emotions and creativity into nondisabled spaces," which carried the possibilities for "connection and recognition" (p. 244). Third, the small communities within which the art was created provided bases for public spaces where gifting and sharing with the outside world could take place (much in the same way that the community arts space OffCenter functions in Albuquerque).

Hall's (2013) study was interesting to me not only for the fact that it served to discredit the characterization of persons with cognitive, developmental, or learning disabilities as socially, spatially, and culturally bereft, but for its extension of art making and artistic performance to art gifting, an element I did not find elsewhere. He asserted that the creation of art need not be relegated to handicrafts as dictated by someone else, but should instead "generate self-knowledge and empowerment," and provide an "opportunity for marginalised people to 'articulate their world view' through the public viewing of their work" (Rose, 1997, as cited in Hall, p. 247). Hall further maintained that persons with disabilities have a "history to the claimed mediating agency of art" (p. 247).

The work of Hall (2013) went to much more than the importance of being given creative opportunities for growth through personal investment. It also offered a sense of

belonging within the structure of the program itself. Hall drew a connection between *longing* and *belonging*—the former representing the yearning for the latter—but he asserted that the true sense of belonging came in the gifting of art to others. He described the exchange of energy that takes place because the art carries with it emotion (in the form of love), embodiment (in the form of the human hand that created it), and a broader sense of the artist/performer as someone worthy of more than the disability label within which they have been secluded.

Hall's (2013) work sheds light on an evolving and important structure as it exists in community-based arts programs for persons with disabilities in that it creates a safe space for mediation between otherwise isolated community members living with disabilities and those in mainstream culture. That Hall, in his conclusion, noted critically, how majority public spaces remain exclusionary for persons with developmental and learning disabilities, opens the door for further research in the area of community arts programs and the possibilities they carry for melding two disparate worlds.

Hybrids of hope. There is exciting work going on with regard to the art of persons with disabilities; it takes place in school, community, and business settings. Wexler (2002) exposed the exciting work then being done in the community of Harlem wherein residents—able-bodied and disabled—who participated in the painting program through Harlem Horizon Art Studio (HHAS) found new hope through art making. This program, according to Wexler, diverged from both the traditional practices of art therapy and art education to teach participants how to work through grief and loss through art making.

The ethnographic work of Kidd (2009), who brought an opportunity for art-making to homeless adolescents will be further explored with regard to the research

guiding the relationships between art making and disability. Kidd used a unique approach in order to connect with a group that is stigmatized perhaps more than any other—especially when one considers the incidence of homelessness and mental illness as co-occurring.

Group music therapy—something I did not even know existed—was discussed for its value in improving the quality of life for participants who live with a severe and enduring mental illness (SEMI) in the study conducted by Grocke, Bloch, and Castle (2009). The authors collected both quantitative and qualitative data in order to determine the impacts of the 10-week program on participants who had not previously seen great improvement in their conditions via virtue of the more traditional routes.

Huet (2011) sought to bring art therapy to the workplace as a means for alleviating the stresses that are inherent in the caring professions in the hopes of validating employees' sense of powerlessness. While initially met with some trepidation, the program shows promise as an alternative to art therapy in business wherein an individual employee undergoes treatment.

Miller et al. (1998) broke the status quo in terms of medical research. The authors, all MDs or Ph.D.s, sought to better understand the onset of artistic ability which is becoming recognized as prevalent in persons who suffer frontotemporal dementia (FTD). This study was fascinating for its discussions about the ways the human brain functions, and I found it heartening to know that the value of art making is being studied in the so-called hard sciences as well.

Perhaps the most unique approach I encountered, however, is discussed in Rustin (2008), who turned the tables on the traditional approach to art therapy, by becoming the

artist-therapist in an effort to try to better grasp his patients' psychiatric issues. Rustin came to recognize that he himself was an Outsider artist, and this experience served him and his patients well. Of the experience, Rustin said that through the art making, he was able to live the experiences of his patients—the loss, trauma, rejection, stigmatization, and isolation that is a part of each day for many. After making my usual multi-colored marginalia and highlights and using my color coded flags, I realized Rustin's account of his "reverse art therapy" goes straight to the heart of aesthetic empathy. So, that is where I go for the conclusion of this research problem.

The role of aesthetic empathy in a new characterization of art and disability.

Rustin's (2008) study went straight to the heart of what it means to live the premise of aesthetic empathy—he bore witness to the truths of his patients and he depicted those truths in his paintings which were created in order to better understand the loss and trauma and feelings of isolation experienced by them. No greater honor can be shown our students, or our patients, or our loved ones, than to bear witness to their truths.

An understanding of art as a window to the soul, while cliché, is critical to one's ability to empathize with another human being. Aesthetic empathy is explained by Dr. Linney Wix in the introduction to the section on the topic in the reader for her class, "Art with At-risk Students." Dr. Wix explained, that the origin of the phrase stems from its two parts," *aesthesia*, which has to do with breathing in, with feeling with the heart (the organ of sense perception according to the Greeks)... *empathy* comes from the German *empfindung* which means to feel into..." Therefore, *aesthetic empathy* is about feeling into someone else with one's heart. As an example of aesthetic empathy in teaching, Wix (2009) used the work of Friedl Dicker Brandeis, whose last mission in life was the

teaching of art to the children at Terezín Concentration Camp. “For as long as she (Dicker-Brandeis) lived in Terezín she offered her artistic fervor to the children who attended her art classes, bearing witness to their truths as portrayed in the images they created” (p. 158). In her 1943 essay, pieces of which were shared by Dr. Wix, Dicker-Brandeis asserted that “when we prescribe the path to children, who, incidentally, develop extremely unevenly in their abilities, we at the same time cut children off from their creative potential and prevent ourselves from understanding them...” (pg. 158). While directed to the teaching of children, I suggest that it is applicable (and advisable) when working with adolescents and adults with disabilities as well.

Robertson (1963/1982) also spoke to aesthetic empathy-- albeit, without the specific term in place. She asserted that the students we teach will, out of necessity, take what they must from us in order to meet whatever needs they have. This is especially important to understand within a discussion about teaching and learning in the context of students with disabilities. As teachers, we cannot hope to understand what it is to be in “the shoes” of our students, but we can certainly reach out to them and allow them a safe place to show us their truths. Robertson further cautioned that teaching must contain within it an authentic response—anything less, and the person to whom we are responding knows that it is less. An opportunity for connection in one moment in time is lost forever when that happens.

Noddings (2005) also spoke to the importance of caring relationships within the context of teaching and learning. She asserted that a “relational sense of caring” (p. 1) is important because it involves hard work and consciousness; this, I believe, goes directly to aesthetic empathy. Relational caring, according to Noddings is recognized by the

receiver who feels actually *cared for*. Noddings further stated “when I care, my motive energy begins to flow toward the needs and wants of the cared-for” (p. 2). Again, this is aesthetic empathy. In a related piece that focused on education in the twenty-first century, Noddings (1997), asserted that:

All students should be engaged in a general education that guides them in caring for self, intimate others, global others, plants, animals and the environment, objects and instruments, and ideas. Moral life so defined should be frankly embraced as the main goal of education” (p. 6).

I see this as aesthetic empathy for the twenty-first century and certainly believe that it is an appropriate objective for all of us, not just those in a general education classroom.

Finally, Cardinal (2009) spoke to Asperger’s separately from autism—the main focus of his discussion addressing the oft-mistaken identities of Outsider artists and autistic artists. I include that portion of the article here because despite the fact that I use it in a different context than that within which the author originally wrote it, I can think of no better words to promulgate an understanding of aesthetic empathy. Cardinal wrote that within Asperger’s “bewildering communicative excesses” we might also choose to see creativity in the context of its peculiarities. In my view, the statement can be synthesized to encompass any person, with any (dis)ability because it is about the relational caring to which Noddings (2005) spoke. It is, therefore, a fitting conclusion to the section of this paper that serves to address the issue of how the art of people with disabilities has been characterized historically. I quote the message in its entirety because I felt it to be best left whole. There is, within Asperger’s, according to Cardinal (2009):

an opportunity for us to move beyond the ticking-off of simple facts and to engage with the dynamic thrust of mental systems unlike our own, in an effort to participate in that alien enthusiasm. At some point, we might catch a glimpse of the inner joy of a Gregory Blackstock or a George Widener when the one completes a particular bout of categorical collecting or the other sees a magic square emerging from an abstruse and extended computation in one of his calendars. Their self-engrossed pleasure in their own mastery can become our secondary pleasure as witnesses thereof, and encourage us to attempt further acts of empathetic response. These should lead us beyond selfish indulgence, for in due course we will find that aesthetic pleasure has begun to coincide with our poignant engagement with another sensibility, another personality; at which point art appreciation is revealed not as a peripheral supplement to human experience but as a privileged medium of human contact itself. (Cardinal, p. 1466)

I now treasure those words as the embodiment of aesthetic empathy, and Roger Cardinal as another hero of mine. Perhaps in the twenty-*second* century, his words will be quoted by someone who is conducting a historical review of the empathetic and celebratory ways we came to characterize the art of persons with disabilities in the twenty-first century.

The Relationships between Art Making and Literacy for Adolescents and Adults With Disabilities in School and Community Settings

Overview. This section of my review includes studies that went directly to the relationships among literacy, art making, and disability. I set about first, considering my own personal beliefs about what constitutes art making, and arrived at the decision to include art in any form, including but not limited to: visual arts, music, creative and

expressive writing in all its genres, performance art, and digital/media arts which would include graphic arts, videography, cinematography, documentary filmmaking, and the writing that takes place in fan-based “affinity” spaces in which thousands of people who are passionate about specific books, games, and music, share the experience of their passion online.

As to what constitutes disability, that is a little more difficult for me to qualify, and I am not, nor will I ever be qualified to make such judgments. For purposes of this research review, however, I spread the net of disability a bit wider than may be considered acceptable by the strictest definitions of the word, and included marginalized groups who are not necessarily viewed as disabled, but for whom circumstances render them *dis-abled* in the context of mainstream society. Among such groups included in my research, homeless youths (see Kidd, 2009) for whom specific diagnoses of disability were not present, but who are statistically likely to live with one or more (especially mental health issues including depression and anxiety), and who are dis-abled by the circumstance of homelessness.

Also included, were senior women of Chinese heritage for whom no specific disability was necessarily present (see McLeod & Ricketts, 2013) because they were marginalized by society by virtue of their ages, their language—none were fluent in the dominant languages of Canada, where the studies were conducted—and, their literacy skills—with some being unable to read or write in any language. Again, I saw their marginalization as socially constructed and dis-abling. Existing in a marginalized place has the effect of creating a disability context.

I initially sought to find research that enjoined all three components of literacy, art making, and disability, seeking also to affirm a connection toward resiliency, but as is noted below, there is limited research that specifically acknowledges a correlation among all three components within a singular study. I did, however, find four such studies, including the one by McLeod and Ricketts (2013), which involved the senior women of Chinese heritage (dis-abled by factors of age, language, and literacy). The authors each became involved in two separate projects and reported together. While Ricketts spoke specifically to multimodal literacies present in her performance arts piece, McLeod did not, though her study involved the creation of a piece based in narrative and visual art together, therefore I felt the literacy aspect was present enough to merit inclusion in this subgrouping. The remaining three studies in this group were conducted by Olivia Sagan (2007; 2008; 2011), a Senior Research Fellow for Pedagogy at the University of the Arts, in London. Sagan's studies all involved adults with mental illness who were enrolled in basic literacy/creative (expressive) writing courses through their local mental health drop-in centers in and around the London area. Sagan combined critical ethnography, life history, and biographic narrative interview methodologies within all three studies. From each, Sagan also conducted case study research in which she explored in depth the individual objective within each study.

Despite objectives seeking to establish a correlation among literacy, art making, and disability being unstated, its presence was easily recognized in the remaining sixteen (of nineteen) studies pertinent to this research problem. In each study, either art making was the focused objective, and the literacy applications could be inferred, or literacy learning was the focus, and because of the types of literacy (e.g., visual, digital, or multi-

modal) the art making presence could be extrapolated. One such study is Grocke, Bloch, & Castle (2009), in which 29 out-patients living with Severe and Enduring Mental Illness (SEMI) participated in a group music therapy workshop in which they sang, composed, and recorded their music in professional studios. While the authors did not specifically speak to literacy teaching and learning, clearly there were multiple literacies occurring in the process of this 10-week project, the most obvious being conventional writing in the form of song-writing. However, I would argue that Berninger and Richards' (2002) *Language by Ear, and Language by Mouth* (referencing the structural systems in the brain that make up one's ability to experience and participate in language) are components beneath an umbrella music literacy, making this particular project relevant as a multi-modal literacy experience for the participants.

Similarly, Hall's (2013) case studies surrounding two community arts projects in Singapore, while focused on the making and gifting of art (products in one study, and performance art in the other), evidenced multi-modal literacies being learned and shared. Likewise, in Hermon & Prentice (2003), a project involving art and contemporary fashion required not only the skill-building inherent in any complex art project, but elements of verbal description, and narrative descriptive writing as well. In Joosa's (2012) observational ethnography, the participant—a young man with Down syndrome—created art and wrote accompanying stories for his drawings and paintings, thus joining his visual literacy experiences with those of storytelling. Also, in Roswell and Kendrick (2013) three boys expanded below average written literacy skills through the inclusion of visual literacy components in their secondary English classes. For example, students wrote

narrative descriptions to accompany photographs (one element of photo analysis), or stories to accompany drawings they had completed.

Regarding the two studies that involved marginalized groups outside of the typical disability framework, and referenced above, Kidd (2009) and McLeod and Ricketts (2013), the latter falls into the studies that I consider to be relevant to all three components of literacy, art making, and disability. Because McLeod and Ricketts (2013) addressed all three specifically within their stated objectives, they are included in the first subsection alongside Sagan (2007; 2008; 2011). Kidd (2009) is included in the second subsection which goes to art making and disability. Kidd conducted a large (over 200 youths involved), albeit sometimes cumbersome and difficult-to-follow study in two different cities, seeking to learn about the art being created by homeless youths. In the process, young people shared poetry, stories, and journal and diary entries, many tucked within the well-worn pages of sketchbooks that represented a lifeline of sorts to their owners.

While unique in many aspects, Miller et al. (1998) also goes to all three literacy/art making/disability components. The authors (primarily MDs) sought to establish or disprove reports of a connection between the onset of artistic ability and frontotemporal dementia (FTD). A positive connection was affirmed for five of the patients, and while literacy was not referenced as a focus of the study, for patients with dementia, I would argue that the visual art they were newly able to create was a mediating gift for the loss of other literacy forms that would eventually result from the dementia.

Two of the research studies chosen for review did not speak specifically to disability, but because they went directly to inclusive concepts and practices that are relevant for all students, I included them. These are Curwood, Magnifico, and Lammers (2013) who conducted three separate ethnographic studies involving digital literacies within affinity spaces, and Fisher and Lapp (2013), who used contrastive analysis instruction (a framework common in teaching English to speakers of foreign languages) wherein speakers of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) learned code-switching registers in both AAVE and formal English in order to understand and successfully complete a test required to graduate from high school. As with Kidd (2009) and McLeod and Ricketts (2013), Fisher and Lapp's work, while not specific to identified disability populations, served a marginalized group, dis-abled by virtue of the social constructs surrounding the language of tests, which differs dramatically from their home registers to the extent that they are unable to understand, or respond correctly to test questions that are critical to whether or not they will become high school graduates, or drop out statistics. The latter group is dominated by students with language barriers, minority status, and issues of poverty.

Huet (2011), and Lacey, Layton, Miller, Goldbart, and Lawson (2007) were unique as well, but for different reasons than those noted above, as both studies involved the researchers working with the care providers for persons with disabilities, rather than the persons themselves. In the case of Huet, staff members working in a secure unit for people with severe mental illnesses, were offered art therapy in the same fashion as their patients usually received, but with a work-focused slant designed to help them to understand their own experiences of anxiety that come with the type of work they

perform. In Lacey et al., the practices of 61 teachers in special education classrooms were studied to determine the use and variety of conventional and inclusive literacy resources and practices.

None of the last four studies discussed above contained specific references to art making as objectives within the studies, but all contained creative elements within the contexts of the literacies they were teaching—art making, in my view. These included: photography, videography, story narration, role playing, and puppet-making. In fact, broadened definitions of literacy, which include, among others: visual, digital, multi-modal, and music, are natural companions, in my view, to art making. For that reason, I will reference, briefly, four articles that speak to this expanded understanding of literacy and/or art making, and therefore, enhance the research studies to which they relate. Because I excluded any studies not peer-reviewed, and/or not representing original research, these four could not be included in the research review itself. Feiner (1941) spoke to role playing in special education settings; Hoggard (2006), presented a historical review of art making in institutions for the deaf; Perry, Wessels, and Wager (2013), provided valuable tools for aesthetic and pedagogical approaches to playbuilding (performance art) as a literacy tool; and Seglem and Witte (2009), offered excellent ideas regarding visual literacies to enhance the teaching of language arts, and have been used by me in my own classroom.

I considered excluding studies that were either lacking enough information to make them replicable, or those that were compiled in a way that was confusing for a variety of reasons, but in the end, I considered these factors to be less important than the potential information provided by the studies.

Research Approaches specific to this section. I consulted several texts for purposes of this research problem, including: Berninger and Richards (2002), Dutlinger (2001), Freire (1994), McMillan and Wergin (2010), Palmer (1998), and Willig (2008/2010), each for its own value as regards either the relationships among literacy, art making, and disability, or for information that helped me to better understand some of the research I was encountering. Additionally, using the same databases and search methods discussed with regard to the first research problem (see “Methods Specific to this Research Problem,” pages 15-16), I sought to connect literacy, and disability, to art making. I again conducted extensive searches for relevant literature within electronic databases through the university library system, including those within EBSCO, ProQuest, and Google Scholar and was able to locate information that was generally either specific to art making and disability, or literacy and disability, but few that spoke to all three within a single research study. Using a variety of search terms and qualifiers, I again found the most success through Education Research Complete, ERIC and PsycInfo. I conducted the search using concurrent search terms in combinations that included *art** OR *art ther** OR *art ed* AND *disability* and *literacy*. There were several dozen articles resulting from those search qualifiers, but only one that came close to meeting my needs. Other combinations were simpler, and included: *art* AND *disability* AND *literacy*; *art making* AND *disability* AND *literacy*; and all other possible ordering of the same three-part qualifiers and in some cases garnered hundreds of results, but after reading abstracts and reviewing titles for the first 50 on the list, found that only two were actually relevant.

Changing the search qualifiers to *literacy* AND *mental disord** OR *mental ill** AND *art** lead me to the research of Sagan (2007; 2008; 2011), and several others that

are referenced as not qualifying for the research review, but being relevant. In Google Scholar, I found seven relevant studies, all discussed above, using the search terms *art making* OR *art therapy* AND *mental disord** OR *emotion** AND *literac**. Some of these studies and several others resulted from linking directly to the references relevant research and finding some of those references useful. If I was unable to connect to the full text of one of these references through UNM or JSTOR, I was able to locate several using the university's interlibrary loan service, ILLIAD.

In all, I utilized over 30 combinations of search terms related to literacy, art making, and disability, and feel I am justified in saying that there is a serious paucity of research that succinctly discusses these elements under the umbrella of one unified study. Research in this area is needed in order for those of us who wish to provide literacy instruction AND art making to students with disabilities to understand how best to integrate the two. Despite a shortage of studies that included all three of my search components, the research used in my research review offer some exciting and innovative work in both school and community venues.

Finally, as regards methods, because I am a person who best understands what I see in front of me, and best remembers what I write by hand, I made a matrix, by hand, on multi-colored poster boards for all nineteen studies included in this review. They were posted on my wall just outside my office as I wrote this. In the hand-written version, I added items that I wanted to be sure to include in discussions regarding implications and conclusions, as well as sidebars referencing other authors and texts to which I could tie some of the studies on the hand-written matrixes. I also noted whether the study was school- or community-related. It was helpful to have all eight poster boards in front of me

so that I could make connections visually before making a final decision about how I wanted to group them for purposes of discussion. Because I work like this, I appreciate and value what visual images and art provide for students who, like me, learn better with a picture right in front of them.

Results, implications, and limitations. As noted above, nineteen studies are included in this section of my literature review that either in whole, or in part, address my research problem which sought to identify relationships between art making and literacy for adolescents and adults with disabilities in school and community settings. The years in which the studies were published range from 1990 (Stronach-Buschel) to 2013 (Curwood et al.; Fisher & Lapp; McLeod & Ricketts; Parker; Roswell & Kendrick). Table 1—arranged alphabetically for ease in locating each study—supplies specific information on participants and settings, research design, and a brief description of the procedures and instruments used in each study. By including descriptive information in the table, I intended to create a reference tool for myself (and the readers of this review) that would make finding commonalities and differences among studies easier to see. Also, by including this information in the table, I hoped to simplify (and shorten) this section reporting results, implications, and limitations because the “bones” of the studies are already present in the earlier discussion in Chapter 1, and in Table 1 (Appendix B).

The results of these studies are discussed in three groups. First, those that specifically addressed correlations among all three components of art making (sometimes referenced as creativity), literacy, and disability as objectives are discussed together. These are McLeod and Ricketts (2013) and all three Sagan studies (2007; 2008; 2011). Next, for discussion purposes, I have grouped the studies that spoke directly to art

making and persons with disabilities (Grocke et al., 2009; Hall, 2013; Hermon & Prentice, 2003; Joosa, 2012; Miller et al., 1998; Sinason, 2007; Stronach-Buschel, 1990; Wexler, 2002), or art making and those serving persons with disabilities in their capacities as care givers (Huet, 2011), or those involving art making and marginalized groups not specifically identified as disabled (Kidd, 2009). Because this second group is rather large (comprised of 10 studies), I initially planned to discuss them in separate contexts of school or community, but some represent overlap in these two venues, and further subgrouping would serve to fragment the review unnecessarily. Finally, the third group of studies that I will discuss together are those in which literacy and disability *or* marginalization are central to the research. The participants vary and include students with disabilities, inclusive groups of students, and students with language barriers that leave them in marginalized groups. All include literacies that involve artistic/creative, non-conventional/inclusive elements that go beyond traditional reading and writing (Curwood et al., 2013; Fisher & Lapp, 2013; Lacey et al., 2007; Parker, 2013; Roswell & Kendrick, 2013).

Because this subsection goes to results, implications, and limitations, I did not further subgroup the studies by methods.

Art making, literacy, and persons with disabilities: correlational frameworks. McLeod and Ricketts (2013), and the three Sagan studies (2007; 2008; 2011) included in this subgrouping all sought correlations among the learning and creative processes for people dis-abled by marginalization or mental illness. They included the frameworks of literacy learning, creativity, narrative, and identity. As well the domains of language (in McLeod & Ricketts) and mental illness (in Sagan) were also

involved in the studies. As the projects evolved, the domains of community, resiliency, empowerment and agency became involved as well. Each of the studies began with larger groups and reported more in-depth on one participant as the studies continued. In the case of Sagan (2007; 2008; 2011), while comprised of similar participant groups and settings, each study had a different objective.

In order to make this section more readable, I have chosen to discuss each study individually first, and include a culminating discussion which allows for comparisons at the end of the subsection.

McLeod and Ricketts (2013). McLeod's study (which became part of the McLeod and Ricketts (2013) article, sought to use narrative analysis and critical perspectives to produce stories that described and interpreted the experiences of the informants from six families, two of whom were senior women of Chinese heritage, and one of these two whose narrative was explored in great depth in this study. The name of McLeod's project was "Mrs. Guo and 'House Very Strong: Six Visual/Text Narratives (Unfinished)," (the title being a reference Mrs. Guo made to the house which was the focus of the study (all six families had lived in it at different times). So isolated was the lady who was the focus of the case study within McLeod's research, she had no photographs of her life to contribute to the project, and no one to whom to gift her narrative contribution, so she presented McLeod with her portion of the project as a gift.

Ricketts noted that the purpose of her own research "was to examine health effects on seniors when the arts are integrated into their lives" (p. 31), and involved a residency in which she lived with "a group of Chinese seniors, a translator and a puppeteer" (p. 31). In Ricketts' project, performance art was central to the narratives

created by participants, who performed in dramatic improvisational sites where they could integrate “mind and body” (p. 31) and celebrate cultural and personal lived experiences. Ricketts’ project also spoke directly to multimodal literacy practices, and originally, I thought to include it with Sagan (2007; 2008; 2011), but because McLeod and Ricketts (2013) reported together, the decision was made to place it in this subsection.

The results of both studies, according to the authors, indicated that outreach components of the projects, individually and collectively, facilitated empowerment and a sense of belonging in marginalized groups. Also, shared storytelling created bonds among participants and imaginative practices created hybrid spaces of both fictional and non-fictional discourse, and served to give voice to participants whose very limited literacies and language barriers had served to isolate and marginalize them. The recognition of participant stories as significant to researchers and community members gave the seniors in these projects purpose, and mitigated their loneliness and isolation.

Implications of both studies, according to the authors go to “a new configuration of self in relation to others” (p. 35). McLeod’s ethnographic project was also seen as empowering for Mrs. Guo, who found pride in her story—as did all other participants as well. Future work surrounding the integration of mind, body and narrative storytelling might offer opportunities for other marginalized groups to be empowered and be released from the prison that is isolation and loneliness for so many.

As with many of the studies in this review, the relatively small size and specific setting (Canada) make transferability an issue and stands out as its main limitation.

The literacies evidenced in these projects are many and multimodal. In McLeod's study, verbal, written, and visual literacies are combined to create both a work of art and a narrative story for each of the participants. In Ricketts the literacies are multimodal, involving the narrative verbalization and writing of stories, the calligraphic imagery, and the kinesthetic movement all representing literacies in their own rights and serving as important components and enhancements to the performance art that resulted. A quote from Ricketts is helpful in understanding the end result of her project. Calligraphic symbols on rice paper, and excerpts from the narratives written by the women, were all projected into the dark space through which the women moved. "We were moving in and through language; exploring how language becomes a vehicle to carry us in the most unexpected ways through a dynamic meaning making process embracing our differences in age, health, cultures and lived experiences" (Kathryn Ricketts, p. 34).

Sagan (2007). The objective (aim) of the research presented in Sagan (2007) was "to observe what *use* was made of a basic literacy/creative writing course which was provided for mentally ill adults with mostly low levels of literacy and limited verbal articulation" (p. 313). The author explained that the word *use* carried a double meaning in that it referred both to the ways in which the participants used the opportunity (e.g., social, educational, recreational), and also what use was made in the psychoanalytic sense. As noted in Table 1 (Appendix B), the initial study involved 12 individuals who were identified as having long-term mental illness, with varying diagnoses, but a shared experience in debilitating depression, for which they had each been hospitalized and were all medicated.

Phase 1 was identified by Sagan (2007) as involving a critical ethnographic methodology in order to examine data and maintain flexibility as the drop-in center through which the study was conducted went through regular budget crises, and transiency of some patient/participants. After the first phase, biographic narrative interviews were conducted throughout the remainder of the three-year study, with the aim of acquiring life stories from participants. An in-depth case study of one participant, “Bertie,” was also included. Bertie, at the time of the study, was a 65-year-old man who had been coming to the center for over 10 years, but had never signed up for any of the offered classes. Many of the implications, results, and conclusions at which Sagan arrived are, discussed in light of Bertie’s experience, although it is acknowledged that he was unusual in terms of the progress he made, exceeding that of most of the other participants.

The results of this study exist in several domains. First, while Sagan (2007) set out to offer adults with mental illness and low literacy rates an opportunity to write creatively within the boundaries of their capabilities, her study suggested that the impulse to create on the part of the participants led to the forming of new identities in opposition to those assigned to them by mainstream society. Sagan suggested that for adults with long-term mental illness “creativity is a hard-earned luxury” (p. 314), often succumbing to the primary priority of maintaining one’s daily existence.

Additional results specific to Bertie saw an improvement from the 9-year-old level of writing skills (where Bertie remained for the first two of the three years the study was done), as well as in his ability to express himself creatively. Bertie’s biographical

narrative not only revealed a painful story of abuse throughout his life, but eventually evolved into a perception of himself in some creative sense.

The implications for educators and others working with populations for whom mental illness prevails are several. First, it is telling, in my view, that it took Bertie two entire years before he made any progress in his written literacy skills at all. Too often, in schools, programs are put in place for students that are then dismantled by the end of the school year. Students often cannot make progress in one year. Second, there are several nuances that are inherent in persons with mental illness and Bertie exhibited these, including low self-esteem, a sense of perpetual pain and loss, and feelings of isolation. In my opinion, as Bertie's biographic narrative began to unfold in the interviews and in his written storytelling, he made improvements in his own sense of self, and only then did he begin making improvements in his literacy skills. The final implication I derived from this study is more of a confirmation of my own beliefs about learning being socially constructed. Bertie's learning did not take place alone; in fact, he not only participated in Sagan's (2007) group study, he also participated in group counseling sessions. These factors, along with the opportunities provided to Bertie for creativity empowered him and ultimately led to social connections with others at the center with whom he shared some common ground. In so doing, Bertie took control of his own social exclusion and the identity labels placed on him by others, and created a new identity of his own making.

Sagan (2007), in her conclusions, noted the risk inherent in uncovering painful memories and that there is a requirement for "unlearning" before new knowledge can take over. She asserted further that this unlearning "demands the very capacities which are under attack when we are caught anywhere along the spectrum from emotionally

disturbed to chronically mentally ill” (p. 319). Sagan also countered the views of Jamison (1993) and others who have suggested a link between mental illness and creativity. She believes that there is a sad truth in the way that mental illness has the opposite effect for many, due to “a stripping away, a depletion of colour, sensitivity and delight...” (p. 319). Further, Sagan suggested that we keep in mind the demands and prerequisites necessary for progression in both learning and creativity.

The limitations of this study are several. First, while the case study of Bertie served the purpose of offering an in-depth view of his journey over three years, the results for the others involved in the study are only noted vaguely as being not as dramatic. Also, because the study represents only one program and one setting, the results are not transferable, although I understand that this is often true within qualitative research.

Sagan (2008). The study itself and the researcher’s stated objective for it were very similar to Sagan (2007). Specifically, Sagan (2008) sought “to explore the learning experience of this group whose literacy level was below the national average, and to offer insights into the barriers and enablers to learning basic literacy” (p. 45). The number (12) and ages of the participants were the same (and may have even been the same participants as in Sagan, 2007, though they were not so identified). The case study participant was a woman named “Marge,” age 65, who suffered a head injury as a child and self-referenced as dim, thick, and slow. Marge also had speech impairment, but it was not known whether this was a result of the head injury. Regardless, it did not appear she had ever had treatment for it. All the phases of the study were the same as in Sagan (2007), beginning with a critical ethnography, and segueing into biographic narrative

interviews and writing opportunities designed both to improve literacy skills, and to enhance creativity. This particular study (2008) had an interpretive phenomenological component that was not present in the 2007 study because Sagan, in the current study being reported, identified her own mental health issues as well as those in her family, disclosing her own reflexivity in this study. If I understand correctly, the reflexivity goes to interpretive phenomenology (linked also to the science of interpretation, or hermeneutics).

The results of this study indicated that prevalent themes among the study participants were those encompassing loss and loneliness with accompanying isolation. The loss was identified in phrases such as “I used to (have),” or “I was used to being,” and loneliness was often identified through phrases like “I kept to myself.” Also, Sagan, in this study, identified a common sense of “no-self” among participants, as they described feelings of fragmentation and being broken into small pieces. For those in the study who experienced manic depression, the mania served to mitigate the loss and loneliness that were present during the depressive phase of their illness. For most, learning was an experience of loneliness and anxiety.

Marge also spoke and wrote frequently of loneliness. In fact, her written narratives and biographic interviews were her first articulation of her own life’s memories. Additionally, Marge spoke to “different types of lonely” and how each had its own texture. Among her different lonelinesses: the one felt when recalling painful childhood memories during interviews, the one experienced when trying to learn something new, and the one felt when she finally understood what she had been missing

all the years she lived without her spoken and written words. Loss too had many faces for Marge as she grappled with age, and time, and lost opportunities.

Just as low self-esteem, pain and loss, were implications in Bertie's learning in the 2007 study, the implications for Marge's learning experience were, in my view, a likely result of her sense of loneliness. Therefore, with regard to Sagan's stated research purpose, it would seem that loneliness is a barrier to the learning experience, while at the same time, the author seemed to be implying that Marge was also enabled in her writing by virtue of her loneliness and the deep reflection that came with the process of engagement in the study, which go to the reparative potential of both learning and creativity.

Limitations of this 2008 study are the same, for me, as they were in Sagan's (2007) research in that I would like to know more about the experience of the other participants in the study as the only discussions and conclusions from Sagan go directly to Marge in this case. This study's results are also not transferable.

Where future research is concerned, Sagan (2008) seems to have made a call (albeit indirect) at the end of the study for the need for a better way to understand how learning, when it occurs in deeply emotional states, has the potential for offering the learner a way to handle the pain of those emotional states. Sagan noted, however, the unlikelihood that this could come to be due to the perception of adult education as outmoded and appearing to have no significance. I would add that this is especially true in light of society's views of mental illness.

Sagan (2011). Similar to the two previous studies done by Sagan, the 2011 study was conducted in a drop-off center for adults with mental illness. The stated research

purpose was almost identical to the earlier studies, and had, as its aim, the exploration of “the learning experience of this group whose literacy level was below the national average, and to offer insights into what use the writing was apparently being put” (pp. 98-99). This study varied only slightly in its make-up, with 14 participants and a timeframe consisting of five years. The methodologies in each phase were the same as in the 2007 study in that the first was inclusive of critical ethnographic methods, and subsequent phases included biographic narrative interviews. Within the context of the case study in this research, Sagan noted that there was a psychosocial explorative element to it. The case study in this research involved “Phillip,” a man in his 50s who was married and had a child, and who was considered (and considered himself to be) functional for most of his life, but whose mental health was declining throughout the course of the study, and included “voices.” Eventually, Phillip was not able to work and his marriage fell apart.

Results of this study surprised Sagan (2011). The author had hoped for similar reparative processes as had been experienced by participants in previous studies—both hers, and others. In the case of Phillip, however, Sagan noted that sometimes the unearthing of a story that represents toxicity and pain can lead to repetitive kinds of memories—being stuck, if you will. By way of understanding it, Sagan explained that there is often a battle being waged between what a person needs to learn in order to continue with the identity they understand themselves to hold, and a part of oneself that tries to “*sabotage* that learning” (p. 113). As Phillip’s fears and anxieties over his own mental health increased, his functioning decreased. His life-long admiration of his father began to erode as memories of his (father’s) inability to handle Phillip’s mental illness began to surface, alongside recollections of Phillip’s grandmother, who also suffered

mental illness, and his mother, to whom suicide was alluded as being due to her own mental illness.

Because of these contradictions in Phillip's journey, Sagan (2011) found that "interpretation through a psychosocial lens" was appropriate (p. 107). Sagan noted that this tangle of "masculinity, depression, persecution and parental objects" (p. 111) as well as their potential impact on Phillip's life, were too much for him to handle and he was left unable to move forward with his learning or his narrative.

The implications cited by the author go toward the role of social policy where early childhood learning and health are concerned. Phillip was identified with mental illness at a young age, and it became obvious that it was interfering with his learning, but it was not dealt with directly on any front. Sagan suggested that proper intervention would offer a "sure start" in terms of a child's ability to think and learn.

As to future research, there is a need, I believe, to understand how to identify (beforehand) when reparative processes of biographic narratives are taking on toxic and dangerous elements that threaten healing.

Culminating discussion for this subgroup. There was a recurring theme of loneliness and isolation running through all of these studies. As the participants in McLeod and Ricketts (2013) shared their stories, composed their narratives, and participated in the art-making process, a new community was formed and the individuals within it were empowered as individuals and as members of the group. I am left to wonder if this occurred in the Sagan studies as well. Although all four studies evolved into individual explorations of specific individuals, only McLeod and Ricketts reported on the research both in the contexts of the group and the individuals highlighted.

Sagan's stated objectives in all three studies (2007; 2008; 2011) were very similar in that she sought to understand how participants' learning experiences and creative opportunities would serve them, and what impediments might arise in the process. There were subtle differences in the objectives of each study, however. Sagan (2007), went directly to Bertie and the "interplay of learning, creativity and narrative biography" (p. 311). In Sagan (2008), despite a barely discernible difference in the stated aim of the research, its direction was more focused on finding barriers and enablers to learning, and ultimately, went to loneliness and loss, specifically. Finally, the 2011 study revealed the potential for reparative processes to become repetitive "toxic stories" (p. 97) that prevent a person from moving forward with their learning, and potentially, their lives.

Unlike McLeod and Ricketts (2013), Sagan (2007; 2008; 2011) does not report on the group, but only on the individuals in the case studies of each project. I believe, from reading between the lines, and by virtue of the thank you to all the participants that Sagan offered at the conclusion of each article, that the work is both ongoing and that some transferability may be forthcoming when all participant results are taken into account. Still, I found it disconcerting that participants were referenced as a group in each of Sagan's studies, but no information on other group member participants was provided in the results. Although I understand that *validity* as a measure is a quantitative term, the exclusion of other participants in the reporting of the results leaves me with questions and makes the reporting, if not the study itself, less trustworthy.

All four studies, despite taking place in different countries (Canada and the UK), and despite dealing with seemingly disparate groups of participants shared the common

themes of isolation, loneliness and loss among individuals, and all participants found art and participation in a community to be effective mediators to these feelings.

Art making and adolescents and adults with disabilities. The ten studies included in this section (Grocke et al, 2009; Hall, 2013; Hermon & Prentice, 2003; Huet, 2011; Joosa, 2012; Kidd, 2009; Miller et al., 1998; Sinason, 2007; Stronach-Buschel, 1990; Wexler, 2002) all dealt with the domains of art making (in some form) and disability and/or marginalization. There were also ecological factors present, though these varied from study to study. These factors encompassed socioeconomic status (SES), ethnicity, language barriers, and homelessness, among others. For the same reasons stated in the previous group, I report on each study individually, and discuss them as a subgroup at the end of this section.

Grocke et al. (2009). The researchers' stated purpose for this study was "to determine whether music therapy influenced quality of life and social anxiety for people with severe and enduring mental illness (SEMI)" (p. 90). The 29 participants in this study did not, as a group, come to the project with previous musical training, or experience with music therapy. Over the course of the 10-week project, participants sang song, wrote song lyrics, chose a style, melody, and harmony for their songs, added instrumentation, and recorded their songs in a professional studio. Analysis included only 17 participants because 12 did not complete their post-project questionnaires. Of the 17 whose responses were analyzed, there were 10 women and 7 men, ages 23 to 64 years, with diagnoses representative of schizophrenia (8), schizoaffective disorder (4), bipolar disorder (3), and intellectual disability (1).

The measurable quantitative results showed significant improvement in quality of life, health, and in the area surrounding support from friends. There was also strong improvement in physical health and opportunities for leisure. The Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI) showed no significant improvement in participants' psychiatric symptoms. Qualitative results were reached through participant interviews, indicated, most prominently: joy, relaxation, a sense of surprise at the song's outcome, a sense of surprise at the presence of creativity (despite no previous musical experience), a sense of achievement in creating the CD, frustration over the one-hour per session time limit, which did not allow for the completion of song lyrics, and sadness for the fact that there would be no ongoing opportunities for music therapy after the project ended.

The researchers identified six themes that were most predominant in the songs. These themes were, in order from most prominent to least: concern for the world, mental illness and isolation, coping and survival, religion and spirituality, healing, and joy in teamwork.

The implications, as noted by the authors, go to the ways that creative self-expression improved a sense of participation within a community among the participants. The authors noted social interaction to be one of the biggest challenges for persons living with SEMI.

The authors noted that in the future they would offer more supports to participants in the completion of the questionnaires as they were too lengthy, and confusing in some parts. I agree that losing data from 12 of 29 participants was critical and needs to be addressed in the future. I also believe that because the participants enjoyed improvements in their quality of life and expressed sadness that the program did not last longer, it would

serve a great need in the community if music-related projects or clubs could be offered, including a community choir, or a song-writing club (as pondered by the authors) as a way for this group to continue connecting with one another.

The limitations of this study relate to its relatively small size, and proportionally large number of participants excluded from the analysis portion of the study, along with factors of time, both the overall length of the project—the actual music therapy of which was reduced by 20% at the beginning and end—and the length of each session, which participants expressed as too short to complete goals such as writing the lyrics to a song. Its results are not transferable for the reasons stated.

The multi-modal literacies that were evidenced by this study (e.g. writing songs, choosing musical styles, melodies, and instrumentation, and offering verbal feedback in group sessions) would translate well to the classroom, in my opinion, and would open a door for creative expression for both students with disabilities and typically developing students.

Hall (2013). The researcher's stated purpose was to "consider how embodied and emotional participation in activities and spaces of creative arts can build self-esteem and confidence for people with learning disabilities" (pp. 244-245). The concept of "learning disabilities," also embodied cognitive and developmental disabilities as well. Core domains in Hall's research included: "creative arts, social inclusion, belonging, learning disability, (and) gifting" (p. 244).

The two case studies, conducted within two community arts projects (Lung Ha's, which identifies as a community theater, and Garvald Edinburgh, which is framed as art therapy plus by the author), were selected by the researcher because both allowed for

exploration of the ways the artists who participate in them understood their own experience of the program, and the ways in which each allowed for an extension of art making activities to include gifting of art to the mainstream public (Lung Ha's by virtue of performances in mainstream, or in-between spaces, and Garvald, through distribution of their products in local shops and galleries, and exhibitions of the work). Neither program frames itself as "disability art," according to Hall.

The results of this study show that self-confidence and a sense of belonging are grown through the processes of participating in the making and gifting of art in any form. Art making done in safe, exclusionary spaces like Garvald's workshop spaces and Lung Ha's rehearsal rooms is also important, according to Hall (2013), for the emotional expression and sense of belonging the venues provide to participants. The gifting component serves to transmit the talent and emotion to non-disabled spaces. This involves risk-taking, according to the author, but acts as an important means of narrowing the gap that exists between disabled and mainstream cultures.

In my view, the implications for this study extend from the spaces within which each component piece of the process that encompasses art making and gifting are performed. These include the safe, exclusionary spaces of the workshops and rehearsal rooms, and move out toward what are referenced as "in-between spaces, which are considered "partially safe" (p. 256), in that they allow for interaction between included groups with those who are most often excluded. Hall (2013) also discussed that the exclusionary spaces, while safe, represent separateness and go to the invisibility of persons living in cultures of disability. The in-between spaces on the other hand, while appearing to bring disparate cultures of disability and mainstream together, are limited.

This, to me, represents cultural dissonance which is often framed in the context of the experience of minority and native cultures, but applies, to persons marginalized by disability as well.

Some of the limitations noted by Hall (2013) include the dominant sociocultural norms that limit the types of participation and forms of art and performance that are accepted by the mainstream culture. Like Outsider artists, the participants in this study—despite having found a community that allows them to self-identify rather than to be subjected to assigned disability identities—are still marginalized and stigmatized by many in the mainstream culture.

Visual and kinesthetic literacies were present in these two community arts projects. Additionally, the connections made between the participants in the projects and the larger public require oral literacies in order to communicate with the public about the art created, or to perform a role on stage—the latter representing interaction in a two-fold manner as participants from Lung Ha’s performed both *with* and *for* non-disabled community members. These arts projects serve as examples that could be replicated in other communities and at public schools in which inclusive practices allow for interaction between students with disabilities and their typically developing peers, both within and outside of school walls.

Hermon and Prentice (2003). The researchers sought to “critically examine the contribution of art and design education to the development of pupils’ positive attitudes towards ‘difference’ in the context of special education” (p. 269). Hermon and Prentice asserted that rather than seek inclusion in mainstream society, the year-long project encouraged students to dismantle perceptions of disability created by others and to

instead, create their own *different* identities. These identities of difference were framed in the context of contemporary fashion.

The results of this study indicated that students' recognition of difference was critical to the development of autonomy, inquiry, and opportunities for creativity for both the participant students and the teachers, who were challenged to step outside of typical curriculums. Students expressed excitement over the deconstruction of fashion, the making of something from nothing (nothing being discarded items, trash, and other found objects), the creation of a different identity, and the promotion of those different identities through media, method, and transformative constructs. The researchers also noted that the project served the intended purpose of overturning "a negative image of difference for those with visible and hidden disabilities" by promoting "inclusive values through art and design education" (p. 277).

The implications for this study are centered, in my view, on self-acceptance and celebration of uniqueness, something particularly difficult for adolescents with disabilities. While inclusion to the extent that it benefits students with disabilities is still desirable, allowing students to move beyond accepting their limitations and toward embracing them, allows for empowerment and for expectations of agency and autonomy in much the same way they are proffered upon students who are typically developing.

This study's limitations surround its small size, and the fact that the student participants attended a small segregated school. Transferability of the project to a larger mainstream setting should be considered in future research. I believe it would benefit all students to witness and recognize the new identities that students self-created. By conducting such a project in an inclusive, mainstream school, student participants would

have a ready (but smaller) audience in which to interact as their new selves before moving into the larger community beyond, which can sometimes be overwhelming for students who have lived in isolation.

Multiple literacies were present in this project, including: visual (through viewing of contemporary fashion in galleries in the local garment district, and by virtue of the sketches made as students designed their fashions), narrative (both verbal and written), and a new literacy located in the processes involved in the repurposing of found items into a new piece of clothing, as envisioned and created by the students. I'll call it GIFO literacy (garbage-in-fashion-out).

Huet (2011). The author's stated purpose of this study was to address workplace insecurity, anxiety and stress through effective staff and organizational support. The healthcare professions are noted as especially stressful and the current art-therapy organizational consultancy was done as an experiment with staff working in a high-stress secure unit for people with mental illnesses. The author acknowledged that there is debate about whether thematic analysis constitutes a research method in itself, but cited Braun and Clarke (2006) who do see it as a method in its own right, and believe it to be "the first qualitative method of analysis that researchers should learn as it provides core skills that will be useful for conducting many other forms of qualitative analysis" (Braun & Clark, as cited in Huet, p. 78).

The results of Huet's (2011) study found that art therapy is a useful tool for reflective practice and supervision, focus on work issues, and articulation and understanding of work-related matters, colleague issues, and client empathy. Two major themes arose: control versus containment, and working with fear/alienation among

clients/society/staff. The impact on staff was thought to be limited by low turn-out (only two of ten originally enrolled actually took part), and other factors of anxiety, and the contexts in which the sessions were offered—outside of the work environs. Other possible issues limiting the impact on staff surround the fact that the clients are also offenders, many of whom have committed violent crimes, so fear and unease on the part of staff is a natural outcome in the context of their jobs.

Despite the fact that the author noted limited impact on the staff, the implications for this study, in my opinion, extend to the outlet art offered to staff in the sense of escape. The therapeutic component to art therapy could only help as well, in my view.

Limitations, of course, are in part due to the very small size of the study. The author also expressed a need for art therapists working in the contexts of organizational team therapy to be trained to work with groups, as many have only done work with individuals.

Regarding the need for future research, Huet (2011) cited—in addition to her concerns referenced above—a plan for future work that would utilize the art present in the workplace, and (to the extent possible) conduct art therapy sessions during working hours. I also believe it would be interesting and helpful to have future research conducted in other types of organizations—especially, in school settings, where the stress of constantly-changing demands, budget cuts, and low pay call for an outlet of healing that art therapy, or art making could provide to teachers, administrators, and support staff. Adults charged with caring for others will be more likely to be empathetic and kind in that caretaking if they have a personal outlet. Perhaps if the staff in some of the hospitals,

noted in the previous section, had had opportunities for art making or art therapy, they would not have dismissed and thrown away the art of their patients.

The literacies present in this study are primarily visual in nature, but are multi-modal, and include “hand” literacy due to the intricate processes involved when one is making art. Like Berninger and Richards’ (2002) discussion of Language by Hand, which referenced the intricate structures in the brain that are required for writing to take place, there must be at least as many structures required to create art with the hands. Such literacies would apply to all the studies in this subsection of my review which goes to art making.

Joosa (2012). The researcher’s statement about this study indicated that it “foregrounds Vygotsky’s cultural-historical theory and semiotic analysis to attend to graphic and dramatic interplay of a young man with Down syndrome as a rich source for meaning making” (p. 26). The study is staged against Joosa’s work as a visual arts educator within the adult center where the research took place. Joosa’s work involved multiple domains, including meaning-making, visual arts with adults with Down syndrome, graphic-dramatic interplay, and Vygotsky’s cultural-historical theory.

The results of Joosa’s (2012) study, go to the recurring themes in Billy’s (the participant) artwork—superheroes, which the author asserted can be tied to cultural myths and legends. Iconic symbols were also prevalent and included houses, musical notes, and hearts as the three main symbols. Colors correlated with important cultural elements in Billy’s life, especially to his Chinese heritage. Billy’s art revealed what he could not speak to as a person without conventional literacy tools (he was almost non-verbal). It revealed a planner, and a person who valued routines, choice, and self-

determination. Despite Billy's non-verbal status, he made ready attempts to connect with another young man at the center through his art. Billy's graphic meaning-making, according to Joosa, goes to his value of goodness and relationships. Billy's meaning-making was also tied to his nighttime dreams, which he would later translate into art, referencing these dreams (ironically) as "his drama" (p. 29). Dreams, according to Joosa informed both Billy's fiction and non-fiction work.

The implications for this study go to the complementary interplay among different modes of art making (and literacy), including drawing, painting, writing, storytelling, and role playing. Viewing the art created by persons for whom conventional literacy is troublesome or absent entirely, and finding ways to share it with them can open wonderful windows of communication into the meaning making of a person whom one might not otherwise be privileged to get to know. In addition to understanding the social and cultural contexts that make up a person's world, a study such as Joosa's (2012) can allow an observer/participant to see changes over time. Joosa also asserted implications for the value of graphic make-believe play as "an important contributing factor for mental health" (p. 31), as the limitations of one's experience in larger culture may be mediated by art making.

As with most of the other studies within this subgroup of research, the size (involving only one participant and setting) make it non-transferrable. This I see as its major limitation.

Multi-modal literacies present in this study were acknowledged by Joosa (2012) (though not specifically referenced as literacies). She noted "listening to the narratives,

noting Billy's gestures and sequence of his expressive vocalisms" (his non-verbal communication), his "writing, speaking, drawing and painting..." (p. 31).

Kidd (2009). The author sought to examine "the impacts of various forms of marginalization and the meanings youths give their work" (p. 345). Kidd presented the artwork, poetry, and prose writing of homeless youths in New York City and Toronto. She engaged these young people by offering them an opportunity to do art after having completed a survey, but many of them already had sketchbooks and journals that were important objects in their daily lives. Kidd also disclosed an autoethnographic component to this study, in that she discussed her own experience in the world and the evolution of her own art making as a component of it. Kidd drew connections between Jean Dubuffet's Art Brut, and Cardinal's Outsider Art in discussing the work produced by the over 200 homeless youths involved in her study.

While results and implications were somewhat muddled separately and together, they go to the marginalization of homeless youths and society's judgment of youth (especially urban) generally. These issues are compounded by the "frightening" behaviors that sometimes accompany mental illness, often undiagnosed and untreated in youths living on the street. Some of the youths expressed a *need* for making art, writing/journaling, and/or performing music in order to cope with the experience of homelessness. They also described the ways art helped them to reach other "nonstreet persons," and saw art as the means for "crossing that divide" (p. 356).

The limitations of this study go primarily to two separate issues. First, the written report of it is, for lack of a better phrase, *all over the place*. Kidd (2009) starts out immediately with a discussion about a night spent on the streets with homeless youths,

then she's back to the literature, then she's talking about Jean Dubuffet... it goes on, and back and forth. While the study definitely has merit and was interesting enough for me that I read all 22 pages, it is certainly not replicable, and there are many "holes" in the reporting. The second potential limitation centers on what I see as a conflict of interest. Kidd, while conducting this multi-year study in two cities, was also doing individual psychotherapy with some of the youths involved (though I do not know if it was formal, or just part of how she talked with them on the streets), as well as co-leading a creative expression group for youths involved in the sex trade in Toronto. Because some of these youths may have been included in this study (and there are vague indications they were), I have concerns, going to issues of informed consent, personal information that is known by the researcher that may lead to bias, the psychotherapeutic treatment offered, and the context in which it was, and whether this treatment also involved providing access to needed medications—just to name a few. All that being said, however, the study held much promise for connecting with a group that is often ignored.

As to the need for future research, this would be a group for which a longitudinal study would benefit our understandings of how homelessness among youths evolves. Do they remain homeless, or is it a temporary condition? Do they tend to seek interventions if they have mental illness—therapy and/or medications—when they get older? How many of them return home, or make a home for themselves? What of their education—does their limited education lead to the majority of them living on public assistance? Do they commit disproportionate numbers of crimes? If so, what types of crimes do they commit?

Literacies are evidenced throughout this study, from the “hand literacy” that I suggested above, to other forms of visual literacy, written, verbal, and music literacies present throughout. Again, despite the shortcomings of this study, the ways that different literacy modes interact and complement art making are evidenced.

Miller et al. (1998). The authors’ stated objective of this research was “to describe the clinical, neuropsychological, and imaging features of five patients with frontotemporal dementia (FTD) who acquired new artistic skills in the setting of dementia” (p. 978). The authors expressed interest in this research due to reports of sudden creativity developing with the onset of dementia. While the original study began with 69 patients who were interviewed regarding their visual abilities, only five became visual artists, and all of these had a specific type of dementia in FTD, which involves anterior temporal lobes, but spares the frontal cortex.

The results of this study affirmed a positive connection between the specific type of dementia, FTD, in which, according to the authors “visual skills were spared but language and social skills were devastated” (p. 978). Therefore, the artistic creativity was always within a visual realm, and never verbal. Another interesting observation made by the doctors (all MDs or Ph.Ds) was that in each case, “despite progressive cognitive and social impairment, they (the patients with FTD and artistic ability) showed increasing interest in the fine detail of faces, objects, shapes, and sounds” (Miller et al., 1998, p. 980). Their interest in art was noted as being “an intense preoccupation,” and they were also willing to “repeat the work until a perfect product” resulted (p. 980), which served in all cases to improve the quality of the art work. Because copying skills are often left

intact, patients were able to continue painting, drawing, or taking photographs even as the stages of their dementia became well advanced.

Additionally, in discussions regarding dominant vs. non-dominant hemisphere dysfunction, disproportionate numbers of the patients who had experienced a sudden onset of artistic ability, had dominant hemisphere dysfunction. The doctors hypothesized that this might be due to selective degeneration of the anterior temporal and orbital frontal cortexes, leading to disinhibition of visual systems such that artistic creativity was possible.

The implications of these findings go to large numbers of people whose lives are impacted by dementia each year. According to the authors, FTD accounts for as much as 25% of all dementias. Because dementia is defined as an irreversible deterioration of intellect (commonly referenced as *insanity*), this study offers a means for its sufferers to maintain a mode of communication and an involvement with the world despite the ultimate, complete devastation of their abilities to communicate in conventional ways, such as speaking, or writing.

There is much in the way of future research that should be conducted as a result of this study. First, studies that go to the ways in which episodic and working memory (spared in FTD) may serve patients as communicative tools—all of whom should, in my view, be tested as a standard of care during early onset of dementia to determine whether theirs is the FTD variety. The person diagnosed, as well as families and loved ones may then be better prepared to not only expect the deterioration of certain verbal and social skill sets, but also for the possibility of heightened visual ones. Finally, the doctors noted “disinhibition, hallucinations, and aphasia are reported in outsider artists” and suggested

that for some, these symptoms may be indications that they “suffered from the temporal lobe variant of FTD” (p. 981). Therefore, this study may evidence some of what others in the realm of Outsider art have long maintained—that there is a positive correlation between mental illness and creativity.

This study, like most in this review, is limited in terms of its generalizability and transferability (both quantitative and qualitative methodologies being incorporated) due to its small size.

Literacies evidenced in this research are specifically visual owing to the psychopathology of this particular type of dementia. This literacy, however, cannot be overstated for its importance to those diagnosed with FTD, and the potential it might hold for their ability to maintain a sense of purpose and (we might hope) joy in the midst of such a devastating diagnosis.

Sinason (2007). This research drew “on the personal experiences of ‘Outsider artists’ who find themselves driven to produce their art by an agency that they do not know or understand” (p. 9). Sinason framed this agency as an internal other and suggested that it is present in all of us, but it takes on a new dimension for those living with psychiatric illnesses. This research is framed against the experiences of two Outsider artists, one (Valerie) who takes medication and acknowledges that this is the reason she is able to maintain a job; she also states that her art was much better when she was in the throes of schizophrenia, and that the medication does nothing to help her with her relationships to the world. The second artist, Ben, suggests that the freedom to respond spontaneously to the world through his art is critical to his putting forth his best work. Like Valerie, he believes this spontaneous response occurs best without medicinal

interventions. Both of these artists understand that the larger culture within which they live does not welcome them.

The results of this study are somewhat difficult to extrapolate because they are convoluted (somewhat) by too many discussions about dichotomous philosophies regarding the psyche and positions of psychoanalytic development that may or may not allow for the presence of an internal other. While these discussions add depth to the ideas being propounded by Sinason (2007), they should not be subsumed under the heading “The inner and outer world of the artist,” as the conversations, going on for pages, serve to deviate from the focus on the two Outsider artists being discussed in the study. In my opinion, these philosophical arguments should occur within a subsection expressly devoted to them.

Despite this, what I was able to glean is that Sinason believes that what separates Outsider artists like Valerie and Ben from the rest of us is their willingness to respond to the internal other, whereas the rest of us deny it. Sinason (2007) cited the work of German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889 – 1976), who differentiated these two as *beings*, referencing all entities in the world, as opposed to *being*, said to be the ongoing nature of the entities’ existence. The discussion of Heidegger goes on from there, and is followed by discussions about the beliefs of notable others.

Because, according to Sinason (2007), even Freud and Jung could not agree about the structure of the psyche, the implications for his research are, in my view, muddled where the drive of Outsider artists is concerned. In essence, I read this as a kind of *no conclusion* conclusion. Because I could not understand or speak to Sinason’s research results in his words, I tried to create my own version of what he was saying. For me, it is

understood through the work of yet another philosopher cited in Sinason, the Russian, Mikhail Bakhtin (1895 – 1975), with whom I am somewhat familiar for his work in linguistic discourse, having cited him in my Master’s thesis on genre (Semsch, 2009).

According to Bakhtin’s dialogic consciousness, we each have two voices; one steps up and tries to make sense of the world in a way that the other can respond to; while the second voice is fluid and adapts to the situation. The second is anxiety-ridden because it must lose itself at least in that moment. As an analogy, I think of it this way, the second “voice” is like the street-savvy person who finds himself at a professorial cocktail party and adapts, but loses himself in the process out of necessity. This is also like the artist outsider who finds himself exposed to the larger culture, and must find a voice to speak to it. I hope that is what Sinason (2007) was saying.

Again, visual literacies are prevalent in this research, though, unfortunately, Sinason (2007) does not speak to as much of the art and the artists as I would have liked.

Stronach-Buschel (1990). In this research study, the author framed “current thinking on trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in children” by focusing on an art therapy case study involving a “young girl exposed to chronic trauma in a dysfunctional family” (p. 48), in order to better understand the “impaired sensory threshold,” that often results in “hypervigilance” (p. 48). Stronach-Buschel noted that the case of “Michelle,” while representing the experience of only one child, is representative of what she (the author/researcher) sees often within the art work of traumatized children. The author treated Michelle for an undisclosed number of months during weekly art therapy sessions.

Stronach-Buschel's (1990) results indicated a number of findings. Because Michelle was "constantly on guard" (p. 50) from threats (abuse, neglect, and witnessing of violence), her ego could not develop because she was simply too exhausted. Therefore, she feared her own anger, or specifically, her ability to control it, because the adults in her life could not control theirs and these were the only examples she had seen. Michelle believed that if she were ill, or hurt enough, her mom would rescue her in a way she never had. This belief led to self-injurious behavior for a period of time. Art therapy helped Michelle to gain a sense of power and control over her feelings and her life. Previous self-injury was replaced by art making and the symbolism contained within it.

The implications for Michelle's experience and the results she was able to glean through art therapy, for me, go to art making serving as a mediator between Michelle's world and the larger one she lived in. Art therapy practices, then, would benefit other students in our classrooms, who like Michelle, exist in trauma and without the tools to cope with it. Art therapy, according to the author, allows for symbolic representations and exploration of conflicts through art, rather than through self-injurious behaviors. For me, these self-injurious behaviors are evidenced in troubled adolescents by virtue of eating disorders, cutting, experimentation with drugs and alcohol, and violence committed against siblings and peers.

Despite the author's assertion that Michelle's case is representative of many other traumatized children, this research, and its inclusion of a single case study, is limited and its results not transferrable for that reason.

Literacies evidenced in art therapy by Michelle include both verbal and visual literacies (or hand literacy, as I suggested earlier). As Michelle completed her artworks,

she was able to narrate stories to accompany each piece and was also able to share the story of Pinocchio and Gepetto with the art therapist in order to help her understand the meaning behind her (Michelle's) sculpture of a whale with Gepetto and Pinocchio inside. For Michelle, it was a metaphor for love, Pinocchio turning himself into a real boy because he loved Gepetto so much.

Wexler (2002). The author conducted three separate pilot studies, which she described as “beginning with a broad base for inquiry, reflected in purposeful conversation not scripted beforehand” (p. 342), and ending in a final study in which “data collection was expanded to include in-depth case studies” (p. 342), all in order to understand the experiences of young people at the Harlem Horizon Art Studio (HHAS), as they were challenged to deal with “significant change” resulting from long-term and chronic disability. Unlike the painting therapy programs that are well-known in Swiss hospitals, and which are run by painting therapists (see Carrigan, 1993), HHAS was described by the author as a kind of bridge between art therapy and art education, though Bill Richards, the professional artist who runs the program, is neither a teacher nor an art therapist. Wexler cited Lowenfeld's view of art as a means of achieving selfhood “for all developing and growing human beings” (p. 341) in grounding her own research and the beliefs of Richards. In HHAS, painting is used as a tool to support and encourage adolescents (primarily male) who need to recover “a sense of intentionality—lost in chronic hospitalization—through self-motivation” (p. 343). The participants in the program, especially during its earliest years, were not expected to make improvements (physically or otherwise) beyond those already made in their healing process. Many were in wheelchairs and undergoing ongoing care in the hospital where HHAS is located.

Wexler discussed the results of her research in terms of the growth experience by the young people involved in the painting program at HHAS. She noted that long-term goal establishment was not previously encouraged for many of the participants, but the program helped them to experience growth not only as artists, but also as individuals for whom goals could be met as they came to understand solutions to life that “capitalize on their limitations” (p. 344). In the cases of one participant, Moses, his miraculous physical recovery (the doctors had no medical explanation for his recovery from quadriplegia) was explained by the author through the lens of Arnheim’s isomorphism. Wexler (2002) explained the theory as one “of aesthetic empathy based on the premise that emotion is not separate from perception and cognition” (p. 345) and tying art making to the way one perceives the world. Further, according to the theory, “our internal bodily experience of the world and the materials we use to concretize them is an external representation of our body state” (p. 345). For Bill Richards, the response to the materials and the creative state set in motion the necessary chain reaction “of becoming, growth, and evolution...” and eventually, “a mutual response which affects our body state” (p. 345). Participant Moses, now an accomplished artist and college graduate who works with young people at HHAS, he sees painting as the genesis of his recovery.

For Ben, another participant in Wexler’s case study, the results—while less dramatic—spoke to the ways that complementary forms of art (and literacy) can make whole, a person whose experience of only one or the other could not. Ben had strong verbal skills, but was not a particularly gifted visual artist. Still, he credited the program at HHAS for his very survival. Ben’s disability will likely never allow for independent

living, but the tools he was provided through HHAS offered him a sense of purpose as he worked toward becoming a rap artist.

The implications of this research speak to the ways that we perceive and construct disability. Both Moses and Ben found healing in emotional, psychological, and physical ways that other forms of therapy could not offer them. The implications for others who exist in long-term, chronic states of disability are that all avenues should be explored with regard to the healing process. Sometimes, without explanation, the body may be healed through art, as it was for Moses. Sometimes, as is the case with Ben and many others, there are complicating factors of poverty that may get in the way of healing entirely. Still, there is improvement in the quality of life when there is involvement and purpose in it, and we should look to that for all young people, with or without disabilities.

In a broader sense, the implications of this research go to what it has offered the community it serves in the form of young people learning “how to focus, how to see a work to completion, and how to direct their energy to accomplish their goal of making a better painting” (Wexler, p. 351), which may be synthesized to the larger world in which they live, entering fully aware that they are capable of achieving their dreams.

Limitations to this study surround the fact that it is a program that exists in many respects because it is supported by doctors who understand a need to respond to an extremely high incidence of trauma, injury and loss among Harlem youth. Additionally, Bill Richards, who runs the program has the freedom to do so as he sees fit. While the program’s major tenets may be transferable to other venues, the absence of a supportive organization, and the uniqueness of Bill Richards’ style and outlook make it unlikely as replicable.

Literacies present in this study were revealed as visual and as encompassing, if you will, a newly-developed literacy of self, such that if literacy is about understanding and communicating within a certain realm, then the young people who participate in the painting program at HHAS develop not only skills within the realm of visual literacy, but also more importantly, a literacy of self. Wexler's final sentence in her study is worth noting here. "The children struggle, just as healthy adults do, to better understand what is going on inside themselves" (p. 352). I know that struggle.

Culminating discussion for this subgroup. Without exception, the results of every study reviewed within this subgroup indicated that participation in art making had some measure of positive impact on healing, self-empowerment, and self-esteem for persons with disabilities and/or persons living in a marginalized status. For people living with, or caring for persons with disabilities, art making was positively correlated to improved quality of life (Hall, 2013), greater resiliency (Stronach-Buschel, 1990), improved healing (Wexler, 2002), reduction in loneliness and social isolation (Sagan, 2008), reduction in depression and anxiety (Sagan, 2007), improved sense of belonging and purpose (Wexler), increased literacy skills (Sagan, 2007; 2008; 2011), improved artistic skills (Joosa, 2012; Miller et al., 1998), improved motivation toward self-determination (Grocke et al., 2009), new or improved sense of self (Hermon & Prentice, 2003; Kidd, 2009), new or improved belief in creative self-potential (Hall; Hermon & Prentice; Miller et al.), and newly understood belief in the value and importance of one's contribution to society (Huet, 2011). Many of the results are positively correlated with multiple domains discussed above.

Kidd (2009) and Sinason (2007), while convoluted and difficult to comprehend in some respects, both sought to include marginalized groups encompassing homelessness and mental illness—groups whose history of stigmatization and ill-conceived perceptions of identity, need more positive exposure, and more research to be better understood and welcomed by members of mainstream society. Mental illness was also a focus in Grocke et al. (2009), and Huet (2011), though the Grocke study involved working directly with persons with SEMI, and Huet sought to help the caregivers who work with them to find a mode of dealing with the fear and anxiety that accompany their jobs. Grocke et al.'s approach was through music, and Huet's through visual art, but both saw results worthy of further study.

Further study is also merited and holds huge potential for our understanding of mental illness as it is manifested in certain types of dementia, and consequently for those currently categorized as Outsider artists, as was demonstrated in Miller et al.'s (1998) research into the sudden onset of artistic ability in patients with FTD. Since the study used in this review was conducted 16 years ago, it is my hope that I can locate more recent research that will elaborate upon that one. I found it particularly fascinating that there may actually be a scientifically provable connection between the creative genius-mental illness link alluded to for centuries now.

Implications for students in our classrooms loom large where this particular group of studies is concerned. As we move into yet another new era within public education (ergo, the Common Core Curriculum), students with disabilities will be underserved if educators are not aware of the many ways that art making and literacy learning can complement one another. There is no standardized test of which I am aware that

measures joy (although Grocke et al., 2009, had quantitative data correlating increased joy to music), nor are there standardized tests for the sense of belonging one feels when part of a community of shared experiences, nor for creativity (as was demonstrated in Grocke et al., 2009; Hall, 2012; Hermon & Prentice, 2003; Huet, 2011, Joosa; 2012; and Wexler, 2002, in this subgroup, and in McLeod & Ricketts, 2013, and Sagan, 2007; 2008; 2013 in the subgroup before), but as educators, we must refuse to teach to the existing tests without also beginning to explore more fully the many ways that art making and literacy can complement one another for students with disabilities in our classrooms. It is, therefore, incumbent on us to continue the work being done by researchers, to share it with colleagues, and to ensure that students with disabilities are both challenged to learn, and gifted with creativity, just as we are taught to do for typically developing students. Pedagogical laziness is not an option. Besides, making art is fun.

A final note on art making and resiliency. I maintain that many of the texts, essays, reviews, and studies cited throughout this paper, and especially those reviewed in this subsection, are evidence that art making promotes resiliency for persons living with disabilities. One definition of *resilient* is “the capability of a body or material to resume its shape, position etc. after being subjected to stress” (The New Lexicon Webster’s, 1992). As a stigmatized and isolated group in the mainstream society, persons with disabilities must be shown paths to resiliency in order that they may “resume a shape” that will allow them to lead more fulfilling lives. Life should be an affirming and joyous experience for everyone. Hannah Arendt, quoted in Wix (2010), spoke best, in my view, to the value of art for the individual creating it, and for the world enjoying it. Arendt said, “Without memory and the representation of memory in the tangible object (which in turn

stimulates memory), the currency of living exchange, the spoken word and the thought, would disappear without a trace” (unnumbered page).

Literacy development in adolescents and adults with disabilities. I opened the discussion that encompasses the entirety of the research problem going to the relationships among art making, and literacy in adolescents and adults with disabilities by discussing the importance of an expanded view of literacy that moves beyond conventional ideations of reading and writing only. This expanded view, for my purposes, pluralizes the concept of literacy to one of multi-modal literacies, which serve to open doors for students with disabilities to participate in literacy communities in the modes to which they can best respond, and in ways that provide choice and the means to participate in their communities at school and beyond. Often, these literacies embrace the visual (art, if you will), and may be a positive or negative influence on creativity, as is noted in Cardinal (2009), not included in this review due to its status as an essay, but important nonetheless for what it tells us about the potential for literacy influencing art and vice-versa. Cardinal relayed the well-known story of Nadia, a 6 year-old child with autism, whose drawing was already prolific at the age of three and continued uninterrupted until around age 6, when reading, and writing, and math became part of her routine. Her art changed in that it became “normalized,” and met “the standard for fidelity in Western culture” (p. 1462). Thus, a child already artistically gifted where visual art was concerned, began to fall in line with expectations and limitations placed upon her by conventions. This is a danger with traditional literacy instruction. Art making should never be forsaken by literacy. Rather, it should be served and complemented by it.

In this subsection, I review five studies (Curwood et al., 2013; Fisher & Lapp, 2013; Lacey et al., 2007; Parker, 2013; Roswell & Kendrick, 2013) all literacy-focused, but which all allow for creativity within the realm of literacy learning. In the summary portion of each, I will share the type of literacy upon which the study was focused, and as was done in the last subgroup where literacies evidenced was discussed at the end of each summary, I will discuss the creativity/art making potential. As with the two previous subsections, a culminating discussion for the entire subgroup will round out this subsection.

Curwood et al. (2013). While three separate ethnographic studies going to the literacies involved in fan-based affinity sites were conducted, the purpose for each of them, as stated by the authors, was the same in that they sought, through “systematic observation, to gain insight into the dynamics of communication and semiotic production in each online affinity space” (p. 680). Multiple interviews with focal participants were also conducted, and artifacts collected. While the focal participants who take part in affinity spaces (encompassing web-based sites in which fans of books, video games, and music can communicate with one another over shared passions—in the case of this study, over *The Hunger Games*, *Neopets*, and *The Sims*), were not identified as having disabilities, they were also *not* so identified, and students with disabilities participate in online affinity spaces at least as frequently as their typically developing peers (in my own experience). Because these websites serve millions of adolescents and young adults, it is important that we incorporate them into discussions about expanding notions of literacy. This study represented multi-modal literacies, including digital media, conventional

reading and writing of fiction and non-fiction, creative writing, role-playing, and graphics.

The results of this study indicated that schools and affinity spaces both serve to teach literacy skill sets to persons who operate within the realm of online affinity spaces. Curwood et al.'s (2013) focal participant working within *The Hunger Games* affinity space cited information and creative writing learned in school as helpful to her roles in the affinity space, where she hopes to spread her love of reading through her participation as moderator on one of the sites, as well as writing news stories, reviews, and participating in a "Fireside Chat podcast" (p. 681). Magnifico's focal participant, Sheena, cited friendship, feedback and opportunities for artistic creativity through multi-modal compositions in the forms of stories, poetry, and profiles as reasons she participates in the *Neopets* affinity spaces. Magnifico noted these as social narrative and editor-mediated publications that will serve Sheena well as she navigates the complexities of literacy at the college level and beyond. Lammers' focal participant, Eve, previously used LEGOs to satisfy her love of architecture, but found greater satisfaction by participating in *The Sims* affinity spaces where she has opportunities to create entire communities, including interior design. Eve now has two *Sims* series books to her credit and has become an expert, according to Lammers, in digital image editing. Eve cited creativity as her motivation. All three participants cited the number of readers and the possibilities for instant feedback as motivating to their desire to write and create art in affinity sites.

The implications, according to the authors, are centered around the ways in which young people thrive if given enough multi-genre opportunities and diverse modes of learning. Indeed, my own research and classroom pedagogical practices are often

centered around the study of genre as a tool for motivating reluctant readers whether for reasons involving perceived lack of interest in reading generally, or because of disability impediments to reading. My master's thesis spoke to the study of genre in the classroom, and included an entire section on genre study in classrooms with emergent literacy learners (Semsch, 2009). Multi-genre reading and writing have proven, just as they did for the authors in Curwood et al., to me to be motivational tools for the teaching and learning of literacy.

The limitations of this study, and within the realm of this research problem, go to the lack of specifically-focused examples of the ways fan-based affinity spaces could be used with students with moderate or severe disabilities. However, I see this as having potential in terms of the empowerment it could offer students whom I could invite to show me and others in the classroom how to navigate and participate in the sites.

In the future, more teachers reporting on the use of online affinity spaces within the contexts of the classroom would be helpful and would expand on this new area of literacy.

Art making was evidenced in each of the three studies in the forms of graphic design, character creation, performance art through role playing, and (in the case of Eve) architectural and interior designs (which also have components of math literacy).

Fisher and Lapp (2013). The authors cited as the reason for their research the desire to learn “how we could teach all of our students, especially our African American students, about language variation without disparaging their homes and communities” (p. 635). Utilizing contrasting analysis, an instructional approach usually used in the teaching of foreign languages, the authors sought to increase the percentage of students

for whom English is an additional language, and those whose home registers are AAVE, to understand the academic English register present on the California state English test, which all public school students must pass to graduate from high school. The authors worked with participant teachers to enhance teacher modeling, productive group work, independent work, and other classroom practices already being utilized by them. The study included six teachers in 12 sections of 9th, 10th, and 11th grade English, over a three-year period during which time a minimum of 15 minutes per class session was devoted to curriculum the authors referenced as “talking like the test” (p. 639).

The results of this study were that all students who had previously failed the test, or who had not previously taken it, passed the test that represented one of the hurdles needed to be overcome for high school graduation. Of 91 students, 97% passed the test on the first attempt after classroom interventions had been implemented (those representing both students who had and had not previously attempted the test), and the remaining 3% (all students who had not attempted the test before) passed it on the second attempt. Therefore, 100% of the students in the study passed the test in one or two attempts.

Implications for expanded use of contrastive analysis instruction for students whose home registers differ from the academic English register present in virtually all standardized tests should include the four principles for use as set out by the author. These encompass: students’ understanding of why the register of school is necessary (expanding it to interactions in life outside of school), equal value and respect being shown for both academic and home languages, language-based social and academic interactions being inclusive elements of instruction, and scaffolded language and

conceptual experiences provided to students and based on their own developing ideas, areas of confusion, and questions.

The limitations for this study surround the issue of time demands and support during classroom curriculum in which a teacher might choose to utilize contrastive analysis instruction. Also, because the instruction in this study took place over three years, and was exclusive to speakers of AAVE, I am unsure as to its transferability in classes with different make-ups. While not specifically addressed to students labeled as having disabilities, students whose home registers are different from the registers prevalent in school are certainly dis-abled by the language barriers that prevent them from fully grasping what is being taught, and from participating in verbal and written responses with a high-degree of efficacy.

Students in this class were given opportunities for creativity in the forms of “electronic art” (my term) opportunities through YouTube and PhotoBooth presentations. As well, visual images were used often to enhance understanding during code-switching exercises and reading activities.

Lacey et al. (2007). The authors cited as the ultimate aim of their study the seeking out “of examples of good practice in teaching and learning literacy that includes students with severe learning difficulties (SLDs) and disseminate themas widely as possible” (p. 149). Their research involved 35 schools, 122 lessons observed by 61 teachers, 10 focus groups and five expert witnesses. The researchers also used “desk-based research designed to locate ‘good practice,’ in order to establish a sort of baseline for their research and to ensure that they were all in agreement and understood what good

practice looked like. They also consulted with five expert witnesses who helped them within the realm of understanding good practice.

The results of the study found that “few students with severe learning difficulties are likely to learn to read and write conventionally... and teachers may be relying too much on teaching traditional literacy to them” (p. 149). Expectations of progression from object of reference to photos to symbols were present in some schools regardless of the severity of the disability. In at least one school, this expectation remained despite having only had one child in eight years become able to transition through all three phases of progression. The importance of symbols was most evident and was stated as being emphasized due to the prevalence of symbols in the world. Resources most evident were conventional and accessible texts. Least evident resources were moving images, drama, and storytelling.

Inclusive literacy practices that were observed (but in a very limited—possibly only one—settings) included writing the weekend news on the computer, storyboarding, web searches with picture downloads, acting out of a book (all students regardless of disability had a role), viewing of Shakespeare and retelling, Bag Book creations and more. Commitment to conventional literacy was evident and cited as being based on government directives by many of the teachers in the focus groups. They also cited teacher training as an issue, with most of the teachers who were observed having received training in mainstream schools and classrooms.

Regarding implications, the authors suggested that if inclusive literacy practices are to be embraced, there is a great need for teacher training in the skills necessary to utilize them. They also cited as “useful” the exploration of teaching and learning around

alternative media, including “still and moving images, live theater and storytelling, digital technology and the arts.” They noted that while some teachers are already using these tools, there is much room for further development of their usefulness within the curriculum for students with SLDs. The authors noted that a frequent question by participants was whether and when it should be decided that conventional literacy for a given student with SLDs was not appropriate and should be abandoned for more inclusive forms of literacy such as the ones suggested above. Despite evidence that conventional literacy may not be a suitable goal for all students, most participants expressed concern at abandoning this ideal even after they acknowledged that “independent literacy was highly unlikely” (p. 157). Notable was the fact that teachers of older students were more likely to take a pragmatic view and recognize that some students may never learn to read and write conventionally. These teachers, however, most often “focused on life skills or they concentrated on symbolic approaches” (p. 157) rather than turning to non-conventional/inclusive literacy approaches.

Future research in this area might involve a mixed-methods quantitative non-experimental comparative/qualitative interpretive phenomenology approach (as was utilized in Miller et al., 1998) in order to determine the efficacy of various conventional and inclusive literacy practices for students with SLDs.

Opportunities for art making were evidenced in some of the classrooms in which inclusive literacy practices were occurring. This opportunity for creativity included: role playing, puppet making, character dress-up/performance, and making masks.

Parker (2013). The author’s stated purpose for this study was the addressing of “the relationship between media creation, critical literacy, and representation within

student filmmaking” (p. 668). The author used Lewison, Flint, & Van Sluys’, 2002 definition of critical literacy as encompassing “analyzing sociopolitical issues, disrupting commonplace understanding about people and our world” (p. 668). In addition to choosing this study for its relevance in terms of alternative literacies (digital and media literacies were connected to conventional verbal and written literacies), I also chose it for the content of the unit being studied by the class (a 12th grade seminar class that was cross-curricular and required elements of visual arts and media production), which was a Borderlands Unit posing two guiding questions. The first question: “What are the major benefits and drawbacks of living in the United States for Latino immigrants?” The second question: “What factors affect their success or ability to succeed in U.S. society?” The deeply relevant material, combined with the multi-modal, digital literacy components were extremely intriguing to me as a teacher of students who represent roughly 90% of the student body I teach each year.

Results, as reported by the author evidenced the importance of opportunities for student voice (especially where marginalized students are concerned), plus the importance of the cross-curricular and multi-modal literacy present for student engagement and relativity to the larger world outside of school. Additionally, students learned responsibility in both their commitment and engagement with their projects and via their relationships between themselves and their subjects. The author noted:

an essential component of critical literacy within a participatory culture is that authors develop meta-awareness, a “life skill,” for the choices they make within the processes of media production and how these choices can have an impact on others. (Parker, 2013, p. 673)

Implications of this and any study involving critical literacy go far to impress upon students the importance of ethics, and commitment to social values—especially relevant to students who may be marginalized due to ecological factors of ethnic minority status, poverty, and/or disability. I also note the implications for students with disabilities in an approach like this one which involved multi-modal literacies, and much reliance on peers through group work. Both of these factors would give students with disabilities opportunities for participation that go far beyond those tending to be existent in more conventional classroom curriculum formats, especially in the upper grades of high school that tend to emphasize academic reading and writing.

The limitations of this study are its relatively small size and the particularities of the class, which could possibly be replicated, but only with extensive communication among interested teachers and educators currently teaching the class.

Many opportunities for art making in multiple formats were evidenced in this seminar class. These included visual arts, media production, set design, role-playing/character development, and personal interactive creative literacies (another from me) in which communication is required among everyone working on the video, as well as between filmmaker and subject, and in which the context (filmmaking) allows for dramatic performance art on an individual and collaborative level.

Roswell and Kendrick (2013). The researchers in this study sought to bring to light the critical need for the visual in what they referenced as “boys’ hidden literacies” (p. 587). Roswell and Kendrick’s focus was “on tangible ways of framing visuals to foster and critically frame literacy work” (p. 587) for boys. The authors, early in the study, went straight to an ongoing issue wherein perceptions of literacy are broadening

and expanding (to include many already presented in this subsection), “in the eyes of many teachers, literacy still widely refers to reading and writing achievement” (p. 587). They further suggested that literacy is embedded with practices that include play, art and gaming), but that these are “invisible” because they are not defined by educators as literacy. They cite the growth in underachievement by boys on standardized tests as further evidence of the need for a broader understanding and use of alternative literacies. The authors cited Tapscott’s 2009 description of Net Geners goes to the adolescent boys of whom they speak. According to Tapscott, Net Geners have grown up “digital” and may be much more visual than their parents. “A study of Net Gen college students showed that they learned much better from visual images than from text-based ones” (as cited in Roswell & Kendrick, p. 588).

The results of the authors’ two case studies on boys’ hidden literacies indicated that when given multiple opportunities for multi-modal literacies with an emphasis on the visual, verbal and written literacies came somewhat naturally as an accompanying component for students who were writing- and reading-resistant during more traditional literacy approaches. Boys respond to language and learning literacy best when there is a visual component present. The authors further asserted that visual texts offer great potential for students’ learning. Also, the visual promotes student literacy and agency by making what was previously hidden, visible—something not achievable by linguistics alone.

The implications for visual literacy cut a wide swath where the literacy classroom is concerned. In fact, they have the potential to transform literacy instruction. I personally see great potential for visual components being included in standardized tests as a means

of clarifying written material for all students, but especially as beneficial to students with disabilities and those with language barriers.

Limitations to this study are its small size. However, the case study participants were inclusive of a student in a general education classroom, and one in an English support setting, therefore the results may be more transferable beyond this study.

An art component was present throughout all literacy activities since the emphasis was on the visual components. Art making was also present in the lesson in which students were given disposable cameras to document images that were important in their lives (which they later wrote narratives to). I have done this in my classroom and students responded with great enthusiasm and I did not lose a single camera over three years (though finances have prevented me from doing the work for the past four years).

Culminating discussion relevant to this subgroup. This particular subgroup of studies lend themselves readily to comparisons in that they all involved inclusive, non-conventional, alternative forms of literacy that exemplify what was discussed at the beginning of this section regarding the need for expanded *definitions* of literacy. Reports abound on the declining literacy rates of our students in 2013 as compared to decades past. Such reports are misleading, however, because they almost always go to only three domains of knowledge—reading, writing, and math—while newly understood literacies are, in fact, not only relevant, but did not exist in the decades from which we draw such comparisons. After reading the studies that encompass this subgroup, I am left to wonder why we lend any credence to such statistics.

Literacy is a living, fluid concept that must be adapted as our world evolves. It has changed in the last decade, and it has certainly changed in the last several. What has

not changed are the formats of standardized tests, and the conventions measured within them. We would not have expected students in the mid-twentieth century to take standardized tests in the dominant language register of medieval times, yet we are essentially asking students in the 21st century—Net Geners as referenced in Roswell and Kendrick (2013)—who were raised entirely in a digital, visual, 30-second clip, kind of world to take tests in a language that is less accessible to many of them. What is apparent to me is that those in charge of creating the tests need to either adapt their thinking to a more expanded notion of literacy, or pass the reins of testing to those who are more educated and experienced in the forms of literacy that are encompassing of visual, digital, and multi-modal. Until then, it is up to teachers to ensure that students understand the register of the tests, the impact of which was well demonstrated in Fisher and Lapp (2013), while also providing ample opportunities for expanding on all of the other literacies that are relevant (and interesting) in the lives of their students, including some registers which are not, but should be respected in the classroom as well.

Literacy as a measure of human value was never relevant. Literacy as a concept that is antiquated and irrelevant and is *still* a measure of human value is a violation of human rights as discussed by Keefe and Copeland (2011), Luckasson (2006), and others. That we can have literacy and art making embracing one another like the long-lost lovers they have always been, is a gift not to be frittered away.

Synthesis and discussion for this section. My research problem sought to better understand the relationships between art making literacy, and adolescents and adults with disabilities in school and community settings. The studies reviewed in this section went

to these relationships and established a positive correlation between art making and literacy learning.

Themes present among the nineteen studies reviewed surrounded isolation, loss, and loneliness (Grocke et al., 2009; Hall, 2013; Huet, 2011; Kidd, 2009; McLeod & Ricketts, 2009; Sagan, 2008; Wexler, 2002), with emphasis placed on the mediating impact of art making, especially when it is done in group settings that allow for community-building in the context of personal meaning-making. These then, became predominant themes in the research as well (Grocke et al., 2009; Hall, 2013; Hermon & Prentice, 2003; Joosa, 2012; McLeod & Ricketts, 2009; Wexler, 2002). Opportunity for social interaction was noted as one of the major challenges for people living with long-term mental illness in Sagan (2008), and among homeless youth, as noted in Kidd (2009), whose study on homelessness found factors of loneliness and isolation to be predominant themes.

Additionally, marginalization, either alone or co-occurring with disability, was both a predictor of depression and a thematic presence in several studies (Huet, 2011; Kidd, 2009; Sagan, 2007; 2008; 2011; Stronach-Buschel, 1990; Wexler, 2002). Depression was a large part of the impetus for the creation of HHAS, according to Wexler, who explained that in 1989, then Chief Pediatrician Barbara Barlow had already implemented a pediatric Injury Prevention Program (IPP) because of the extremely high incidence of traumatic injury in the Harlem area in which the hospital was located. Dr. Barlow and other concerned Staff, according to Wexler, recognized “the inevitable depression that children experience during long periods of hospitalization” (p. 340), and sought to create a program that addressed that specifically. The result was HHAS.

Where literacy is concerned, the studies reviewed (Curwood et al., 2013; Fisher & Lapp, 2013; Lacey et al., 2007; Parker, 2013; Roswell & Kendrick, 2013) serve as exemplars of the need for thinking outside the box of conventional literacy instruction as the only means to bringing literacy learning to students who are marginalized by language (Fisher & Lapp; Roswell & Kendrick), and disability (Lacey), but also in general education classrooms where the curriculum is easily accommodated to students with disabilities (Curwood et al.; Roswell & Kendrick). Students with disabilities, like their typically developing peers, have grown up in a digital, visual, moving image world, and for whom learning often best takes place within those domains. In my view, special promise is held for literacy learning within the context of online affinity spaces (Curwood et al.) an area that is currently enigmatic to me. But, I look forward to learning more about this medium, and see it as a great opportunity for reciprocal teaching and learning, which has been shown to be motivational and empowering for students.

Language barriers serve as a means of isolation and marginalization and while they may not fall within the domains of disability as specifically understood by most people, they serve as a dis-abling factor for community participation (Fisher & Lapp, 2013; McLeod & Ricketts, 2009). Language barriers may be framed in the context of a first language that is other than English (McLeod & Ricketts), or a home register that is so markedly different from the formal academic English spoken in much of mainstream society, and within the contexts of schools (and especially on standardized tests), it is essentially a foreign language (Fisher & Lapp). Art making and inclusive literacy practices may serve as a path for success for students and community members who are denied full participation due to the exclusion that is proffered by a mainstream society

that prizes English and denigrates the languages and home registers of persons who are usually from non-white backgrounds and for whom the ecological factors of poverty, and under-education are often present.

There is promise in the idea of gifting as an extension of art making, and in the journey that seeks to narrow the gap between disability community members and the mainstream public. This was a central focus in Grocke et al. (2009), and was also present in McLeod and Ricketts (2013), as Mrs. Guo felt compelled to gift her contribution to the group-created art piece, but had no recipient—no family or close friends remaining in her life—so, she gave it to McLeod. This giving and receiving of gifts is an instinctually human drive, and can serve the processes of healing and resiliency well. An excellent example of the ways this might take place is contained in Rustin (2008), which did not meet the criteria as a first-person study to be included in the review, but which is a fine example of the ways in which art and the gift of it can serve in the therapeutic process. Rustin, always interested in art, but never trained himself, reversed the typical art therapy process by painting pictures of his patients' pain, anguish, and experiences of trauma as he understood them. He would come to recognize himself as something of an Outsider artists which further served to connect him to his patients. Regardless of the quality of the work, patients were appreciative and the emotional bond between therapist and patient was grown through first the art making, and then the giving. Kidd (2009) also felt compelled to connect her own research to art making, referencing herself as a “researcher who does art projects/artist who does research projects” (p. 351). While gifting was not a component of her own art making (to my knowledge), it served as a means for her to

connect more deeply to the homeless youths with whom she was working, just as it allowed for Rustin to connect with his patients.

Ben Wilson, in Sinason (2007), discussed the reasons he favors the visual over the semiotic. He said he is “troubled by words” and their “imposed meanings” (p. 13). While many persons with disabilities in our classrooms and communities may not have the language to speak to that, they would certainly understand it on an instinctual level, and it is central to the reason for this research review.

Thus, this discussion closes with a call for more research into the impact that the arts—in all its forms—may have on literacy learning for persons with disabilities. I was very disappointed, and frankly a little surprised, that there was not more research that triangulates the domains of art making, literacy and disability in a singular research product. The results of such research, as set forth in McLeod and Ricketts (2013) and Sagan (2007; 2008; 2011), hold much promise for our future understandings of the ways in which art making and literacy teaching may be combined in order to improve the lives of persons with disabilities.

While they are not studies meeting my criteria for review, real-world examples of inclusive work being done within the realms of art making and literacy, and worthy of mention, exist in the visual literacy practices explained and celebrated in both Roswell, McLean, and Hamilton (2012), and Seglem and Witte (2009), the latter teaching students both critical literacy, and allowing for personal culture and life experience to become part of the learning experience. I also believe that kinesthetic literacy (if there is such a term) needs to be further developed, in practices framed as performance art, role playing, or playbuilding, exemplified in Feiner (1941) and Perry, Wessels, and Wager (2013), who

despite seven decades of time separation all spoke passionately to the value in performance art for the teaching of literacy (also utilized by Ricketts with senior women of Chinese heritage in McLeod & Ricketts, 2013). Finally, a population that is neglected in all forms—literature and research—are those who comprise the deaf and hearing-impaired. Hoggard (2006), was the only literature in all my research that focused on persons who are deaf and hearing-impaired and their experience of art. Hoggard's historical review was framed in the context of art psychotherapy, and evidenced need for further research in this area.

Summary and conclusions for this section. This section of my literature review addressed my stated research purpose, which was to better understand the relationships among art making and literacy in the lives of adolescents and adults with disabilities. A positive correlation between and among the three domains was found in all nineteen of the studies reviewed.

Sagan's (2011) research provided a caution with regard to some of the approaches one takes when inviting the lives and memories of persons with disabilities into our research. While she hoped, and had previously evidenced, a reparative process enjoining literacy learning and creative writing in the form of biographic narratives, Phillip, the participant with whom she focused for her case study, instead, found his own truth to be too toxic, and his forward momentum was thwarted by repetitive memories of his own experience of abuse and trauma. While this is not necessarily the fault of the researcher, it reminds us that we have duties to the people with whom we work to protect them from harm to the extent possible.

The implications for our failure to move beyond current, stagnant, narrow notions of what it means to be literate, will serve to disavow persons with disabilities, moderate or severe, physical, intellectual, mental, or emotional, who will continue to be left out of full participation in their communities, full celebration of themselves as talented and unique individuals with much to offer the rest of us, and with fully-applicable rights to the same freedoms and joys that are appropriated the rest of us as humans.

As to the implications for our society if we fail to celebrate art, art making and artistic representations of understanding the world, Holding (2012) spoke eloquently to this. She noted that while we need the methodical and preordained processes of science—citing the surgeon as an example of one whose scientific training we are thankful for—we must always celebrate those who embrace (and teach) the arts. She asserted art’s instinctive nature and its creation as “subject to the tempo of motivation and desire” (p. 67), and performance art’s “fluidity, grace, and ostensible effortlessness,” adding that we are glad for the “glimpse of the sublime,” it offers. She then quoted Salman Rushdie , whose words I find compelling and perfect in terms of the gifts that are bestowed upon us by art. Rushdie said (in reference to our witnessing of the sublime in art), “these are the occasions when the bolts of the universe fly open and we are given a glimpse of what is hidden; an eff of the ineffable. Glory bursts upon us in such hours...” (p. 67).

A memory of such a glimpse of the hidden sublime in my life was prompted by Rushdie’s words. It seems fitting here to share it. One of my semester project menu items offers students an opportunity to create a CD/album in which they design the art for the album cover, provide a creative title for the album, and topically relevant titles for ten songs within it, and write the lyrics to any of those songs they choose. The only caveat is

that everything in this made-up album must be relevant to their self-chosen, non-fiction research topics. Performing the song for the class during the presentation of the project gives students an opportunity to share their talents with peers (and earn extra credit). Last year was the first year this menu option was included, and a boy in my class performed a song he wrote, self-accompanied on acoustic guitar... about Duck Tape. The experience of seeing the performance, and watching the class laugh and nod their heads to the silly lyrics is one of my best memories of teaching. I wish I had recorded that song.

Visual Art as Language and Literacy

Overview. As noted in Chapter One, I sought, in addition to literature and research connecting art making and literacy to persons with disabilities, to locate material that went to visual art *as* language and literacy. Specifically, I hoped to locate research that discussed visual art as central to an expanded view of literacy—in its teaching and its learning—for persons with disabilities. I was gratified to locate several texts that speak to art as language. Additionally, there is a growing body of research that goes to the merits of using visual art—sometimes referenced as *visual literacy*—in the development of conventional literacy, critical thinking skills, and as a component in teaching and learning across content areas, including and beyond English language arts.

The conceptual frameworks within which I ground my research allows for the conceptualization of art as language (Dewey), of multiple ways of knowing the world (Freire), of the allowance for each person's construction of his own vision of the world (Foucault), and of knowledge being constructed with the help of a more knowledgeable other acting as a facilitator within a social context (Vygotsky). I suggest that each of these theories correlate well with the expanded views of literacy as proposed by Keefe

and Copeland (2011), Luckasson (2006), UNESCO, and PISA, all of which were discussed in the introduction to this chapter.

Unfortunately, persons with disabilities are not often specifically addressed in the growing body of literature and research I located; therefore, I propose that my research will fill a great need in that regard. The learning of new things is centrally important to human beings as they evolve in their understandings of the world. McDonald and Fisher (2002) asserted that the arts (inclusive of music, dance, drama, and visual art) are central to the understanding “and perpetuation of culture...,” further considering knowledge about the expressive mediums inherent in the arts to extend to knowledge of human existence itself (p. 2). The authors further noted that the authors of the *National Standards of Art Education* (MENC) went as far as to conclude that “no one can claim to be truly educated who lacks basic knowledge and skills in the arts” (as cited in McDonald & Fisher, p. 3). The authors also noted the excitement that is added to all learning through art making and appreciation.

An expanded view of literacy, then, should allow that for persons with disabilities who often struggle to learn conventional literacy, art may serve as first, a language within which to frame an evolving understanding of the world, and second, as a motivating tool toward conventional literacy development for those whose disabilities do not inhibit this as a possibility. Because the studies discussed in the previous section of this literature review allowed for ample discussion of the relationships between and among art making, literacy, and disability, I feel it is appropriate to include this additional section despite its not specifically addressing persons with disability because it goes specifically to what is unknown and missing from the scholarship in this area. What is unknown is whether the

work being done with typically developing students as regards the integration of visual arts into and across all contents may also be applicable to students with disabilities. Also unknown, is whether research conducted with young children (with disability diagnoses and without) is applicable to adolescents and young adults. Again, there is a paucity of research focusing on this age group. Finally, it is unknown whether the autoethnographic stance of the researcher (me), contributing my own experience of existence within the cultures of disability and marginalization, can contribute in a way that positively impacts persons with disabilities that are not of the same type. I believe, especially considering the dearth of research in this area, that my proposed investigation is worthy of consideration as a possibility in that regard.

Research approaches specific to this section. Using the same databases and search methods discussed with regard to the two research problems discussed earlier in this chapter, I sought, this time, to connect visual arts with literacy or language, searching for relevant literature within the University's databases, including again, those within EBSCO, ProQuest, and Google Scholar. I conducted an advanced search, sorting the results by relevancy. The use of concurrent keyword search terms "visual arts" and "language arts" or "literacy," yielded two results, neither worth further study. I then changed the search qualifiers to "visual arts" or "literac*" and because there were thousands of studies, but none in the first 50 making the teaching connection I sought, I limited my request to those within EBSCO and all UNM University Libraries because I was also hoping to locate hard copies of relative texts as well. I found three extremely relevant peer reviewed journal articles that will be discussed below.

Additionally, I found a current textbook, Stewart and Katter's (2010) *Explorations in Art*, consisting of a curriculum designed for grades K-6. While disappointed that the text did not move beyond the 6th grade (again, not uncommon in terms of educational materials of all sorts where students with disabilities are concerned), I checked out the 5th and 6th grade levels from the fine arts library on campus. I found that the curriculum was designed as theme-based and process-based, aligned with language arts, inclusive of cross-curricular teaching and learning connections, and with the revised Bloom's Taxonomy. As well, because the text offered differentiation ideas for students with disabilities (and others, including English Language Learners, and advanced students), it merits inclusion in this section of my literature review. The textbook authors (five of them) are all art education professors at the college level, and also have experience as art educators in primary and secondary schools, community settings, and in the case of Eldon Katter, in Africa as well.

Other texts I used in the construction of this section, include: Tobin and Dobard's (1999) *Hidden in Plain View*, a text that goes to the language contained within "slave quilts" that helped to guide slaves along the path to freedom along the underground railroad, Dewey's (1938) *Art as Experience*, Dewey's (1900, 2009) *The School and Society*, McDonald and Fisher's (2002) *Developing Arts Loving Readers*, Adamson's (1984, 1990) *Art as Healing*, Jackson's (1998) *John Dewey and the Lessons of Art*, Coppin and Nelson's (2005) *The Art of Inquiry: A Depth Psychological Perspective*, and Dutlinger's (2001) *Art, Music and Education as Strategies for Survival: Theresienstadt 1941 – 1945*. It is my hope that these works will serve to guide us in our future thinking

about the curriculum we design for students with disabilities so that visual arts become a more central component to that design.

Art as language. I understand that thus far, aside from establishing a historical perspective about the art of persons with disabilities, the literature and research I have presented have been used largely within the context of art making as a proposed conduit toward the development of conventional literacy, or vice versa, conventional literacy development being inclusive of art making. I do not wish to abandon that idea here. I do, in fact, believe that there is great joy in one's holding a command of conventional literacy insofar as the doors that are opened through reading and writing offer much in the way of full participation in the larger world. This participation is certainly stilted for those who cannot read at all, or even for those who are functionally illiterate to the extent that they cannot understand the language contained in the important documents of their lives, or know the joy of reading for pleasure. But, I also do not wish to ignore the possibility that for some, art may be the only language with which to communicate to the world.

I return here to Lacey et al. (2007), discussed at length above. The study's aim was to locate good practice with regard to teaching and learning conventional literacy that included students with severe learning difficulties (SLDs). The authors' research, while not epic in scale, was comprehensive in that it included 35 schools, 122 lessons, and 61 teachers. As well, their methodology was sound. And their results, already stated above, but worthy of note again here, were that "few students with severe learning difficulties are likely to learn to read and write conventionally..." (p. 149), yet teachers in the study were most likely to continue to teach traditional literacy to these students. Teacher expectations (for the development of conventional literacy skills by students

with SLDS) were present, according to the authors, regardless of the severity of the disabilities and despite having had *only one child in eight years become able to transition through all three phases of progress from object of reference to photos to symbols* [emphasis added]. I do not seek to deny the importance of symbol recognition in our symbol-saturated world, but I do believe important opportunities for communication are being forsaken if visual art and visual literacy methods are not considered as viable, and at times, even preferred, in the classroom.

Since I consider my conceptual framework to be grounded, foremost, in the theories of Dewey, his (1934) text, *Art as Experience*, was crucial in my coming to view art as language. “Because the objects of art are expressive, they communicate... it is the consequence of the work—which indeed lives only in communication when it operates in the experience of others” (Dewey, p. 108). This correlates well with expanded views of literacy and the necessity that learning must include a social context, as theorized by Vygotsky, as well.

Dewey (1934) also posited that the materials in an object of art contain qualities that correspond to signs and symbols that are without value whatsoever when viewed alone and without, but take on extremely important value when allowed to stand “for things that may... be qualitatively experienced” (p. 39). This symbolic “standing in” was referenced by Robertson (1963/1982) and Adamson (1984/1990) as well as others. While my research focus is on the visual arts, McDonald and Fisher (2001) also asserted that the arts (inclusive of music, dance, drama and the visual arts) “communicate within nonverbal avenues of expression and use symbols that are simply not translatable to human language” (p. 4). And according to the California Department of Education,

“human language alone may not provide the sufficient means to communicate many life experiences, emotions and meanings” (as cited in McDonald & Fisher, p. 4).

Coppin and Nelson (2005) also address language, though I use it out of context here, as their text spoke to psychological inquiry. The authors stated that “the overwhelming attitude toward language and words is one of correctness, utility, and clarity” (p. 109). I suggest that this is often the heart of the problem where conventional literacy and persons with disabilities is concerned, and propose that art opens doors of language that can sometimes not be opened for those without words. Stewart and Katter (2010), in the curriculum series, *Explorations in Art*, referenced above, also refer to art as language. They proffer “Art is a language. The elements of art are the words of the language... Artists organize these words using the principles of design” (pp. liv-lv). Further, the language of art is expressed through art criticism, according to the authors, in which a person describes what he’s seeing, analyzes the organization of the artwork, interprets what the art is saying and evaluates it for its pleasing qualities.

As a final consideration of art as language, I return to Adamson (1984/1990). When considering that someone may be unable to communicate verbally, whether due to disability, or tragedy rendering a person speechless, the language of art then becomes even more profoundly important. Adamson, in fact, had numerous examples of artwork “sets,” in which the changing mindsets, progress, or other variants on evolution could be clearly seen over time through the visual art created by the person (in one case, a man who remained non-verbal over a period of six years). I use this example of time because I believe it goes to another issue that we do not address well in our schools or in our lives generally, and that is simply that some things—at least the important ones—often take

time. A “voice,” whether we are referencing the actual physical voice, or the voice rendered in a piece of art, has been silent for a reason (consider the critical reason of survival in the story quilts of the Underground Railroad that served to lead so many to freedom, and which are discussed below, in “Visual Art as a Mechanism for Survival and Healing”). The voice that exists in silence will make itself heard in its own time. We are an impatient society.

Art as central to the school and community. I begin my discussion regarding the importance of art as central to the school and community through Dewey’s (1900/2009) conception of a “new education” in which the school is integral to and interactive with the community. The models in Figures 19 and 20, below, are very basic maps of both floors of his University of Chicago Laboratory School, which was his attempt at experimenting with his theories regarding the importance of interaction between the school and life outside of it. Note, please that the arts are given spaces as large and central as those, often termed “the hard sciences” (e.g., physics, chemistry, and biology) on the second floor of the school. I quote some of Dewey’s thoughts about the place of art in education in the following chapter, but a picture paints a thousand words, does it not? He noted specifically that the connection with the university indicated in this chart (which I recreated from Dewey, 1900/ 2009), was simply to “indicate that there ought to be a free interaction between all the parts of the school system” (p. 56) and the universities, libraries, labs, and museums outside its walls.

Jackson (1998) noted that the school was designed and implemented early in Dewey’s career (around 1899 and 1900) and many years before his authoring of *Art as Experience*. At the time, according to Jackson, Dewey was concerned that the small

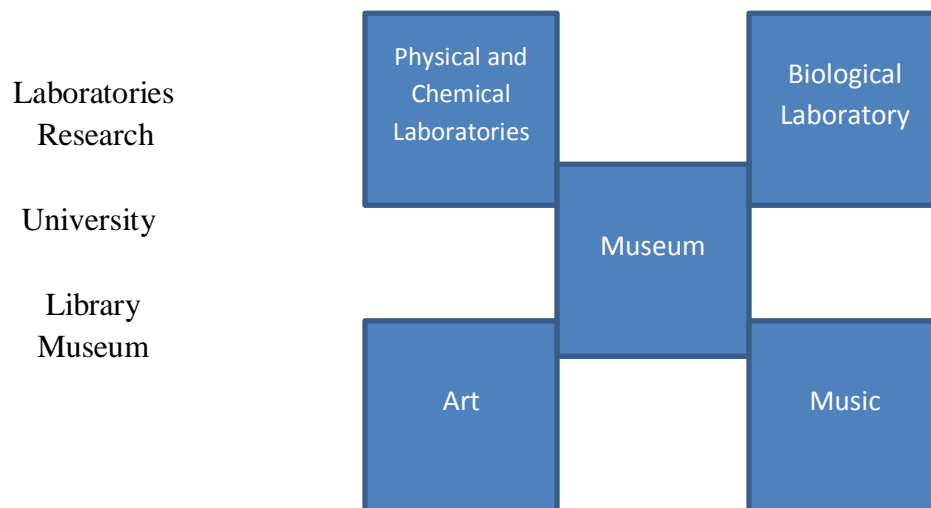


Figure 19. The 2nd floor of Dewey's school

communities which had embraced the school as central to their lives were disappearing due to the growth of cities during the Industrial Revolution. As well, the “massive influx of immigrants to those cities, creating ethnic enclaves” (p. 167), was of great concern to Dewey because they further set people apart from one another both physically and culturally. The rise of the factory meant that school had to fill a need in educating future workers for these positions. This concern of Dewey's is evident in Figure 20, the 1st floor of his University of Chicago Laboratory School, with its focus on the trades, but the 2nd floor is still dominated by arts-related spaces. (As to the naming of the school, Jackson posited that during this time of industrial fervor, a school connected to a major university, and emphasizing its laboratories over its art studios, was much more likely to be supported (both ideologically and financially)).

Dewey (2009) also considered that the life of the child would both come into the school and extend out of its doors “to the garden, surrounding fields, and forests. He (the student) would have his excursions, his walks and talks, in which the larger world out of

doors would open to him” (p. 37). This is why Dewey did not include a gymnasium in his design. Thus, on the main floor of Dewey’s school (Figure 20, recreated from the one included in Dewey, 1900, 2009), he noted that the “school building has swelled out... the surrounding environment the same, the home, the garden and country, the relation to

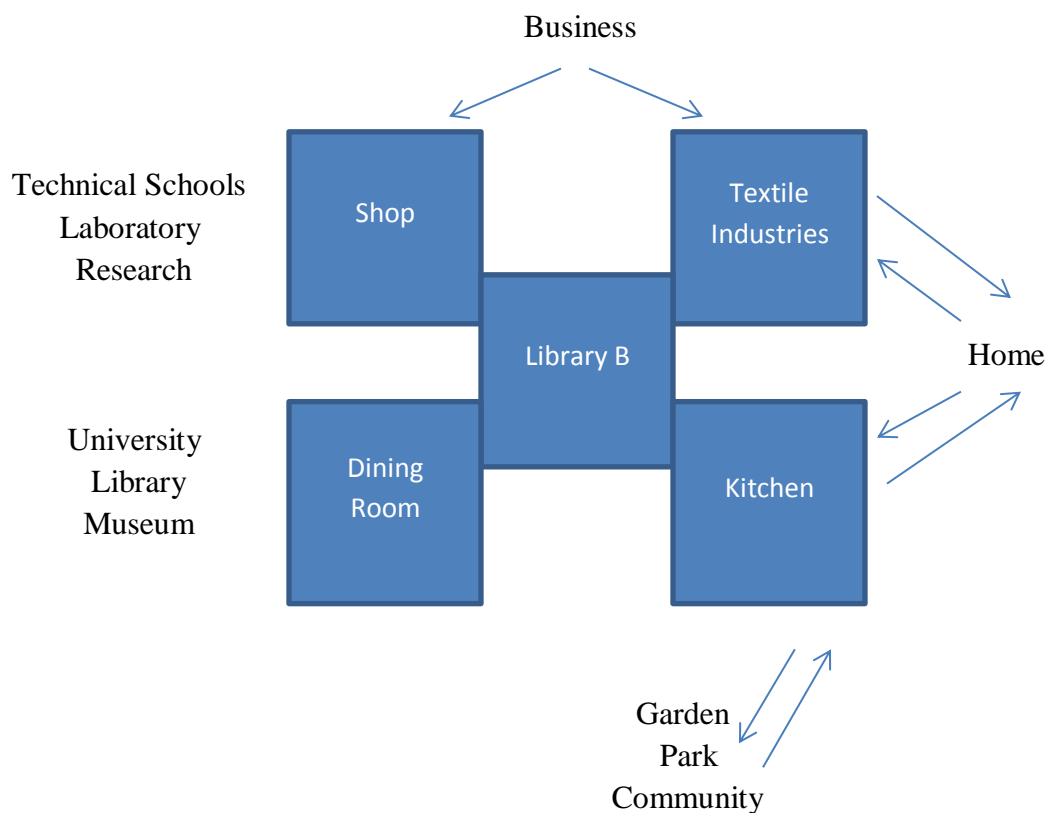


Figure 20. The 1st Floor of Dewey’s School

business life and the university. The object is to show what the school must become to get out of its isolation and secure the organic connection with social life” (p. 57).

Jackson (1998) considered Dewey as both forward-thinking and radical for his time (a consideration that was shared by Dewey’s contemporaries). He noted that most of the educational battles Dewey took on “are still being waged today,” including the differentiation of curriculum based on socioeconomic status, cultural background, race and ethnicity (p. 166). The author went on to say, however, that Dewey’s theories and desires were much more radical than the stance he ultimately took as an educator, bowing

to the pressures of conformity in his school in the same way that many forward-thinkers do today. He finally did step up and caution those involved in education many years after the publication of *The School and Society* (1900) and *Democracy and Education* (1916/1944), and as the rise of progressive schools was firmly in place, regarding what he saw as too much student freedom and too little adult guidance and curricular goals. And, regarding the experiment that was his laboratory school at the turn of the century? Fifteen years later, he and his daughter, Evelyn, wrote a book together *Schools of Tomorrow* (Dewey & Dewey, 1915), in which is included twenty-seven photos of students in the schools they visited together, engaging in “active occupation” that was primarily outside, and included: “cooking food, building houses, dancing, putting on plays, working in fields, cobbling shoes... singing songs, and playing games” (p. 175). Dewey’s ideals, in his first treatises were proving viable in real life.

McDonald and Fisher (2001) also noted the ways in which the arts correspond to other teaching and learning within and outside of school. The authors cited the important work of Jensen’s 2001 *Arts with the Brain in Mind*, in which he explained that “education in the arts can actively contribute to and enhance learning in other areas of the curriculum as well as provide additional, albeit less measurable, benefits” toward development (p. 4). Jensen posed questions that the authors included, and which I consider worthy of inclusion here as well. He asked:

Why be sheepish about the possibility that the arts may promote self-discipline and motivations? What’s embarrassing about countless other art benefits that include aesthetic awareness, cultural exposure, social harmony, creativity,

improved emotional expression, and appreciation of diversity? Aren't these the underpinnings of a healthy culture? (as cited in McDonald & Fisher, p. 5)

Clearly, there are scholars and educators who are asking themselves these same questions, and who are incorporating visual art in their classrooms, or researching its potential. Some of the ways this looks are included here.

Visual art in the classroom. The discussion of visual arts as an inclusive element across the curriculum is not new, but I found it difficult to locate articles that detailed some of the ways this was occurring and that might also be applicable to students with disabilities. The articles I did find addressed typically developing student populations (as noted above), none were in community settings, and some were simply not well-written enough for me to contemplate a practical use for them. I did, however, find three peer-reviewed journal articles (as noted above), a dissertation, and the textbook series by Stewart and Katter (2010), also referenced above. I will not go into as much detail in breaking each of them down here as I did with the studies in the previous section of this chapter because they do not address students with disabilities. But I do believe each of them to be transferrable in whole or in part to the teaching and learning that takes place among persons with disabilities, so they are each summarized below.

Johnson (2008). This article addressed 25 specific steps that teachers could take in order to develop both verbal and visual literacy through experiences in the visual arts. Johnson used Eisner's definition of visual literacy, which referenced it as "the ability to create visual messages and to 'read' messages contained in visual communications; to perceive, understand, interpret, and ultimately, to evaluate one's visual environment" (Eisner, 1978, 2002, as cited in Johnson, p. 74). As concerns the aesthetic domain—

which must be included in any discussion of visual literacy, or arts-based instruction—students learn to talk about art. Johnson noted that the expectation for such talk by even young children (the focus of this article), extends their “experiences in, and understanding of, visual messages communicated through media such as film, advertising, and, of course, works of art” (p. 74).

Also central to the use of visual art in the classroom is questioning and dialogue that surrounds both the art created by students, and famous artworks as well. Johnson (2008) referenced this as *art talk* and suggested five categories of questions she considered to be appropriate to such art talk. These areas surround: ideas, process, materials, knowledge, and the future. The questions that fall into the knowledge category call for students’ prior knowledge about art and lead, ultimately, to critical thinking, an awareness of the style and practices of others, and an ability to draw comparisons between the work of someone else with the work created by oneself.

I will not wax eloquent on all 25 tips for teachers within the aesthetic domain as proffered by Johnson (2008), but I would like to suggest that more than one of them—because they address young, mostly pre-literate students—are applicable to students with moderate and severe disabilities of all ages. These included the encouragement of private “aloud” speech in terms of talking through self-direction, speaking to emotional release, and that which involves fantasy. Often, students are not encouraged to speak out in class, but I personally find it very helpful to work through problems (as with this dissertation) by verbally walking myself through the problem, and arriving at possible solutions. Johnson also suggested that students whose literacy skills are not yet developed could be assisted in creating an artist statement about their own or another’s work (that is, the

teacher acting as the recorder, then translating the statement to writing for the student). Taking students to locations outside the classroom and asking them to draw what they see and then express how that makes them feel is also transferrable to students with disabilities—especially, in my view, of the emotional type; these students are seldom given the opportunity to share their feelings, within the school day, about anything.

Johnson (2008) noted that speaking to the work of specific artists with students is important to their understanding of historical contexts and styles. For students with disabilities, exposure to artists who create abstract or other “nonrealistic,” types of art would be helpful so that they learn that art can be many things that are not necessarily recognizable as something in the world just as it appears.

As with others who have done research in the area of visual art and visual literacy as a component of cross-curricular instruction and literacy development, Johnson (2008) suggested the use of a Venn Diagram in order to compare and contrast student work with that of another artist. Also included—coincidentally—in her discussion about the possibilities for comparison were the examples of story quilts (discussed in the context of the Underground Railroad below).

While students with disabilities were not specifically addressed by Johnson (2008), she did note that some students are not ready to articulate their ideas about the process, or during the reflection and art talk components of instruction. (I would add that this is true whether conventional literacy has been developed or not.) She cautioned that teachers must allow for students to simply enjoy the process and not force them to answer questions about art that they may not be able to answer. When they're ready (and if they are able to) talk, they will. Again, this goes to our willingness to allow people whatever

time they need to come to whatever place they will arrive. Contriving to force a conversation, or an observation loses much of what is freeing with regard to the inclusion of visual arts in the classroom. Some students learn by listening to others. The development of language and socioemotional skills is taking place by virtue of one's presence and does not have to include the verbalization piece. Students begin to think artistically when they see teachers modeling verbal and visual literacies as complements to one another.

Towell and Smilan (2009). This study is the only I found in which a professor whose focus area was on teaching pre-service teachers in the areas of language arts, reading, and children's literature, teamed up with one whose focus area was in art education. Because the authors presented at the International Reading Association's (IRA) 2006 conference on strategies for teaching an arts-based language arts curricula, they were asked to conduct a workshop for members of the Trinidad and Tobago Reading Association on arts-based literacy. The conference was attended by both elementary and high school teachers, school administrators, and librarians, with the goal being the representation of "authentic art integration techniques in which parallel and/or intersecting concepts in the visual arts and reading/language arts curriculum could be explored through image and text" (Towell & Smilan, p. 12).

The authors sought, as well, to expand the participants' definition of literacy from one that was strictly text- or word-based, to one that included a reading of image and the considerations of "the power of visual culture in the lives of our students" while also honoring the country's (Trinidad's) own "multicultural heritage... by studying indigenous literature and art" (p. 12). Towell and Smilan asserted that expanded views of

literacy must include “symbol systems and visual images” and that being literate in these areas means “the ability to find meaning in images” (p. 13). They also included Resnick’s social interaction components, asserting that being literate in any area involves the social interactions that take place in that particular literate arena. What resonated with me, however, was Sweet’s 2005 expanded definition of literacy, because it not only included the social interaction pieces, but spoke to the complexity and interaction of processes drawing upon “social and emotional experiences as well as cognitive ability” (as cited in Towell & Smilan, p. 13). Finally, the authors included Staikidis’ 2006 writings about the artist’s perspective and asked that we should consider life as narrative and that this narrative can take shape in visual formats. Expanding on this idea, the teacher, by validating “the lived experiences of the learner” when we situate “the teaching of skills within authentic contexts” that are integrated and valued by students (as cited in Towell & Smilan, p. 13), is facilitating the reciprocity that exists between the lived experience and the narrative text and image that naturally accompany it.

Towell and Smilan (2009) emphasized that students’ exposure to global cultures demand that they be taught the skills necessary to communicate with others within those cultures and suggest that parallel concepts inherent in verbal and visual literacy give students opportunities to “develop visual schema and critical thinking skills” (p. 13). They also spoke to students’ development of meaning and multiple ways of knowing (Paolo Freire, again). The learning of new things that are already interesting to students (e.g., those which are technology-based and visual) requires a deeper understanding because, as the authors noted, the Internet challenges learners “to interpret symbol systems from their own cultures, as well as to negotiate meanings from global symbols

and images” (p. 13). They reference this as *semiotics*—which is the study of signs in order to interpret meaning, and is similar to *iconography*, which is the study of images used in art, connecting to their sources and meanings.

Because most of the participants in the workshop were not themselves art teachers, Towell and Smilan (2009) began by grounding them in the language of art, noting that “...it is imperative that teacher education and professional development provide opportunities for creative application of concepts” (p. 12). They used Bang’s 2000 text, *Picture This, How Pictures Work* to teach basic design principles and compositional elements. After these concepts were taught, the participants were introduced to an artwork that was culture-specific and would be used throughout the first day of the workshop. Towell and Smilan asserted that it is imperative that our teaching be student-driven not only because it is empowering, but also because “it invites dialogue for mutual understanding in the classroom community” (p. 14). They further cautioned against “antiquated ethnocentric curriculum that does not honor” the fluidity of culture or the importance of those cultural elements (e.g., the visual) to the students in the classroom (p. 14). The importance of a shared lived experience between the teachers and the students in terms of the art being examined cannot be overstated, in my view, because it is the basis for the metaphors and analogies about the experience and can only be understood by everyone when it comes from where they are. Thus, one of the pieces of artwork examined in the workshop was done by a local artist in which the subject depicted was familiar to everyone—the game of cricket, in this case.

The workshop began with a group critique of the artwork in which participants used some of their new understanding about design principles and compositional

elements to discuss it. This process, according to the authors, parallels “grand conversation” in reading terminology. Participants then progressed through prompts that asked them to speak to being *in* the painting (they could choose any vantage point and consider the questions as relative to something visible within the artwork, or expanding beyond its borders) and answering questions about what they see, smell, hear, feel, and taste. At this point, they were not given the title of the artwork so that their responses would be objective and not influenced by clues imbedded in the title—a practice I use in my classroom art gallery activity as well and for the same reason. It is important to note that the questions would not have been answerable by the participants if the cultural referent (cricket) had not been present.

Resulting conversations that took place were, according to Towell and Smilan (2009) “powerful, revealing the inner emotions that were based on the prior experiences and developed schemata” of the participants (p. 15). Additionally, the element of reciprocity between teachers and students was present because the teachers (being from the U.S.) did not know the game of cricket, so an opportunity was provided for students to teach the teachers. The authors noted that the dialogue that takes place among participants—in the grand conversation in the initial group critique, and the conversations surrounding their individual vantage perspective responses to the questions that placed them *in* the painting—“becomes a dance, choreographed to accommodate each perspective and insight that is contributed by the participants” (p. 16). Also important in this dialogue was something unexpected by Towell and Smilan in terms of the individual dialects that emerged from each participant. They learned that in Trinidad, educators “believe that students should be encouraged to write in their native dialect, when

appropriate, rather than using Standard English” (p. 17). They noted that our focus on “correct grammar” often leads to the overlooking of the “significance of oral traditions and the dialects of other cultures” (p. 17). I found this particularly poignant when comparing this thinking to U.S. education in which standardization is the goal, and tests meant to be taken by students from all cultural backgrounds and experiences of the world (ways of knowing) are created from the narrow perspective of a few people who are often schooled in a classic education and ensconced in a narrow (sometimes even corporate) perspective of what is important to learn and how one should express one’s knowledge. We are well advised as educators to find a middle ground in which students are taught that which is important to their functioning in a global culture, while having their own heritage and culture honored at the same time.

On a final note with regard to Towell and Smilan (2009), the authors reminded the readers of this study that our students are inculcated with “diverse semiotic systems” by virtue of “our visual culture and technology” (p. 18). Because of that, we (teachers) have a responsibility to be educated in visual symbols and “referents with which our students are conversant” if we hope to reach them and influence their learning in a way that helps them to “negotiate meanings” in a “multicultural classroom community” (p. 18). They suggested that purposeful selection of artwork can help teachers to both design content-based experiences and at the same time learn about our students at a depth and level we would not be able to achieve through mere words alone.

Lazo and Smith (2014). This study focused on the development of thinking skills through visual *a/r/tography*. The study was small (inclusive of two teachers and two students) and sought to discover whether year 13 students (17 years old) “could develop

critical thinking skills through images” (Lazo & Smith, 2014, p. 100). The authors noted that in New Zealand—where the study took place—“the national curriculum and assessment systems stress ‘thinking’ as a key competency and place emphasis on developing visual literacies” (p. 99). (This was also noted by Towell and Smilan, 2009, as a focus in Australia’s national curriculum.) The authors’ research questions pondered the relationships between students’ critical thinking skills and their own experiences of “art making, artworks, and explanations” (p. 100), and like Towell and Smilan, discussed the relevance of these skills in light of the expanding global context with its constantly changing structures and resulting demands for “a new educational paradigm” (p. 100). They further noted that in the twenty-first century, “ideologies are principally transmitted by images” that leads to “a corresponding demand for new aims and approaches focused on analytical capacitism” which in their view, “stresses that a cognitive focus should replace a content-instruction emphasis in which students” (p. 100) merely acquire information for its own sake. What makes this distinctive is that by removing a content-based focus, teachers are free to design curriculum that is interesting and relevant to their students, and that will more likely motivate them to be lifelong, participatory learners. This, the authors posited, means that education should have “a reflective rather than technical focus” (p. 101).

Smith focused on a/r/tography as the theoretical framework for her 2007 dissertation, which was text-based, but took her research findings to an image-based context in a 2009 exhibit, and encouraged Garcia Lazo to also explore the arts as both a research and teaching tool. A/r/tography, according to Lazo and Smith (2014) was best “elucidated” by Irwin and Cosson in 2004 as “a creative land of dialogue and

experimentation between three fields—artist/researcher/teacher...” and as an arts-based methodology it “privileges both text and image in order to seek deeper meanings involving the self and others” (as cited in Lazo & Smith, p. 102). As well, a/r/tography is grounded in “visual knowing” as propounded by Eisner, who in 2002, wrote about “the diverse and rich thinking (that) occurs in the context of making images or studying them” (as cited in Lazo & Smith, p. 102). For the authors, a/r/tography provided “a challenging and liberating method” (p. 102) in which meaning could be conveyed through visual art. The authors stated further that this methodology, allows for the researcher’s interpretations to be included along with the viewer’s recollections of emotions, while at the same time validating the maker of the art by including her meanings, expressed in writing.

Lazo and Smith (2014) began by conducting semi-structured interviews with teachers that honored their individual voices about the experiences of teaching (both were visual arts teachers—one in photography and one in painting and printmaking). These interviews were followed by audio-taped and photographed observations of the teachers’ interactions with their students. The authors then conducted audio-taped interviews with the students in order to learn “the importance of images to them” (p. 103). The final piece to their method—and the one that makes this uniquely a/r/tography—is the creation of three artworks by the researcher.

The research revealed, according to Lazo and Smith (2014), that both teachers used scaffolding in their teaching, “progressively offering opportunities to develop individual thinking through all the secondary school years with the ultimate aim of producing active learners” (p. 103). Students were free to choose their own artistic

endeavors and were given much individual attention from the teachers, who provided “artist models,” (p. 103) carefully chosen by the teachers as a starting point for the students. Students were not expected to reproduce the work of another artist, but rather, were provided a wide range of artworks to view and think about in order to arrive at subject matter and style that was of interest to them. Only one of the teachers included a wide range of selections from students’ daily lives (as was emphasized in Towell & Smilan, 2009). She told the researchers that she liked to provide students with “a wide range of contemporary images... to try to blow their minds... for new ways of working to come in” (p. 104). Both teachers used discussions and worksheets to help students to develop their own work and to motivate them. As well, both teachers experimented with their own art making in the classroom setting, showing students that they didn’t know everything, exposing their own curiosities surrounding their art making, and their willingness to make mistakes.

After students produced their artwork, they were asked to create critical statements about each piece. Prompts were provided for them that were similar to those suggested by Johnson (2008) and included questions about the meaning of the work, the visual languages of the piece, the use of color and whether it was used intentionally to convey a certain emotion. One teacher also encouraged “a deep investigation of artists’ approaches by asking students to create a timeline...” (p. 105) in order to connect their chosen artist models to historical events at the time they created the work, and to list at least ten other artists and the ways their work developed over time. This, the teacher suggested, was to create a cause and effect awareness in her students. She began the explanation of this task with a tree allegory in which she talked to students about how this

tree led to “this branch led to this twig, then led to this twig, then to this twig... and you need to trace all that back to the precedents to find out where these ideas began” (Lazo & Smith, 2014, p. 106).

In the end, both students said that the visual arts class provided them with “essential support to develop their thinking around the visual” (p. 107), one noting that she had developed enhanced understanding about the underlying meanings inherent in visual images and that this allowed her to “perceive more things in an image,” which helped her in her understanding of architecture, her chosen subject matter. The second student, whose subject matter was the exploitation of animals, said that she became keenly aware, though the context of her visual arts class, of the ways in which “the visual affects young people,” and “declared herself a frequent user of websites that offer images to be explored...” and had become “very conscious of the active role of the viewer in reading images” (p. 107). Both students discussed high levels of motivation being driven by being able to choose their subject matter, and to research extensively by using visual images. As well, both students became aware of the use of symbols in portraying thoughts and emotions.

“Both students considered that the flexibility of the ‘thinking journey’ had enabled them to develop evaluative skills for producing artworks and making adjustments according to changes in their thinking processes” (Lazo & Smith, 2014, p. 108). Also, one of them specifically spoke to a high level of comfort in *not* knowing how her story would end. She suggested that the work in her portfolio would evolve as she discovered the elements in her work that she liked or didn’t, and “magnify them more, or make them smaller” in her future work (Lazo & Smith, p. 109). For this student, her work was

grounded in “psychological discourse” that is the way in which symbols and images “portrayed powerful meaning” (Lazo & Smith, p. 109).

Lazo and Smith (2014) found that both students “demonstrated awareness of their thinking, coupled with the ability to evaluate, synthesize and communicate ideas” (p. 110) through their visual language and accompanying writing. The author-researchers then took the resultant work by their students and interpreted their individual voices through their own art making dedicated to the process and work of these students, thus completing the a/r/tographical process. They used their grown appreciation of the use of images to reach “deeper meanings involving the self and others” (p. 110). Garcia Lazo (who was new to the a/r/tographical process at the start of this research) created three a/r/tographic artworks “based on multiple fragments from the data, coupled with her own interpretations” that complemented the research conclusions (Lazo & Smith, pp. 110-111). In one digital collage, fragments of the students’ (both of them) work were combined with her own photographs to create a new image. This brought the researcher and student together in a way where the work of each was honored and served to complement the other. In another a/r/tographic piece completed in this study, the iconic tree (referenced earlier) began with a photograph of a leaf, whose stem became the tree’s trunk and the veins, the tree’s branches. According to Lazo and Smith, “the leaf ribs were as interconnected as the artists, who are linked by their approaches” (p. 114). The image was accompanied by a poem written by Garcia Lazo and inclusive of fragments from the interviews and the author’s conclusions in this research. All the art created by the researchers in the a/r/tographic framework served to honor the participants in this study

by incorporating their meaning making with that of the researcher. I found this to be reminiscent of Rustin (2008), discussed earlier in this chapter.

As a reminder to my readers, Rustin was a therapist and, despite his having no formal art training, was always interested in its potential for healing. The doctor, in essence, reversed the art therapy process when he painted pictures of his patients' experiences of pain and trauma as he best understood them. His patients expressed great appreciation and gratitude at his efforts to connect with them through his art and found it to be an emotionally bonding experience connecting each to the other. The therapeutic process was, in the end, served by first, Rustin's making of the art, and then his presenting of it (gifting) to each patient (referenced as an important component within the process by Hall, 2013). Rustin, himself, began to see himself as an Outsider artist. As a teacher, I see great potential for growing the relationship with students in this manner—by relating to their experiences of disability and expressing the attempted understanding through art making. Therefore, I see a/r/tography as a potential research approach for me that could find its beginning points in the results of this dissertation research, which embodies an autoethnographic method because both seek to position the self as researcher within a larger culture.

Stewart and Katter (2010). As referenced earlier, Stewart and Katter (2010) is a K-6 textbook series (*Exploration in Art*) that I found worthy of discussion in terms of this section with its focus on the ways in which the incorporation of the visual arts into the classroom setting looks in practice. The program is well-developed by five authors: Marilyn Stewart, Eldon Katter, Cathy Weisman Topal, (and contributing authors) Laura H. Chapman, and Nancy Walkup. All five have impressive backgrounds in art education

across school and community settings, and I find their approach to the integration of visual arts into the classroom to be both relevant and exciting. The material below, including page references, are from the Grade 6 Teacher's Edition, but share commonalities across each grade level.

Each unit at each grade level is theme-based, teaching students about traditions and identity in order to expose them to the relevance of art in their lives.

The enduring human themes foster active inquiry and natural connections across the curriculum. Elements and principles, skills and techniques, and forms and media are learned not as isolated concepts, but as tools that help students interpret the ideas of artists and express their own ideas through art.

(Stewart & Katter, 2010, p. vii)

Additionally, the process-based studios at the end of each unit, according to the authors, emphasize “the importance of thinking, planning, and reflection in creating superior, original artworks” that go “way beyond ‘make and take’” (Stewart & Katter, 2010, p. vii). Students are inspired by “art in the real world... and evaluation criteria for each studio” (p. vii). Also, the five-step studio process directly aligns to the five-step writing process in language arts, reinforcing “writing instruction and the cognitive processes critical to both visual and written compositions” (p. vii).

I appreciate this text not only for the components noted above, but also for several other key features included in each unit. For example, each lesson in the unit ends with an extension activity for students to practice throughout the week that surrounds aesthetic awareness. In Grade 6, for example, in Unit 1, at the end of Lesson 6, which addresses color harmonies, students are asked to “observe the color schemes or combinations that

can be seen in sports team uniforms, fabrics and clothing, wallpaper, and gift wrap, home furnishings, and other decorative objects” (Stewart & Katter, 2010, p. 23). Students are to “find examples of monochromatic, analogous, and complementary colors, in addition to warm, cool, and neutral colors” (Stewart & Katter, 2010, p. 23). Another component to each lesson is at least one suggestion for differentiated instruction to accompany the culminating art studio, for students with special needs (as well as for English Language Learners, and advanced learners). I do wish that there were more of these examples, but am grateful that they are included. At the end of Lesson 6, in which students create a still life painting from objects in their daily lives, a differentiated example is provided for students with visual impairment. “Use spill-proof containers for paint. On a palette, organize colors in the same order from left to right” for each studio lesson involving the use of paint (p. 23.)

As well, I appreciate that the planning guide for each unit in this text informs the teacher about cross-curricular connections (for all contents) in a grid fashion for each lesson in the unit, ties lessons together into strands of instruction according to the standards, and suggests trade books for students to extend their understandings. Each studio lesson has an accompanying performance assessment rubric, and each unit (consisting of 6 or 7 lessons each) includes a summative assessment and rubric. These rubrics do not make suggestions for teachers of students with disabilities, which could not possibly be done in a way that would allow for individual student goals as set forth in Individual Education Plans (IEPs), in any case. However, a teacher in a general education setting could make ready use of special education teachers and paraprofessionals for assistance in modifying the rubrics for individual student needs.

Finally, each unit closes with a grid that ties it to *The Revised Bloom's Taxonomy* by Anderson and Krathwohl (2001). The grid allows for the assessment of student growth in the domains of knowledge and cognitive process.

In looking through the entire text, I was able to tie middle school Common Core Curriculum (CCC) requirements for English Language Arts (ELA) to many of the lessons. Some examples include: the writing process, compare and contrast, vocabulary learning, the concept of themes, mythology, figurative language, web-based research activities, characterization, and understanding mood and tone.

In asking the two art teachers with whom I have worked recently whether they were familiar with this text, they said they were not. I assume this means that it is not a text that has been adopted by Albuquerque Public Schools (APS), but I plan to contact the authors to see if it is possible to ascertain if there are any private or charter schools in the area who are using the text. This could lead me to a connection for future research.

Visual art as a mechanism for survival and healing. In the beginning of this chapter, in the review of literature surrounding the history and perceptions of the art of persons with disabilities, I discussed the potential for healing that is contained within the creation of art. Here, I propose to suggest that the language of art has, throughout history, proven itself to be a key factor in first, the very survival of certain groups, and later, the healing of wounds that would be carried forward from the experiences of trauma, marginalization, and isolation by those survivors. Here, I return first to Adamson (1984/1990), whose many years of experience working with patients at Netherne (a hospital for patients diagnosed with mental illness) taught him much about the healing

properties of art. Adamson spoke to the visual arts as “a vital form of self-help” and of the parallels between “the dynamics of spontaneous painting, and the therapeutic process,” noting that “art is a very powerful form of communication, which in turn is a vital part of the therapeutic situation” (Adamson, p. 5). Adamson is not alone in his assessment regarding the therapeutic value of art. Hoggard (2006), discussed art as a therapeutic tool which served in gaining access to a student’s feelings and thoughts. Hermon and Prentice (2006) and Muri (1999) recognized the potential for art and design to connect students with other community members from whom they had been previously isolated. Hall (2013) saw art as connecting a person’s longing for *belonging* and suggested that part of the process regarding therapeutic value was the gifting component. Rustin (2008) used art as a way to emotionally connect with his patients. All of these go to the concept of *aesthetic empathy* as explained by Wix (2009), but also understood (without the specific terminology applied) by Robertson (1963/1982), Noddings (2005), and others. Aesthetic empathy, I assert, is a beginning point to the process of healing through art.

Adamson (1984/1990) suggested the natural “‘fullness of time’ which occurs in both Art and healing...,” noting that each “must proceed at its own pace” (p. 7). Throughout history, art has proven to be not only a mechanism for healing, but for one’s very survival. One example of the language of art taking a central role in survival is found in Tobin and Dobard’s (1999) text in which the authors assert a purported mode of communication used in the Underground Railroad and found in the quilts made by slaves

of the American south.² Tobin and Dobard claimed that it is because of scholars' "traditional fascination with the written word" (p. 2) that many alternate modes of communication, including the oral tradition, and those encompassing the arts, have been ignored. While there is debate among some historians regarding the accuracy of such codes, it is not disputed that enslaved people were not allowed to be literate in a conventional sense. Tobin and Dobard spoke to this, informing their readers that "in slave-holding states, it was actually illegal to teach slaves to read and write, and so most of those in bondage were bereft of the means of written communication" (p. 2). Therefore, whether by virtue of quilt squares or other artistic means, it seems plausible that some form of communication would have existed for use during times when oral exchanges were not possible. An example of the quilt code as deciphered by the authors and understood by Ozella McDaniel Williams, herself a decedent of slaves, can be found in Figure 21. It is compelling to imagine that the "stories" told within the squares, might mean salvation for those who understood how to "read" the art within them.

For slaves and other marginalized people, the language of art has historically served as a unifying mode of communication, providing the means for persons sharing community from all walks of life, from different countries, different cultures, and different languages to communicate with one another. Whether that communication surrounded the way to freedom (in the way provided by legal doctrine in the states in which slavery had been abolished) may never be known, but I would argue that the

²It should be noted that there are challenges with regard to the existence of decipherable "codes" within the quilts of American slaves attempting to escape to freedom via the Underground Railroad. While there is much scholarship affirming the information as presented in Tobin and Dobard (1999), it is important to note this challenge.

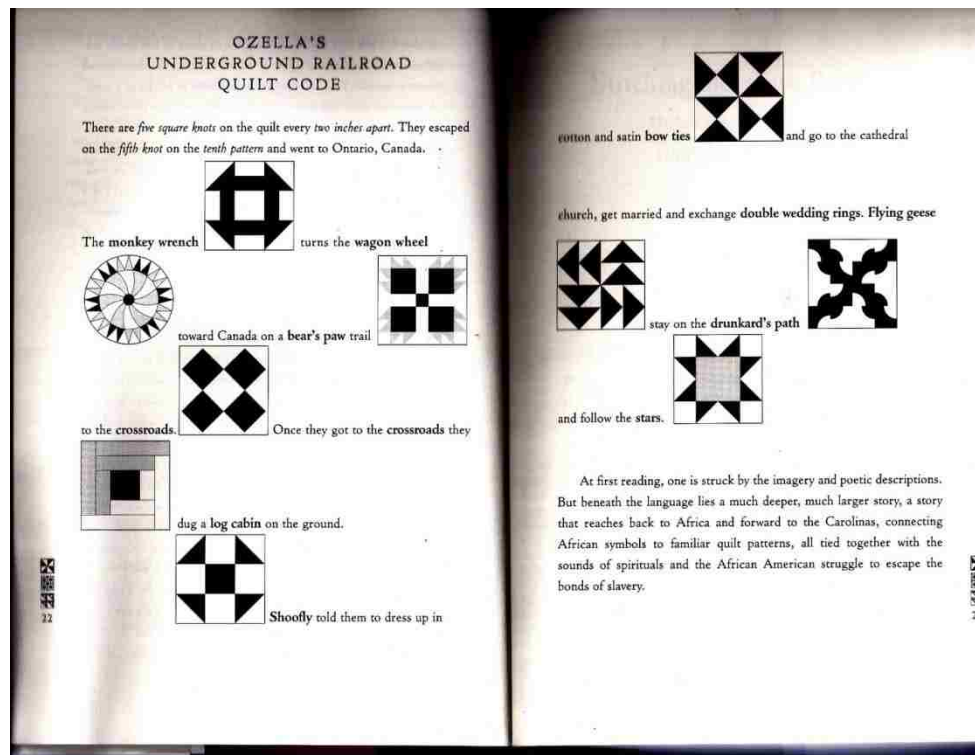


Figure 21. Story Quilt Code from Tobin and Dobard's (1999) *Hidden in Plain View*, pp. 22-23.

freedom inherent in the creation of any artwork that may help one person to understand another is its own form of freedom. The story of how this particular art form may have served as a code is interesting, to be sure.

According to Ozella McDaniel Williams, whose grandmother was a slave in South Carolina, the quilt patterns (listed in the code created by the authors) were actually mnemonic devices. "They were used to aid the slaves in memorizing directives before leaving the plantation. The names of quilt patterns function as metaphors in the code; in other words, the patterns represent certain meanings" (Tobin & Dobard, 1999, p. 69). According to Williams, there were ten quilts used in this direction of the slaves and each quilt had one of ten patterns, or directives. The quilts were placed one at a time on fences outside of plantation houses and in a particular order. The authors noted that "since it was

common for quilts to be aired out frequently, the master and mistress would not be suspicious when seeing the quilts displayed in this fashion” (p. 70). The first quilt, for example, had the Monkey Wrench pattern and informed the slaves that they were to collect whatever tools they needed for the upcoming journey. The second quilt was the Wagon Wheel and informed the slaves to pack for the wagon that would be used for transportation. The Tumbling Boxes pattern told the slaves that it was time to escape, according to Williams. “The code had dual meaning: first to signal slaves to prepare to escape and second to give clues and indicate directions on the journey” (Tobin & Dobard, 1999, p. 70). Thus, the language of art served as salvation. If the codes within these story quilts as they have come to be known is indeed accurate, the survival of those able to “read” the quilts’ language was explicit. Sometimes, the language of art and its role in survival and healing are less explicit but inarguable nonetheless. Such is often the case during times of war.

Again, I return to the work of Friedl Dicker Brandeis, whose provision of art lessons and art making opportunities in Terezín Concentration Camp are known to have provided comfort and healing to children whose lives were understood even by them to be in great peril and likely short. This time, however, I view the art in its context as a language, and also in its containing of universal archetypes because it is a great reminder that we are all joined across time, geography, culture, and unique human experience by the language of art. Dutlinger (2001) noted that she was particularly struck by “similarities between the Theresienstadt children’s ‘glue pictures,’ which used ledger paper, and the ‘ledger book drawings’ by Plains Indians imprisoned in U.S. Army forts during the 1870s” (p. 4). The author asserted that both the inmates of Theresienstadt and

the imprisoned Indians “interpreted the ‘...specifics of their condition. They could experiment with who they were becoming and they would, literally...” (in a fashion she likened to being possessed by the image) “work through the trauma of the present and the recent past” (p. 4).

For Dutlinger (2001) the artworks of these two disparate groups—both created, as they were on ledger paper—went to “the transformation of bureaucratic forms into autobiographical art resonates as an act of self-affirmation... an act of covert resistance... a way of mourning the past and fixing it in historical time” (p. 4) (due to the language and references contained in the ledger forms themselves). The use of the ledger paper, in both cases, according to the author, “adds its layer of language and meaning” which is reflected both in the abstract work by the children in Theresienstadt, and “in the self-portraits by Native American prisoners as proud warriors” (pp. 4-5).

Dutlinger (2001) maintained that the human relationships and creative endeavors of the children in Theresienstadt served to help them in their “will to live” because “the mental and physical engagement required to create art, play music, or perform theater were ‘strategies for survival.’ Art and music provided a way to forget and remember, to believe in and imagine the other world—the familiar, reassuring world of home” (p. 5). This is, for me, reminiscent of my own observations of the work of three of the Outsider artists I chose to examine in the beginning of this chapter (Adolf Wölfli, Madge Gill, and Martin Ramirez) and the recognizable connections the artwork of each drew to their lives outside the institutions in which they created that art. As well, Robertson (1963/1982), discussed the importance of symbols (archetypes) and the ways in which they can serve to connect one to a place of comfort and protection.

Artistic processes in healing and survival are neither new nor revelatory.

Therefore, this tool should then be considered as an important one for improving the lives of persons with disabilities. For some, the language of art can complement the language of words; for some, the language of art may be the only potential way for them to communicate what it is they feel, what they think about, what they hope, and what they miss. That communication is the key to healing and survival.

Summary and conclusion for art as language and literacy. I agree with Tobin and Dobard's (1999) assessment that as scholars, our love of written language and our need for well-understood methodological tools for interpreting research can sometimes preclude the embracing of research that is not so readily understood from the outset. Art as a language and visual literacy as an important component to an expanded view of literacy generally are perhaps easier to grasp in theory than they are to try to understand at a deeper level, especially for teachers and researchers who are not schooled in the principles of art, art education, or art therapy. Much credence has been given to art making among some disability populations in terms of its healing potential, but I have so far been unable to find research that seeks to understand what the art of persons with disabilities may be conveying that is unutterable in any other language.

I do not anticipate that there is a discoverable referent in terms of an archetypal theme or symbol that will suddenly open the doors of communication between persons with disabilities (especially those who are non-verbal and pre-literate) and those of us considered as typically developed in a big AHA! kind of way. In fact, I agree with Smith-Shank's 2004 caution that "we can never know exactly what a sign or symbol *truly* represents to another individual; however with shared knowledge, culture, and traditions,

a community can interpret the signs of its members” (as cited in Towell & Smilan, 2009, p. 13). I also believe that we are perhaps missing an opportunity by not considering that there may be a common language that exists between those of us who are fully and conventionally functioning in a traditionally literate society, and those who do not speak that language. Tobin and Dobard (1999) reminded us that the Africans who found themselves enslaved in the United States did not come from a place without culture, without tradition, without language—they just came from many separate cultures, traditions, and languages, all unique, and none understood by those outside of them. They found a mode of communication, through the language of art, to save themselves and to connect with one another. I hope to find at least the beginning of similar correlations with regard to those whose language and cultures are uniquely imbedded in individual experiences of disability.

Chapter Three. Methodology

Proposed Research Questions

In formulating my research questions, I sought a big picture, about what I hoped for in terms of results, and moved backward.

In what ways can an understanding of myself as a person who has experienced marginalization, disability, and the impacts of art-making on both, serve to inform and expand our understandings of the relationships between and among disability circumstances, creative expression, and literacy development, in ways that are reciprocal rather than hierarchical? What does this synergistic learning and reciprocity look like in practice? Can reciprocity of voice between and among myself as a participant/researcher and teachers who have come before me serve to inform future practice, both my own and others?

Conceptual Framework

Generally, in seeking to draw connections among and between the areas of art making, literacy, and disability, there were some issues of concern for me with regard to availability of current scholarship as it relates to epistemology specific to connecting the areas of art making, literacy development, and disability in the twenty-first century classroom. However, this was not a barrier to my research because the philosophies I consider most relevant are, in fact, timeless.

Theorists within my conceptual framework. The conceptual frameworks for my research are rooted first and most broadly in the work of two theorists: John Dewey, in the fields of education, democracy, and art, and Paolo Freire, whose theories regarding ways of knowing are informed by and overlap with those of Dewey. As well, two

theorists are relevant in a discussion particular to the merits of reflexive autoethnography as a methodology for research. At the core of autoethnography, there is a participant-researcher seeking to identify her place in a particular culture. The theories of Michel Foucault, as they pertain to power and knowledge and the nature of the individual and institutions, and those of Lev Vygotsky regarding social development and social constructivism are applicable. The perspectives of Foucault and Vygotsky serve to ground autoethnographical research because both are centered on an inclusion of individual voice—in this case, the participant-researcher’s—as meriting further consideration in the discourse that encompasses academic scholarship. I discuss each theorist below.

John Dewey (1859 – 1952). Dewey’s work in the field of education, generally, and as it relates to art, specifically, are primary in my conceptual base. Dewey has contributed greatly to our perspectives of both traditional and progressive education and the roles that each may play in a more sound educational system. Despite the fact that much of Dewey’s own research and theories were developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, his philosophies and theories continue to be applicable today.

Dewey’s theories about education, generally. At its simplest, Dewey’s philosophy of education proposed that it should serve the purpose of helping students to become problem solvers so that they would be better able to navigate an ever-changing world rife with problems to be solved. He believed that labels, as they are applied to the doctrines of education serve to prolong *schism*—which is the destruction of unity that comes about when there is disagreement over doctrine. Schism remains a problem in public education at all levels today. Further, Dewey believed that the “quality of any experience has two

aspects. There is an immediate aspect of agreeableness or disagreeableness,” (Dewey, 1938, p. 27) and these influence all later experiences, such that an agreeable experience of school would influence one’s having more agreeable experiences later, and vice versa.

Dewey further suggested that, from an administrative perspective, the problem of education is that it is set up as a sequence of “unrelated and overlapping parts” which lead to “waste arising from friction, reduplication and transitions that are not properly bridged” (Dewey, 1900/2009, p. 53). In his view, “the only way to unite the parts of the system is to unite each to life... we must look at it (school) as part of the larger whole of social life” (p. 53). In terms of how this would look in real life, it is simply this: all that is learned in school is carried out to everyday life and used there, and all that is used in everyday life is brought to school and used there. In this way then, “The isolation of studies as well as of parts of the school system disappears... All studies arise from aspects of one earth and one life lived upon it” (Dewey, pp. 61-62). Dewey believed that “mere learning” carries with it no social inducement. Instead, he referenced “active occupation” as being the center for renewal of a school’s spirit, and that this active occupation should take place throughout the entire school system. How, then, does art fit into this dynamic?

Dewey’s theories specific to art and education. According to Dewey (1900/2009), “all children like to express themselves through the medium of form and color” (p. 40). That said, he did not espouse the act of making art without the intention of growth. Rather, he suggested that the impulse to create should happen first, “and then through criticism, question, and suggestion bring him (the student) to consciousness of what he has done, and what he needs to do” (p. 40). Ultimately, the work becomes a combination

of “observation, memory, and imagination,” (p. 41). Key to the importance of these philosophies is the growth out of what Dewey referenced as “communicating and constructive instincts,” along with “a social motive, something to tell” (p. 41). I assert that these are the same basic elements of construction that must be present to grow conventional literacy.

Additionally, Dewey (1900/2009) noted that social motivation for learning (whether it be art or other studies) offers much in the way of skill sets that all of us must master (the problem-solving referenced earlier) in order to wend our ways through life’s travails. These include “a continual appeal to memory, to judgment, in adapting ends to means, a training in habits of order, industry, and neatness in the care of the tools and utensils, and in doing things in a systematic, instead of a haphazard way” (p. 68). As well, art (referenced as “music and art work,” p. 70) serve, according to Dewey, to develop one’s “moral and aesthetic nature” (p. 70). He also noted that he knew of no other study content that served so well the internalization of traits of patience and the ability to work something through to completion, or that “better develops the power of attention, the habit of observation and of consecutiveness, of seeing parts in relationship to whole” (p. 70). The map of Dewey’s experimental school, established through the University of Chicago provides a visual representation of his vision of the school, with its connections to life outside, and an equal distribution of environment and placement for art as compared to other studies. This map is not only a map of space, but also a map of reciprocity in which literacy and language are brought in from the world outside and then inform the art that is made in the school, which in turn, is taken back out into the world

and becomes a part of a tapestry of language and literacy and art and life. Three views of the map are included in Chapter 1's introduction.

All of these pieces and the ways in which they demand a connection with the world outside of school—with life, as it were—complement the theories and ideologies of Paolo Freire, discussed next.

Paolo Freire (1921 – 1997). As discussed in Chapter 1, Paolo Freire's "pedagogy of hope" espoused ways of knowing in a philosophy that asserted the ability to "read the world" as necessary for one to be literate. Specifically, Freire's theories maintain that "the reading and writing of words comes by way of the reading of the world," requiring then, that the reading of the world be "an antecedent act vis-à-vis the reading of the word" (Freire, 1994, p. 78). Freire's contentions that the cyclical reading and rereading (reinterpreting) of the world must be present to the extent that without it, reading and writing the word is incapacitated across all contexts, fits with an extrapolation of Dewey's theories of the necessity for meaning in life outside of school to be present in order for learning to take place and have meaning in school.

Further, Freire's (1994) philosophies against educational "directivity"—asserting that it stifles creativity and one's ability to investigate the world—also coincide with Dewey's philosophies that school should be a place of active occupation and problem-solving that can benefit one's existence in the world. The sharing of one's world through art making represents the next step, then, in a reading of the world, moving from an initial observation of that world, to a visual interpretation of it, followed by discourse regarding what one has created.

Freire's (1994) expanded view of literacy, like others cited in this research, serves to respect multiple ways of knowing. This is essential, especially in the pre-literate stages of development for students with disabilities. Art then, may be seen as a means of both complementing and informing the teaching and learning that surround conventional literacy, especially when viewed as a basis for the construction of knowledge about the world (through "observation, memory and imagination" as suggested by Dewey). In turn, a person's interaction in the social world, with its ever-present discursive elements, also serves to complement and inform one's art-making. Thus, there is a synergy between the social contexts of both literacy and art.

Finally, with regard to Freire (1994), I use (albeit out of context) his words that go to the compatibility of rigor and beauty because I think they are important to a conversation about the language of art and the language of words. Freire stated, "There is not the least incompatibility between rigor in the quest for an understanding and knowledge of the world, and beauty of form in the expression of what is found in that world" (pp. 71-72). For our students with disabilities, the rigor and oft-accompanying fear that accompany early literacy learning, might be assuaged or even grown by and through their art-making if that is a means through which they may show their knowledge of the world.

Michel Foucault (1926 – 1984). At the root of all things theoretical or philosophical, there is knowledge. Both Dewey and Freire spoke to knowledge of the world, and these theories underpin those of Foucault as well. Oliver (2010) noted that rather than an interest in the history of knowledge, or changes in it, Foucault was interested in "the mechanisms and processes by which our understanding of the world

alters” (p. 19). Considering society, then, as one of those mechanisms, he proposed that rather than a structuralist view of society (in which social structures such as class, and political systems are the controlling influence), we consider “the individual as the creator of his or her own destiny” (Oliver, p. 25). By this model, Foucault would have each person creating “his or her vision of the social world” (p. 25). I suggest that his “anti-structuralist” ideology should be adopted in the classroom to the extent that each student is allowed to create his vision of the world (through the creation of art and the ensuing oral and written discourses that would accompany these). This vision would then be used by teachers to inform their understanding of what is important to the student—what interests her and brings her joy. From this, the teacher can be directed toward reading materials, subject matter, and writing topics that motivate the student to a desire for conventional literacy development. And all of it would begin by giving voice to the student in the first place.

This voice is also present in my own research as I sought to connect my own experiences with those who exist within the disability culture—via reflexive autoethnography and multiple data collection methods.

Lev Vygotsky (1896 – 1934). Vygotsky (1962) theorized that learning always occurs within a social context. Where schools are concerned, then, the old transmission models (what Freire would call “directive” teaching) for imparting knowledge to passive, docile learners, could not work because they do not involve social interaction (what Dewey referenced as “active occupation”). Instead, Vygotsky saw the teacher’s role as one of a collaborator and facilitator whose role is to serve students by helping them to

construct their own meanings. (Freire's "ways of knowing" and Foucault's "anti-structuralist philosophies fit here as well.)

As well, Vygotsky (1978) theorized that language is the vehicle by which participation in one's culture can occur. This, he suggested, takes place within the contexts of thinking, reasoning, and cultural activities (including reading and writing). He considered language, and specifically, word meanings, to be fluid and dynamic, and needing to change as a person's understanding of the world evolved and developed (Vygotsky, 1962). His well-known social development theories are inclusive of three key components: social interaction as key to development, the role of a "more knowledgeable other" to serve the learning process and assist in the understanding of a particularly task or concept, and the zone of proximal development, which is the space between a person's current ability to complete a task with assistance from a more knowledgeable other, and to do it independently. Within that space, according to Vygotsky, is where learning occurs. Semsch (2009, unpublished master's thesis), considered Vygotsky's theories as key components in "literacy development as a piece within the larger realm of language development" (p. 7).

The development of one's mode of discourse takes place in the world of the classroom for students with and without identified disabilities. It also takes place in the world of academia with its scholarly discourses and accepted (and unaccepted) means of conveying one's knowledge of the world. I propose that reflexive autoethnography can play a key role in the arena of empirical research and discuss my reasoning below.

Methodology

As I revisited my conceptual frameworks, and read anew the epistemologies of the theorists within which they are rooted, I came, at some point, to the conclusion that there is much more to be discovered with regard to the interplay of art making, literacy activities, and persons with disabilities. I feel strongly that these two areas (art making and literacy), usually considered as separate and unique, can and do in fact, complement and inform one another in a synergistic and reciprocal way, and that even as a stand-alone concept, the creation of art and participation in creative activities generally, can serve to position oneself in the larger social culture. I was able to speak to some of the ways this is being demonstrated in Chapter 2.

I began by using a reflexive autoethnographic methodology in my research with data collection, reporting, and analysis strategies inclusive of: narrative storytelling, reflection and observation, personal art-making, audio tape recording, informal interviews, research journaling, and archival document searches. These archival document searches were originally conducted within the framework prescribed for autoethnographic research and were relevant to that portion of this work. However, in seeking evidence of arts-based practice in classrooms with disability populations, I conducted further archival document searches at the Center for Southwest Research (CSWR), located in the Zimmerman Library on the campus of the University of New Mexico (UNM) in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Those document searches led me to the discovery of a collection of teachers' diaries (the Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries) that moved the autoethnographic component of this research to a secondary position. The information revealed in the diaries and discussed further in this and

subsequent chapters, contributed to the evolution of my research as primarily phenomenological in nature. Therefore, I will discuss here first, phenomenology as philosophy and method.

Phenomenology as a philosophy. Phenomenology is, according to Popkin and Stroll (1993), to be understood first as a contemporary philosophy. The authors noted it as one of the “philosophies of life,” (along with existentialism, for example), and as such, it has in common with other such philosophies, the shared interest in answering questions about human existence (Popkin & Stroll, p. 302). The authors credited Edmund Husserl, a German philosopher, with the development of phenomenology as a movement early in the twentieth century. According to Popkin and Stroll, Husserl saw knowledge as needing no proof, but rather, as being evident in the examining of it. “If there are such intuitively certain truths in human consciousness, we should study them as objects of consciousness, just as they appear to us and not as aspects of some hidden metaphysical world” (p. 309).

Husserl, had a vision for phenomenology as a means of knowing—through description of the conscious experience, and not a psychological method, or something to be “deduced” from presuppositions. Unfortunately, Husserl, who was Jewish, died at the hands of the Nazis (a phenomenon like no other the world has seen) in 1938, according to Popkin and Stroll (1993). Much of his work, great amounts of which were smuggled out of Nazi Germany, is still being published. In his absence, however, his former assistant, Martin Heidegger (discussed within the realm of Sinason, 2007, in Chapter Two), built on Husserl’s work, and the French philosopher, Jean-Paul Sartre used Husserl’s and Heidegger’s work to develop his own version of existentialism. Thus, before it was ever

seen in qualitative research—much more recent—phenomenology existed as a philosophy of life.

As noted earlier, McMillan and Wergin (2010) asserted phenomenology as the philosophical basis for *all* [emphasis added] qualitative research, “holding that subjective experience, rather than objective observation, is the key to deep understanding” (p. 90). However, that speaks only to the phenomenological perspective, and not phenomenology as the qualitative research method. It also holds, according to the authors, that the same event or scenario may be experienced and interpreted in multiple ways, and that “the meaning of the phenomena to each person is what constitutes reality” (p. 90). Moustakas (1990), as cited in Thacker’s (2009) phenomenologically-oriented master’s thesis, discussed the etymology of the word *phenomenon* as coming from the Greek *phaesesthai*, to flare up, to show itself, to appear” (p. 26). Thus, all phenomenology finds its origins in what shows itself to someone through “the experience, not as it is *thought* to be but as it is *lived*” (Mayan, 2009). The end result, according to Mayan is “a thick description... of the essence of the phenomenon” (p. 49), and the phenomenon *is* the lived experience.

Phenomenological research. I used Van Manen’s (1984) interpretations and explanations of what phenomenological research is and is not as the basis for reclassifying my primary research method as phenomenology. Van Manen discussed phenomenological study as being comprised, always, of certain characteristics. First, phenomenological research must always start in the “lifeworld.” This world, according to Van Manen, is the “world of the natural attitude of everyday life... the original, prereflective, pretheoretical attitude” (p. ii). It is about paying attention, and being aware of the minutia of everyday life—those trivial things that we tend, often, to ignore. The

difference, then, between ethnographical research and phenomenological research is in the cultural element. While an ethnographical study seeks to *characterize* a culture, phenomenological research seeks to *be enlightened by a phenomenon*.

Van Manen (1984) further discussed the objectives of phenomenological research as being a “deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences” (p. 66). In seeking to explain this broad idea, Van Manen differentiated two questions. The first, “How do these children learn this particular material?” is not a phenomenological question. Phenomenology, instead, asks “What is the nature of the experience of learning (so that I can now better understand what this particular learning experience is like for these children)?” He further referenced it “a ministering of thoughtfulness” (p. 1).

Key to my understanding of phenomenology, was Van Manen’s (1984) comparisons between poetry and phenomenological study. He suggested that we do not seek a conclusion or a result when we read a poem because to summarize the poem “in order to present the result would destroy the result because the poem itself *is* the result. “The poem is the thing” (p. 2). However, Forinash (1995) spoke to the ways that phenomenological research may demonstrate validity, by virtue of “returning to the original data with the *results* [emphasis added] and showing how those results are grounded in the data” (p. 372). This stance runs counter to Van Manen, in my view, because phenomenology—which seeks to understand truths as existing in multiple manifestations—cannot be understood in only one way. I would also add that validity is not the goal of qualitative research; rather, the goal is transferability.

Forinash noted that a frequent criticism of phenomenology is “the subjectivity of the analysis,” which the author cited as the researcher’s “free rein to make any conclusions he or she feels necessary,” in order to “support the researcher’s bias” (p. 372). Her response to such criticism, is noted above as regards a return to the data’s results. I would add to that two additional responses to the critics of phenomenology as a research method. First, all researchers are free to draw their own conclusions from the data—perhaps especially quantitative researchers who have a hypothesis to prove. Data are oft interpreted in favor of the original hypothesis for a wide variety of reasons. Also, as to the researcher’s bias, when conducting archival research (which represents the phenomenological portion of this work), the potential for bias is greatly diminished. What exists in the archival records was originally initiated for someone else’s purposes. Therefore, the potential for researcher bias falls back to the person who originally collected the data, and not on the researcher who locates it years later.

Phenomenological research, according to Van Manen, consists of four procedural activities, which I will frame in the context of this dissertation, and which I have narrowed further from its original. First, according to Van Manen, I must identify a phenomenon in the world that is of serious interest to me; in this case, it is the relationship and influence of art-making on literacy learning, with a special focus on persons with disability attributes. I must, then, according to Van Manen, investigate the experience of art-making as it is (or was) lived by persons with disability attributes, rather than as I conceptualize it, or as others do. The reading of the teacher diaries in the NCSTD, and the examination of student artwork represents that investigation. After I have investigated the experience of art making as it is lived by persons with these

disability attributes , I must reflect on the essential themes which characterize the phenomenon. (These themes are revealed and addressed in Chapter Five to this dissertation). I must also describe the phenomenon through the “art of writing and rewriting” (p. 3); this is done in Chapter Four to this dissertation, and was done throughout the research process in the keeping of a research journal, and through extensive note-taking beyond the journal. In sum, “phenomenology is the application of logos (language and thoughtfulness) to the phenomenon (lived experience), to what shows itself” (p. 4).

Others also spoke to the nature of phenomenology. Jurema et al. (2006), for example, envisioned phenomenological research as a kind of “unraveling (of) the internal structures of meanings” (para. 1). The authors further asserted that phenomenology, unlike other research methodologies, is not about evidence, but rather about all of the manifestations of truth that exist within the realm of human experience. This then, the authors suggested, is the reason that phenomenologists must listen carefully in an interview situation, because the meanings are often multi-layered and go beyond words. I would assert here, that the diaries read for this research required a deep level of careful *reading*, much like an interview requires careful *listening*. As to Jurema et al.’s reminders about the importance of spontaneity and free speech rather than structured interview questions, the diaries utilized for this research were akin to conducting open-ended interviews of over 20 participant teachers, with no structured questions at all, and over a period of seven years. This certainly meets the suggestion of the authors that participants be allowed the opportunity to speak to their own phenomena (lived experiences).

Strengthening the argument in this researcher's favor, Jurema et al. cited multiple texts of Paolo Freire as their conceptual and theoretical grounding.

Also useful to me as a teacher—and as relevant to the teacher diaries in the CSWR archives—are Willis' (1999) notes about phenomenology as a component to reflective practice. Reflective practice, according to Willis, requires that we look at the activities that make up our practices and ask ourselves whether what actually occurred in the unfolding of the activities was what we had planned, critique the activities from a number of different perspectives, and determine what corrective action we should take before we next do the activities, which are then reflected upon and critiqued, and the cycle goes on (p. 104). Certainly, this was a primary purpose of the Nambé teachers' diaries which were rife with reflections and questions that went to their interactions with the students at the school and the community within which they served. This is also reminiscent of practitioner action research, so I will ask a question. Is practitioner action research a form of phenomenological research? I have never seen either discussed in this context, but I know that there are many hybrids of many research methods.

I also appreciated Willis' (1999) discussion of "presences," as in Merleau-Ponty's (1974) "perception does not give me truths like geometry but presences" (as cited in Willis, p. 93). Willis explained that presences reference the outcomes of our being awake, and aware, and present in the world. "Presences are generated by getting back to a first level of awareness" (p. 93). This takes me back to Van Manen's (1984) discussion about the world of prereflective, pretheoretical attitude. Willis further suggested that phenomenology should slow the researcher down so that our gaze can be fixed on the phenomenon itself; these were discussed in a list of processes similar to Van Manen's.

Hybrids of phenomenological research. There are different *kinds* of phenomenological research. The interpretive variety, according to Willig (2008/2010) is influenced by *hermeneutic* versions of phenomenology. Hermeneutics, goes to Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics and says that the knowledge produced by hermeneutic phenomenology "is *reflexive* in so far as it acknowledges its dependence on the researcher's own standpoint" (p. 69). Thus, hermeneutic phenomenology is a "cousin" to *heuristics* (the noun form of the adjective *heuristic*) because it references the "process of internal search through which one discovers the nature and meaning of experiences and develops methods and procedures for further investigation and analysis" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 9). The author explained further that in the process of understanding a phenomenon in greater depth, "the researcher also experiences growing self-awareness and self-knowledge" (p. 9). I assert that these are also essential components to autoethnographic research, discussed in greater depth below.

Heuristics, according to Moustakas (1990) is related to *eureka*, which finds its roots in "Greek mathematician Archimedes' discovery of a principle of buoyancy" while taking a bath (p. 9). Apparently *something*, either *on*, or *around* Archimedes was floating and bobbing around in the tub, and his aha moment was so profound, he ran through the streets naked, and shouting *Eureka!* (True or not, it is a great story.) Further, heuristic, according to the New Lexicon version of Webster's encyclopedic dictionary (1989), is "useful for discovering knowledge, e.g. of a teaching method which encourages a pupil to proceed by his own investigation... [fr. GK. *Heuriskein*, to discover]". Therefore, the interpretive variety of phenomenology is influenced by hermeneutics, which reference reflexive processes back to the self, and the new knowledge of the self, is heuristical in

nature. While hermeneutic phenomenology may be referenced as a specific methodology, heuristics is not a methodology, but is rather a component of hermeneutic phenomenology.

The implications for phenomenological research go right to the heart of truth for those who have not been afforded a voice because they are not empowered within the venue of scientific discourse. It is time that one of Foucault's "great political and economic apparatuses," namely, the University, change what counts as truth by including the voices of persons with disabilities and the truth as they live it.

We are privileged, as researchers, to be allowed into the worlds of those whom we seek to understand. It is not, vice-versa—that is, that *they* are privileged to have us enter *their* lives. The truth of one's experience is the truth, regardless of how it appears to someone else not living the phenomenon, or the day-to-day existence (as understood through illness, or art-making, or isolation, or identity generally). If we want the truth, we should be prepared to accept it for what it is. Here again, aesthetic empathy, as conceived by Dicker-Brandeis, Kramer, Noddings, Wix, and others, enters the picture. Aesthetic empathy is one person (the teacher, the art therapist, the social worker, or the enlightened witness) inviting the truth of another to be shown through their art-making. We are privileged when it is shown, and the benefit for the artist comes in our seeing their truth, and saying to them: "Thank you. What you have shown me means a great deal to you, and so it does to me."

Archival document searches and research journaling in this phenomenological piece. I have chosen to combine these two because they are directly connected throughout much of my research, and will continue to be connected throughout

the narrative description, and the results and findings in Chapter 4, including the resulting formation of patterns and themes. While some of my research journaling was related to my autoethnographical explorations, the majority of the notes within it were related to the archival document searches conducted in the CSWR.

One cannot position oneself in any culture without information that goes to the heart of that culture. I suspected at the outset of this journey, that there existed elusive pockets of information to be meted out which might help me to validate my own experiences, or to form theories which might in turn inform educational practice in the future. I also knew that looking for these elusive pockets in archival collections was sometimes like looking for a needle in a haystack. Who built the collection? If the person was a researcher, what was the objective of that research? What search terms might result in something useful to my work, even if the original research was not about literacy teaching and learning or art-making and students with disabilities? In order to discover whether such information might be in a local repository, I visited the Center for Southwest Research (CSWR) and was told by the archivist that a good starting place would be to search through the Rocky Mountain Online Archives (RMOA) database. The database has information on archival collections from 25 participating archives, museums and libraries housed in Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming.

On two separate days, I conducted searches of the RMOA database and found it to be somewhat confusing to use. For example, a search using the term “disability art” in an advanced search setting resulted in records of 20 collections that were primarily political in nature (from Bruce King to Dennis Chavez). After reading the biographical descriptions for each, there were no useful art-related, or even disability-related items that

I could discern in these collections. Continued searches using related terms resulted in the same almost non-sensical results lists. At the end of my second day's search session, on my last attempt, I simplified my search to the term "Education," and did a basic search, resulting in 1,173 records. Recognizing that these collections were likely built for reasons other than a researcher's attempt to draw connections between literacy learning and art-making, I kept the search term to the one word (Education), but went to advanced search and limited the findings to only the University of New Mexico (UNM) CSWR. This led to a results list of 384 records; I again started reading the biographical descriptions. Number 35 on that list is an example of one of those elusive pockets of information mentioned above.

These are some of the phrases pulled from the biographical information for this collection that are highlighted in my research journal from October 21, 2014: *born of realization that school wasn't meeting community's needs... diaries kept by teachers... 26 boxes and 1 oversize folder inclusive of art and projects... student projects (texts and drawings)... notes on student behavior ("character sketches") and student living conditions...* (Inventory of the Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries, Biography or History section). This collection would turn out to be a very strong example of the elusive pocket sought. It is made up almost entirely of primary source documents including elaborate diaries kept by the teachers and at two experimental schools (discovered by this author and confirmed with the archivists at CSWR despite both being housed under the collection titled Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries [NCSTD]). Both were run under the direction of Dr. Loyd S. Tireman and the University of New Mexico's College of Education (Bachelor, 1991; Nambé Community School

Teachers' Diaries, 1935 – 1942; Tireman & Watson, 1943). Despite the name of the collection reflecting only the Nambé Community School (NCS), a second collection in the form of the San José Training School (SJTS) was unearthed during my research. That school actually began operation as a demonstration school in the Deweyan model in 1930, and continued as such through the end of school year 1936 – 1937. The text by Bachelor verifies the origins and years of both schools and the text by Tireman and Watson delves into the Nambé project specifically. Both projects, along with background information about Dr. Tireman and his curriculum reform efforts in New Mexico are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

Reining in a collection of the size and scope of the NCSTD required that I get organized, and after several false attempts at such organization, I settled on one that worked best for me, though I would do several things differently if given the opportunity in terms of organizing my data. My routine became this. Each research day, I brought my research journal, a printed copy of the 21-page NCSTD inventory, and my USB drive to the Anderson Reading Room at the Center for Southwest Research (CSWR) (everything else had to be placed in a locker near the reception desk). Over 29 research days, I noted the day number, the box and diary, or folder number I was working on (and established codes for them by the third day; for example B13D2, ML g2, indicated that I was working with Box 13, Diary 2, teacher ML [I used initials only], grade 2). The discovery that there were actually two schools meant that I had to revisit some of my already-completed research with an eye to this fact. Originally, I viewed this as an inconvenience and loss of time (both of which were true), but after finding the Bachelor (1991) and Tireman and Watson (1943) texts and reading them both, then reading more thoroughly

the scope and content of the collection, and drawing connections between the years of the diaries in the boxes and the years of operation of both schools according to the two texts, I realized I had ample material for both schools and decided to include both with an eye to comparing and contrasting key points, including curriculum—especially that related to literacy learning and creative expression—teacher styles, and any information that might go to the ways that each school dealt with students with disabilities. I also noted the school from which the information was derived, correcting my initial errors.

Originally, I intended to only review the diaries of the principal, and the teachers who taught grades 6 through 8 (the population I am most interested in), but it became clear that I needed the context of the teachers at the lower grade levels for vertical alignment of the curriculum, how individual teachers included (or excluded) struggling students, and a view to how creative expression changed as the students got older.

For every note I wrote in my research journal, I typed a more elaborately detailed set of notes into the computer, using the bold, Italics, and highlighting features to differentiate between information that was relevant to art-making and students with disabilities (the latter had to be teased out since there was no such thing as an official Special Education designation in the pre-war era), notes to myself about connections I was making or connections I had, examples of reciprocity between and among the school faculty and staff, the students, the community, and the federal agencies (Roosevelt's efforts to pull the country out of the Great Depression) with which the school and community interacted. I also used the large bed scanner to email items to myself (e.g., student drawings, promotions lists, lesson plans, correspondence, etc.).

On a typical day in the archives, I spent between four and one-half and seven hours poring over the diaries, drawings, and photographs; I typed between seven and nine single-spaced pages of notes, hand-wrote three or four pages in my research journal, including descriptions of each scan (usually between six and twelve multi-page scans each day), which I numbered in the time order they would be listed in my UNM inbox. At night, I would print my notes for that day and do a cursory review of them. I would then open each emailed scan, title it with enough descriptive detail that I would be able to easily identify it if necessary, and save it as a PDF. At first, I printed each scan, but I literally broke my printer doing that, so after I bought a new printer, I only printed the scans that I was absolutely certain I would use. Each set of notes and scans were placed in archival quality plastic sleeves and in binders with tabbed dividers designating the day number of the research (e.g., CSWR, Day 14), which was also the heading of my handwritten research journals for the archival work, and the corresponding typed notes. In this way, I can look at any one item and cross-reference it to any of several places. Keeping the printed material in plastic sleeves also makes it easier for pinning them to my wall. In this way, I can view many items at once, draw connections between my self-story and the archival documents, notice new patterns or themes I hadn't before, or merely make myself feel overwhelmed! I chose not to explore electronic options for sorting and coding the data in part because of the time involved in the learning curve, but more importantly because I so appreciated the tangible aspect of this part of my research. There is something quite special and amazing about touching the paper and ink on the diary page that a teacher wrote 75 years ago, or handling the fragile, now-yellowed paper, with its torn edges, or permanent wrinkles on which a child used crayons to depict his

experience of a visit to a farm, or to visually show his understanding of the root systems of various plants in a study about soil erosion. The scanner I used made the type of PDF documents that will always allow me to see those yellowed pages, those crayon strokes, the yellowed tape, and torn page corners. There is no computer program that can duplicate this feeling for me. These are now my treasures.

Through the NCSTD, my personal experiences were validated and made more complete because as I read the teacher reflections, viewed student work, and learned about the lives of the community members outside of the schools, I was constantly made newly aware of parallels in my own experiences and in those being described despite a geographical distance and a 75 to 80-year time differential. I know, firsthand, something about the ways in which the creation of art informs one's sense of self, goes to healing and resiliency, and how the speaking, reading, and writing of the world, can serve to inform and strengthen each to the other, in addition to allowing for full participation in one's community. However, to have my own experiences validated by people whose lives were decades before I was even born affirmed that the desire to create and to give something valuable and lasting back to the world is a human condition that knows no boundaries of geography or time.

I immersed myself in archives that informed my understanding of not only the relationships between literacy learning and creative expression, but also about the very nature of reciprocal relationships. Finding an appropriate collection to research was difficult in the beginning. This was due, in part, to the nature of archival studies. As noted by Hill (1993), I was seeking information that had been previously framed by another to answer questions that were not the same as my own. These teachers were not asked by

Dr. Tireman to keep diaries about students with exceptionalities in their classrooms and the ways in which creative expression and literacy learning might inform one another. They were, however, urged by him to describe in detail their interactions with the community. Dr. Tireman did not reference this as reciprocity, but that's what it was, and that *was* something really important in my own research. Therefore, despite the fact that the original goals for the work of both schools was curriculum reform in rural communities, and especially where bilingual education was concerned, the collection is rife with material that goes directly to what I sought for my own research.

Calantone and Vickery (2010) asserted that “any database in existence before the initiation of a research study is data that are secondary to that study” because “conceptualization of the original data collection design was entirely independent of any consideration of the current study” (p. 3). These authors offered many reasons to include archival document searches in qualitative research (despite the difficulties noted above). They cited, for example, the ubiquity of archival data in our world, thus making it a ready source of information. They noted the money and time saved by using data that are already in existence and publicly available, which allows for what they termed “true *re*-search.” As well, they asserted that “secondary data sourced from archives can be more objective than even primary survey data because it is free from contamination by respondent perceptions and/or memories of the phenomenon of interest” (p. 3). That last piece is critical, I believe, to convincing others that my own personal experience of the world as related to marginalization, disability, and the relationships and activities surrounding creative expression and literacy that ameliorated them is not an anomaly.

Rather, it is one example among an infinite number that go to the vastness of the human condition.

Calantone and Vickery (2010), also asserted that secondary data from “surveys, censuses, etc.” can be used to “answer questions or test hypotheses that are far removed from the research intentions or informational requirements of the scholars and/or agencies whose studies or initiatives generated the data” (p. 3). This serves to enhance credibility by virtue of the fact that it “removes the possibility that the purpose or intention of the research could have influenced the design of the research questions, survey instrument and/or population(s) sampled” (p. 3). Student artwork became critical to the realization that I was dealing with material from two different schools. The visual examples created by the students, as well as the accompanying captions, or longer written charts about their excursions into the community looked very different from one another. In the case of the SJTS, the student drawings depicted multi-story buildings, and visited an ice cream factory. At NCS, the students went to an apple orchard and regularly interacted with the flora surrounding the school.

The story of Charlotte Hogg’s “discovery of her grandmother’s unpublished writings” (Ramsey et al., p. 17) in a local library led ultimately to an intellectual project on women’s literacy: *From the Garden Club: Rural Women Writing Community*. And the book was just sitting on the library’s shelf. The day I found the NCSTD, after opening the first box and reading the first diary page, I felt like I knew a little about how Charlotte Hogg must have felt.

The archival document search conducted at the CSWR, and the resulting data as reported in this dissertation, comply in all respects with the criteria necessary for both

phenomenological philosophy and research. That said, and as referenced earlier, I initially began this research considering that autoethnographical methods would be primary to it. Although they became secondary, they are important to an understanding of the personal components of the data that follow insofar as they also go to the intuitive truths in human consciousness (Popkin and Stroll, 1993). Therefore, they are discussed next.

Autoethnographical research. The relevance and defining characteristics for autoethnography as method as well as for each of the data collection strategies are discussed below. Studies reifying autoethnography as a valid empirical research method are also briefly discussed below, and are included in my literature review.

Hughes, Pennington, and Makris (2012) and Smith (2005) credit Hayano (1979) as originating autoethnography as a term initiated within anthropological circles and referring to an individual's study of his own culture. Mayan (2009) used Reed-Danahay's 1997 definition of autoethnography as "a self-narrative that connects the personal to the cultural by placing understanding of self within a social context" (p. 41). Further, she utilized Sparkes' description of autoethnography as including "highly personalized accounts that draw upon experience of the author/researcher for the purposes of extending sociological understanding" (as cited in Mayan, p. 41). An appealing aspect to an autoethnographic approach is discussed in Ellis, Adams, and Bochner's 2010 work in which they discussed the ways that autoethnographers "use personal experience to illustrate facets of cultural experience, and, in so doing, make characteristics of a culture familiar for insiders and outsiders" (as cited in Hughes et al., 2012). As well, McIlveen et al. (2010), asserted autoethnography as reflexive, with the researcher-practitioner

embedding herself “in theory and practice” (p. 13). McIlveen et al. also considered the “defining feature of autoethnography” as the performance of “narrative analysis of himself or herself as intimately related to a particular phenomenon” (pp. 14-15).

As to the forms that data collection may take in autoethnographic studies, Smith (2005), included: “short stories, poems, and artistic interpretations” (p. 4) and considered these “alternative representations” as a defining feature of autoethnography. These alternative representations took on many forms in the autoethnographic papers I located, including: a dissertation written by Ling-Yin Liao (2011) that included avatars—virtual online identities, inclusive of “art-making, self-making, and knowledge-making” through the process of the creation of a virtual body, physical features, clothing styles, and behaviors, Furman’s (2005) poems and narratives reflecting the grieving process at the loss of a pet, Moreira’s (2008) poetry reflecting the struggle of a minority scholar to find his “place, scholarship, voice, and body” (p. 663) in the world of academia, and Brogden’s (2010) identity research inclusive of what she referenced as “artifactology” and comprised of poetry, narrative, and photography. These are only a few of the thousands of autoethnographic books and articles that have been published, most in the past two decades.

While some scholars have argued that autoethnography is not research, Mayan (2009) and others affirmed its status as a research method because it draws a connection between the individual and the larger culture, which is common to all ethnographic approaches. Autoethnographic research either as a component piece, or as a method unto itself in a dissertation is becoming more commonplace. There are certainly potential pitfalls to be avoided, but that is true of every methodology, whether quantitative or

qualitative. In recent years, autoethnography has become an increasingly viable option as a qualitative research method. Chang (2008) noted that “in the 2000s, articles labeled autoethnography become [*sic*] noticeable in qualitative research journals such as *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *Symbolic Interaction*, and *Qualitative Inquiry* (p. 50).

Gergen and Gergen, in 2002, cited the freedom that is afforded the researcher using an autoethnographic approach to research. The authors cited, for example, freedom from more traditional writing conventions because the method calls for “one’s unique voicing—complete with colloquialisms, reverberations from multiple relationships, and emotional expressiveness...” (as cited in Chang, p. 52). As well, Chang specifically noted the use and powerful benefits of an autoethnographic approach for “researchers and practitioners who deal with human relations in multicultural settings, such as educators...” (p. 51), adding that the method is “friendly to researchers and readers... enhances cultural understanding of self and others, and... has a potential to transform self and others to motivate them to work toward cross-cultural coalition building” (p. 52). This is appealing to me in terms of accessibility to stakeholders within the disability community who may wish to read my research. Too often (albeit, with the best of intentions), we include in the *process* of scholarly research the persons we purport to wish to help by way of contributing to a growing body of scholarship, but then exclude those same persons from the final research *product* by virtue of the unobtainability of the language used within it. These stakeholders whom we serve include parents, educators and other service providers, and—most importantly—persons with disabilities, and they should be allowed easy access to that which we have learned through them. Also, as

educators, there is an expectation for reflection in our practice (ergo, the 3-Tiered system in place in New Mexico which requires an arduous process of self-reflection and reflexivity, data collection, collaboration with colleagues and other community stakeholders, and willingness to change and adapt in one's practice in order to meet the requirements for movement to the next level). Reflexive autoethnography contains, at its core, a requirement for deep reflection.

There are a number of studies in addition to those cited above, (Atkinson, 2006; Chang, 2007; Cotunda, 2006; Neville-Jan, 2003; Olson, 2004; Smith, 2005) and texts (Coia & Taylor, 2006; Ellis, 1996; Lee, 1986; Nash, 2002; Tillmann-Healy, 1996; Tompkins, 1996) specifically devoted to autoethnography, either as process, product, or both. While the subject matter differs, all of the researchers sought to position themselves in relationship to a larger culture. In my case, I sought to understand myself in relationship to the cultures of disability, marginalization, art making, and my place in the world of academic scholarship. From that, I hoped to better understand the students with whom I work, and for whom disability has too often been deemed a reason for their being shut out from the world of communication generally and literacy specifically. Whether these students have been diagnosed with a disability attribute, or experience psychosocial disability circumstances such as poverty, violence in the home, non-dominant language-based exclusion, or trauma, they are deserving of respect and the opportunity for voice regardless of whether that voice manifests in terms of conventional literacy practices, creative expression, or both.

Autoethnography, according to Chang (2008), may contain data from the present and the past, and includes self-observation (collecting factual data as it occurs in the

present) and self-reflection (the gathering of introspective data from the past the serve to inform a current perspective). The data collection and reporting procedures are described in more detail below. Additionally, the other components of my autoethnographic research including strategies for data analysis and the goals for results are discussed.

Participants. Because my data collection strategies are self-generated or inclusive of archival document searches in which I sought to better understand my own experience in relation to others, I am the only participant in this research.

Settings. The settings for this research are primarily separated by time into past and present. The difference is delineated as self-reflective and self-observational, both of which are described above (Chang, p. 89). Physical settings are subsumed into these arenas of time, with the exception of archival document collection searches oriented within research spaces, primarily in the CSWR.

Data collection and reporting strategies. As noted above, in the introduction to this chapter, I collected my data through observation, reflection, audio tape recordings, informal interviews, personal art-making, archival document searches (seeking knowledge of others with some of the same personal and life attributes as my own), and research journaling. According to Chang (2008), regardless of whether one is attempting to gain cultural perspectives through reflection on the past, or observation in the present, the data collection is autobiographical “fieldwork.” Each component of the data represents a separate data set for purposes of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. A description of each in terms of my intent, its merit (according to some published research), process, and product follows. Before sharing my data collection strategies, I discuss pre-research data collection strategies that are specific to autoethnography.

Pre-research data collection. Chang (2008) confirmed the concerns of many in terms of the precarious nature of memory, but nonetheless, considered it a necessity in tapping into self-information. Some of the pre-research data collection strategies I used in order to tap into this self-knowledge included conducting what the author referenced as a personal inventory, in which I collected, evaluated (for its usefulness), and organized bits of memory, adding and removing items as needed, and then “ranking them (what remains) in a hierarchy of importance” (p. 76). Some of the ways I conducted my personal inventory involved taking written notes (sometimes referenced as memoing) and then verifying the correctness of my information (when possible) with my parents or siblings. I also made a list of all the places I have lived (44 homes, and three periods of homelessness, living in my car), placed them in chronological order, and then asked questions of my parents that included the reasons for a particular move, where my dad was working and what his job entailed at the times we lived in different places—this, because as the sole working adult in our household, I wanted to understand where and how the poverty began.

I spent an entire day doing Google map searches (satellite views and street views) of the houses, neighborhoods, or addresses (some of the homes are no longer there). I captured interesting images in these street views and printed some of them either in color or grey scale, depending on the memories evoked. I also jotted notes in my research journal about the feelings I was experiencing in seeing some of these places—the memories—and, finally, took several of the most important images to my local print shop and had enlargements made for art-making purposes. Having the images in my mind accurate both in terms of reflection and observation of my current life was a critical pre-

research component. Chang (2008) suggested that one way to make this inventory manageable is to try to arrive at “five thematic categories and five items in each category,” (p. 76), noting that these are not set in stone. This suggestion was the basis for the categorization of my transcribed audiotapes and notes as discussed below in the *Narrative* section. Chang referenced this process of narrowing the research focus as *data refinement* because it serves to whittle down data that is either redundant or not important, while expanding on that which matters most.

While I did not create an autobiographical timeline in the traditional sense of one (per Chang, 2008), my chronological list of childhood homes, Google maps search, and discussions with my parents and other family members created a timeline from which to work. I also followed her suggestion that the information be thematic in nature, thus my *pre-research* data collection established five themes, each with five patterns or attributes that related to them. These were later further reduced to three salient themes as discussed and illustrated in Chapter 5.

The other pre-research strategies I employed involved looking through photos of family and places that elicited strong memories, collecting artifacts that went to my daily routines (photos from my morning or evening walks with my dog, George Stephanopoulos, for example), activities I enjoy that do not involve art-making (movie ticket stubs, for example), or my current environment (peacock and chicken feathers, and some rocks). I also wrote some poetry, drew in my research journal, made a map of a significant childhood place, and did an ink sketch of a recurring dream. As to artifacts from my past, I have had a little difficulty in gathering personal items for a variety of reason. Items that were once in my parents’ home are either missing, or lost in the many

moves we, as a family, made over the years. I do have many artifacts from my years of teaching and some of those have informed this research and will be included in its presentation, though not in this dissertation because I do not have consent for its use in this research.

The inclusion of official documents (e.g., certificates, announcements, degrees conferred) serves, according to Chang (2008), to validate “the significant moments of one’s life” (p. 107). I have a number of those, some of which surround me in my working environment as I write this (my framed degrees), and some that bring back memories of places and times gone by (the notation of address and father’s occupation on my birth certificate, for example, and the Final Decree and Dissolution of Marriage—one of these documents marking the beginning of my life, and one my most recent status as a newly divorced woman.

Much of this pre-research data has found its way into my narrative, and certainly serves to inform my conclusions and the implications for my research. However, some information is too personal, and it is not my intention that this dissertation be a confessional beyond that which is important for my own understanding of self, and for the reader’s elucidation.

Narrative Storytelling. Generally, the construction of narrative storytelling, and its subsequent analysis is extremely common among autoethnographers (Chang, 2008; McIlveen et al., 2010; Smith, 2005; Sykes, 2014) and serves as a crucial part of the research being conducted. For my purposes, I constructed a story using both reflection

and observation, and positioning myself as a person with disability attributes and as one who has experienced marginalization by poverty and abuse during both my childhood and adult life. As well, these experiences have led to what I consider to be marginalizing characteristics in terms of my own educational preparedness in the world of academia. Much of the narrative was constructed during the collection process, while the data reporting method, discussed later in this chapter, is also itself a narrative constructed of the findings from my archival document searches and pieces of my own story.

Mayan (2009) included narrative as a method evolving from traditional ethnography. For my purposes, I consider it among my data collection strategies within all methodological components of reflexive autoethnography. According to Mayan, a central tenet drawing researchers to narrative “is how stories and storytelling make meaning in our lives” (p. 49). Storytelling is common across human experience, and Mayan asserted that “any one person’s story, analyzed in sufficient depth, represents a larger collection of social experiences” (p. 49). According to Mayan, there is no one framework used by most narrative scholars, instead, they seek out themes as the basis of their analysis. Chang (2008) included narrative writing as potentially inclusive of both past (narrative reflection) and present (narrative observation).

When considering an autoethnographic approach to research, narrative is crucial to the positioning and evolution of oneself in the context of the larger cultures being studied. Bruner (1990, as cited in Waterhouse, 2007) asserted that language is the vehicle we use to make sense of our world and to represent it to ourselves and others. It is a living representation that is always under construction and evolves through our life experiences. Waterhouse further suggested that Dewey (1934/1958), Eisner (1991), and

others wrote about “making sense of the world as a form of artistry” (p. 276), and that one form of such artistry may take the form of written expression. The author posited that narrative is the very shape of language; we shape and interpret our experiences through a narration of the events, and the emotions connected to them. Included in a narrative we identify as story, according to Waterhouse, are the myths and legends and images that take a distinct shape in the telling.

Four studies included in my research review (McLeod & Ricketts, 2013; Sagan, 2007; 2008; 2011) included narrative methodologies in their research designs. In all cases, the narrative was framed in the context of creativity—a visual/narrative art piece in the research done by McLeod, embodied poetic narrative in Ricketts study, and biographical narrative in the context of a creative writing course in all three of Sagan’s studies. Additional autoethnographic studies containing narrative elements are discussed throughout this section.

Morse (2002), cautioned that narrative is “rarely one’s own” (p. 1159) by virtue of the fact that it contains information that may be recognizable by others, and “as such, writing about others violates anonymity. If these ‘others’ do not know about the article, it still violates their rights” (p. 1159). In such cases, Morse advocated for the possible use of a “nom de plume,” which has the effect of disadvantaging authors who do not receive credit. However, it should be considered an option when necessary. Morse’s second concern with narrative is its potential for overwhelming a study in ways that are unnecessary to the research. She referenced this as “*conceptual broadsiding*—a form of concept tunnel vision” (p. 1159), wherein the researcher-participant’s own experiences negatively impact the overall goals of the research. These are cautions I take seriously,

and it is why I will devote much of my research to archival document searches and meticulous research journaling about that process. That said, the merits of narrative processes are spoken well to by McIlveen et al. (2010), who suggested:

Storying serves the reader: I read you, I hear you, I speak you, and thus I am here too. Perhaps story is the soul of *empathy*—genuine understanding, a shared humanity that reaches across and touches; and in feeling with the other, we become our own self—the human intertextuality of existence” (p. 18).

The parallels between autoethnography and phenomenology. After months of collecting both personal and archival data, I found that the two share many patterns, parallels, and themes, and that the story is best told when the components of each are woven together. Therefore, I have built the story that comprises Chapter 4, and its analysis in chapter 5, from all sources, including hundreds of pages of both personal and archival research journals (the latter resulting from over 148 hours of reading and note-taking of primary source documents from the collection noted below), over six hours of transcribed audio tapes that are primarily reflective in nature, approximately three hours of informal semi-structured phone interviews with my parents, very brief and informal interviews of people in the painting classes I attended over the last year (sixteen classes), and observations and reflections on both the process and product of my own art-making, whether directed or self-directed.

After gathering the data that ultimately served as component pieces of my narrative, I began coding and organizing it. This process was explained by Chang (2008) as *fracturing* because it breaks up the larger chunks of data into smaller pieces and allows

them to then be rearranged for *categorizing* it. In the coding of my data, I assigned topical identifiers (e.g., *disability attributes*, *family dynamics*). In this way, regardless of the source, data segments that fell under the same topical code could be grouped together. This part of the research was, frankly, cumbersome, but I got better at it as I went along, eventually only coding, organizing, and categorizing the pieces that I was sure I would use in my narrative story. Ultimately, these categories of information were further condensed into the themes discussed in Chapter 4.

Personal artwork and the artwork of others. I use my personal artwork primarily by reference with some minimal description in the narrative story that evolved. Written descriptions of my experience in the creation of the art, the settings in which it was made, and others (if any) present during the process were a part of the process of this component of my research, though most of these descriptions will not be included in the narrative discussion and results in Chapter 4 except in terms of an overall sense of what was derived from the experience. Additionally, I revisited many of the art pieces created by my students over the years with an eye especially, toward those works that included both a visual art-based element, and a written component. These observations were supplemented with reflections recorded on audio tape and later transcribed. This process was made more relevant in light of the artwork described in the teacher diaries (and in some cases viewed) that was created by the students at the San José Training School and the Nambé Community School, described in the *Archival document searches and research journals* section, below. I discovered art-making and its contribution toward my own sense of self-awareness, self-esteem, and resiliency only recently, though I have saved drawings from my childhood as well (which, it turned out, were mostly lost to time

and circumstance), and have clear recollection of the environment during the making of some of it. These recollections were also audiotaped and transcribed and some are included in the narrative in Chapter 4. I have a long-held interest in the making of art by others, especially the art of persons marginalized or stigmatized by society and who are self-taught (as evidenced in my literature review). Always, when I read the back story about a particular artist outsider, I wondered, what might have happened if he or she hadn't been institutionalized, or had been provided appropriate therapy or medication, or had been born in a different time and place. *What if that person had been respected by a teacher, and encouraged in his or her art-making? How would that have changed their lives... their art?* Interestingly, perhaps, I had not considered its potential in my own life until I was asked to take an art education course in order to better inform my research interests. This process was as far removed from a comfort zone as I have been since beginning this academic journey, but it is now an ongoing and life-saving part of my world. If I am to understand the potential for art as transformative – whether in the context of an expanded view of literacy, as a tool to inform conventional literacy, or as a means to personal fulfillment in its own right—it seems appropriate to use some of my own work.

In addition to the research cited in the literature review, there is merit, I think, to considering the role of art-making in a discussion of one's place in the larger culture. Sacks (1970/2006), for example, devoted an entire chapter to what he termed “the autistic artist.” Dr. Sacks has long asked patients “if it is possible for them, to write and draw, partly as a rough-and-ready index of various competences, but also as an expression of ‘character’ or ‘style’” (p. 215). He noted that children with autism have long been denied

the presumption of “anything imaginative or personal” (p. 219). This presumption is common and extends toward children and adults with all types and degrees of disability attributes, but is especially the case for those with the most severe intellectual developmental disabilities. This notion of an incapacity for imaginative work or creative expression was also discussed earlier by Crawford (1962). And it was certainly present where the artwork created by the institutionalized artists discussed in my literature review was concerned. This presumption is examined in terms of the implications for future practice in Chapter 5 of this work.

Sometimes, art *is* the language. Dewey (1934) said as much when he noted that “because objects of art are expressive, they are a language. Rather they are many languages” (p. 111). Smith (2005) also found healing in art-making after an acquired brain injury (ABI) and used it in her own autoethnographic study. She noted that “completing creative projects had a significant impact on my self-esteem” (p. 2), a trait that might find itself more frequently within the disability culture if art-making opportunities were afforded more regularly and with purpose. I included these two referents in this section on data collection strategies as a means of helping the reader to understand my thinking where the inclusion of art-making, both as process and product, in the narrative of Chapter 4 is concerned.

Data analysis and interpretation strategies. As to the archival component of my research, Calantone and Vickery (2010) asserted that the implications for future primary research become apparent through the process of archival document searches, and after conducting my research, I could not agree more. The authors used the example of under-researched groups as one example. These under-researched groups are numerous and as

regards my archival research inclusive of individual students and teachers in rural, Depression-era progressivist schools, and the scholars who stepped out of traditionally-held belief systems in colleges of education, to train those teachers in non-traditional methods of curriculum reform.

Calantone and Vickery (2010) also suggested that archival data collections serve well the “assistant professor on a tenure clock.” They suggested that “for these and other scholars, the use of secondary data alone or in conjunction with a very narrow survey, is efficient and effective, and increasingly so, as the scope of a study broadens” (p. 10). Again, my experience suggests to me that archival collections may be one of the most underused and valuable resources available to researchers, especially those who work in smaller institutions for which outside funding for research is less readily available.

Chang (2008) discussed that in autoethnography, among data collection, analysis and interpretation, activities “often take place concurrently or inform each other in a cyclical process” (p. 122), and I found this to be the case with my work. Originally, I proposed the use of latent content analysis as described by Mayan (2009) as my primary data analysis strategy. Mayan described latent content analysis as “the process of identifying, coding, and categorizing the primary patterns in the data” (p. 94). After collecting the data, however, I am not sure that I am comfortable calling my method for analysis and interpretation of my data latent content analysis in the strictest sense of the process, because there was so much interweaving of my own experience and family history and the experiences described in the NCSTD that I was often collecting their information, analyzing it in terms of a parallel experience in my own life, and then interpreting this connection. This was consistent with Chang’s assertion that

“autoethnographic analysis and interpretation involve shifting your attention back and forth between self and others, the personal and the social context” (p. 125). As to my archival research, the back and forth was also inclusive of the literal experience of others as described in primary source documents comprised of the very personal hand-written words of the diary authors, correspondence among individuals, and the artwork of students.

I used elements of coding, organizing, and categorizing my data, described above. I also abandoned and removed pieces of data that did not meet my own requirements as to their relevance in this dissertation. I found that activity very difficult, after spending so much time collecting, organizing, coding it, and especially for my own personal work, *feeling it*. I used these data analysis strategies for both primary and secondary data sources.

Mayan (2009) and Chang (2008) both asserted that themes form naturally from well-constructed categories, and I found this to be true—after I first constructed far too many categories, confused myself and my process, and then pared things down to a more manageable and sensible number. Mayan further noted that theming involves a return to “the big picture level” and that their numbers should be limited to three or fewer. I have found that several of the studies I read in preparation for this research had themes that were too many in number or too broad, including Kidd (2009), and Smith (2005), so this suggestion as to the limiting of themes was invaluable to me.

Regardless of whether or not the data collected are analyzed and interpreted in a concurrent manner, I use the term data interpretation as the process of arriving at the meaning, of one’s research, which in the end, informs the results. Chang (2008)

contended that the meanings are not self-explanatory from the data, but rather, “they are formulated in a researcher’s mind” (p. 127). My results were initially written up as two data sets in Chapter 4. My personal life experience and family history (the autoethnographical portion) comprised the first data set, and the NCSTD was the second data set and reported as such. The merging of themes and patterns between the two data sets was to be included in my findings. After presenting my data in this manner, however, I found it impossible to create a seamless merging of my own life experience with the story of the NCSTD. Therefore, I went back and rewrote Chapter 4, removing much in the way of extraneous material that simply did not work in the reporting of my data. The result, I think is cleaner and comes closer to the seamlessness I sought.

I have made every effort to report my data with an eye toward avoiding jargon and “therapese” a term used by Ulman (1962), and concerning “a lingo used by psychiatrists, psychologists, assorted therapists (occupational, music, art, etc.), and social workers...” She also noted that “teachers are fast becoming infected by Therapese” (p. 77). Ulman suggested that therapese involves as one of its main characteristics “freedom from precise definition” (p. 77), and used as an example our references to *verbalize* and *verbalization* instead of using words like *talk* or *say*. I assert that therapese also has the characteristic of exclusion because potential readers who are not members of the inner-circle of academia generally or, the specific professions in which it is likely used with regularity are unable to read and understand what is written. Therefore, the voice of my Chapter four is intended to be accessible to persons who may be interested in the examples set forth there, and who are not themselves scholars.

It is my hope that my results contain a narrative story rich with description that positions me in the context of the cultures within which I sought a better understanding of my own interactions with the world. It is not my intention to be self-serving with this information, although that is a naturally derived benefit, but to use this new self-understanding to serve others, including students in my classroom, members of my family, and community members. At a minimum, I hope my research serves to enlighten and inform its readers about whatever aspects of it are most immediately relevant to their own sociocultural view. Because qualitative research generally, and phenomenology and reflexive autoethnography specifically, are inductive in nature, this process will continue for me long after I have finalized this dissertation.

Research Questions. As noted above, I sought a big picture about what I hoped for in terms of results, and moved backward to arrive at a usable research question and subordinate follow-up question. Therefore, in this research I hoped to answer the questions proposed at the beginning of this chapter (p. 199). However, after discovering the NCSTD, I am compelled to add an additional research question that is more appropriate to the phenomenological nature of the research that evolved.

What does the lived experience of school staff, students, and community members, as shown through the teachers' diaries that are part of the NCSTD collection, reveal about reciprocity between and among art-making, literacy learning, and community?

Chapter Four. Narrative Discussion and Results

My Experience

This is not a once-upon-a-time kind of story that begins with my first steps, and weaves a tapestry, now threadbare from high traffic, to the present moment. Someone once said that in order to develop fully in the present, we must be willing to move backward through space, and time, and memory first. We must face the demons that threaten to thwart our forward momentum. I asked myself how it works, this backward-forward thing. I've considered it for a long time, and consulted many experts. I wanted these experts to *fix* me. I wanted my damage to be repaired, or at least for someone to tell me the many ways I was broken so that I might try to fix myself. When I take my car in for repairs, I expect it to be fixed. Whatever problems the car was having should be gone once the problem is diagnosed, the car repaired, and the bill paid. It's a bit trickier where we humans are concerned. Decades of oil build-up on a car's engine and exhaust usually require more than one steam cleaning before the smoke clears. So it seems, do decades of emotional gunk take more than one cleaning of the mind and heart before the smoke begins to clear.

Thus, there exist numerous over-stuffed files with my name on their crumpled tabs. I picture these manila folders in dusty, water-stained boxes, on cold cement floors, in dark warehouses that sit behind chain-link fences with padlocked gates at the end of roads where no one lives. I don't know why I have this image, but it is consistent, and may say something about my own sense of self-worth. Those files, I imagine, include both accurate and dubious medical diagnoses written in the ubiquitously indecipherable penmanship of doctors who never had a real interest in what might be wrong with me.

Many never wondered, for instance, whether I was really medically ill, mentally unbalanced, or emotionally deprived. Neither did they care if I was well-fed, or know I was loved, or lived with hope in my heart, or even, if I lived in a home at all, which I did not during at least one medical visit. Many were good at prescription-writing and I dutifully swallowed their prescribed medicines waiting for the moment when I would feel better. I took pills to alleviate depression, squelch anxiety, prevent seizures, reduce appetite, cure pain, induce sleep, and then to wake me up when the pill to help me sleep maintained its grip the following morning. At various stages, I recognized that pills do not, by themselves, lead to functionality, or happiness. They did not improve my forward momentum. For a long time my response to that awareness—that the prescriptions from the experts weren't working—was to self-medicate. While not continuous, I sought refuge and freedom from pain over the years by abusing alcohol, drugs, food, my wallet—myself. Facing the fact of my self-abuse, however, came well into adulthood, although sometimes hints of that awareness crept into the dust-filled beams of sunlight that I allowed into my addled mind when I was feeling brave.

Becoming a teacher: The impetus for this research. The realization that secrets serve to further isolate, and that my own refusal to deal with my issues from childhood, my continued bad choices, and the lack of self-esteem that constantly waged battle inside of me and presented outwardly as self-deprecating humor and inwardly as self-loathing, began to be more regularly present when I became a teacher. The school in which I chose to work was, not coincidentally, populated by students at high risk of failure due to life circumstances that were similar to many of those I had in my childhood. They lived in poverty, experienced food insecurity (*therapese* for hunger), and were more times than

I could know, victims of violence and abuse in their homes. They were riddled with self-doubt, inclined toward self-destructive behaviors or, alternatively, toward bullying of others in order to empower themselves in their otherwise disempowered worlds. Some of them moved well beyond bullying, and as I write this there are three young men who are awaiting trial for the brutal murder of two homeless men. How many lives were devastated by that one act alone, we will never know, but clearly, school was not the priority for many of these students; survival was.

Unlike my own experience—I devoured books—but similar to several of my siblings, most of the students I taught over the years were not even close to grade-level proficient readers. In fact, those who read (in eighth grade) at a fifth grade level, were often some of the highest level readers in my classroom. It was not uncommon to have twenty-five percent or more of my students without specifically identified disabilities reading at the low third grade level in eighth grade. I began to wonder what made the difference for me versus my siblings, or for the few students in my classroom versus the majority in terms of experiencing school as a refuge rather than another source of torment.

Many of my students did, however, have identified disabilities (something that would also be recognized for one of my siblings, but not until she was an adult. These students with identifiable disability labels came to my general education middle school language arts classroom with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) that left me feeling helpless as their teacher. How could I address the individual needs of fifteen to twenty percent of my students who required individually-tailored extra assistance? In the first couple of years of my teaching experience, the students with the most severe

disabilities came to my fully-inclusive classroom with assigned educational assistants (EAs) who would work one-on-one with them. But, many of the students who also needed direct assistance only had me, and I had been trained as a general education teacher with minimal special education training and no experience in teaching students with specifically identified disabilities.

In addition to the students with disabilities, identified or not, many of my students were classified as English Language Learners (ELLs). They were in my classroom, in no small part, because I was endorsed to teach them. I was not, however, bilingual, and some of them had next to no grasp of academic or even formal English. Again, in the first two years they were included among all students in my classroom, and participated in language arts alongside students for whom English was their home language. Extra assistance was (theoretically) provided to them in a separate class taught by a bilingual instructor. However, I was responsible for teaching them what they would need to know in order to pass the battery of standardized tests common in eighth grade that were prepared for their high school coursework.

Therefore, when taking into account students with identified disabilities (those with IEPs), those not identified but with disabling life circumstances (also known as *psychosocial* disabilities), those with reading levels that were three or more grade levels low, ELLs (and many were twice or even three times exceptional), over 95% of my students needed some kind of extra assistance. It fell to me to be the means for them to experience something akin to success in school which, for most, was not something with which they were very familiar.

Simultaneous to stepping into my new career as a teacher (and continuing to pursue my master's degree), three important things impacted my potential for success. The first was the ongoing and prolonged failure of my marriage. Facing my students every day while simultaneously worrying about severe financial difficulties, or thinking about the argument I'd had with my husband that morning was a regular reminder that as much as we may understand that we should leave our personal lives at the door of our classrooms, it is not always possible. And, if it was not possible for me as an adult with a lifetime of experience to come to school with an emotional blank slate, how were young adolescents supposed to be able to leave the disabling circumstances of their own lives at the door?

The second issue I was dealing with surrounded a serious brain injury I had suffered in the last semester before I began teaching. This injury resulted in problems with my vision, short term memory, and organizational skills. The details of it are not as important as the results, which were still very ongoing during my early teaching years, and were a constant reminder to me of what it must be like for my students who could not remember what they read, or who could not see what was written on the board. So, in that sense, the brain damage made me a better teacher than I would have been, and the need to help my struggling students became far more important to me. I *understood* what they might be dealing with from my own personal experience.

The third issue I was facing at that time involved the voice inside of me, growing louder and more urgent every day, and telling me it was time to confront the issues from my own childhood. These issues were responsible for crippling depression and anxiety, self-destructive behavior, low self-esteem, failed relationships, and perpetual bad choices.

How could I help these students—and I wanted desperately to help them—to become more whole, to believe in themselves, and to experience joy when I myself was living a lie? I had always imagined an invisible line that existed somewhere out in front of me; I could not see this line, of course, but I somehow understood that I would know when I had crossed it, and I would never be able to go back. When I became a teacher, I crossed that invisible line. I could no longer accept anything less of myself than I hoped for my students.

Teacher as student. When I look back at the kinds of classes I took in my master's program in the Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies (LLSS) Department, I see it. I see the crossing of that line. When I read the papers I wrote, I see a quest for understanding myself within the larger community and world culture. I took classes about groups who were historically underserved in both education and in terms of cultural recognition and respect; I took a class about educating for social justice; I took methods classes that were focused on literacy and language teaching and learning, one that helped me to understand the role that the brain plays in these processes, and several that informed me about the ways I could help my students to help each other and themselves. And through all of this, something interesting happened. I began to recognize my own place in the whole scheme of things. I began to see parallels between my own experiences of childhood and education that were strikingly similar to many of those about which I was learning. More importantly, I was regularly noticing parallels between my life and the lives of my students for whom I was desperate to do more.

Despite being reminded by some of the instructors in my courses that I was privileged as a white person and had to acknowledge my “whiteness,” I also knew that

some of the things that needed fixing about me and my world were born of the same kinds of disabling circumstances that were present in the lives of others, separated from me by culture, geography, and time, but common to our shared humanity. In other words, I began to realize that the human condition dictates that certain needs be met in order for us to overcome disabling circumstances. When I look at some of the papers I wrote for those classes, I see that I was beginning to draw these connections, but they were still mostly unconscious. My primary focus was—as I believe it had to be—how to help my students. Secondary to that was the need to make the forward momentum for my own life happen so that I could develop into the kind of person who was capable of helping others. In order to do that, I had to understand how to love and help myself, as cliché as that seems. The first conscious connection of that idea, as I recall, involved the completion of a creative project for one of my classes. I had not drawn, or written poetry, or written stories in years, but as I worked on that project, I felt joy and rejuvenation. I also, unexpectedly, discovered that the creative component of the project actually served as a tool for my improved understanding of complex content that I had been really struggling to grasp. My project involved coloring and labeling the brain in a way that would make clearer the different functions of its component parts. I added short poems or Haikus intended to be mnemonic devices that I could play in my head and combine with the visual/creative elements. For example, one Haiku I wrote was an effort to remember the name for the brain system that was impacted in students with Attention Deficit Disorder.

Kids with ADD
Bad attentional systems
Can't focus to learn

I also wrote a very short story from the first person point of view of a student who was not able to learn the material presented; this was meant to show that I could understand how a specific dysfunction in the brain would manifest in a student in the classroom. From that point on, I began using creative expression in my own classroom. I wanted to bring back the “art” in language arts.

Seeking my place. My connection to the world was always felt by me in a palpable way. In fact, the reason I returned to school (after a nearly two decade absence since my previous efforts at college) was because of 9-11. I obsessed over the children who lost parents, and the pets that waited in apartments for their people who would never again come home. I thought about how many people would never again feel safe, and I worried for my own future and that of the entire world—literally. I was helpless, as we all were, and really... it wasn't about me. Or was it? I started writing lists (something I do constantly, and which is a manifestation of the symptoms of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder [OCD], one of my disability attributes) about all of the things about 9-11 that were on my mind and bothering me most and the ways those things related to me. The item on my list that jumped out and screamed loudest was this: (left column) “People in NYC, going to work, putting off personal dreams... no time left;” (right column) “What am I putting off that I think about doing? ...School...” (L. A. Semsch, personal journal entry, October 7, 2001). School was actually one of several items; others on the list would have been easier—taking a trip to Maine, losing weight, and a number of other things. It was certainly the one that would require the most of my attention, time, and money. I lived in Taos at the time, worked full time as a bookkeeper, and had less than no

money. But, like all things that wend their way into my mind and become worthy of obsession, I found a way to make it happen and began in January, 2002.

I think that story fits in a big picture kind of way with how I work. I wanted to honor the thousands of people who died on 9-11 even though I didn't know them, and the closest I could come to honoring them was to step up and do something that none of them would ever have a chance to do. Four years later, when I stood in front of my rag-tag group of students and tried to think about how I could help them, how I could honor them, I again turned to my own education, first in the master's program described above, and finally in the special education program for which I now write this dissertation. Honoring and doing for others has to begin, I think, with first honoring and doing for oneself. I am better as a teacher for my future students if I have first opened wide the door to my own secrets, dysfunction, and damage. If I can come to understand how I have survived so far, the things that have brought me the most joy, and the people who supported me (and how they did so) so that I could move forward, then I have a much better likelihood of doing the same for my students.

The Archival Component

I have struggled with how best to communicate in this work my own process. The methods used to collect my data are discussed in Chapter three. I do not know if there is a seamless way to tell a story that is first about the self (as I have been doing these past few pages), and then becomes something much larger that connects to others, but I always believed that my story was not unlike many others, past and present. Therefore, it seemed logical to me to seek examples by conducting an archival documents search seeking those others. That effort proved very rewarding, but then I was left with the conundrum of how

best to report my own personal data and that which emerged from the archives. I became passionate about collecting both, and then about reporting on them in a way that conveyed the most important components of both. That passion was something that resulted in an over-written effort to include every detail. I then realized that every detail cannot possibly be contained within the framework of a dissertation. So, I regrouped, and started again. Thus, the original two data sets are instead reported together as one.

Something else that changed from my original efforts aside from changing two data sets to one, was the manner in which I decided to report my personal memories. Memory comes to the forefront in snippets and may be from early childhood, then young adulthood, then present time, and then back to childhood. After collecting these pieces and categorizing them in order to find themes and patterns, a picture began to form. I thought that picture would be best conveyed by telling my story in a chronological way. I also believed that the experience of it would be best conveyed by a first person, present tense retelling of the most poignant of those memories. However, the parallels and patterns between my own childhood and those of the students in the NCSTD is much more evident, I believe, when I cite examples of my own experience, or the experience of people in my family, as they specifically relate to my archival research narrative. In other words, the shared human experience is far more evident, I hope, when it is presented together on the same page. And if my experience and those of the students in the NCSTD is truly to be presented as a shared one, then I also needed to lose the first-person, present tense retelling.

In an extremely broad way, my archival research was initiated, as noted above, because I believed that my story was not the only one like it, and that there were other

stories that might serve to enhance my own. Specifically, I wanted to know if something in the archives might serve to validate my belief in the importance of relationships for students who struggle in life and in school. I also hoped to find evidence of teachers who had used creative expression as a means of teaching more conventional content (with a primary focus on literacy) because I had come to recognize that this was important to me, personally. Finally, I also hoped that there would be evidence of this type of teaching where students with disabilities or disability/risk circumstances were concerned. The Universe intervened and gifted me with the NCSTD. The teachers and students who showed themselves to me through the NCSTD who worked together in the Depression era of the 1930s and leading up to the U.S. involvement in World War II taught me much about how we might choose to address our students at-risk of failure. Creativity was a central piece of how they worked. If all struggling students, past and present, had been provided some of the opportunities these students were, I believe their lives would have been (or could be) changed for the better.

Therefore, I begin here with an introduction that describes for my readers how the SJTS and NCS came to be in the first place. I report salient data on each in narrative form, adding components of my own personal experience into the narrative as a means of explaining the parallels between the experience of school for those students, and those of my own or my siblings. The data is then synthesized and discussed in terms of the similar salient patterns and themes that emerged from both. I hope that in the end, I have told a story that conveys my own belief that we are all more alike than different, and that this was as true in time past, as it is now.

The collection known as the Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries (NCSTD). I have struggled with how to share this archival collection because as noted above, the collection contains, in reality, the teacher diaries and student work from two totally different schools. The first, the San José Training School (SJTS), was located in the village of San José, but situated so closely to Albuquerque that some of the envelopes on the letters of its students used Albuquerque as a return address. The second, the Nambé Community School (NCS), was located in the village of Nambé, north of Santa Fe, and near Pojoaque. The collection was, at the time of my research, catalogued as consisting of only the diaries and student work of the NCS, which is why its title is the Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries. Further, the two schools were not run as experimental schools concurrently. SJTS was in operation as a demonstration school between August of 1930 and May of 1937 (though the diaries for this school are only inclusive of the last two school years). NCS operated as a demonstration school from August of 1937 through May of 1942. The realization that I was actually collecting data for two different schools came only after I had spent many days in the archives, taken many notes, and scanned numerous pages for both schools with the belief that it was actually one. Therefore, some of what I wrote was not only irrelevant, but untrue. I spent days teasing out which box contained information for which school before confirming that the schools did not operate in the same years, which then served as a guide to both correcting my earlier notes, and ensuring that from that point forward, I could be certain about which schools' diaries and student work I was actually reviewing.

The next problem surrounded how to report the archival data. I was unsure whether to separate the work of the teachers and students at San José Training School

from the work done at Nambé Community School, or present them together. Ultimately, I made the decision to present them separately for purposes of comparing and contrasting the unique needs of each community, the ways in which the school functioned within each community, and the successes and failures of each. Certainly, an argument could be made that the data for both schools should be presented together since they were both housed in the same collection. I am, however, comfortable with the decision I made, and also with the interweaving of pieces of my own story into each.

Both SJTS and NCS were set up as community schools (alternatively known as training, demonstration, or experimental schools) in the manner of John Dewey's (1900/2009) educational experiment run in the last years of the nineteenth century, and which he himself referenced as "the University Elementary School. That name was a result of Dewey's belief that the university, through its teacher training programs, was the place where educational reform had to begin. To reiterate, a central tenet of John Dewey's progressivist educational ideologies as discussed in Chapter two, was the belief that there needed to be more than mere connection between the University and the teachers it was training.

...the University shall put all its resources at the disposition of the elementary school, contributing to the evolution of valuable subject-matter and right method, while the school in turn will be a laboratory in which the student of education sees theories and ideas demonstrated, tested, criticized, enforced, and the evolution of new truths. We want the school in its relation to the University to be a working model of a unified education. (Dewey, p. 63)

Teachers so trained, could then venture out into the communities where they would teach and, regardless of the community's size, or locale, meet its needs by presenting it with students who had been taught the skills necessary to contribute to that particular community's needs. In other words, school could not be a one-size-fits-all proposition.

In the late 1920s, when Dewey was, in fact, changing some of his own previous views of how best to educate our children, someone in New Mexico still espoused his ideologies, not only in regard to the interactions between the University and the teachers it was training, but as regarded the curriculum, which Dewey readily referenced as experimental. He asserted that the experiment was not designed with the goal of imitation in mind, but rather, to demonstrate “the feasibility of the principle, and of the methods which make it feasible” (p. 63). The person at the helm of curricular reform in New Mexico, beginning in the late 1920s and continuing into the years surrounding the U.S. involvement in World War II was Loyd S. Tireman (1896 – 1959), the namesake of the former library in the College of Education at the University of New Mexico.

Loyd S. Tireman. Loyd Spencer Tireman was born in Orchard, Iowa and lived the state until he was around age 30. From 1927 forward, he lived most of his life in New Mexico, where he died in 1959—not a long life when compared to many of the educational theorists and philosophers whom he admired. These theorists and philosophers included John Dewey who lived into his 90s, a fact noted by Bachelor (1991) as one possible reason for the renown of the latter, and the near anonymity of the former. Dr. Tireman came to UNM in 1927 and remained a professor at the university until his death.

According to Bachelor (1991) Dr. Tireman's youth in Iowa might be considered as idyllic in many respects. His was not a young life of hardship—quite the contrary. Iowans then, like now, were known for their individualistic thinking, political leadership at a grassroots level, and the belief that democracies worked best under local control. This last ideal was perhaps most evident in Iowa's school districts, which were independently run and numbered over 14,000 by the turn of the twentieth century. Of these 2,500 had fewer than ten students, according to Bachelor (1991). While other states were consolidating their school districts in order to save money and run them more efficiently, both Iowa and Nebraska held firmly to their beliefs that smaller and more independent was better, and with literacy rates over 97% at the time (the highest in the country, according to Bachelor), an argument with Dr. Tireman against the merits of independent community schools would have been difficult to win.

For Loyd Tireman, duty in whatever form, always came before personal needs. He even postponed his own marriage to the former Pearl Garretson, originally scheduled to take place after his graduation from college, opting to enlist in the first World War in 1917. After he returned and married Pearl, he enrolled in a normal school course which led to his first positions as not just an administrator, but a superintendent in three small towns in Iowa over several years' time. These accomplishments were achieved before he had reached the age of 30. While serving in these posts, Loyd Tireman received his MA from the University of Iowa in 1924, and after quitting his job at Postville (his last Superintendent post) to focus on his doctoral work, he earned his Ph.D. in 1927, whereupon he literally moved to New Mexico immediately following his graduation

ceremony, which he nearly missed because he was loading the family possessions onto the train. I have learned through my research that Dr. Tireman was not a time-waster.

Having been both a student and an administrator in Iowa, Dr. Tireman understood that Iowans were much more inclined toward conventional models of teaching and learning in their schools. It is Bachelor's (1991) belief that Loyd Tireman understood that his interest in child-centered, curricularly relevant reform would best be implemented elsewhere. It is not wholly clear to me whether Dr. Tireman had much in the way of personal experience with New Mexico prior to his moving here, but he had made several trips to Mexico to observe their practices, and liked the hands-on, activities-based manner of their pedagogy. Regardless, according to Bachelor, once here "he immersed himself in the study of the language and reading education of children in his adopted state" (p. 13). There was no record of student achievement, so Dr. Tireman created a survey in which he sought information about reading achievement in New Mexico elementary schools. He directed the project himself and had preliminary findings ready by the time of the New Mexico Education Association's (NMEA) 1928 convention.

His report to the NMEA convention was likely viewed by some as curious and contradictory, as his findings indicated that children were failing reading in the lower elementary grades, but not the upper elementary grades (which included grades through eight). On the other hand, in the upper grades, they were failing the subjects that required more and more rigorous reading. Dr. Tireman thought the connection was unmistakable. He found the students' failure of core subjects at the upper grade levels to be due to their lack of proficiency in reading as these subjects were literacy-centered (that is to say, primarily involved with reading and writing). He further concluded that there was a

strong likelihood that the problem stemmed from the fact that there was no “purposeful reading program” beyond the earliest primary grades, in which teachers had specific material and concrete objectives. Dr. Tireman suggested in his report to the NMEA that reform of the state’s reading program could alleviate the problem. As noted by Bachelor (1991), Dr. Tireman’s report to the NMEA was expanded and became the “germ of the plan that eventually became the San José Demonstration School” (p. 14) (referenced in the minutes of the UNM Board of Regents as the San José Training School).

The beginning of Dr. Tireman’s efforts in educational reform. Dr. Tireman began the process of planning his reform of reading education in New Mexico by first personally traveling throughout the state, testing nearly 10,000 students and scoring and making the statistical correlations by hand, according to Bachelor (1991). The results showed that regardless of the home language, the gap between Spanish-speaking and English-speaking students was minimal at the third grade level (the lowest grade level tested), but increased every year through the eighth grade. This finding was critical in light of our state’s large population of Hispanic children whose need to learn English was exceeded, Tireman determined, by the traditional methods of teaching reading that were being used in the local schools.

In addition to his concern over achievement, Dr. Tireman was, according to Bachelor (1991) keenly aware of the impact that social problems have on a child’s ability to learn. As the 1920s came to a close and the stock market crash portended the Great Depression to come, in New Mexico, poverty, drought, and disease already gripped the lives of many of its children, especially those who lived in rural parts of the state. It is noted by Bachelor (1991) and has become abundantly apparent to this author after many

weeks reading the diaries that comprise the Nambé collection that Dr. Tireman wanted more than temporary solutions to these social challenges. “Growing up in a time and place in which people retreated into prejudice when challenged by social change, he was nevertheless a staunch advocate of cultural sensitivity and was one of the very few to organize bilingual programs” (Bachelor, p. 7). Despite his graduate school training which emphasized quantitative methods in order to measure the efficacy of educational programs, Dr. Tireman held fast to his belief that education should address the “individual differences and creative needs” of students (p. 7).

In my research, I confirmed that Dr. Tireman was very much opposed to the increasing reliance on standardized testing in public education. Dialogue recorded in the diaries between him and Mary Watson, the principal of the NCS for all five years of the school’s incarnation as a community school, confirmed his belief on the subject, and was shared by both of them. Both feared that the movement toward more and more testing was serving to submerge and overwhelm the individual needs of the students whom they served. They also believed that the information provided by such assessments was at best, a measure of individual skill sets that may or may not be necessarily useful to their futures, and at worst, said nothing of the whole person. While the progressive movement in education had divided into two camps in the early 1920s (one in favor of testing as a means to better understand how to develop individual talents and the other, concerned that testing would overwhelm those individual talents), Loyd Tireman stood firmly and followed his instincts, believing that above all, the community needs should dictate the school’s curriculum.

In early 1930, Dr. Tireman decided to make the move toward establishing a demonstration school in New Mexico. There is some confusion to me as to whether it was he who first made contact with the General Education Board (GEB), a philanthropical branch of the Rockefeller organization that was based in New York, or if it was Dr. Zimmerman, the University's President who reached out to the organization. Regardless, it is an established certainty that the GEB, according to Bachelor (1991) held a "strong influence in education" owing to the money it had available from the Rockefellers. Since the turn of the century, the GEB had as its main focus the improvement of "Negro education and education generally in the southeastern United States" (p. 17). Bachelor contended that President Zimmerman succeeded in convincing the GEB to fund the reform efforts in New Mexico by suggesting that New Mexico was also a southern state, and as such, was a worthy recipient of their funding. With the GEB's southern agents planning a trip to New Mexico, Dr. Zimmerman used Dr. Tireman's report and rough plan as presented to the NMEA as the initial blueprint for educational reform to be presented to the agents on their visit.

Dr. Tireman did not have a reputation for patience once an idea formulated in his mind (according to Bachelor, and my own readings of the documents in this collection), and when the University had not received a response to its request for funding by spring of 1930, he called one of the agents he respected out of the GEB's office in Baton Rouge seeking information. One reason for his impatience was, perhaps, due to the fact that he was already talking to teachers recommended to him as strong candidates for work in his new experimental school. He had in mind a young man he thought would serve as a

strong principal, and as the spring wore on, he feared that he would lose contact with his chosen teachers over the summer break.

Negotiations were indeed in the works between the University of New Mexico and the GEB in New York City. Agreement had been reached over the details, and the matter went to a vote, finally, on May 22, 1930. At that meeting the GEB agreed to fund an experimental school suited to the needs of rural Hispanic children living in New Mexico. Things moved quickly after that as indicated by UNM's Board of Regents Minutes for May 31, 1930, which state that the GEB in New York will contribute \$12,000 per year for five years to UNM for their direction of "the demonstration project in the Experimental School, and stating that Senator Bronson M. Cutting had promised to contribute \$5,000.00 a year for two years with the understanding that if the work goes on in a satisfactory way he will continue the gift for three more years..." (UNM Board of Regents Minutes for May 31, 1930). The Board agreed to accept both contributions.

Choosing San José as the site for the experimental school was primarily due to its proximity to Albuquerque (according to Bachelor, 1991). While an unincorporated village in its own right, and thus technically still rural, it was already considered by many as part of Albuquerque. Additionally, the diaries of the teachers in its last two years of existence, as well as the information provided in Bachelor's (1991) text indicate that the area was rapidly becoming more urban in nature. Still, it was funded as a rural school, had mostly Spanish-speaking residents, and (most importantly) those residents agreed to the proposal for the school as presented by Dr. Tireman. By the time UNM's Board of Regents met on September 26, 1930, the SJTS was an officially designated community school, and the list of the school's directors impressive in its length. The Board of

Directors for San José included President J. F. Zimmerman, then UNM President, as its Chairman, and many other notable names including John M. Milne, who was President of the State Board of Education, and Mayor Clyde Tingley, to name just two of the 17 members of the original Board of Directors (UNM Board of Regents Minutes for September 26, 1930).

The school was most certainly a progressivist experiment, espousing Dewey's student-centered ideologies and activities-based approaches to teaching and learning. As to the curriculum, according to Dewey it should be individualized in order to produce for the community, citizens who were responsible, socially aware, and useful to the needs of the community. To say that this school was founded on the same principals as those of John Dewey's experimental school run by the University of Chicago is probably obvious. The objective of a community school was, in no small part, to serve the unique needs of the community, but there was also an expectation of interaction between and among the school and the community. These reciprocal interactions involved the school's relationship with members of the community who had skills and talents and needs that might be utilized or served by the school, and the school returning well-trained students to those community members in turn. So, the work of Dewey's University elementary school and Tireman's New Mexico demonstration schools were only alike in the larger general ideals. These communities were geographically and demographically worlds apart from one another. Both, however, served as experiments in progressive education.

By 1938, the second year of operation for the NCS, John Dewey had already written *Experience & Education* (1938), and his educational philosophies and theories had changed over the 25 years since *Democracy and Education* was written. Dewey had,

by that time, reached the conclusion that neither traditional nor progressive education methods, by themselves, could be adequate in reforming education to the extent necessary to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse and industrialized society. Regardless, Dr. Tireman showed no indications that his ideology had changed. He continued to hold progressive views centered on the idea that schools should remain under local control and should be more than a mere presence in the community, but should instead serve that community's needs by providing its students with the skills necessary to participate and serve within it.

It is unclear from the meeting minutes of UNM's Board of Regents (which are not referenced at all in Bachelor's [1991] text) where Dr. Tireman fit with regard to the original planning and negotiations surrounding the demonstration school. That has been a frustrating fact of my research. Clearly, politics played an important role in the school's genesis as the make-up of the original advisory board was adjusted to meet the preferences of the representatives of the GEB, and ultimately doubled in size, including Senator Cutting, and his friend Mary Hunter Austin, as well as other "interested parties." Whereas the origins of the NCS became clear to me through a number of sources, including a very helpful set of correspondence I located in the Zimmerman Collection (RMOA Collection UNMA #008), I did not find anything so concise regarding San José. Additionally, the teacher diaries were apparently not a part of the process of the first five years of the operation of San José under the University's direction. The earliest teacher diaries for the SJTS are, therefore, from school year 1935 – 1936, and are inclusive of only two school years, since SJTS, in its genesis as a demonstration school, ended at the close of school year 1936 – 1937.

Because the diaries for San José only cover two school years, I had initially thought to focus solely on the NCS. However, because I had already read the diaries of so many of the SJTS teachers before I realized that there were actually two separate experimental schools, I had already collected considerable data that included the way the teachers spoke to their lowest performing students, the use of arts-based activities in the teaching of literacy, and the interactions between the school and the community. Because I read first the diaries of Mary Watson, as well as miscellaneous Nambé teacher diaries (since the boxes that comprise the collection do not go in order by school year), the contrast in the SJTS diaries was noticeable in many respects. Not only was I not seeing the dialogue between Dr. Tireman and the teachers in the diaries, but I noticed a different attitude toward the students, larger class sizes and a much greater disparity in the ages of the students in them (one 6th grade class included nearly 40 students between the ages of 10 and 16). As well, it was clear to me that while there were art activities included in the literacy teaching at SJTS, the teachers (with the exception of the art teacher) did not speak to artistic activities specifically. Drawings inserted in loose papers inside the diaries had to be tied to lessons by me, as the researcher. As well, after the first three grades, the lessons themselves (and by connection, the art) did not read as being steeped in the community's culture to quite the same extent.

To be fair at the outset, however, I believe that much of the apparent improvement in the concept of the community school as envisioned by Dr. Tireman was due to the fact that SJTS was the initial effort at reform and the NCS benefitted from the experiment that was SJTS. Regardless of the differences between the schools, Dr. Loyd Tireman was the clear impetus for each, and it is my opinion, after thoroughly researching the materials

from both schools, that the most likely explanation for the improvements in the diary content, as well as in the successes and failures for both, was that Dr. Tireman, the teachers he trained at the University of New Mexico, and the teachers he hired to work for him in his experimental schools just got better at the process of it. It is also clear from the diaries, that Dr. Tireman was a much bigger presence at Nambé than he was at San José in terms of being a mentor for the teachers, and a witness for the students.

Additionally, the growing impact of the Depression throughout the 1930s certainly had to have played a role, as did the ultimate U.S. involvement in World War II which occurred, not coincidentally I believe, during the last year of the University's operation of the school in Nambé. The NCS origins as a school are discussed in the introduction to the Nambé data, below.

With the above-noted comparisons already present in my mind and in the copious notes I took during the course of my research, I decided that the very differences I was seeing might serve as a basis for comparison purposes between the schools. Most importantly, I hoped that a comparison of the two schools might shed some light on the experiences of the students. By reading first-hand accounts of teacher impressions, and viewing the students work, I hoped to understand the ways in which a school succeeds or fails its charges. *What types of activities and subject-matter make a student want to come to school, and which ensure their apathy and encourage absenteeism? What, in addition to the curriculum, is present in a school to which the students are intrinsically motivated to first, show up, and then, to work hard?* (I'll note here that NCS had Average Daily Attendance ratings in the mid- to high 90th percentile throughout all five years of its

functioning as a demonstration school, while San José's average daily attendance fluctuated, but was never as high.)

While Loyd Tireman's original focus was on bilingual education, much of the curriculum reform he implemented is the basis for our understandings about literacy teaching and learning where students with disabilities are concerned. Both groups (ELLs and students with disabilities) have been historically underserved in public education. Bachelor (1991) noted that Dr. Tireman's efforts toward bringing about change that would close the gap between Spanish-speaking and English-speaking students were a rarity in the era of nativist and assimilationist sentiments. Eugenics was widely accepted as scientific fact by many in the educational world, and it is believed that Dr. Tireman likely read Lewis Terman's *The Measurement of Intelligence* in his graduate studies. According to Bachelor, Terman asserted, among other things, that "racial dullness" was prevalent among not only Negroes, but Indian and Spanish families as well. He advocated for the segregation of these students into special classes. Even progressivists were inclined to acculturation of minority students into America's melting pot. Whether or not Dr. Tireman read this text, he clearly did not buy into the segregation of Spanish-speaking students from their English-speaking peers. There was, however, a division of students into ability levels, which is discussed in more depth to the extent it is understood below.

After attempting several different ways of organizing the data, and after coding and categorizing led to themes, I decided that I would allow the phenomena to unfold and tell me how to present it. There will be an overall discussion under the thematic headings

and some of the pattern subheadings following the presentation of exemplars of the work being done at both schools. These exemplars begin after the subsection which follows.

The community school as envisioned by Loyd S. Tireman. As referenced several times earlier in this work, a central tenet of the concept of the community, or demonstration school, is interaction between the students in the school and the community outside of it. There were many excursions into the community, especially at the younger grade levels at SJTS, but less evidence of other types of interaction between the community and the school. There was a school fair in the fall, however, that was well-attended and had its own board of directors consisting of some of the more prominent community members.

Regarding the expenses of both schools, at the NCS, students' families were charged a tuition of fifty cents per pupil, but I was unable to verify that this was the case at the SJTS. Additionally, textbooks were paid for by the State of New Mexico, and at least at Nambé, supplementary materials were paid for by the project's contributors, so my assumption is that this was the case at SJTS as well. Dr. Tireman believed that whenever possible, the materials surrounding them in the community should be those used in the lessons. At NCS, textbooks (in the form of readers at the lowest grade levels and perhaps some others) were used, but always supplemented with reading material that was relevant to the students' lives, so again, I am making the presumption (much of which is based on my reading of the diaries) that the same was true for SJTS.

Because of the volume of material I have collected, and the hundreds of pages of notes I have taken both in my personal data collection and in the course of the archival document research, I cannot hope to present each piece of information to the extent that I

would like to do eventually, but that is not to say that I did not make a fervent effort to do so. Ultimately, as I write this, I have removed over 100 pages of previously written material (out of respect for my committee members and other potential researchers) in order that this work might be more functional. Since SJTS is discussed first because it was the first of the two school experiments, much of the data on that school is focused on presenting an overview of the units being studied at the earlier grades, the methods used, and then the ways that these units evolved vertically as the students moved to higher grade levels. Because NCS teachers used the same broad methods as prescribed by Dr. Tireman, I will not focus so much on that area when discussing that school. Where relationships to my own personal experience, or the experience of my siblings can be made, I do so because while I was not present during the teaching and learning taking place at these two schools, I can better understand some of the outcomes for them through my own life. This is more readily done in the case of the NCS because the archival collection contains information over a longer period of time, and because there were more parallel patterns in my own experience (e.g., small town living, extreme poverty, and relationships between teachers and students that served to be life-altering). Personally, my research interests are generally focused more on adolescents and young adults, but our educational journeys all begin at the lower grades, and impact not only our overall experience of school, but who we become later.

The Bachelor (1991) and Tireman and Watson (1943) books, as well as all of the diaries in the collection, made it clear to me that Dr. Tireman had a deep and abiding respect for the use of creative activities as integral to the teaching of reading. That said, there are more actual student drawings from both schools at the lower grades, and more,

generally, from SJTS, but much more written description of the creative work at the higher grade levels and in the diaries associated with the NCS which also contain dialogue between the teachers and Dr. Tireman about the artistic activities of both the students and the community. Several photos are also relevant to the data, but due to restrictions on the collection, most will not be included in this dissertation. Some will be used in my research presentation, however. Also, I have included some photos from the Tireman and Watson (1943) text, as they include student work examples and photos of students at work on the land outside of the Nambé school, and their use is not restricted as they are part of the text instead of the collection. Scans of more of the drawings than would be practical for inclusion in this dissertation are included in the presentation of this research as well. As to my family, my initial approach to presenting that data as detailed and separate was not in keeping with the rules regarding the protection of human participants, so I have inserted commentary parallels throughout the discussion of both schools' data, and hope that this conveys something of the reasons for my interest in this work.

Access restrictions on the NCSTD also dictate that researchers using it not divulge names of individuals mentioned in the diaries, and despite being unsure whether that includes the names of the teachers who wrote them, I have opted to reference only the grade levels and the box and diary numbers where the information was obtained. I also use the abbreviated parenthetical reference to the collection itself, so that the Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries is NCSTD, and is inclusive of data from both schools. There is no specific example of this in the APA Manual, but it does say to include "as much information as is needed to help locate the item with reasonable ease

within the repository” (APA, 2010, p. 213). If dates are provided, they are also cited. Especially in the first years of the diary-keeping, there were often not specific dated entries for one day only, but rather the inclusive dates of the unit. If this is the case, I will note the inclusive dates.

As to the ability groupings referenced above, it was Dr. Tireman’s desire, according to Bachelor (1991) that students who were “overage” (a reference he sometimes used synonymously for students with exceptionalities, or who were generally low-performing) not be further stigmatized by being placed in a grade while being much older than the average student in that grade. Therefore students were placed in one of three or four groups, alternately referenced as low, middle, or high, or A, B, C, and D groups. By the time of the sixth school year for San José, which is the first year of data available for that school, it had grown to the extent that these groupings were generally in at least two separate classrooms, usually with the “low level” students in one room, and the “middle” and “high level” students together in the other room. While differentiation of materials was alluded to by some of the teachers, specific references were not provided.

It is my hope that I will have the opportunity to interview some of the students who attended these schools in future research. I also discovered the Zimmerman Collection recently, and because it has no restrictions, I am hopeful that some of its contents may help me to fill gaps in my understanding of the origins, activities, and ultimately, the demise of these two schools. For now, the primary source documents used in this data set, and inclusive of hand-written diaries, crayon drawings, pencil sketches, a small woven rug, correspondence, and photographs provided information akin to my

having been able to conduct open-ended interviews of some 20 teachers over a seven-year period. They became real to me as I touched the pages and read their words from decades ago. I saw how those who stayed evolved as teachers and as people, and I feel privileged to call myself a witness to their journey and to better understand myself along the way.

Data from San José Training School with Autoethnographic Interweavings

As noted above, the data available for San José does not include primary source documents for the first five years of the school's operation as a demonstration school. Additionally, Dr. Tireman's practice of dialoguing with the teachers in their diaries does not seem to have come into play until NCS was in operation. There is, however, plenty of information to discuss the school's interactions with the community, and the process and products where the interaction of creative expression and literacy learning are concerned. I use exemplars whenever possible that go to the work with students in the lowest leveled groups of each grade.

There were distinct curricular goals at each grade level that are well set out in the Tireman and Watson (1943) text, but this book is specific to NCS. Having read the SJTS teachers' diaries and lessons, and viewed some of the student work, I am able to ascertain that much of the intent was already present at the SJTS, although the process more evolved at NCS. Still, the objectives were largely the same. For example, in prefirst grade, students (most of whom are Spanish speakers) were provided an opportunity over the course of one school year to acquire the vocabulary that their English-speaking peers had been exposed to at home since birth. The classes were large at SJTS (often between 35 and 45 students) and the activities hands-on with the emphasis on oral language.

Students were also presented with pictures of the words they were learning, and created some of their own, but the work of reading and writing did not take place until the first grade. The focus was on three large topics: animals, classroom, and playground.

By the first grade, the students had been leveled and (at least theoretically), and the teacher had been trained to vary the methods and materials used for each group. Oral stories, at this grade level and continuing on through the higher grades, were transferred into “charts” (the use of which I did not quite fully grasp until many diary readings and written explanations). These were similar to Language Experience Stories (and were even referenced as such in one of the NCS teacher diaries), but they were written in specific formats and with specific kinds of sentence structures (and looked like little verses of poetry). The teachers listened to the oral stories of the students and took what each child said, rewrote it in the format and sentence structure she was taught to use for that particular level of students, and in the end, had a group composition that the students would then read aloud over and over again from the blackboard. Later, the chart was transferred to paper and a copy, which was a ditto (remember the purple ink?) at SJTS. The ditto included the chart (group composition) at the bottom, and the child’s visual interpretation of that in a box on top of the page.

Two examples of the use of charts from SJTS (and student drawings) are shown below. These are from low first grade level (according to the designation written on the front of the diary). They are from the Community Activity. For this unit, students went out into the community and learned about it, then followed up with literacy activities. They went on these excursions (the word used consistently) out into the community regularly (and the descriptions of what the children saw were my first clues that they

were not walking around in Nambé—too many shops, and buildings). Dr. Tireman believed that the experience of doing something far outweighed what a child could derive from merely reading about it.

The chart below was from the first excursion of the SJTS first grade students and was written by the teacher to help the children to understand behavior. The chart was considered an informational or introductory chart, because it was used to open the unit of study and provide direction for the students as to the expectations for their behavior. They did not go on the walk until they had practiced the chart orally, and were able to show that they understood the instructions it provided. I have written them exactly as they appeared in the diary.

How to Go for a Walk

1. We walk.
2. Stop and look
before we cross a street.
3. Walk behind the teacher.
4. Keep our hands to ourselves.
5. Look and see everything.

(NCSTD, February 18 – March 30, 1937, Box 4, Folder 1)

The group composition (charts) written by the students after their excursion involved first, a description of the walk, generally, and the follow-up activities they would do.

Our Walk

We went for a walk.
We saw many things.
We will make our houses.
We will make them today.
We will put our numbers
on our houses.
We will make our garages.

(NCSTD, February 18 – March 30, 1937, Box 4, Folder 1)

The reference to making their houses involved the recreation of the village of San José as the continuation of the community activity. As with all units, students either began with an artistic activity, or ended with one. In this case, the village was a 3-dimensional creation and therefore, sadly, was not included in the collection (but was the very first question I noted in the research journal I kept because I wondered why the children of Nambé would be making the village of San José in their classroom). I do, however, have the written diary entry about the village.

We made the Village of San Jose on top of our low cupboards and added to it as new things were thought of by the children several times. I had to take down part of it to have room for the new things that were being made. The top of the cupboard used was 15 feet long by 17 inches wide. The village had one main street with the buildings facing it from both sides. The largest building, the Santa Fe shops, was about 10" x 12" in size – all the village was constructed out of construction paper and pasted together. (NCSTD, February 18 – March 30, 1937, Box 4, Folder 1)

It was further noted that the children made their own homes first, and spent several days on them because they wanted to add things like fences, and porches and garages with cars, and toilets, according to this teacher. Charts were written by the class, with the format transferred to that prescribed by Dr. Tireman for this level and grade of student and for every item included in the village created by the students. Some indicate that they were written while the village was being planned, as in "The Filling Station," and others after the buildings were actually constructed, as in "Ernesto's House." These two chart examples follow.

The Filling Station

We saw a filling station.
 A car came to it.
 The man put gas in it.
 The car went away.
 We will make
 a filling station.

Ernesto's House

Ernesto made his house.
 It is gray and red.
 He made a mail box.
 He put the number
 on his house.
 He made a tree
 and some grass.

(NCSTD, February 18 – March 30, 1937, Box 4, Folder 1)

It is apparent that literacy and artistic activities were being done concurrently, which, in my opinion, showed the students that neither was considered more or less valuable than the other. This was not the case after kindergarten for either me or any of my siblings. In Catholic school, none of us recalled art as being a part of the regular curriculum at all, with the exception of making “hand turkeys” at Thanksgiving, and decorations at Christmas. By including opportunities for creative expression in first grade, these students were being taught that it mattered, and that something they enjoyed could be an integral part of literacy learning.

Since the charts were composed orally, transcribed onto the blackboard by the teacher, and then read aloud by the students as a group, and as a regular part of their literacy instruction, the verb tenses used in the charts above indicate that one was written before all or part of the village was created, and the other after it was completed. Despite

there being no visual image of the three-dimensional village created by the students, there were charts written about every building, and then the students were given an opportunity to create a drawing of something they saw on their excursion. The two drawings on the following page (Figures 22, and 23) contain descriptions taken directly from the charts, which were copied by the students and used as captions for their drawings, “The Filling Station,” and “Cows,” respectively. There were also some drawings without words (e.g., “The Church”), and with minimal word labels (“The Grocery Store,” or “Shops,” are two examples). This indicates to me that each student was allowed to perform at his or her own level in this classroom.

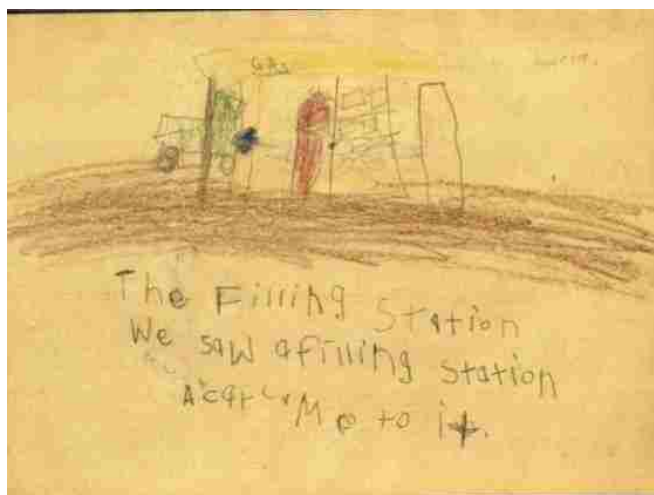


Figure 22. The Filling Station with Caption. Low First Grade.

(NCSTD, February 18 – March 30, 1937, Box 4, Folder 1)

The students who created these drawings in this low first grade classroom were receiving more individualized attention than were the students in middle first and high first grades, meaning that they had not attained the 500 to 750-word vocabulary objective for pre-first grade students. I noted this because I learned in discussions with my brothers and sisters who were placed in (lower) leveled classrooms after we began

attending public schools that there were no art activities in those classes. Just more drills primarily centered on spelling and phonics, and reading from *Dick and Jane* books even when they were well past the age when those might have been even remotely interesting.



Figure 23. Cows with Caption. Low First Grade.

(NCSTD, February 18 – March 30, 1937, Box 4, Folder 1)

Since the captions may be illegible in print format, I will translate here. For Figure 22, “The Filling Station,” the caption reads “We saw a filling station. A car came to it” which is pulled directly from the chart above. For Figure 23, “Cows” the caption reads “The cows are walking to the fence. We milk them,” which is also pulled directly from the chart the class did for the cows. Also, the student/artist has written “The clowdis” just under the clouds she drew. The fact that she ventured beyond what was written in the class chart is, to me, an indication that she felt safe in her learning environment. (I love the way the cows look like they’re dancing.)

I should note that it is possible that the cow drawing was done in connection with the farm animal project, which was conducted around the same time as the community project. Because the children’s artwork, and often, the photos, were placed loosely in the

diaries, or in separate folders because of bulk, it is difficult, sometimes, to be sure.

Regardless, I like to think that the little boy with the cow in the photo I will use in my research presentation may have been the artist of the cow drawing. (My favorite photo.)

Thus over a six week period (the length of time for completion of the unit as indicated by the teacher's diary), the students were exposed to the community outside of school, and then used that experience repeatedly in oral language lessons, multi-modal literacy instruction, and artistic activities.

It is unclear to what extent the students who were placed in the lower achievement levels may or may not have had diagnosable disabilities. Since these records are from the 1930s, and tests to determine diagnosable intellectual developmental disabilities were either not yet created or used in the realm of education, I had to rely on the placement of the students, and the case studies in teacher diaries to make any assumptions about disability attributes. Case studies were written descriptions of the students' behaviors and classroom performance and, to a lesser extent (at SJTS) descriptions of their home environments as contributory factors in both.

Certainly, at the lowest grade levels, students placed in lower ability groupings may or may not have had disability attributes. It was more likely (or at least as likely) that their issues with literacy learning were attributable to language deficits, and not to disability attributes. However, the teacher case studies shed light on some of the students who would likely qualify for special education services currently. Dr. Tireman believed in flexibility where student grouping was concerned. He spoke to this frequently in his dialoguing with the teachers of NCS. He encouraged the movement of students from their assigned levels. The teachers, from what I have gathered in my research, had autonomy

in these decisions, and especially at the beginning of the school year, students were often determined to be inappropriately placed and would be moved accordingly. It was also occasionally the case that a student would be moved to a different grade level (only a higher one) in the middle of the school year, and at SJTS, at least one promotions list indicated that two children were promoted from second grade directly to high fourth grade, with a note indicating “These children will need help with addition with [*sic*] carrying” (NCSTD, [*n.d.*], Box 10, Diary1). There is no reason given. This flexibility and the movement of students in the middle of the school year is also different from what was being done in the schools attended by me and my brothers and sisters.

While teachers were expected to include individual student case studies in their diaries, it was clear to me that they had not received a particular template or instructions as to how these should read. Some teachers wrote entire pages on students (though most of those were done by teachers working at Nambé), while others wrote short paragraphs. Some considered only the student, and others the whole child, which is what Dr. Tireman had in mind, according to Tireman and Watson (1943), and the dialogue between him and the teachers at the NCS. In the cases where the whole child was considered, it was interesting to note the differences in the kind of statements made about a child’s home, or family, or personal characteristics. Some were, as one would expect, more professional while others showed bias in the words written on the page. Regardless, as I continued my archival work, and understood that these case studies would be present, I found myself looking for the names of certain children from year to year to see if they were still placed in the lower-achieving groupings, to see if there were any work samples (writing or art), and to read about the thinking of their different teachers from year to year. I found this to

be difficult as each teacher usually chose only a few exemplars as work samples, and at SJTS, many of those chosen appeared to be from higher performing students.

The diary formats themselves varied widely from teacher to teacher. One pre-first grade teacher at SJTS, for example, tabbed her pages (but most were no longer there owing to the fragility of the paper, so the categories that were originally written on each were not identifiable). This particular teacher's diaries had extensive notes on each student, and even a section with every vocabulary word they had studied for the entire year (NCSTD, 1936 – 1937, Box 5, Diary 1). She also paid scrupulous attention to minutiae as related to her students. For example, in a folder that was in the same box as her diary, and which contained mostly art work, it was noted that the children were supposed to be a minimum of five years six months old in order to be in her pre-first grade class, but she suspected that many of them were younger (which was later confirmed) (NCSTD, 1936 – 1937, Box 5, Folder 1). When given choices of items to draw, students in this pre-first grade level drew simple, but obviously important pictures of items like toys (a doll, a Jack-in-the-Box, and a top, for example).

An example of how the case studies became important in my getting to know both the teachers who wrote them and the students they described follows. I had been enjoying the rich prose of a certain second grade teacher at Nambé. By the end of reading the first diary of hers, I knew her to be a funny, kind, and empathetic teacher, who was interested in the lives of her students and their families at a deeply-felt level. In the next diary, which was also noted as second grade, but had no teacher name on its cover, I assumed it was the same teacher (as she was the only second grade teacher in Nambé to my knowledge). A reference in a case study to a student as “mentally handicapped,” which in

and of itself was not atypical language for the era, struck me as out of character for the second grade teacher at Nambé. (I had also noticed differences in the charts, and the style of writing, and to a lesser extent, the handwriting, but I did not read the diaries simultaneously.) Not only was the two-word phrase not in keeping with the teacher I had come to know, but the entire case study did not read as compassionate, but read instead, as perfunctory and obligatory. That said, once I established that the school in which this particular teacher was working was actually SJTS, I was able to look for this student's name in the school year previous and try to ascertain whether there were other notes about this student having a mental disability as an attribute. I did not find any indications from the previous teacher that she also had this impression of the student, and in the end, there is no way to know whether the student did indeed have mental illness as an attribute, but I realized then, that I had come to know the teacher well enough to recognize that this was not a comment that was in keeping with her heart as it showed on the pages of her diary. I had actually come to know *her*. That was a very gratifying realization and the first time, in my archival document searches that I made a conscience connection between my experiences as a student, recalling the kind Sister from my second grade year in school, and this particular teacher, imagining what she meant to these students. But, I digress. The point I was trying to make was that the case studies were very important and very telling when they were done with thought. Still, I suspect that a teacher who would so label a student may also have had limited expectations for his or her success, as was the case with several of my siblings for whom school was a torturous extension of our already difficult home life.

Art-making and creative expression, generally, continued in the use of charts and the drawing and other creative activities that accompanied them, but as the grade levels increased. There were many descriptions of the other types of creative work the students were doing. One example of this involved the making of rag dolls by the students (male and female) in second grade as a follow-up activity to the reading of the book, *Delicia* (author unknown), which was a story about a rag doll of that name. Apparently, this was an assignment that students were given that involved work both in-class and at home (students were allowed to take their partially completed rag dolls home to work on them). The dolls were all entered in the school fair, which was a very important community event in the village each fall. The following chart was written in connection with this literacy/creative activity:

This is Delicia.

Delicia is a rag doll.
 Mrs. J---- read us a story about her.
 We are trying to make rag dolls like her.
 We come every day so that we can sew.
 We are going to take our dolls to the Fair.
 No girls have been absent this week.
 We are all present today.

(NCSTD, October, 1936, Box 10, Diary 1)

The reference in the last line to everyone being present is explained below.

What was striking to me about this chart was the complexity of the sentences. This class consisted of the A and B reading groups. I learned over the course of my research that the charts, and the reading material connected with them provided clues to the reading groups when that was not apparent from the front of the diaries, or the content list provided by the Center for Southwest Research (CSWR). This was one differentiation

among the leveled reading groups in the lowest grades. Also, that the inclusion of sewing was added to the students' art-making is striking, especially in light of the rigor of expectations for students. These would have been students who were around seven years old, and they were learning to recreate a character from a book they were reading by making their own version of her. Not only did they sew the dolls, but they made clothes for them as well. The students chose representational characters, including the main character, Delicia, for each of their dolls and decided as a group how their characters would have dressed. The teacher's diary noted that this unit became a sewing unit that was tied to the school fair (held in October, and much more elaborate than what we think of as a school fair today—See Figure 24, the introduction to the San José School Fair of 1936 on the following page). One student brought a doll clothes pattern from Leary's doll patterns (a company for which I could find no information), and copied it for the entire class. The students then used flour sacks as the fabric.

Delicia, of course, had her dress, but there was a male character (Adolphus) that got dressed in trousers, a button down shirt, suspenders, and a cap. The character Soldier Boy was outfitted like a boy from the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), which was determined to be khakis. The inclusion of a doll dressed like a CCC boy (as they were called) goes to the importance and cultural relevance of President Roosevelt's New Deal programs in the community (and the country) during this time. The students used examples from the community and their families to decide how each character should be dressed. This was an elaborate unit that involved cooperative decision-making, creative arts, multi-modal literacy activities, and reciprocal interactions with the community

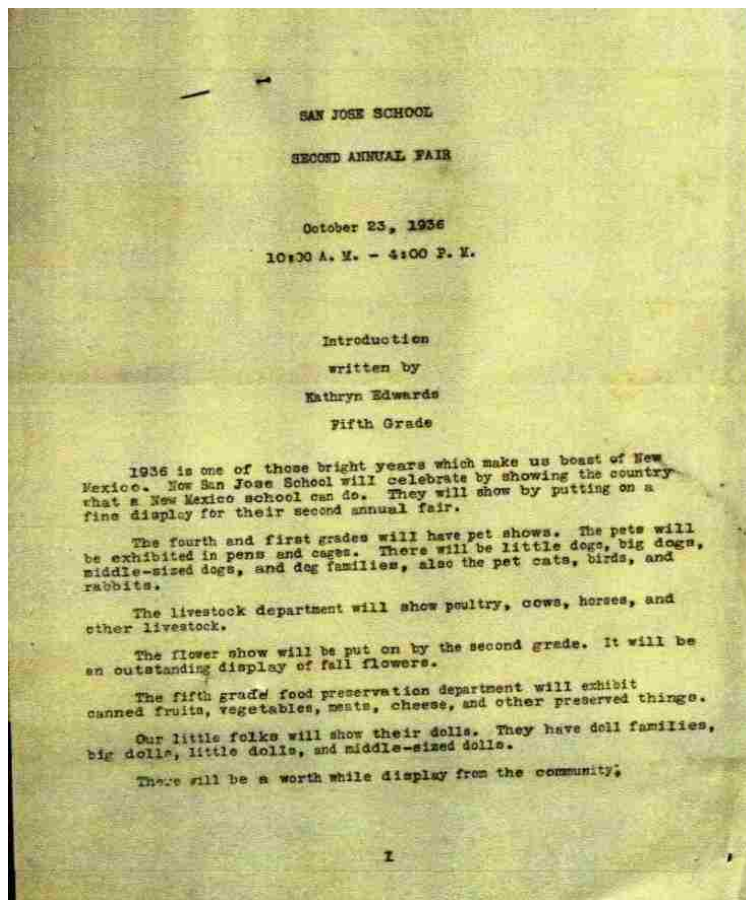


Figure 24. Introduction to SJTS Second Annual Fair with Comprehensive List of Each Grade's Contributions.

(NCSTD, October 23, 1936, Box 10, Diary 1)

because every grade level was involved extensively with preparation of a specific thing for the school fair.

In this particular second grade classroom, one of the dolls won a blue ribbon at the school fair. A new chart was created, but with the same title, "This is Delicia," reflecting the award received in the fair. As motivation for attendance, the teacher noted that she posted the following chart on the hall bulletin board along with the doll and the blue ribbon. The dates (Oct. 26, Oct. 27, Oct. 28) written around the chart, were days of perfect attendance.

This is Delicia.

She won a blue ribbon
at the Fair.

We are all here today
to see her ribbon.

Second Grade
Room 9

(NCSTD, October, 1936, Box 10, Diary 1)

This was, according to the teacher's diary, meant to be a motivation for the students to come to school. As in, if you come to school, you have more fun and can complete the work being done, and you may even win a prize for your efforts.

One other creative activity noted by this teacher surrounded the use of cereal boxes to make three-dimensional representations of the modes of transportation the students were learning in the transportation unit. Again, these objects were not available for viewing because, like the village made by the students in first grade, they were too large to be included in the collection due to space considerations. The vehicles, according to the teacher's diary, included: planes, a covered wagon, a stagecoach, a train, and a transcontinental bus, all made from puffed wheat boxes.

The students also built a grocery store in their classroom as part of the community project. A small group of boys was in charge of the creation of the actual store—using tagboard, which is the heavy cardboard used sometimes as dividers in boxes, or in luggage tags, to name two examples. Each student was involved, with some making the play money, and others grocery store items for the shelves (based on what they had seen in the grocery store on one of their excursions). They made the items out of clay. During this activity, their teacher had a hospital stay, and the students practiced their letter-

writing skills by creating a group-composed letter, contributing lines like they did for their charts, and telling her about their store.

One of the students' excursions into the community (during what I believe was a unit on spring) was to see the flower show put on by the Albuquerque Garden Club. On their return to school, students read about the characteristics of the different types of flowers, wrote charts (group compositions) on each, which were copied in scrupulous detail into the teacher's diary, and then took a walk through the community to see if they could identify any of the types they had learned about in the yards or public spaces. Birds were also a part of this unit. The School Fair also featured a student flower show and a poster in front of the display contained the captions "Spring Flowers" and "Spring Birds," with the written question "Have you read a story about flowers or Have you read a story about birds?" This invited the students from the other classrooms and grades in the school to share information about the books they were reading, and allowed all students to practice their oral language skills.

The teacher of this particular second grade class was scrupulous in the details she noted in her diary for each student, which included race and each child's height in inches. Despite Dr. Tireman's own assertion (Tireman & Watson, 1943) that one of the reasons for leveling the students into different reading groups in the first three grades (at Nambé) was so that they would not suffer from the social stigmatization that would come from being placed in a grade level for which they were "overage," it is not clear to me that this was put into practice at SJTS. This second grade teacher, for example, noted in her diary, at the beginning of school year 1936 – 1937, that the age ranges in her class were from seven years and one month to nine years and seven months.

The case studies for the above-referenced teacher again became important in terms of understanding the student population in her classroom. In her case studies she noted abilities (and problems) that certain students were having in different subject areas, along with her suspicions as to the reasons for some of their problems. These included age and high absenteeism. I noticed that one particular student in this class had much more written about him in his case study than was typical for the teacher. She wrote, generally, that she was concerned about his truthfulness and lack of interest in what was being taught, but noted also, that he had made progress. Despite this—and out of the blue—she ended her case study with “Is mentally handicapped,” (NCSTD, May 15, 1937, Box 10, Diary 1). She offered no explanation for her thinking, but it was obvious from the previous words about the boy that this teacher cared about this particular student. I would like to know what she meant by mentally handicapped. I find the issue of semantics across time to be one of the problems in interpretation of the data because over a period of nearly 80 years, references to students with exceptionalities has changed to the extent that it is difficult to know what was meant by a word or phrase that was used then, but is no longer a common, or appropriate reference.

As a final note on this particular grade at SJTS, it is notable that there were already numerous standardized tests that the students took (more so at SJTS than NCS). What I do not know is whether these tests were taken at every grade level. There was no test data for the first or third grades in the diaries. When I went to school, we took a standardized test in fourth grade and in eighth grade. There was also one in high school at either the ninth or tenth grade that I recall that went to abstract thinking and mathematical skills. There are 17 pages of test data for several reading tests, but the columnar headings

with the test names are abbreviated, so I do not know exactly what these tests were. I am, however, certain that they were from this second grade teacher because of the student names. Teacher A. J. taught the higher-performing students, which is one reason I did not include a deeper analysis of them, but another is that test scores are not the information I was seeking (though I will analyze test data for NCS in one context when I report the data for that specific school).

It is worth noting, here, I think, that when I originally researched this box, it was in the belief that I was researching Nambé records, and it made no sense to me that the students were attending a flower show in Albuquerque, or that their excursions included so many yards, references to traffic, etc. I was already aware that a main focus of the curriculum at Nambé was soil conservation, nutrition, and health generally. I was also aware that Nambé's residents lived in abject poverty, so I was curious about a teacher who brought cookies to her class that were baked by her maid. That, as it turned out, was a reference to a teacher from SJTS, and there are other indications that some of the people involved with that school were well off, and well connected politically. Examples of some of these people are discussed where appropriate in this analysis of data for SJTS. Regardless, the fact that the students were interacting with their communities, studying what was relevant within them, and participating in many arts-based activities as a component part of their literacy learning was done in both schools, and the fact that the content of some of the curriculum looked different from one school to another is an indication that the community school model, as envisioned by John Dewey, and planned for New Mexico by Dr. Tireman, was being followed.

Certainly the excursions taken by the students into their respective communities were made more relevant by the connected curricular activities surrounding literacy learning and creative endeavors. My brothers and sisters and I laughed about some of the field trips we took, and which included, to name a few: the local hot dog packaging plant, the Bunny Bread bakery (which brought up the horror of wearing yellow and red Bunny Bread bags with the smiling bunny grinning from the tops of our leaky boots), the garbage dump, and the salvage yard. None of us recalled any lead-in or follow-up activities related to our field trips. That is not to say that there were none, but no one remembered studying anything related to the places we occasionally visited.

I will veer slightly for a few paragraphs from curriculum and student work samples, to the diaries themselves because the above-referenced 4th grade teacher included some loose printed sheets in her diary that I found helpful in my own understandings about what teachers included in their written records (at least for school year 1936 – 1937, the last school year for which I had records for SJTS). These handouts shed light on the expectations for the diaries and on the growth of the student population at SJTS over what was then the entire six-year period of its operation as an experimental school.

The first indication that there was any direction in the way the diaries were to be written came in these inserted pages. They directed teachers in how best to write a “resumé,” the word the San José teachers used on the covers of their diaries (another clue that this was a different school). The suggestions included an accounting of the teacher’s group of students (with family background), a record of formal subjects taught, including outlines of unit plans to be completed bi-weekly or monthly, a record of arithmetic and

spelling and a note to “give a picture that cannot be secured otherwise,” (NCSTD, 1936 – 1937, Box 11, Diary 1). Teachers were also asked to include notes about student reactions (extreme boredom or enthusiasm), a list of contributions from each student’s home, preparations for Council (unclear), and samples of student work (low, mid-, and high). There was also a reference to “half time girls” available for remedial reading. The impression I got in reading the “suggestions,” as well as the deadline given by MMH (whom I believe was Marie Hughes, the namesake of the Albuquerque elementary school—but cannot verify this), is that the teachers were not satisfactorily completing their diaries (according to Dr. Tireman perhaps?). There was a deadline for turning them in and notes that implied teacher dissatisfaction (comments about the workload, and ongoing organization of certain units that were being refined [and for which the teachers’ advice and criticism, it was noted, may be invited at some point]).

In the same set of loose papers, in this fourth grade teacher’s diary, there was a sheet dated October 16, 1936 with a year-by-year enrollment and attendance list from 1930 through 1936. What is clear from this sheet is that the village of San José was growing. In 1930, the enrollment for the school was 477, and by 1936 it was 705. The sheet (also with the initials M.M.H.) noted also that “Last year our highest Anglo enrolment [*sic*] was 12.4 per cent [*sic*] of the total. The report ending October 12, 1936 shows the Anglo enrolment [*sic*] (at) 16.2 per cent [*sic*] of total” (NCSTD, 1936 – 1937, Box 11, Diary 1). It is clear that the enrollment of Anglo students was noteworthy. In another teacher’s diary, that figure was used to note that there were “economic changes” in the community as a result of the increasing Anglo population (but that was not elaborated upon). I am noting the enrollment because this information was provided in

the fall of the last school year under which San José was operated as a demonstration school under the direction of Dr. Tireman and the University of New Mexico. I will use this information to theorize why this was the case in my wrap-up of this section, but note it here because I noticed that at grades four and up, there seemed to be a departure in the curriculum that felt to me like it was less connected to the community of San José.

One example of this departure came in a typed unit page from a teacher entitled “Prairie Dogs,” and which I could not for the life of me connect to what was typed below it, which included references to skyscrapers, elevated trains, and huge crowds of people. (NCSTD, 1936 – 1937, Box 11, Diary 1) The description of the unit (Prairie Dogs) then went on to discuss a student’s trip to New York City, and to note other students’ travels to Los Angeles, Denver, and El Paso (another indication to me that there was more money in this village than in Nambé). I certainly do not dispute here the importance of students’ understanding of the world beyond their own community, but I note it because it felt like a departure from the typical kind of work I understood to be the goal of Dr. Tireman and of community schools generally. The use of charts was also noticeably less present, or was not noted in the teacher diaries. However, community excursions were still happening, and students practiced letter-writing at the fourth grade, thanking their hosts on trips in the spring of 1937 for trips to the KGGM Radio station, and to the local telegraph office. The letters were written on behalf of the class, and only one sample of each was included (likely a high level example from my point of view). There were, at this grade level, no arts-based activities that I found in the collection that were connected to these trips, as had been integral at the lower grade levels. Instead, the writing of letters and compositions were the accompanying in-class activities to these excursions.

The student drawings, loose in some of the diaries and in folders, indicate there were still arts-based activities in the upper elementary grades, though references to them in the diaries was sparse. One that was a regular part of the curriculum involved the original illustration of books and stories the students were reading. Examples of some of these illustrations will be included in my research presentation, but because the teacher who wrote this particular diary taught all ability levels, it was difficult to ascertain the reading levels of the students whose drawings were included in her diary. A note in another teacher's diary, however, indicated that this particular teacher took on the "very slow individuals" at the fifth grade level in school year 1935 -1936, so I am comfortable in my belief that she had many students in her class who were among the lowest performers. I was happy to know, then, that students whose reading levels were low (and in some cases, extremely so), were still being provided with opportunities for creative expression. In some of the lower grade levels, when reviewing reading test scores, some of the artwork that was regularly included from a few students was created by students whose reading scores were low. I note this because it is an indication that all students participated in art. As stated above, my sisters and one brother who were placed in the lowest ability groupings have no memory of any kind of arts-based activities, or any special positive attention. One sister remembered drill after drill and "boring books."

As well, at the higher elementary grade levels, students created posters illustrating the lessons they were learning in their health class. Infectious disease (including small pox) and general hygiene were noted in several teacher diaries as being of concern at the time. The illustration below, Figure 25, is an example of one such poster, which was noted by the teacher as one poster in a frieze that was being used in their fourth grade

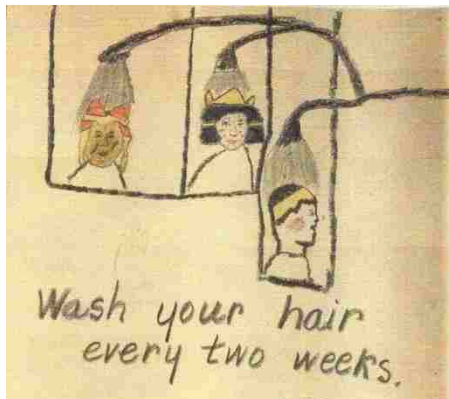


Figure 25. Health Poster by Fourth Grade Student.

(NCSTD, 1936 – 1937, Box 11, Diary 1)

classroom. Efforts were noted by teachers at all grade levels to get the students to take more seriously the importance of washing hands.

Taking to heart the suggestion that student work be labeled for its achievement, the teacher of this class labeled some student drawings as “Best, O.K., Bad, and Worst,” but only for the writing examples (in the Norway Unit). I suspect that the artwork she was choosing to show is generally the exemplary work, and she did not label them as to their quality. She noted in her diary that the Norway Unit (which was conducted in the spring of 1937) was the students’ first “regional study,” and that the overall performance on the curriculum based assessment (CBA) she designed was not as strong as she would have liked, but she thought it was due to the fact that it was such a departure from anything the students knew, which I found to be a good example of reflective teaching, and a strong use for the diaries. A fun note in her diary reads: “Children were impressed mostly by the codfish, since almost all of them had some experience with cod liver oil...” (NCSTD, February 18, 1937, Box 11, Folder 1) This was funny to me because I know that it was common to give children cod liver oil to prevent constipation, and at Nambé they used it for a nutritional supplement to help the very malnourished students gain

weight. I was picturing the turned up faces of the kids as they were learning about how cod liver oil was extracted and it just made me smile.

The students were learning to watch out for one another and a student council (comprised of 13 boys; no girls) was created. They not only reported on the bad behavior of students that they witnessed (e.g., rock throwing, window breaking, bullying), but they reported on what students were learning in different grades, which included: a milk study in fifth, a picture writing study in 6th, and the labeling of one fourth grade class as “the Baby room,” because of their chewing gum and candy.

Students at this grade level (and regardless of the reading group to which they were assigned), were beginning to write short compositions independently. After a visit to a restaurant (no details found in the diary) students wrote about what they found most interesting about their excursion. The following (believed to be possibly from the same teacher who taught many of the lowest level students as referenced above) is my favorite essay of the entire collection, and would have only been improved if it were accompanied by an illustration.

The Boy's Toilet

There were three bowls in the men's rest room. It had four toilets and two lights. It was very clean. It had the word “Men” on the door. The lights looked very much like candles. One of the lights was broken. Mr. Hughes went with us. (NCSTD, March 3, 1937, Box 10, Diary 1)

I loved this story because, generally, as a teacher, I have always offered my students choice in reading and writing topics whenever possible, and it is sweet and lovely that for one boy, the toilets were the highlight of their excursion to a restaurant. I wonder if he grew up to have a very clean bathroom in his own house.

Overall, as the grade levels increased, and the school population grew, I began to see the potential for serious problems in the classrooms (with 45 students in a class and age ranges varying by up to six years), and some of the teacher notes indicated frustration. I also began to become aware that students whose case studies indicated they were performing at very low levels were being promoted regardless of that fact. Generally, I found that many of the diaries were difficult to track, in terms of when things were happening, etc. because teachers tended to arrange them according to (I suspect) the categories as noted in the above-referenced suggestions by MMH, rather than chronologically like a typical diary would be written (and as they were written in Nambé). I am also quite sure that the keeping of such complex diaries became more difficult as the class sizes grew to 40+ and encompassed large age ranges, and ability levels.

As the class sizes grew, most teachers did not read as being as compassionate. The teacher who had written about liking a child who was a bit of a behavior problem (and noting that he was mentally handicapped) had at one point thought he would benefit from some kindness. By the end of the year she wrote the following:

He has done good work only under pressure. He wanted to make a rag doll and took one home to complete the same as the other children. He reported that his mother did not have time to finish it but when I offered to do so he never returned it. He seems to have no respect for the truth. (See Home Relationship section for further details.)

In the Home Relationship section referenced by this teacher, she wrote:

I expect that B----- G----- does well considering his home environment. He lives in that awfully bleak adobe house at the corner of Broadway and _____.

I have never been in but the door is often wide open as we drive by and from a distance it looks as barren inside as it is without. The woman with whom I occasionally see him walking is rather nice looking. Seems neatly dressed.

B----- has good clothing.

(NCSTD, (ca. 1937), Box 10, Diary 1)

I read the diary entry about the student's untruthfulness, and was struck by it enough to include it here for several reasons. First, the reference to the student being untruthful was confusing. I did not understand what was untruthful about the student saying his mother was too busy to sew the ragdoll, and consider it a non sequitur to connect the fact that he never returned the doll to whether or not he was telling the truth about his mother being too busy. In the second part of the case study (the Home Relationship section part), it is clear to me that this teacher is judging this family. I thought about Mr. Tula, my fifth grade teacher with kind eyes behind thick glasses, and three fingers missing on one hand (something at which I could not stop staring when I first met him, but forgot to even notice after I knew him), and how he and my grandma both filled the roles of enlightened witness for me and about what a difference that made in my life. Their words always left me feeling special, and I found myself hoping that this student had someone like that in his life.

If Mr. Tula or any other teacher had ever looked into our house when the door was open wide, they would have seen shabby furniture, an unkempt house, and likely my mother looking tired on the couch, if she wasn't changing a diaper, or racing to get

supper on the table in time for my dad. If they had seen me walking with her, the bread bags sticking out of her boots, and her threadbare gold-colored, quilted coat would have been the wardrobe noted. And if they had listened, they would have heard the sucking *schlup-schlup* sound her leaky boots made when she walked. I also was not able to get help from my mother on homework, especially something that involved sewing, and part of this was because she had so many children.

Once, I was expected, by my Girl Scout troop leader to bring a Barbie doll dressed in a Scout uniform, complete with miniature hat, sash, and badges. It was a very high expectation, even aside from our circumstances of poverty (no materials were provided), and the time factor. I cut up one of my own green shirts, made my own pattern by hand, and hand sewed the uniform right onto the doll. When I brought it to the next meeting, I was the only girl who had such a project. All of the others were amazing little replicas of their own uniforms. I was so ashamed, I hid my doll behind some coats, and lied and said I forgot it at home. Then I quit the Girl Scouts rather than face the same humiliation the next week.

So, when I read about the student and the ragdoll, what I read was a missed opportunity for a teacher to reach out to a child. And I was left wondering if maybe he tried to work on the ragdoll himself, like I had with the Barbie, and was too embarrassed to allow the teacher to see his efforts.

As the holidays approached students at SJTS were involved in learning the formalities of socializing. In one class, they learned to set a proper table, but the only drawings from the unit were done by the teacher, who had an inclination to do that sometimes. The school had a stove, so the students cooked a Thanksgiving dinner that

consisted of rice, cocoa, crackers, butter they churned and buttermilk they made. They also made tablecloths and napkins. It was unclear to me at what grade level these students were, but believe they were one of the younger grades. One of their guests was Mary Watson, whom I believe is likely the same Mary Watson who became the principal at Nambé—one of the teachers from SJTS went to NCS, and it was that teacher who, I believe, drew the formal Thanksgiving place setting.

There were many “urban” lessons included in the teacher diaries for SJTS, some dubious as to their import in terms of relevance to the local community of San José. I believe these were, as I referenced earlier, sometimes indications of the money that was connected to this school. I reached this conclusion as I delved more deeply into the research, and it remains my own opinion, but considering that there was a Senator contributing toward its funding, a board connected to the Rockefeller organization in New York, and people from the Public Education Department, and various more local political positions who made up the 17-member board that ran the school, it would be foolhardy of me to believe that this school would be run only by the man with a dream from Iowa. Other indication of money connected to the school included pages with fashionable evening dresses torn from magazines and inserted in one diary, a formal living room and someone named Mrs. Draper torn from another, and the living room of Marie Hughes herself—also somewhat formal in appearance despite there being little that actually shows in the photograph—in which sixth grade students from SJTS are gathered around the fireplace popping corn (See Figure 26) at Mrs. Hughes’ home. (While Mrs. Hughes’ home, and several edicts to the teachers made an appearance, there was nothing personal from her, and, unlike Mary Watson, Nambé’s principal, she did not keep a diary

herself, to my knowledge.) This photo was taken during an excursion in which the boys visited homes in the community, and some under construction (which were large and formal in appearance).

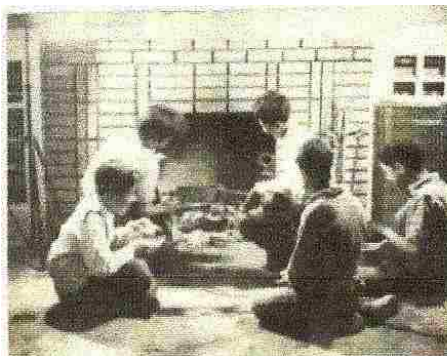


Figure 26. Boys popping corn in front of Mrs. Hughes' fireplace.

(NCSTD, Spring, 1936, Box 21, Diary 1)

Another example of community connections that the students were making and that indicated the community was seeing more of an influx of money at the time, came in the form of the December 15, 1936 edition of *The San José News* (which I believe was the first and only edition of the school newspaper, and was quite lengthy (14 legal-sized pages). The newspaper clearly had an adult influence and had extensive "Society News," which included a teacher's maid, and her trip to Detroit to buy a new car. This section also included engagement and wedding announcements. There was also a "Cartoon" and "Advertisements" section, the latter including two local business sponsors for the newspaper's publication. Because the paper was printed in the purple ink used in dittos, and did not scan as legible because of the need to shrink the already small type down from its original legal size, I did not include it here, but it was a definite representation of growth and an influx of Anglos into the community. Because there were several copies of it in different teacher diaries, it was unclear at what grade level students actually may have been involved in putting the paper together.

In the biographical information provided by the CSWR for this collection one teacher is referenced as teaching fourth and “Special.” I have been unable to find anything specific as to the Special class for SJTS, but note that Bachelor (1991) discussed an “opportunity room,” the objective of which was “to bring the skills of the youngster up to the level of his peers so that he might return to his regular classroom. There was a great deal of emphasis on drill in skills, peer tutoring, and the use of community resources in the room” (pp. 35-36). Bachelor did not indicate if this was only done at certain grade levels, but the only reference I found to a “Special” class at SJTS was contained in the records of one teacher, as noted above. Her class was comprised of C and D level readers (though she referenced them as Groups 1 and 2), and it is unclear whether the fourth grade students in the class were one and the same as the Special students. Regardless, her diary utilized the case study requirement in a very insightful way. This is the only teacher that I can be certain was teaching students who were at the lowest reading and general achievement levels at SJTS, and she made specific references to issues that were likely reasons for the poor performance of some of the students in this class. (The class was comprised of 33 girls and 12 boys.) This teacher’s empathy and positivity was indicated in her note that “We have some outstanding members in the slow group too” (NCSTD, October 1, 1936, Box 12, Folder 1). She then went on to indicate various reasons for some of the students’ low performance.

Of student, J. B., in the lowest reading group, she wrote that the student was “terribly nervous and underweight. Probably suffering from mal nutrition [*sic*]. A good student in spite of handicaps” (October 1, 1936). Then she followed up in January with a

note that the student had moved to the mountains with a married sister and that she hoped this would make her stronger. In April, the student returned, with apparently no improvement in her health.

Of student, M. G. (noted as “negro,” despite no such notations for other students), “Was very unhappy, and was treated badly by other girls who are not used to negro students until R. M. O. (colored) arrived. Now she has a friend and her outlook is brighter” (October 1, 1936). In January, after the student’s mother developed an infection in childbirth, she had to stay home to take care of the baby, which shocked this particular teacher (the same one with a maid and a new car, so likely not from the same SES status as most of the students).

Student, R. M. having been absent for three weeks was missing school because she had no shoes. The teacher was planning on retaining her. (I found myself wondering about life’s outcome for a child who could be retained in school because she was so poor she had no shoes, and again, noted the difference kindness and attention could have made for her.)

Student R. M. O. (noted above, and in case study as “negro”) was observed by the teacher to be involved in regular arguments on the playground over her race. By January, she was observed to be doing better with her white classmates.

Student, J. Q. was included in the Special class, but was in a higher reading group, and was noted to have “great interest in social studies.” Of her, the teacher wrote:

J. is a cripple, a result of paralysis. She has had several operations, thereby missing a lot of school. This year she is walking, and she feels too proud to ride

in the wagon she used last year... Her younger sister is in the same room, and is a little brighter. When J. comes to school she stays upstairs and eats her lunch alone... all of this is giving J. an inferiority complex and she feels keenly the fact that she is 'different.' (NCSTD, October 1, 1936, Box 12, Folder 1).

On December 14, the case study read merely "Poor J. has dropped out."

Other students in the Special class for whom the teacher wrote case studies were noted as being often ill and missing school, one as being "a queer overage chap," one "a jittery busybody... work is untidy and spasmodic," and one as "a slow dreary type... not very creative" (NCSTD, October 1, 1936, Box 12, Folder 1). The use of many of these particular names have been lost to time, but my own siblings who struggled in school due to disability attributes (both physical and psychosocial) were called names regularly, and in literally all of their environments. School should be a place of refuge from names, but in my teaching experience, there is ready reference in the climate of high-stakes testing that allows for references to students as "bubble kids" (denoting their scores on the tests), "SPED kids," and even, shockingly "Retards." These are words used by teachers and when I read this teacher's diary, I was appalled in an all-too-familiar kind of way.

There was one student in the class, referenced above, whose IQ was written as 101 (no other IQ scores were included), and from the notes, I believe was only in the Special class because "father is dead" and "mother appears to lack proper interest" [*n.d.*]. I believe this student to be in the class due only to these psychosocial disabling circumstances because the teacher noted further that the student was "capable of good work" (NCSTD, (ca. 1936), Box 12, Folder 1), and the IQ score was certainly not

indicative of a student with intellectual/developmental disabilities. All of these student notes were included in separate loose pages rather than as part of a diary.

While there are no specific disability references in the students discussed above, it is my belief that many of these students were likely performing at low levels due to the psychosocial disabling impacts of poverty, including high absenteeism (often a result of the former). I found this to be the case with many of the students in my own classroom, regardless of whether they were receiving Special Education services or not. Certainly, if my family were judged on a parent's lacking "proper interest," all six of us (my siblings and I) would have been placed in the Special class.

In the same teacher's class as that referenced above, the students wrote fantasy essays about what they imagined life would be like if they lived in a large city. They also visited the "dog and cat hospital," and then created a bulletin board that contained several pictures of their own pets (though not many, again likely because the use of cameras at home was not as commonplace). One of the drawings included as an exemplar from this unit, was titled "Space Dog," and was a wonderful illustration of fantasy.

Something that stood out to me about this class, as compared to the others, was that there were more examples of fiction writing, and the drawing referenced above would seem to indicate that this also extended to the art activities the students were doing. This teacher was also interested in knowing which units were the students' favorites (and reported the results in her diary). Students wrote essays answering that question, and the winning unit was the camping unit, which involved an actual overnight camping trip taken by the students. One student's report indicated that the trip was to Yellowstone, but I believe that since the teacher encouraged the students to use their

imaginations in their writing, they did not go camping in Yellowstone. There were quite a few photos from this camping trip, and it was clear that all students were having a wonderful time. Because the students' faces are identifiable, I cannot show them in this dissertation. Overall, this particular teacher was one of the most thorough in the keeping of her diary (of the SJTS teachers). At year-end, when the students took the Gates Reading Tests, she made a very detailed list of each of her 50+ students, columns for all 40 questions, and marked which each student got correct, and which were missed. She then taped a note with comments about the reasons some of them were likely missed (which covered up most of the page of test data, and could not be removed due to the glue from the tab, and fragility of the paper). One insightful comment noted that a particular test question, which was missed by more students than any other, was about rabbits, and most of the children had never seen rabbits of the type that apparently change their coat colors (nor, have I). These comments were another good example of sound reflective practices.

By fifth grade and up, there was less emphasis on arts-based activities at SJTS, at least to the extent that they did not accompany every unit's literacy-based assignments as they did in the lowest grades. There was a note in one fifth grade teacher's diary and a program for the school's open house of November 1, 1935, that indicated there was a student art gallery on cotton, but there was no indication about what the art may have been. In fifth grade, there was an emphasis on good citizenship and social science, generally. Students also studied farming in the Western U.S., and the teachers created assignment sheets that directed students to perform tasks independently and then fill-in-the-blanks after completing the instructed reading. For example, students would be told to

read specific pages in books or stories, and then answer the questions provided on the worksheet, which was in a purple ditto format and were so poorly made as to be difficult to read.

Despite generally fewer artistic activities at the higher grade levels, two teachers, who are listed as a pair in the CSWR biographical content information, and who taught the lower-level students in fifth grade did include quite a few. These teachers wrote only cursory comments about the students in their case studies, and they were often about the child's physical appearance. Some of these comments included: "good-looking chap," "sickly, undersized," "mouselike" and "squat, ungainly child" (NCSTD, [*n.d.*], Box 18, Diary 1). These labels were followed by a list of the remaining students (40 in all) with just their names provided, ages, and sizes (great variations in age and size), and according to the Gates Reading Scores, their reading levels were from between low third grade and high fourth, with one at a low fifth grade level. Because the products of the artistic activities discussed were three-dimensional, there are no examples of them to share.

One of the projects the girls worked on was the sewing of dolls from a pattern, which they first made out of oilcloth because it was easier to work with, according to the teacher's report. There was a drawing of a little red dog that was said to represent one of the dolls made by the girls. The boys in the class, after an excursion to visit the fire chief who also enjoyed working with wood in his free time, were provided with a pattern to make a toy elephant, and instructions for its assembly. The fire chief apparently showed them how to use a coping saw (though there is no indication if they had access to one at school), to cut the pattern, and a lathe to make the wheels, as well. Again, there were a few simple, undetailed drawings included in the diary that represented the toys the boys

made which included an elephant, a horse, and a parrot on a pole. Writing activities that accompanied this work were basically comprised of written descriptions of the toys (which were generally the type that had wheels and a child could pull, or ride). It is interesting to me that there were more references to artistic activities at the upper grade levels in the classrooms with the lower-performing students. In the NCS diaries, there were inquiries to Dr. Tireman as to whether certain students should be directed toward “handicrafts,” after they were deemed to have learned as much academically as they were likely to ever learn. It is easy from the present perspective to judge this as perhaps being evidence that the teachers had expectations for these students that were too low, but it gives me pause, as well, to consider whether a student learning a craft is necessarily being provided a disservice. One of my siblings is grateful that he had the opportunity to learn woodworking in school because as he puts it, “I’m better with my hands than I am with reading and writing.” He struggled all through school, was dealing with abuse in many different environments, and was never able to achieve well in terms of test-taking. School for him was torturous, except for the classes that involved learning to use tools and make things.

Like the fifth grade students at the NCS students at SJTS also studied sheep and wool though the NCS study involved venturing into the community to learn from a resident how she shorn her sheep, carded and spun the wool, made dyes from plants, and then wove on her loom, and the study at SJTS was primarily text-based. The team teachers of the lower performing students referenced above, attributed the lack of interest in this unit to the students’ low ability levels. At some point, one of them left SJTS, and a different teacher took her place, and found that the students much more enjoyed hearing

about her personal experiences of Vermont Merino sheep, and learning about how various sheep's wool differed depending on the climate. She also included information about sheep herders and sheep dogs that the children found interesting. After adding her personal knowledge of the Vermont sheep, this teacher noted that the children frequently asked her to tell them stories about the farms in Vermont. (Bringing personal background knowledge to literacy instruction at all levels and grades is always, in my experience, more interesting than merely reading from a book.)

There were some notes about using charts in the diaries, but no samples were provided (for the higher grade levels) in the first year the diaries were kept. I found that generally, the diaries kept in school year 1935 – 1936, were very difficult to cull information from. Teachers were not experienced in writing them, and there were some that, apparently, left mid-year, and were replaced, but there were no notes to that effect; I just had to figure it out if I could. Additionally, there were some drawings that were inserted into pages, but I had to try and figure the context out on my own. For example, a drawing of a Chinese Junk I knew must connect to the China Unit, which was only studied by the upper-level readers in fifth grade. Some drawings were impossible to scan because they were glued into the diaries in layers and too fragile to manipulate for copying.

In 1930s America, colonialism generally, and most especially as understood in the celebration of the pioneers who settled the west (and the myth of Daniel Boone), along with nativist thinking that allowed for anti-bilingual sentiments, were prevalent, and some of that can be seen in the artwork created by the students at the upper grade levels at SJTS. Despite Dr. Tireman's strong belief in bilingual education, a decidedly non-

nativist stance, the elaborate ink drawings of the students at the sixth grade level were the arts-based connection they made to the curriculum. There were many drawings of Daniel Boone, and they often depicted pioneer men smiling as they shot at a Native American on his knees, or a Native American being tortured in some fashion. One interesting take on Daniel Boone (labeled as being part of the English Explorers Unit) depicted him looking toward Kentucky, with his pirate friend at his side. The label read “Boone-Crosses-the-Mountain (illegible) First-View-Of-Kentucky.” I am not sure what the dashes indicate, but wrote the students words as they were intended to honor him (or her).

Drawing was also prevalent at the low sixth grade level, according to another teacher whose class consisted of students who tested primarily at the third grade reading level on an oral reading check. Several of these students created some sketches that show artistic skill of a high level, in my opinion. It is interesting to note, then, that the artwork that was often used as exemplars by this teacher, and which showed great artistic skill in my opinion, was done by students who were reading at the lowest levels in the class. Diary notes on several of these students indicated that they were not inclined to complete the assigned work in class, except that involving art-related activities. This motivation showed clearly in some of the sketches done at this grade level, and which I was able to tie directly to some of the lowest-performing students. These sketches are shown as Figures 27, and 28 on the following page. Since the artists read two or more levels below grade level, it would have been a great opportunity for the teacher to get them to participate in literacy activities for this unit, though it is unclear exactly what the students were studying as the drawings were inserted in loose paper and not specifically connected to the teacher’s diary pages. Examples of such connected activities could have included



Figure 27. Man with Sugar Cane or Bamboo by Sixth Grade Student.

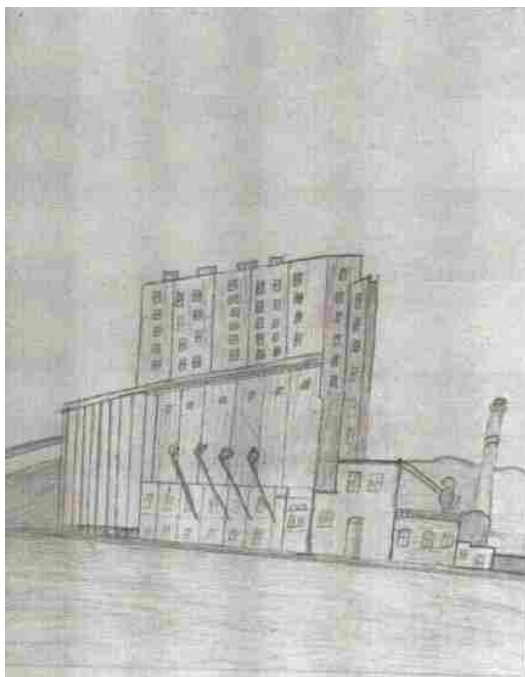


Figure 28. Grain Elevator by Sixth Grade Student.

(NCSTD, [ca. 1936], Box 24, Diary 2)

written charts, or short stories about the illustrations. Students might have told oral stories that held the drawings as a centerpiece in their tales. There are many ways to pair art and literacy activities, as was demonstrated at the lowest grade levels at SJTS, and if that was

being done, it was not clear from anything in the diaries, nor were any writing components included with the drawings. As well, I would make the point that art, without a context, has little or no meaning for the viewer, regardless of the skill or training of the artist rendering the piece.

As stated above, it has become more clear to me since researching these archival documents is that art without a context within which to view it carries less meaning for the viewer, and is, therefore, not being used as the tool for learning that it might be. I will discuss this further in Chapter 6 in the synthesis portion of this dissertation because, in reviewing some of the artwork created by my own students in the context of a language arts class, its clarity is better understood by me, and will be to any other viewer, if it is viewed in light of the unit being taught. It is also more meaningful, in my opinion, when accompanied by the artist's written description—whether that encompasses the process, the product's objectives, or both. I was able to learn that some of the curriculum covered in seventh and eighth grades at SJTS included the Industrial Revolution and inventors from that era. In the folder that contained the previous two pencil sketches (and which was credited to students in the low sixth grade) at least some of the images would seem to correlate more with the seventh and eighth grade studies.

The collection contained records for only one teacher at the seventh and eighth grade levels of SJTS who taught both grade levels, and primarily the high level students. However, she did teach some reading, English, and music classes to low seventh and eighth grades. This teacher's diary indicated that she had 40 students at the 7B level, 36 students at the 7C level, and 37 eighth grade students. She was also the teacher (as referenced above), who made note that the increased number of Anglo students (5 of her

37 eighth grade students are Anglo in school year 1936 – 1937), was an indication of “the existence of an economic change in the San José community” (NCSTD, Fall, 1936, Box 24, Diary 2), though she did not elaborate on that statement.

Midway through the school year, this teacher indicated that the average grade (score) in eighth grade was 87.5% and in seventh it was 84.84%. According to the diary, the eighth grade students, on learning of the improvement of their average scores from the previous year, were very happy; unfortunately, Miss B. shot them down. She wrote: “The eighth were jubilant over their higher average, until I pointed out to them that statistically speaking it was not significant!” (NCSTD, Winter, 1936 - 1937, Box 24, Diary 2). I did not alter the teacher’s punctuation or underlines, and was saddened by the words. I imagined what a statement like that would have meant to especially the students who were struggling. This teacher, in the same diary, went further, drawing up a sheet in which the seventh grade students were in one column, and the eighth in another. She compared their reading and spelling grades, noting that it was on the same material (this was in her heading) and found them to be doing equally well. She noted her frustration that the eighth grade students were not doing better. Since I attended a school with three grade levels in the same classroom, and at the same grade levels—that is, upper elementary, late fifth through eighth grades—I can attest that since we were all in the same room, I knew the material of all three grade levels equally well, having heard what the other grades were being taught every day.

In English class, the students were writing fables, but these were without a visual component which would have, in my opinion, greatly added to the imagery created by the students in the fables. I believe students would have also been more motivated in writing

the fables if they were allowed to illustrate them. When reading the fable sample I have chosen to include here (on the following page), I get a clear picture in my head, but I also understand that the writer's picture would have been different than mine, and I would enjoy seeing it.

A Quarrel Between the Moon and a Cloud

A quarrel between the moon and a cloud
 Came because each was proud.
 Said the Moon,
 "I shine here every night.
 There is no need of a fight."
 Replied the cloud,
 "I can stand here if I please,
 Even if you're not at ease.
 You think that you're so bright,
 Just because you give the world light.
 I am strong and give them rain
 When they're thirsty and in vain."
 Answered the Moon,
 "When the world is darkest night,
 I just stand and give it light.
 Sometimes it's so gay
 Then rain makes them go away.
 I think that after all
 You'll be happier in the fall."

(NCSTD, January 24, 1936, Box 24, Folder 1)

Alternatively, a set of cartoon cells in comic book format could have been done for something that weaves a tale as complex as this fable. The students were given topics among several. To my knowledge, this is the only one that was written in the genre of poetry, which was also interesting, and tells me that this teacher gave the students not only choices in topic, but also choices in writing genre. This is very important, especially in the grades immediately before high school. Pairing word and image is a sound research-based literacy strategy as well.

The eighth grade students were also taken to a symphony concert on the campus of the University of New Mexico. In reading the diary entry for this community excursion, I noted that Dr. Tireman was in attendance, one of the only references to him I read in all the diaries of the SJTS. Another excursion was to Coronado School to watch the performance of a sixth grade puppet show. To my knowledge, these were the only two excursions for this grade level for the entire year, and at least one (the trip to the symphony) was exclusive to the music club students.

Other notes for the eighth grade curriculum included references to their Unit on Occupations (we did a similar career unit for our eighth graders at the school where I taught), and homework that involved the students learning to use the telephone to make formal inquiries, then report on what they had learned to the class. There was much in the way of writing, but no art-making activities noted at these grade levels. However, as discussed above, I believe at least one drawing (of Thomas Edison) was done as part of a seventh or eighth grade unit, and placed in the wrong folder. The seventh grade students (both levels) did participate in a visually-based activity called *Story About a Picture*, which was very similar to one I've conducted with my students many times, and is a recognized literacy strategy that offers students of all ability levels access to the core curriculum. The picture they were examining (and based on the teacher's description from her diary) was of a father and mother and two children, all together in the living room. The parents were watching while the children were dancing to radio music—so, the radio must also be in the picture. The students were to write and then share aloud their thinking about the picture. Two of my favorites were: "The room is clean, so the people are rich. The boy is not ashamed to dance with his sister" (NCSTD, 1935 – 1936, Box 24,

Diary 1). The next activity was an identification of words items in the picture that were unfamiliar to the students. These words then became their new vocabulary and spelling words. From the above-described picture, the students' new words included: davenport (my grandparents called their couch this also), upholstered, and easy chair. In particular the student who said that the people in the picture were rich because the room was clean, brought a personal connection for me. I used to think that my friends who had milk for dinner were rich, especially if the milk was served in glass glasses. I also thought people with fruit baskets with real fruit in them were rich, and I vowed that I would always have fresh fruit in a basket when I grew up. To my recollection, and that of my siblings, we never had fresh fruit except very occasionally. We did, however, get oranges in our Christmas stockings, so the value of fresh fruit stays with us to this day.

The eighth grade students took a test at the end of the school year called "Reading to Learn, Test I, Book II" (unsure if this was a standardized test). Students scored between 32 and 84 points out of a possible 100. From the list of student scores, this class of 41 had 34 who scored 50 or lower, with 11 in the 30th percentile range, and seven in the 40th percentile range. The median score was 54. The seventh grade (in Test II, Book I of the same test) had a median score of 73, but this was the high seventh grade only. I include these test scores because I find it significant that after six years of operation as a demonstration school, I believe the test scores (despite my belief that they are only one small part of a picture of a student's skill levels) were likely a disappointment to Dr. Tireman and to the teachers. The Detroit Reading Test scores were also provided for the seventh grade students, but this test had a different scoring system and points value, so there is no context on which to judge the scores, but the high score in the class was 14

and the low was 2. I will add, however, that according to the teacher's notes the students' test scores on the Detroit Reading Tests correlated to their class performance, something that, as a teacher, I found was often not the case with my eighth grade students. Often, this was due to the material on the test being vastly different than the curriculum maps we were instructed to use.

This particular teacher noted some of the funnier responses that students had on the tests and was dismayed that after their extensive unit on aviation, one of the students said that Columbus was responsible for developing aviation. One that I remember from one of my former students was that Luke Skywalker was the author of *Charlotte's Web*.

What is probably most notable—in a negative way—to me is that as the students advanced in age and grade level, at SJTS, they seemed to get more of what the Nambé teachers referenced as “seat work,” which was the work students were expected to complete individually when they had completed the class work. At SJTS, at least in the years the diaries were kept, and especially in the seventh and eighth grades, seat work took place during what seemed like a large portion of the school day and often involved completing worksheets or answers at the end of short readings in a multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, or true/false fashion. I did not see any real differentiation of instruction at this level despite their large discrepancies in reading scores. Even the teacher noted that the only real difference in the readings given to the students at the higher levels and those who were struggling was that the lower level readers got short stories that were “poorer quality.” I am now unsure if the students who read at a lower level got to participate in the fable reading and writing, which is unfortunate if true.

Another notable segregation of the lower level students at SJTS occurred with the eighth grade Portfolio Club, the objective of which was to read books, write reports on them, and then share the reports with other club members so that they might know of interesting books to read independently. While it was not specifically exclusionary in that no student was told he or she could not join the club, students had to volunteer to be in it. When I correlated the names of students in the club with their reading levels, no lower level students were in the club.

By School Year 1936 – 1937, it was clear that, especially at the higher grade levels, there was a much broader range of ages and ability groupings in one classroom at SJTS. One telling sign of this is the Promotions List provided in one of the diaries (confusion about the grade levels she taught and the possibility for anywhere from fourth grade to seventh grade are noted in the content list descriptions in the CSWR biographical information for this collection). The confusion over the grade levels taught by this teacher stems, in part, from her inclusion of students being retained in the low fourth grade, and low fifth grade, or promoted to any of the grades between fifth and seventh. It is my belief that she likely taught a “Special” class, and that this class was comprised of students at all these different grade levels. A sampling of the reasons for retention or promotion includes:

- Retained in low fourth. Large for his age but incapable of going on to fifth.
- Retained in low fourth. (I.Q. 54)
- Promoted to low seventh. Has spent two years in sixth. Slow but has made gain this year.
- Promoted to low seventh. (Size)

- Promoted to low sixth. Second year fifth grades.
- Promoted to high fifth. Doing nicely, but too timid to hold her own in sixth grade.
- Promoted to low sixth. Size, and two years in fifth grade.

(NCSTD, Spring 1937, Box 23, Diary 1)

The notations about students being promoted due to size, and already having completed two years in one grade, were common to a number of students. There were 38 student names on this promotion list, and considering the age and grade ranges, I find it nearly impossible that these students could have been receiving the kind of individual attention that was the aim of the “opportunity room,” as described by Bachelor (1991), and which was certainly noted by Dr. Tireman as his original intent.

On another sad note, this teacher’s diary contained a list of students under the following heading: “Scores of eighth Grade Pupils who have stated their intention of going on to ninth grade,” (NCSTD, Spring, 1937, Box 24, Diary 1) which in itself indicates that there was an option. Again, the test scores had no context, but ranged from 2 to 19. Of the 41 students listed, only half indicated an intention of even starting ninth grade.

The demise of San José Training School. I have the benefit of hindsight in terms of my recognition of some of the factors that would appear to make the demise of San José Training School predictable. That said, it was clear to me that the teachers did not know this would be the case because their diaries for the end of the school year 1936 – 1937, made no reference to it, and generally, teachers are kept out of the loop of decision-making, in any case. Bachelor (1991) surmised that one of the reasons Dr. Tireman decided to discontinue his direction of the school was because it had grown so

much over its seven years of operation as an experiment in curricular reform, and the population had become so transient, that it was no longer possible to measure its success or failure as a demonstration school. His reforms required vertical alignment of the curriculum, and students entering the school at higher grade levels from elsewhere would not have been schooled in the same manner as their peers who had been in the school throughout.

Dr. Tireman believed that the traditional school held no intrinsic value, according to Bachelor (1991), and that the only way a school could be valuable was in its interaction with the community and sensitivity to the community's specific and unique needs. Dr. Tireman may have felt that SJTS, was no longer meeting the needs of the community of San José when he asked for a meeting with a GEB representative in 1936 at the NEA Convention in New Orleans. Mr. Favrot (the GEB representative out of New Orleans) recalled, according to Bachelor, that Dr. Tireman and Dr. Nanninga (then dean of the College of Education at UNM) stated their belief that it was "desirable to discontinue the San José Training School as an experimental school" (p. 61) and that they wished to return the school to the control of Bernalillo County at the end of the school year, for the reasons noted by Bachelor, above. Drs. Tireman and Nanninga had no control over the enrollment issues (growth and transiency) because SJTS was funded, in part, by taxes, and as such, had to accept all students who lived within the district.

According to Bachelor, before the GEB could even respond, Cyrus McCormick had entered the picture and offered to largely fund the undertaking of a school based on the same premises as those at SJTS, but in the community of Nambé, north of Santa Fe. Most of Bachelor's reasoning where the demise of one school and the creation of another

read as sound, however, I, as the intrepid archival digger I have become, wanted to understand if that was the truth (if the truth could possibly be understood) because it seemed very coincidental to me that Cyrus McCormick would come around with money to spend and a belief in Dr. Tireman's dream of curricular reform just as Dr. Tireman was returning the school to the control of the county.

In the James Fulton Zimmerman Papers, there were two files with the name Nambé on them. Nambe Demonstration Experimental School 1937-40, (Box 5) contained more than a dozen letters dating from April, 1937 through October, 1942. The other, Nambe Community School 1941-42, had two letters from December, 1941 and January, 1942 (Box 6). All of this correspondence shed some light on many of the questions I had about the truth of the beginning and end of Nambé, but as regards the end of San José as an experimental school I am still left with questions, and there was no San José file in the Zimmerman collection. Additionally, this collection had not been catalogued when Bachelor (1991) wrote his book, so I was attempting to fill in what he could not know. Perhaps I will find my answers in the Tireman collection?

A letter from Cyrus McCormick to President Zimmerman in April of 1937 indicated his wishes for Nambé's school to come under the direction of the University and Dr. Tireman because he had that very morning visited San José and was so impressed. In the letter, Mr. McCormick expressed a wish for the "early fruition of the joint hopes of everyone with whom we have discussed the situation to effect at Nambé something resembling the remarkable work at San Jose" (Zimmerman, J. F., 1937-1940, C. McCormick to Zimmerman, April 29, 1937). So clearly, there were negotiations taking place while SJTS was still an ongoing venture. In my opinion, this excerpt, along

with the general tone of the letter in which he praised the accomplishments of the SJTS, read as though Cyrus McCormick was unaware that SJTS would no longer be operated by the University. Also, a letter from President Zimmerman to Mr. McCormick written just after the Board of Regents meeting of May 1, 1937, stated the following:

Dr. L. S. Tireman will represent the University in the matter of receiving this contribution and will confer with you at some date in the near future about the entire transaction.

I feel sure that the continuation of the San José Project throughout the State, and particularly at Nambé, will bring many beneficial results to the rural schools in this area... (Zimmerman, J. F., 1937–1940, Zimmerman to C. McCormick)

From this correspondence, I am left to believe that one of two things was taking place. Either, President Zimmerman was being deliberately left in the dark by Drs. Tireman and Nanninga (and perhaps, Cyrus McCormick), or President Zimmerman's suggestion about the "continuation of the San José Project" was a referent to the concept of the demonstration school, and not specifically to SJTS as an ongoing effort. There are indications, in the Board of Regent Minutes, and throughout the course of the teacher diaries I read, that Dr. Tireman was not, perhaps, as integral a part of the San José Project as he had originally intended. So perhaps he was making an effort to forge ahead without the blessing of President Zimmerman in advance. This, despite the fact that Dr. Zimmerman used Dr. Tireman's data to convince the GEB in New York to fund the project in the first place, and also allowed that it would be Dr. Tireman's curricular reforms that would be fine-tuned and implemented at the school.

Aside from the most broad of the concepts (the children's excursions within the community, the integration of charts, hands-on activities, and reading group levels at the early primary grades), it was apparent to me that much of what was being practiced at the SJTS did not meet the expectations originally set out by Dr. Tireman. Finally, a 17-person Board of Directors for the school, comprised primarily of politically-connected people, never meshed with everything I read about Dr. Loyd Tireman, the down-to-earth Iowan who believed in local control, and schools that were responsive to their individual community's needs.

Regardless, as the letter to Cyrus McCormick from President Zimmerman indicated, he basically handed control of the efforts at Nambé over to Dr. Tireman and Cyrus McCormick, who was himself, in the inner circle of the Republican party in New Mexico and nationally. From what I now know about Dr. Tireman, he was more than ready to prove that his curricular reforms could work given the right circumstances, and with his guidance and direction. Therefore, I believe the demise of the SJTS, in its genesis as an experimental school, was not only due to matters out of the control of Dr. Tireman, but also involved his political connection with Cyrus McCormick and others.

Data from Nambé Community School with Autoethnographic Interweavings

Like my presentation of the data for SJTS, I present here the information that is exclusive to NCS. However, there are comparisons drawn throughout (just as there were in the previous section), and occasional notes that pull in the parallels I found between my own experience and those of the people I studied in connection with the two experimental schools.

The village of Nambé and the Nambé Community School. As stated above, it was not likely sheer luck that allowed for Cyrus McCormick to come calling at the door of Dr. Loyd Tireman just as he was giving up on the experiment at San José. Regardless, as the story goes, in June of 1937, just as Dr. Tireman was informing the GEB that he was going to relinquish the University's control of San José back to Bernalillo County, he was approached by Cyrus McCormick, heir to the International Harvester fortune and resident of the village of Nambé about running the school in Nambé, which he found sorely lacking in the ways it was currently serving the community, and he offered to fund the efforts out of his own pocket. Thus, Dr. Tireman's next efforts at educational reform in New Mexico would continue in a small village north of Santa Fe, and perhaps one of the last places one would expect to become the seat of a progressivist movement of its sort, especially in era of the Great Depression.

With his personal fortune, and his connections to Washington D.C. and President Roosevelt's New Deal programs, set in place to alleviate the gripping hold of the Great Depression on millions of Americans, the NCS, both in concept and in fact, stood on more solid ground in its first days than SJTS ever did. There were, of course, additional reasons that the NCS stood a stronger likelihood of success—hindsight again privileging me to understand this. First, the community school as a concept was at least four decades-old by the time of Dr. Tireman's experiments. Dewey's experimental school out of the University of Chicago was started at the end of the nineteenth century and since that time, there had been many community school incarnations across the country from which Dr. Tireman might collect data (as he was wont to do) about the successes and failures of those previous attempts at progressivist reforms. Additionally, Dr. Tireman—despite

there being no indication that he ever admitted defeat, or questioned his own role in the failure of the San José experiment—had surely learned much from his first efforts at the former demonstration school near Albuquerque. While some of the factors that impacted the ultimate failure of San José as a demonstration school were certainly out of Loyd Tireman's control (i.e., the growth of the student population in the midst of his experiment that demanded vertical alignment, and the transiency of the student population generally), there were others that he learned by doing, as is true for all new efforts, no matter the person or the arena within which one is striking new ground.

One example of the manner in which Dr. Tireman improved surrounds the format and use of the teacher diaries. It is unknown whether he had any input at all as to the format of the diaries used by the teachers at SJTS, or even if it was his idea in the first place. The list of suggestions for the diaries that was sent from Marie Hughes to the teachers at SJTS is the only direct evidence of anyone directing the diaries at all. In any case, the organization of the teacher diaries at San José made them cumbersome, difficult to use, and time-consuming beyond what was necessary for the teachers. The set-up, as suggested by Principal Hughes was also difficult from the standpoint of anyone (like me) wishing to glean information from them as they were not written in a chronological fashion, but were instead organized by category. Additionally, at SJTS, the teacher diaries did not include dialogue between the writer-teachers and a mentor—either Principal Hughes, or Dr. Tireman. The inclusion of the dialogue in the diaries written at NCS made them vastly more useful, I imagine, to the teachers who wrote them, and certainly more informative to future archival researchers like myself. The dialoguing began from the first week at NCS.

An additional factor that likely influenced the potential for the success of NCS was timing. By 1937, the effects of the Great Depression had settled in on across the country. In New Mexico, a rural state, and in particular, small villages (like Nambé), the community was likely willing to accept the assistance of anyone who might be able to provide them some relief from the ravages that had befallen them. Among these impacts, poverty to a degree never seen before in the State of New Mexico, or the country as a whole was eating away at the lives of Americans. This poverty impacted everything in the lives of the people suffering at its hands, and little towns like Nambé with their already limited resources were hard-pressed to even begin to know how to tap into the resources that were being made available by the federal government through President Roosevelt's New Deal programs. When Dr. Tireman arrived in Nambé, with his ideas about turning their school into something more functional than it had been throughout its history, it was likely secondary in the minds of the community that their children would be better educated. The hope that the community school concept held included social services such as medical care through the provision of a County nurse, the salary of whom would be covered by Mrs. McCormick, Cyrus McCormick's wife.

When the teachers and Dr. Tireman arrived in Nambé in 1937, the people in the community were quite literally starving—nearly everyone in the village, young and old alike, were suffering devastating malnutrition to the extent that people were dying. At the time the school was turned over to Dr. Tireman and the University, roughly 70% of the families were receiving Relief in the form of minimal cash and/or food allowances intended to sustain them. It was not enough. While the village had been self-sufficient from an agricultural standpoint for centuries, the degradation of the land due to poor

cultivation practices, along with the dust storms of the early 1930s that stripped the top layers of the dry soil and sent it through the air all the way to the east coast in some cases, led to soil erosion that was devastating to crops, and to the people who relied on them for sustenance. Infant mortality was so high, in the earliest case studies completed by the teachers and the county nurse in their diaries, each family was noted with first the total number of children, followed by the number dead, and the number still alive.

Disease was also a ravaging impact of poverty, much of it totally preventable but for the unsanitary conditions that prevailed. The toilets in the village were a major cause for much of the contagion. Flies spread disease from the poorly planned outdoor toilets, and very few houses in the village had screens, so that through the course of summer, many diseases were spread by infested insects. Personal hygiene was also a problem as few people had running water, and the poverty was such that some families did not even have a bar of soap with which to wash themselves, or to clean their clothes. Additionally, one of the biggest contributors to disease in the village of Nambé surrounded sexual practices that were not hygienic, and which spread Venereal Disease (both syphilis and gonorrhea) not only between sexual partners, but among the children of persons who had contracted the disease, including the unborn babies of women who became pregnant and did not have prenatal care, let alone medical treatment for the disease. These babies, if they survived, were stricken with any number of related maladies, including some who were born without sight due to gonorrheal eye.

Dr. Tireman's community school concept was surely understood by Cyrus McCormick as offering potential help for the villagers in the most extreme need. He owned a ranch that was located on land adjoining the school's and he donated some of it

to the school for its use. As to the staffing of the school, Dr. Tireman and the Santa Fe County superintendent agreed that the staff needed to be “open-minded, familiar, and sympathetic with the problems of Spanish-speaking children... Members of the staff were requested to live in the community, for a community school would have been impossible with a commuting staff” (Tireman & Watson, 1943, p. 9). While teachers were not required to speak Spanish (and some did not), according to Bachelor (1991) part of the funding for at least the first year of the experiment at Nambé was derived from remaining GEB grant monies that had been promised for SJTS. Therefore, the necessity that the school at Nambé have a focus on bilingual education was part of the package. Originally, it was also stipulated that the teachers be experienced, but over time, Dr. Tireman came to decide that attitude trumped experience.

It was certainly a strong lot who agreed to move to the little village of Nambé, removed from the modern conveniences (like indoor plumbing) and the recreational opportunities to which they were all accustomed in order to take part in this next experiment. As to the selection of the principal, Dr. Tireman felt that the community should regard the principal as the leader and not be given any opportunity to go over her head to the director” (Tireman & Watson, p. 9). One teacher, it appears from the archival records, followed Dr. Tireman from San José to Nambé where she worked for an additional two years (which was originally one of the causes for confusion on the part of this researcher regarding the existence—or not—of two experimental schools within the collection thought to be only related to Nambé).

Whether the teachers understood fully how difficult their jobs, and their lives, would be in the circumstances that then existed in the community, is not known, but one

of them, along with the principal, Mary Watson, stayed for the entire five years of Nambé's running as a demonstration school. Also, Frank Angel (the only male) stayed for four years and likely would have remained during the last year of the school's existence had it not been for the onset of World War II, during which time he, like many of the men in the village, left to serve in the military. This teacher's first teaching position was in fact at NCS, and after returning from military service, he earned his doctorate and became a noteworthy professor of education at both the University of New Mexico and Highlands University. He wrote many publications, most of which were dedicated to the education of students for whom English was a second language, and for whom culture is often misunderstood generally.

In the first two years of the school's operation, most of the teachers who were among the original faculty chose to stay. As time went by, however, some of the teachers, whom I would get to know through their diaries, would be missing from the teaching rosters in the following school year. Mrs. Watson, herself, noted that it was a difficult life in Nambé in terms of the lack of opportunities for a social life, or shopping, or even to see a movie. Since most of the staff was female, some of them left Nambé after marrying, and perhaps left the teaching profession entirely (as often occurred during that time). All of that said, however, the teachers who worked at NCS, generally, showed tenacity, empathy, and a willingness to work long hours, sacrificing a personal life for the students in their charge. More than one of the entries in the diaries of Mary Watson (of which there were four years in the collection) spoke to the long hours being worked by the teachers. She always marveled, and indicated her appreciation. It was not uncommon for a teacher who began the day at 7 a.m. to work until 9 or 10 in the evening. In addition to

a longer-than-average school day, all of them were involved in after-school activities that were either directly student-related (e.g., sewing or cooking clubs, music lessons, or PTA meetings), or activities involved in improving the well-being of the community (e.g., home visits, and work surrounding the maintenance of the land around the school), just to name a few. Never, was there a complaint from a teacher in his or her diary about any of their work; on the contrary, most would end a long day with a lengthy diary entry expressing the gratification of accomplishment in all manner of work for the day.

Beyond Dr. Tireman, Mary Watson, and the faculty of teachers at Nambé, there were many people involved in its growth and success over the years. Some of these included the young men of the CCC, and the National Youth Administration (NYA), which was part of the WPA, agents and representatives of the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), the Santa Fe County Health Department, the Forest Service, the Santa Fe County Board of Education, and the General Education Board (the Rockefeller philanthropic organization out of New York), and those are merely the organizations that come to mind as I write this. There were also many community members, without whom the school's physical space would not have grown to encompass a woodworking shop that was utilized by the entire community, and may never have had electricity. In fact, during at least part of the first year, there was no electricity at the school. Even the water used by NCS was given to the school by a neighbor whose well was near the boundary with the school. That same neighbor also provided affordable housing for the teachers and was involved, along with many of the other village residents, in the creation of more.

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA), was more active than any such organization I have ever known. The members not only stayed directly involved in

whatever the school needed, but they were the force behind fundraising—no small task in a community that was as poor as Nambé. Because of the PTA, electricity came to the school, dances were held for the students, fabric and other material purchased for the sewing classes, and much more of what was needed and not covered by other sources was provided.

One of the most important contributions to the school that would not have happened without the work of the PTA surrounded their fundraising and other assistance in order to start a hot lunch program at the school that was desperately needed. The lunch room was staffed by local residents whose salaries were paid by the WPA. After its addition, the lunch program provided what was likely the most nutritious meal many of the students would eat in a day. Vegetables and other contributions were made by all of the residents for the lunch program, and Mrs. Watson kept scrupulous notes about the fresh and preserved items contributed by each family. Had that food run out, the program would not have been allowed to continue as its funding was limited to payment of the kitchen staff's salaries. Even the heat in the room where the students ate came courtesy of a community member who started a fire in the stove every morning before school started. The hot lunch program was a source of pride to the extent that it was worthy of a photograph, but many smiling faces make its use restricted in this dissertation.

As to the community itself, the school had as one of its central missions, the goal of improving the health of the members of the community within which it existed. Community schools were places in which other social services were often provided, and as stated previously, at the NCS, the Santa Fe County Nurse whose salary was paid by Cyrus McCormick's wife, was located at the school. The nurse took care of the students

in the school, administered life-saving vaccinations to students and community members, provided information to families on nutrition, advised the women about pre-natal care, and took on the many contagious diseases that were prevalent in the community—venereal disease, impetigo, and measles to name three. She also visited homes regularly and assisted the women in safe food preservation practices (nearly every home in the village had a pressure cooker). Due to the extreme need and the hardship of taking people to the clinic in Santa Fe for pre-natal care, or more comprehensive treatments (using Mrs. McCormick's car for transportation), the school took advantage of the federal programs available and eventually helped the village to build a clinic of its own.

And it was thusly, that the NCS came to have what I personally feel certain must have been a lasting impact on the community it served. The accomplishments of those involved with the school, has greatly impacted the way I think about the idea of one person making a difference. I have come to understand (through this archival research, and my own autoethnographic explorations) that one person can save lives, and change the world.

The diaries of Mary Watson. I begin with Mary Watson, the principal at NCS for the entire five years of its incarnation as a community school. Her diaries were so thorough they are a good way to set the stage for a summary of what was done at the school over the first four years (some of the diaries were missing from the NCSTD). As the leader, Mary Watson was what I think of as a teacher's principal. She was supportive of her staff, willing to take on any job that needed to be done both inside the school and out in the community, and she was kind to the students as well. Along with some of the teachers, she walked through the village in the first days of the school's operation,

introducing herself, and inquiring about the children who should have been in school but were not. Within weeks, enrollment was at nearly 100% of the school-aged children in the village, and average daily attendance (ADA) remained high throughout her tenure—hovering in the 96 to 98 percent range usually, and only dropping during the winter when students did not have proper clothing to walk in inclement weather, or were ill. One such example is from January, 1939, when despite repeated storms throughout the month, and many illnesses going around the community, the ADA was over 97%, with every student in attendance on every day they were not ill, according to Mary Watson's diaries.

As well, Mrs. Watson was a hands-on principal, and taught classes when a teacher was ill or whenever it was necessary. She also put herself in charge of the remedial reading program for the younger students, expressing exasperation at what she saw as a lack of interest in the lower performing students on the part of some of her teachers. She was also very funny! I laughed out loud more than once as I read her words, and some of the exchanges between her and Dr. Tireman. Since the boxes containing Mary Watson's diaries were among the first I read (I went numerically through the 26 boxes and hers were in two of the first three), I had not yet figured out that it was Dr. Tireman with whom she was communicating. In fact, I did not even know at that point that the entire program was a result of Dr. Tireman's work (or who he was, for that matter); all of that would be teased out as I continued my research, and then found the Bachelor (1991) and Tireman & Watson (1943) texts. So, when I look back at my research journal and my typed notes, it's funny to see my ponderings over the "mystery writer," with whom she was communicating. Regardless, it is clear to me now that NCS was much more successful than it might have been because of its leader. Dr. Tireman chose well.

In the third paragraph of the very first diary of Mary Watson's that I read (they were mislabeled, so I read them out of order), I became aware that consideration was being given to students with exceptionalities. It was for this reason that I opted to read all of her diaries thoroughly, because initially I was going to just skim hers, thinking the principal would have less of the information I was seeking than would a teacher. She discussed the hiring of a teacher for the "Special" room as being "for children who haven't made 'normal progress'" (NCSTD, February 8, 1939, Box 2, Diary 1), and was compassionate and reflective as she noted her concern for those students... that they not be embarrassed because of something out of their control, and adding that the other students were "more fortunate," instead of referencing them as more intelligent. Of a child who was eight years-old and in first grade for the third year, Mrs. Watson was very observant and sought advice through her diary on how she might help him. She had clearly spent time with him, because she was aware that try as he may, he read backwards (starting at the end of each sentence), and that when she watched his eyes as he tried to read, they "flitted" from one word to another and in no particular order. She then added that his memorization skills and retention of what he had learned were both excellent. I noted these two examples because they made clear to me from the first days in the archives that not only did students with disabilities *attend* NCS, but they were *attended to* as well. This was important, since I understood that most all of them came to school with disability attributes, either from illness, poverty, neglect, or all of these. These attributes ranged from intellectual developmental disability, to physical (a number referenced as blind, or nearly so), to mental and emotional disorders—the latter, the most common.

Because so many of the children, regardless of age, were unable to read at all, or read well below grade level, especially in the first years of the school, Mary Watson did not let that deter her, insisting that for those who were unable to read, an emphasis on oral expression could still be present. She worked alongside all the teachers on this objective and allowed no student to be left out of the many and regular performances that were put on at PTA meetings, for the many visitors to the school, and during holiday and other special pageants put on by the students. This was probably also aided by the daily singing in which the students participated.

When she visited the classrooms, she was very pleased, and noted in her diary the many different activities in which students were participating at the same time—differentiation of instruction. At the lowest primary grades, students were assigned different readers, depending on their levels, working either independently, in small groups, or with the teacher, depending on their needs. This practice of flexible grouping, and differentiation of reading materials and activities continued throughout all of the grade levels at NCS, and Mrs. Watson was clearly aware of what was going on in each room, noting the materials being used, and the amount of time being devoted to particular lessons, as well as the response of the teachers and children to them throughout her diaries.

Also in the first diaries I read, I came to understand that arts-based activities were not just extraneous additions to reading and writing, but were as important. Mary Watson discussed the beautification of the school walls by the students. She noted that she was seeing progress in the students' understanding about "what makes a good picture," adding that "we should begin to organize our thinking in terms of visual material that

should be produced” (NCSTD, [n.d.], Box 2, Diary 1). She also suggested in a separate entry that it would be helpful to have the assistance of someone more technically schooled in such subjects. And, the artistic endeavors in which the children participated were not just visual. Singing was a regular part of the day for everyone, and in one exchange between Mrs. Watson and Cyrus McCormick, it was clear that he had anticipated providing the school with some Christmas music and a phonograph in order that they could prepare for the Christmas program, but when Mary Watson submitted a list requesting a larger variety of music and specific records, he complied, adding that he liked her list better. (Both Dr. Tireman and Mr. McCormick were often somewhat flirtatious in their communications with Mary Watson, and both inclined to comply with much if not all of what she requested.) After she attended a conference of principals in St. Louis, Missouri, Mary Watson wrote extensively in her diaries about the two items that “were repeatedly brought out.” These included the child being always more important than the skill being taught, and that all teachers wanted to teach with more artistic activities, but needed guidance in how to do that.

During the first year of the school, Mary Watson attained enough help from the community members and the “boys of the NYA” as she liked to reference them, that the building of the shop on the school grounds was completed in short order. On one day alone, she recorded that 750 adobe bricks had been made, and that more rocks had been hauled to the grounds than she thought could be done over a much longer period of time. A nursery school was also added during the first year, though Mrs. Watson and the school’s nurse (Miss Casias) were struggling with attendance because of ongoing and chronic diseases that kept the children at home. In the winter of 1937/1938, these

included chicken pox, and whooping cough. Another phenomenon that was recorded in Mary Watson's diaries, and that was medically related, surrounded the ongoing number of children who were undergoing tonsillectomies, especially throughout the winter. By the end of the diaries, it seemed as though there must be no child left in Nambé who still had his or her tonsils.

Regarding the work of soil conservation, most if not all of the photographs that were included in the NCSTD were included in Mary Watson's diaries, and she maintained scrupulous watch over the trees that were planted, the rock terraces created by students and staff containing grasses and flowers, and ensured that all were cared for, assigning specific trees to each community member who was in charge of its care during the time when school was not in session. Students were schooled in caring for the land from the first grade, and each year's curriculum contained a different level of attendance and specific focus area with regard to this dire issue in the community. There are some excellent photos that show the transformation of the land around the school. But, an example of how ravaged the land actually was, along with an example of a drawing of various vegetable root systems completed by a student can be seen in Figure 29, below. This student, it should be noted, had low skills generally, and had shown no previous interest in school, according to Mary Watson, until he was exposed to both art, and natural science. The photo illustrates both the curriculum as it surrounded land management, and the state of the surrounding hillside, stripped of vegetation due to soil erosion, which can also be seen in one of the plates in Figure 33 in the pages that follow.

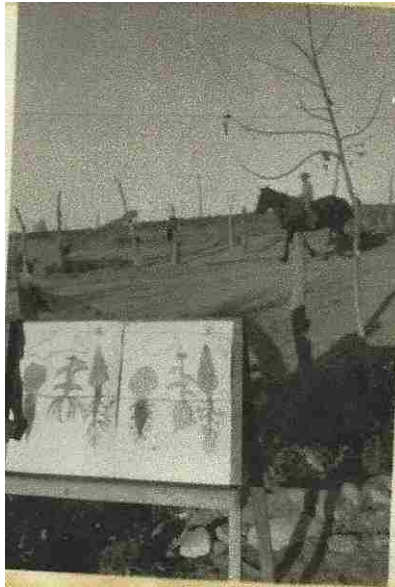


Figure 29. Student drawing of vegetable root systems, with ravaged land of Nambé in back. (ca. 1937)

The work of the school became known to many beyond the community thanks to its principal, Dr. Tireman, and the McCormicks. Mary Watson regularly attended conferences both in New Mexico and beyond. Additionally, the students practiced letter-writing and eventually had an ongoing and interesting exchange with some students in Australia (which was initiated by Mary Watson). Ultimately, the exchange moved from letters only, to gifts, and eventually seeds were exchanged, although some of these were rejected by the postal services for various reasons. There were also visits from many school principals, groups of teachers, supervisors, and others interested in the work going on at NCS. This interest only grew with each passing year, so it was a sad day when I realized there was no diary for Mary Watson's fifth year. As well, it was clear from correspondence that the friendship between Mary Watson and the McCormicks (especially Mrs. McCormick) grew quite close over the years that NCS was in operation.

Only three things seemed to regularly frustrate Mary Watson, if her diaries are an accurate depiction. First, there were, occasional unannounced visits by women connected

with the WPA, usually driving an expensive new vehicle and wearing expensive clothing. Mary Watson would comment on the waste of money that went into the administration of the program as evidenced by these items (cars and clothing), and she became incensed when the women would criticize the food being offered to the students, suggesting that they might have “a rich soup, cocoa, fruit, and cookies everyday” (NCSTD, April 15-19, 1940, Box 2, Diary 4), with no awareness of the impoverished state of the community, and the limited funds of the school. The second item that regularly frustrated Mrs. Watson is as age old as public schooling itself... the janitor! She waxed eloquent about the uselessness of the janitor throughout her tenure, but most often with her dry humor as her means of venting.

The final frustration for Mary Watson, I found, was the behaviors of some of the members of the community toward school staff. She made great strides in this regard over the course of time, but said that she often felt like a failure. Some of these issues surrounded what was referenced simply as “race,” and was an allusion to the fact that most of the people connected with the school were Anglo. Mary Watson understood that the school’s efforts to develop strong citizens and leadership was sometimes misunderstood and viewed as the white people coming in and trying to tell the locals a better way to be. She felt that she could do better in terms of her dealing with the matter, but wasn’t sure how that would look. After one such reference in her diary, Dr. Tireman responded: “The more we strive to develop initiative & leadership the more we must expect conflicts. That is no doubt why despots prefer not to educate their subjects. Better have sores open to the sunlight than hidden... they may heal more quickly” (NCSTD, May 9, 1940, Box 2, Diary 4).

Certainly Mary Watson was not perfect. Especially in the last of her diaries, it was clear that she was tired. The diary entries were less often written daily, the language was a little harsher, and her frustrations with ongoing staffing issues were showing. As well, it is my opinion that she was worn down from the number of funerals she attended over the years, commenting in her later diaries about how many PTA meetings were cancelled due to yet another death, and writing eloquently about how her mind would sometimes wander as she attended yet another funeral—especially those for the babies in the community. I would have loved to have met her, though. She came across as someone with whom I'd love to have a cup of coffee and laugh at the ridiculousness of the expectations thrown at teachers and principals by those outside of a school's daily operations. My own experience (as a teacher) with several principals includes only one who was supportive of both me and the students with whom we worked. The last principal with whom I worked was so abusive I considered leaving the profession entirely. There was no Mary Watson in my professional world, which is very unfortunate.

I am not sure why her last diary was not part of the collection (but few from the last year actually were). I do not believe, however, that she was aware that the school would end as an experiment in five years, as she more than once spoke to the need to develop a more long term plan (once mentioning a ten- and fifteen-year set of objectives).

The diaries, generally. The teacher and principal diaries for the Nambé project are elaborate and as noted previously, evolved into dialogue journals between the diary authors and Dr. Tireman, who wrote notes of encouragement, validated teaching practices, answered questions, and praised accomplishments on a regular basis through each diary. These diaries, and the student work samples which were also included,

confirmed what I learned from Mary Watson's diaries, which were read first—that art played a central role in literacy teaching and learning, that the curriculum was based in the local needs and interests of the community, and that there existed an ongoing and rich reciprocity between and among the students, the faculty at the school, and the members of the community. As previously stated, because of the hours I spent reading these oversized, hand-written, and eloquent diaries, looking at the drawings made by students and the photos that helped me to better understand the words I was reading, I walked away feeling as though I had conducted open-ended interviews with these teachers over. I especially got to know well those who stayed for several years, or throughout the entire experiment. It is as if they said to me: *Let me explain that further. I'll tell you about that child and we can look at some of her work together. Let me share something about that child's home life that might allow you to know him better. Let's look at the mural that class created for that unit so you might see their vision of that lesson.*

As was noted in the introduction to the archival data set, which encompasses the entirety of the collection contained under the title Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries (MSS 306 BC), while the diaries and records produced by the San José teachers contained more student drawings, the records produced by the teachers of Nambé contained more rich description of arts-based activities, of attention being paid (and in what manner it was) to students with disabilities who were part of the classroom, and of the interactions between and among the staff of NCS and the community members. There were also more photographs of Nambé, thanks to both Mary Watson, and the Tireman and Watson (1943) text. A few of the photos are included in this work. At the outset, I was extremely disappointed that there were not as many drawings or student art project

samples that I could touch and look at as closely for NCS as there were for the SJTS. Because of the richness of the teacher diaries, however, I looked forward, every day to finding more, to teasing out every detail, and to writing in my research journal not only what I found, but also moments of connection between the lives of these people who came so long before me, and my own personal experience of the world, of poverty and hunger, of school, and of the people who made me want to get out of bed in the morning when I was a girl. Those people, with the exception of my grandma, were all connected to school. They offered me opportunities to express myself in writing and through artistic activities, some of them sat beside me so I would not be alone at lunch; they cared to whatever extent they were able, just like the teachers at NCS did for their students. I'd like you to get to know some of them here.

The curriculum and objectives for NCS. First, as to the consideration of the students' and community's needs when designing a school's curriculum, I will borrow Dr. Tireman's analogy in which the curriculum of a school and the legend of the beds of Procrustes are aptly compared. According to the legend, there was a robber named Procrustes who lived near a river and who used armed forces to collect tolls from everyone who needed to cross it. Because there was no other crossing point for many miles, travelers paid Procrustes' toll, except when they had no money, in which case, Procrustes would put them up for the night in his dungeon, and they would sleep on one of his beds. The beds were famous because they could be made to fit every traveler perfectly. Those who were too tall for the bed had whatever parts extended beyond its borders chopped off. Those who were shorter than the bed's length would have heads and feet tied and be stretched to the bed's dimensions.

Dr. Tireman's version of the legend substituted the word *curriculum* for the *beds of Procrustes*. That is, he saw the students as the poor travelers without toll money, forced to go to school, and learn everything in the same manner, the right order, and in the established method for doing so. They must *fit* the curriculum. He asserted that in some cases, the student found to be capable of more may skip a grade, but that being advanced was no guarantee of escape from "performing piffling tasks which afford no challenge or stimulation" (Tireman & Watson, 1943, p. 10). He suggested further that after many years of being bored and unchallenged, the advanced student loses all desire to "exert himself for the sheer joy of achievement..." (Tireman & Watson, p. 11).

At the other end of the spectrum, and also doomed to the beds of Procrustes as analogized by Dr. Tireman, are the students who do not fit because they are not in possession of the necessary tools to achieve academically. This student, according to Dr. Tireman, does not "learn quickly from books" but, may be at his best "on the playground or fields, he may be a fair workman with his hands, but abstract knowledge is not his portion" (Tireman & Watson, p. 11), but he too is forced to sit all day and attempt to learn within the confines of the routine as it has been set up. This student, according to Dr. T. (as I refer to him when I am most fond of what he is saying, which is not always), exists in an "intellectual fog," and if he is lucky, there is a story that goes to his own life experience that comes up occasionally, or there is something said in a language he understands, or he is allowed to participate in an activity alongside the other students in the class. But, primarily, he sits and the others in the class learn what he does not. He further asserted that many teachers fail this child, but when they do it is viewed by a majority as the natural expectation for *children like that*. "No criticism is attached to her

when four or five ‘dumb’ children are retained for a second year in the grade” (Tireman & Watson, p. 11). Dr. T. noted further that the situation is exacerbated when the child speaks a language other than the one for which the curriculum was originally designed, and then drew again, the analogy to the curriculum in a traditional school setting as “a fixed Procrustean bed to which all must conform” (Tireman & Watson, p. 13).

The reality in the community of Nambé was that unlike many communities, including San José, most people did not move to or away from it. Most families who lived there, stayed there. At the time the school opened, there was only one example of a student who had gone off to college that I read about, and only several examples of newcomers (one a Japanese artist who was taken by the government to an interment camp in 1942). Most people had no plans for college, and some not even high school. But the parents, some of whom had gone off to work in agriculture in California on a seasonal basis, saw that the world was changing and they wanted more for their children. Their many letters included in the teacher diaries expressed a great hope that their children would go to high school, and believed that a mastery of English would be central to their success.

Because most families still grew their own food—and most not successfully enough to last them through the winter in those first years—it was decided that one of the school’s top priorities must be the teaching of sound soil practices for the future (some of which was discussed in relation to Mary Watson’s diaries). This part of the curriculum would be inclusive of improved planting practices, better use of the irrigation provided by the local ditch system, the tackling of ongoing problem of soil erosion, and educating the students and community in the best general uses of all of the resources available to them.

Additionally, and equally important, priority would be given to the health of the community's residents. As to how meeting these needs would look in practice, Dr. Tireman turned directly to the community and asked them what they wanted it to be, reassuring them when he did so that their children would be taught to think in a way that would be applicable to whatever path they chose for their lives. He also reassured these parents that their children would be the center of everything at the school. In this manner (school and parents planning together), nine principles were drawn up with regard to designing the content to be taught. I paraphrase them here, but believe them to be important for any reader to understand the school's main objectives from the outset.

- The school would minister to the needs of the community;
- It would discover and use the community's resources, incorporating them into the classrooms (these resources to include the *people* of the community);
- It would make use of every available outside service agency; the starting point of everything in the curriculum would begin with Nambé and move out from there, so that what the students were learning would begin with the familiar first, before moving to the unknown;
- The school could not and would not attempt to teach everything, but would instead put a priority on "social utility";
- The expectation of "reasonable proficiency" in literacy and math, would be in place, but it was hoped that students who came to the school would learn to read and speak Spanish as well;

- Students would be allowed the time necessary for planning, discussing, and thinking (flexibility in the schedule);
- Since there may exist some deficiencies in the curriculum that would be useful for students to know, they would be provided reading lists in order to attain some of that knowledge independently; and
- The curriculum would be flexible in terms of the units studied, so that it could meet each group of students where they were.

It was further acknowledged (between and among Dr. Tireman and the community members) that the expectations for some students (referenced as “retarded in school work,” or “overage” most frequently by Dr. Tireman) would likely not be enough that they would be prepared to do the kind of work that the local high school required, but that they would be taught to the extent they were able to learn and that what they would learn would be useful to their lives and, perhaps, even be interesting. While not specifically referenced in the principles, creative expression was integral to the curriculum and was often the subject of dialogue between Dr. Tireman and the teachers and is discussed above in connection with Mary Watson’s diaries, and throughout the data reported for NCS. Creative expression was also included as one of seven areas on which the children were assessed in the template included by the seventh and eighth grade teacher, as well.

At Nambé, the inclusion of arts-based activities was an integral part of the village lifestyle, if the diaries are any indication. Students learned English, especially in the lower grades, by singing mnemonic devices to learn new material, and again at every PTA meeting, there was a program that included singing—at first by the students, but later by everyone. As the community members became more comfortable with the

meetings, there were also instrumental performances by local persons, and dramatic presentations for parents depicted what they were learning in school, and were often culturally based. These were usually presented by students who volunteered and were performed in both English and Spanish.

Reciprocal relationships were important to the planning of the curriculum and became more apparent and deeper almost immediately, by and through the inclusion of arts-based activities. Bachelor (1991), in fact, credited the little school and its interactions with the community for the revival of the Spanish Colonial arts traditions that were being lost to the era and nationalist thinking. In fact, he referenced this revival as one of the biggest successes of NCS. According to my research, every child, at every grade level and age, was given an opportunity to experiment with one or all of the traditional art forms that could be taught by community members. Just a few of these art forms included working with wood, tin, leather, and weaving, and were a way for the community and its artisans to become immediately involved with the school. He also believed that the McCormicks were very instrumental in this revival of the local and traditional art forms. He pointed out that they lived in the village of Nambé, and at the time, there was a “nostalgic desire to preserve Spanish village life. ...they joined Mary Austin and legions of other transplanted New Mexicans who imagined they saw in Hispanic rural life and art something that needed to be saved from urbanized and industrialized America” (p. 71). Therefore, in my opinion, it was likely the combination of Dr. Tireman’s strong belief that a school should be non-traditional, and serve whatever purpose the local community found relevant, and the McCormicks’ desire to save local art and traditions as part of that

process, that led to creative endeavors being much more central and embedded within the mission and actual practices of NCS than they appeared to be at the SJTS.

As the relationships began to grow, the communication became more open as to what each side of this venture was hoping to achieve. So it was really after the school was already fully-functioning that Dr. Tireman and Mary Watson translated those desires into classroom activities and units of instruction for each grade level.

As plans were being made for the curriculum, and the community was being consulted as to its needs and desires, it became quickly apparent to everyone involved that this would be no traditional school. A favorite quote from Dr. Tireman sums up the plans broadly and eloquently. “Here was no bowing down to the familiar formal curriculum. Books no longer occupied the sole place in the learning process. Other means of learning were recognized. *This school should not stand aloof, gathering its robes tightly about her to avoid the common touch. The education of the hand and heart, as well as the brain, were recognized* [emphasis added] (Tireman & Watson, 1943, p. 21). And the journey began.

I would like to make a disclaimer of sorts, here. I thought, at first, to include the names of the teachers at Nambé in this part of the report of my research. After all, they were named by Dr. Tireman, along with their tenure at the school in the book he wrote with Mary Watson (which was why I used her name). However, I have opted not to do so, just as I did with the SJTS. This will insure that I hold fast to the consent form I signed at the beginning of this archival document search, which in part, dictates that I not identify anyone by name who is mentioned in the diaries, as it may be a potential invasion of privacy to living individuals. It is unlikely that many (if any) of the teachers

are still alive, but the students, may very well be. Therefore, I will continue with my use of teacher references by grade (which is sometimes, a little awkward, but I did not want to create pseudonyms). When diary excerpts are used that make specific reference to a community member or student by name, I use the person's initials.

The data for NCS. Since Dr. Tireman had already designed the methods for San José that would remain in place at Nambé, I will not force my reader to be instructed, once again, in the pedagogical practices common between the two schools.

As with the SJTS, children who had not been exposed to English at home attended the pre-first grade before moving on to first grade, learning in the nine-month school year, the important English vocabulary that would offer them the potential for success in school. The pre-first grade teacher was the only one (according to Tireman & Watson, 1943) who stayed with Nambé Community School for the entire five years of its existence. She, therefore, provided a welcome stability for the young children of the community who attended the school, already knowing her as a part of their lives. Her diary during the first year of the school's operation (the only of hers in the collection) was very thorough and included stories about interactions with many of the older community members as well.

Dr. Tireman had distinct ways of communicating his pleasure (or displeasure) with teachers in the ways they were communicating, and what material they were including in their diaries, though this was not apparent to me after reading the dialogue between him and Mary Watson, for whom he was always supportive, and respectful. He indicated to this particular teacher that what she was writing was not what he wanted to read, yet did not say why that was so, or what exactly he was looking for but still, she

persevered. I include some exemplary exchanges between Dr. Tireman and this pre-first grade teacher both because her writing serves to show the reciprocity between the teachers and community members, but also because I found the dialogue to be not in keeping with the way Dr. Tireman generally responded to the teachers. He was considered a taskmaster by many, according to Bachelor (1991), and he certainly came across that way with this particular teacher, with whom he clearly had a problem of some sort. One early entry [*n.d.*] follows:

I met with Mr. J. O. and he was certainly glad about the school. He said that his children were so interested that the days seemed short. Last year these children did not want to come to school. Especially the older children [*sic*]. Somehow or other they disliked school. This year I see a great change in them. Mr. O. complimented the teachers very highly. I saw T., his older boy with a big smile on his face. Mr. O. is very cooperative and a regular visitor of the school.

Many of the big boys that last year didn't take any interest in school work and activity. I see them enjoying baseball, and other outside games. I also hear much English among the older children which proves that the teachers are emphasizing in speaking English all the time. (NCSTD, Fall, 1937, Box 19, Diary 1)

In response, Dr. Tireman wrote (and I added no punctuation or emphasis): “No! Keep to your room. What do you do that relates to the community?” I don't know what more he was expecting as regards that particular entry's relationship to the community. Those two paragraphs alone were more detailed and incisive than almost any I read from San José,

and many from the other Nambé teachers. Not only was this pre-first grade teacher working closely with her own students, but she was showing the ways she interacted and observed others in the community for whom she had no professional responsibility (in terms of teaching). I got angry on her behalf when I read that response. Not only was this diary entry indicative of interactions within and beyond this teacher's classroom (and she did, indeed, despite his reprimand, report on the lessons she was doing in her classroom, inclusive of all of the required methods—charts, drawing, word identification, playground activities, naps, etc.), but she also showed regular and natural interaction with many members of the community.

Another particularly interesting exchange involved a conversation she had with a village elder in which he told her that as recently as five years prior (to 1937) there were disputes over the land between the Spanish farmers in the village and the Indians in the Pueblo, and that the result was that many of the farmers had lost their land because they did not have proper documentation to prove that they had purchased it. She proposed, in her diary, that the older students be taught about legal documentation for land purchases so that they could, in turn, teach their parents at home. Dr. Tireman responded “good idea,” which at that point in the diary was one of the only positive (almost) comments that he had made to this teacher. Then, in response to an entry on October 12, 1937, Dr. Tireman responded with questions, asking her what the school could do to help, and also what the community could do to help the school's curriculum. He suggested that “each teacher should concentrate on this problem from the standpoint of her work” (NCSTD, October 12, 1937, Box 19, Diary 1). This was in conflict with the principles referenced

above and everything I read in all sources that everyone should work together for the joint benefit of each person.

Undeterred, this teacher continued to speak to what she believed was important in her diary. Following the above-referenced reminder that she should communicate about the problems as they pertained to “her” work, she suggested that the teachers needed to communicate with the residents so that they didn’t feel criticized, especially where issues of health and hygiene were concerned. Impetigo, ringworm, and rashes of various other types were big problems according to this teacher and, regardless of Dr. Tireman’s suggestion that she basically mind her own business, she was using the hectograph to produce information for the families to help them to know how to care for their ailments. For anyone who may be interested, I looked up what a hectograph was and learned that it was a gelatin duplicator that used special ink in a pan of gelatin, and was invented by Mikhail Alisov in Russia in 1869. Since *hecto* means 100, one preparation of the gelatin and ink made roughly 100 copies. (I found instructions and a video from the University of Iowa online, and plan to do this since it can be done with regular ink pens.) After reading that diary entry, I checked the content list and diary cover to verify that this was indeed the pre-first grade teacher, and not the nurse. I cited these examples for this one teacher, because it was representative of the great degree to which all of the teachers were this involved in the community, and became more so as the years went by. Their diaries bring to life that community involvement.

The fact that the pre-first grade teacher was the only one who stayed with the school for five years was one way of standing up to him, as Bachelor (1991) suggested was the way Dr. Tireman often deemed them worthy, but there were no comments in her

diary in response to his harsh tone, which was not the case with some of the other teachers. The pre-first grade teacher at NCS was a very caring person, not only to the community members, but most especially to the students in her class. Her diary indicated that her activities and methods were designed to meet the curriculum that had been established for the pre-first grade, which included: emphasis on acquiring English vocabulary of 500 – 750 words, and units inclusive of relationships at home and school, the study of animals and how things grow in the garden. But she also wrote many pages about conversations she had with students and their families that indicated her understanding of their limited resources and other challenging life situations they faced.

From personal experience, I can say that this level of empathy is not common. It is difficult for people, in my experience, to share concern of the personal experiences of others directly with them, especially when it comes to issues of poverty. In Nambé, many of the villagers did not benefit from the relief programs that were put in place as part of the New Deal. Some of this was due to their unfamiliarity with the means to do so, but much was also a result of their rural location. Even today, rural residents often have difficulty taking advantage of programs that are at the ready disposal of urban dwellers who have available public transportation to enroll in them, assistance through non-profit organizations that supplement them, and more people in their immediate environment who might be able to help them, generally. As well, people in rural communities do not have as many employment opportunities and as was noted earlier, when NCS first began its work in the village of Nambé, over 70% of the population was receiving some minimum monetary or nutritional relief, but there were few jobs. In my own family, the qualification for services such as Medicaid and food stamps, only came with the life-

sapping poverty that accompanied my father's unemployment, or severe under-employment.

So, I know of what I speak when I recognize that this teacher of the pre-first grade had the kind of caring and concern for her students that changed lives. She was especially cognizant of the pain inherent in the labeling of students who struggled. One of her diary entries dealt with her distress over the fact that some of the children in her class were "pronounced dumb last year," and she was working to rectify that. This was a little confusing to me since it was the first year of the school's operation under Dr. Tireman and UNM. She was also someone who made references to events at the school in years previous, so I came to believe that she may have been someone who worked at the school in its previous incarnation, which could have been the reason that Dr. Tireman seemed to have issues with her that he did not with most of the other teachers. Regardless of Dr. Tireman's seeming displeasure however, the teacher's diary had many pieces of correspondence between herself and parents, that went to her supportive and nurturing presence in the school and the deep respect for her that was held by them. I, therefore, found it curious that there was only one diary for this teacher and that it ended rather abruptly on May 9, 1938.

As students progressed through the lower primary grades at NCS, just as in SJTS, they were taught literacy using strategies that included: language experience stories, reading the room, provisions always for a literacy-rich environment, word walls (referenced as bulletin boards), wordless picture books (often created by the older students for the younger ones), picture analysis, and regular ongoing opportunities for creative expression throughout. Of course the community excursions looked much

different, and therefore, the charts the students used to learn and the drawings they made looked different as well. In Nambé, an excursion might be a trip next door to the McCormicks to see Mrs. McCormick's chickens, or a visit to a local apple orchard. Regardless, that interaction with the community was ongoing and rich.

With health and land management as the decided priorities, each grade level had these two themes as guiding tools for the curriculum. In first grade the garden studies in which students had participated in pre-first grade were expanded so that they were being instructed in the foods of Nambé specifically, as well as learning about the insects and animals to be found in their community and how to take care of both farm animals and pets. Great emphasis was placed on learning to read in first grade and much of the reading activities were connected with outdoor/environmental studies, or with nutrition-based studies (e.g., a milk unit, and a unit on vegetables in the garden). Even at the first grade level, the curriculum centered on the available resources around them that would help to improve their overall health.

The first grade teacher was one who, as referenced above in the section on Mary Watson's diaries, went out into the community in the first days of the to round up students who were supposed to be in school but had not made their appearances at the start of the school year. In the process of entering homes, this teacher wrote about what she saw as being needed there (most had very little furniture, and few children had beds in which to sleep). Since it was fall at the start of the school year, many of the women were home canning corn and chile for the winter (one of the three mainstay crops grown locally, along with wheat which was locally milled). There many letters from parents in the first grade teacher's diary regarding attendance. These letters expressed their gratitude

for not only her teaching efforts, but for her ongoing communication with them. I noted that the most of these letters were written in English, despite the fact that the parents were almost all Spanish speakers. So, both the teachers home visits and ongoing communication, as well as the parents efforts to communicate in English go to the extraordinary efforts that were being made by everyone.

From the outset, there was great interest from educators and others far beyond Nambé about the experimental school. The first grade teacher wrote about visitors to her classroom from outside of the community. She shared that some visiting teachers from Tesuque copied almost every chart on her walls. She taught them about the different purposes and types of charts, which included: experience, planning and direction, reinforcing, and supplementary charts (among others). An example of one of the charts written in the first grade (shared to illustrate similarities and differences between subject matter at the SJTS and the NCS is the following:

Cooking

The girls made soup.
 The boys brought vegetables.
 We washed the vegetables.
 We cooked the soup on the stove.
 We ate the soup.
 The girls liked the soup.
 The boys liked the soup.
 They said, "Thank you, girls."

(NCSTD, Fall, 1937, Box 19, Diary 2)

One of the first notes in this teacher's diary was about how expensive the food was in the little local store, and that the cost was prohibitive for most of the residents who were living on some form of relief. Introducing the students to vegetables most of them

had never experienced before was a critical first step toward improving the health of the students. Thus, the chart about the soup they made took on importance that was literally relative to their very health and well-being. So important, in fact, was improving the health of the community, that the teachers actually tracked the height and weight of the students and noted gains with great excitement in their diaries. These gains were achieved, in part, by giving each child a dose of cod liver oil with a cup of cocoa first thing each morning during the winter, when some of the students were especially malnourished. It was unclear to me whether this practice started in the first or second winter of the school's existence, but it was clearly successful in terms of the weight the children gained after that step was taken and was critical to getting through the coldest months because the winter provided sparse food sources in most of the households. And federal relief was not enough for most of the large families of Nambé to stretch their food resources to the end of each month.

The ultimate establishment of the school hot lunch program, as discussed earlier, was derived originally from the same concern over the children's malnourished states. Mary Watson and the teachers took the initial steps toward assisting the children with better nutrition when they realized direness the situation. One story I read, and which was also included in Bachelor (1991), surrounded that of a child (likely more than one) carrying an empty lunch pail to school every day so the other children wouldn't know she had nothing to eat for lunch. Of those who did bring lunch, a cold tortilla was often the entirety of it. The first grade teacher, and others were aware and many commented in their diaries, that children who were undernourished were not likely going to be able to learn optimally. Fatigue was evident, especially as the day wore on, and most of the

students in the younger grades took naps. It was painful to read some of the stories of the malnourishment of the students at NCS because it reminded me of many times when I was hungry in my life and when I was aware that we had no money for food. We got help from the Salvation Army or St. Vincent de Paul during the worst of times, but these students in Nambé had no such resources, so the school took it on, as they did everything else in the community.

As discussed earlier in the section on Mary Watson, differentiation of work for students in each leveled reading group began immediately. There were no “low” and “high” classrooms at the school but students were placed into different reading groups within each classroom and the teacher was responsible for teaching up to four levels as part of a regular day. An example of a first grade chart for a D level reader follows:

We saw a brown rabbit.
We saw a brown rabbit run.
We can run.

The reading materials were adapted to the students’ interests and levels and the teacher worked with each group in turn, while students not receiving direct instruction continued with individual or group seat work. That work was often inclusive of the duties surrounding maintenance of the room’s upkeep, assigned chores such as keeping the classroom terrarium clean, or watering the plants, or independent hands-on activities including working with puzzles, reading stories silently, or painting, working with clay, or sewing (which, in first grade, was primarily on simple and small items like doll quilts). Regardless of the reading level, mobility of the students as they improved was encouraged, so that a student may begin at the D level, but be advanced to the A or B level by the end of the school year.

Generally, the first three grades looked similar to one another—in both practice and product—such that pieces of the collection as catalogued were sometimes noted as being from an “unknown grade” or “loose materials.” It is not as important, I think, to establish whether a student’s work was from the first or third grade as it is to note that the content was vertically aligned and the content similar but more complex with each passing grade. The lowest grades studied foods and nutrition, the use of the land for growing flowers and other plants, the kinds of animals, insects, birds and plants in the community, and the types of clothing worn in different seasons. I believe the picture and chart on the following page, “Juliet’s Farm, Figure 30, is likely from the second grade (possibly third) because that was when students were not only being introduced to the

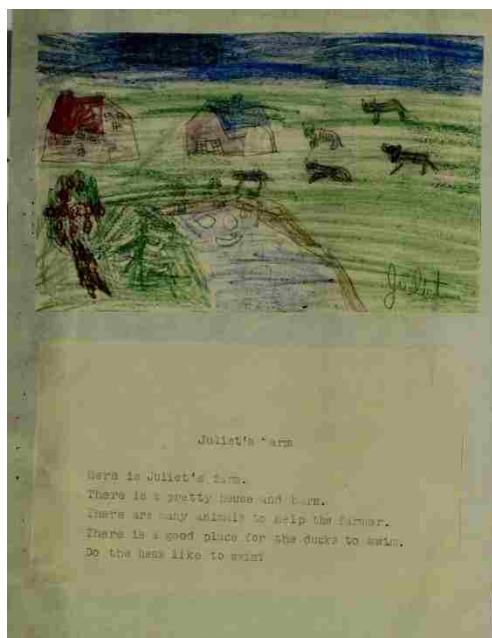


Figure 30. Juliet’s Farm. Drawing and Individualized Chart
Teacher Unknown. Likely Grade 2 or 3.

(NCSTD, [ca. 1938], Box 13, Diary 2)

connection between the pictures they were drawing and the words in the charts, but were learning that they might each have a different interpretation of the same thing, so that

some of the charts were individualized, becoming language experience stories with a specific format. (Note that the chart ends with a question. This was common, and goes to the encouragement of students' curiosity and encouragement to ask questions as part of their learning process. The questions, like the rest of the lines in the chart, were student-generated, either in groups or by individual students, depending on the activity.)

Because the chart is likely difficult to read in this reduced size (and because of the light blue ink of the hectograph), I will transcribe it here.

Juliet's Farm

Here is Juliet's farm.
 There is a pretty house and barn.
 There are many animals to help the farmer.
 There is a good place for the ducks to swim.
 Do the hens like to swim?

I have also included a second chart, "Gilberto's Farm," which was included in the same loose materials. It goes to the individualization of the experience as translated in the language experience story (which is the chart). This chart was also typed (by a very hard-working teacher) and placed below the picture drawn by the student.

Gilberto's Farm

This is Gilberto's farm.
 It is a very pretty farm.
 There are many animals on his farm.
 There is a big barn for the animals.
 Can you name all the animals in the picture?

So, there is a commonality in the structure of the sentences, and the use of certain words that are a part of the vocabulary the students are learning (e.g., *pretty*, *many*, *animals*), as well as in the structure of the chart/story itself, with a first sentence that introduces whose farm it is, and a last line question. The students had visited a farm, and each of their

individual experiences of it were honored and respected in the allowance to create his or her own chart, and to draw the picture that represented the words. (Juliet's has a place for the ducks to swim, and Gilberto's is focused on many cows and a big barn.)

One teacher who taught the second grade, included the most comprehensive unit plans of any teacher from either school. For the six-week foods unit, she included a single-spaced, typed 12-page plan inclusive of the aims and objectives, the initiation of the unit, activities guiding it (which included much in the way of visual arts), songs learned, outcomes, culmination, a comprehensive bibliography of books read, every chart, and a 4-column vocabulary list. I found her description of the unit's initiation to be most helpful in understanding how it unfolded. She wrote:

At the close of the unit on clothing, a doll house was made. Charts were made about the things in the house beginning with the materials used for the bed and tables. From that we made charts about the dishes of clay in the cupboard. This led to a discussion on the things we have on the table to eat. Charts were made about bread, cooking pans, and the bowl and rolling pin mother uses to make bread. The children began telling about the way their mothers made bread and about the mill where the flour was ground from native grown wheat. (NCSTD, [ca. 1938], Box 13)

This unit included a very comprehensive reading list, and arithmetic activities were many and varied. As well, students wrote group and individual compositions (likely charts), and a letter to a visitor thanking him for coming. They also drew illustrations for poems, "Blow, Wind, Blow" and "Ride a Cockhorse," and *most fascinating*, in my opinion, the students in this second grade classroom were introduced to fine art in the form of *The*

Harvest, by Émile Bernard (1868 – 1941), shown below as Figure 31. (According to the website, Web Gallery of Art, *The Harvest* was an example of a Breton Landscape of the



Figure 31. *The Harvest* by Émile Bernard (1888)

type painted by “painters of the Pont-Aven school, a group of painters congregated around Paul Gauguin and Émile Bernard” and was influenced by both folk art and Japanese wood cuts. The style was known for its “simplicity and two-dimensionality” according to the site.) The chart that was written for the painting is included below. It is clearly more complex than those I have shown thus far for this grade level, but generally, as this unit progressed, all of the charts grew in complexity and in the use of expressive language, which was one of this teacher’s stated objectives.

The Harvest

A great artist painted this beautiful picture of people harvesting wheat.
 The men have long flails to break up the wheat.
 The women are sifting out the grains of wheat and putting them into sacks.

The inclusion of an examination of art, the concurrent discussion about it, and the writing of a chart as a follow-up, are to me, indicative of the central role that art had at NCS. As well, this teacher, and most of the others whose diaries I was privileged to read,

created rigorous and comprehensive units that were inclusive of several different content areas, were challenging but interesting, and were very important for the children's own lives. Wheat, as mentioned above, was one of the three staple crops grown in Nambé and understanding it as a food source was a critical introduction to the land management focus that the curriculum contained at the higher grade levels.

My first exposure to the existence of fine art was in a fourth grade classroom (and my first public school experience), but not until I was moved up to the "A Room," where we watched weekly televised shows each geared toward a different artist and style. To accompany that, we were given notebooks and mini replicas of an example of one of the works of the artist being studied. We then responded to writing prompts about the art in the same notebooks. This was just one of several opportunities for exposure to art in that particular class. My siblings, in the same school, received no such opportunities in the "C Room."

This NCS second grade teacher was also very thorough in her discussions about some of the areas that needed focus within the community. And unlike the pre-first teacher who was reprimanded by Dr. Tireman to stick to the business of her classroom, this teacher was encouraged in her efforts inside and outside of school. Included in her observations were the need for sanitation involving toilets and bathing, the need for more buildings, and her impressions of the homes and families she visited. She often drew little sketches to accompany her writing (as did several of the teachers and the principal, Mary Watson). Figure 32, below is my effort at recreating a sketch she drew on a page that addressed the school's efforts to improve the sanitary conditions at the school. The drawing provided a visual image of the ingenious way the teachers created in order to

ensure that the students washed their hands every time they returned from playing outdoors. (Note: I believe the hose was connected to a cistern and the water came from a well of a neighbor who was involved deeply with the school.)

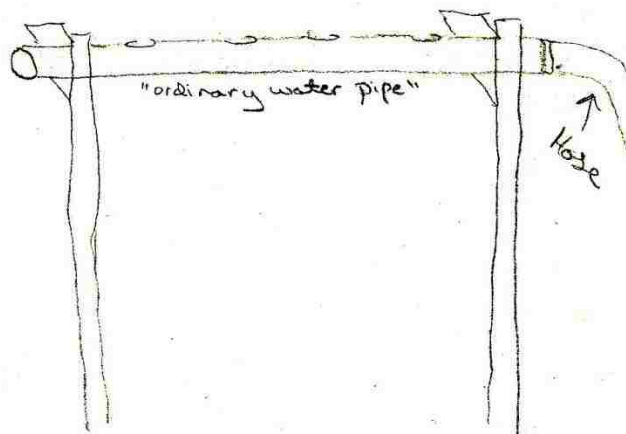


Figure 32. Outdoor "Hand-Washing" Station, Recreated from Diary of Teacher M. L. , Nambe

(NCSTD, [ca. 1938] Box 13, Diary 2)

Dramatization of the stories being read was also an integral part of the curriculum at the lower grades. In the first and second grade teacher's diary notes from October of 1940, the C and D level readers were dramatizing *The Little Red Hen*. This teacher, I believe, took over for the one discussed on the previous two pages after the first two years of the school's operation as a demonstration school. Much of what she did in the classroom, in terms of method, were the same, but she wrote with particular humor and insight, commenting on everything, including the pungent aroma of the children's feet after they took their shoes off for weighing. She also wrote some lovely notes indicating that after a visit to an orchard run by the grandfather of one of the students they stopped to take in the view from the top of the hill near the church and that the students were very observant as to the beauty of the valley below, commenting on the colors and shapes of the mountains. On the way back to school, they collected many different leaf specimens

for their classroom science table. Of course, two language experience stories were made, “The Orchard,” and “Our Walk,” and during the oral reading of them, she noted the pronunciation difficulties that the lower-level readers were having with many of the words. In the afternoon, the “children drew pictures of the walk and the B group did a rather good frieze on brown paper of the road and the orchard” (NCSTD, September 26, 1940, Box13, Diary 3).

While this teacher was dutiful in her writing, and clearly had an interest in artistic activities that she wished to pass on to the students, her references to students with (likely) disabilities were offensive to the extent that Dr. Tireman would respond to them in a brusque manner—setting her straight as it were. For example, of one child, she wrote “...certainly a physically ill child, talks incessantly and says mostly nothing,” to which Dr. Tireman replied “He is nearly blind too” (NCSTD, 1939 – 1940, Box 14, Diary 1). This was one of a number of comments from teachers that were addressed by Dr. Tireman that indicated a lack of information being provided to the teachers as to the exceptionalities of their students. It struck me, for instance, that a teacher should learn that she had a student who was nearly blind in her class from a note in a diary. But as I contemplated that, I was reminded that I often did not know anything about my own students’ disabilities until well into the school year, and was never advised about issues of abuse or homelessness that would have helped me to be a stronger source of support for them.

Despite comments like the one above, this second grade teacher’s attitude (and language with regard to her lower performing students) evolved over the course of the

school year (which I believe was her first at NCS), and in the winter of 1940 she wrote the following entry about the remedial reading group in her class:

I think we should all rejoice over the remedial group. Some of them have been in school four years and had been given up as hopeless... They really feel that they are now part of the school since they can read. They will be able to do second grade work next year, at least 11 of them. (NCSTD, February 1940, Box 14, Diary 1)

Unfortunately, despite her attitude evolving, the teacher herself was not responsible for the success of these students. Rather, they benefitted from remediation by the principal, Mrs. Watson, who taught some of the lowest-performing students to read in a pull-out fashion. If the teacher's notes were accurate, some of these students had been in second grade for four years, which was surprising to me on many fronts, but from what I gathered, at least in the beginning, students at the lowest grade levels were not promoted until they could read satisfactorily, regardless of the number of years retained in the lowest grade levels. This would explain some of Mary Watson's concerns about students with exceptionalities being embarrassed.

It was also this second grade teacher who offered my first alert to murals being done by the older students—although this came up repeatedly in the diaries of the teachers who led the older grades. Particularly, she called attention to the mural that was outside of the school, and which was created by five boys. In her second grade classroom, she had discussed the idea of perspective with her students, and used the mural as an exemplar. Later, in another teacher's description of what she noticed on first arriving to the school, the mural was referenced again. It was a mural of Coronado, and I wish there

were a photo of it, as well as the other murals regularly painted directly on the walls of the classrooms.

The murals remained a puzzle to me throughout much of my archival research. They were mentioned as being an activity the students in the middle and upper grade levels enjoyed doing as a seat work option when other students in the classroom were completing their work. It was unclear to me, for the longest time, whether they were actually painting the walls, or painting on large format paper. Even Mrs. Watson discussed a mural in her diary, and the frog mural done at one of the lower grades was taken (a reproduction?) to the conference she attended in St. Louis and won a prize. Finally, in some of my last days in the CSWR, the teacher of the seventh and eighth grades shed some light on the murals' as a process. He shared that the murals were getting larger as the students gained more artistic skill and confidence. And, he also noted that they were removed from the walls each year regardless of their quality so that each new class of students was able to create its own version of the content they were learning and decide how that might look in a visual representation. He said he was grateful for Kalsomine, as it was a cheap way to cover the old murals. (An online search revealed that Kalsomine was the brand name for a kind of whitewash paint generically referenced as calcimine, made from slaked lime and chalk.) I also learned from his diaries that the type of paint used to create the murals was called alabastine (which is a gypsum-based paint that is easily tinted and used for interior wall paint)—love the Internet sometimes. Unfortunately, there were no photographs of any of the murals, but they were a regular part of the curriculum at all grade levels, to be sure.

Therefore, it seems a good time to discuss the middle and higher grade levels at Nambé further. There was much in both art and science in which students of all ability levels participated, usually in flexible groupings according to ages and ability levels, but not necessarily reading ability levels. Depending on the particular lesson being taught, it was common that students of mixed reading ability levels would find themselves in the same group. By the fourth and fifth grades, the students were being schooled in irrigation practices and learning about the uses for water beyond the obvious watering of crops (e.g., for electricity). The practices of both water and soil conservation were becoming more real at these grade levels, and students often had their class time outside, where they worked with the vegetation that surrounded the school—both the wild varieties, and those put in by school personnel and former students in the first years of the school. The lessons learned in the school were then taken home by the students to the parents. Student learned to terrace the land, to sow plants with strong roots near the arroyos to prevent soil erosion and prevent the banks from washing away during seasons of flooding. They learned to pay attention to what grew well naturally—which plants were suitable for the climate and soil type found in their community. They worked closely with the SCS and the CCC in many of these efforts. A set of three photos of the area surrounding the school was included in Tireman and Watson (1943) and is included on the following page, labeled collectively as Figure 33. The first photo of the three shows the ravaged land at the time NCS was a new entity. This was similar to the background in the photo shown earlier as Figure 29. I was struck by the barren landscape that, to me, was almost other-worldly because of the lack of plant life. It reminded me of the land around an area that

has fallen victim to fire. In the other two pictures, from just three years later, the efforts of the staff and students and the federal agencies that assisted them is clear. It is notable,

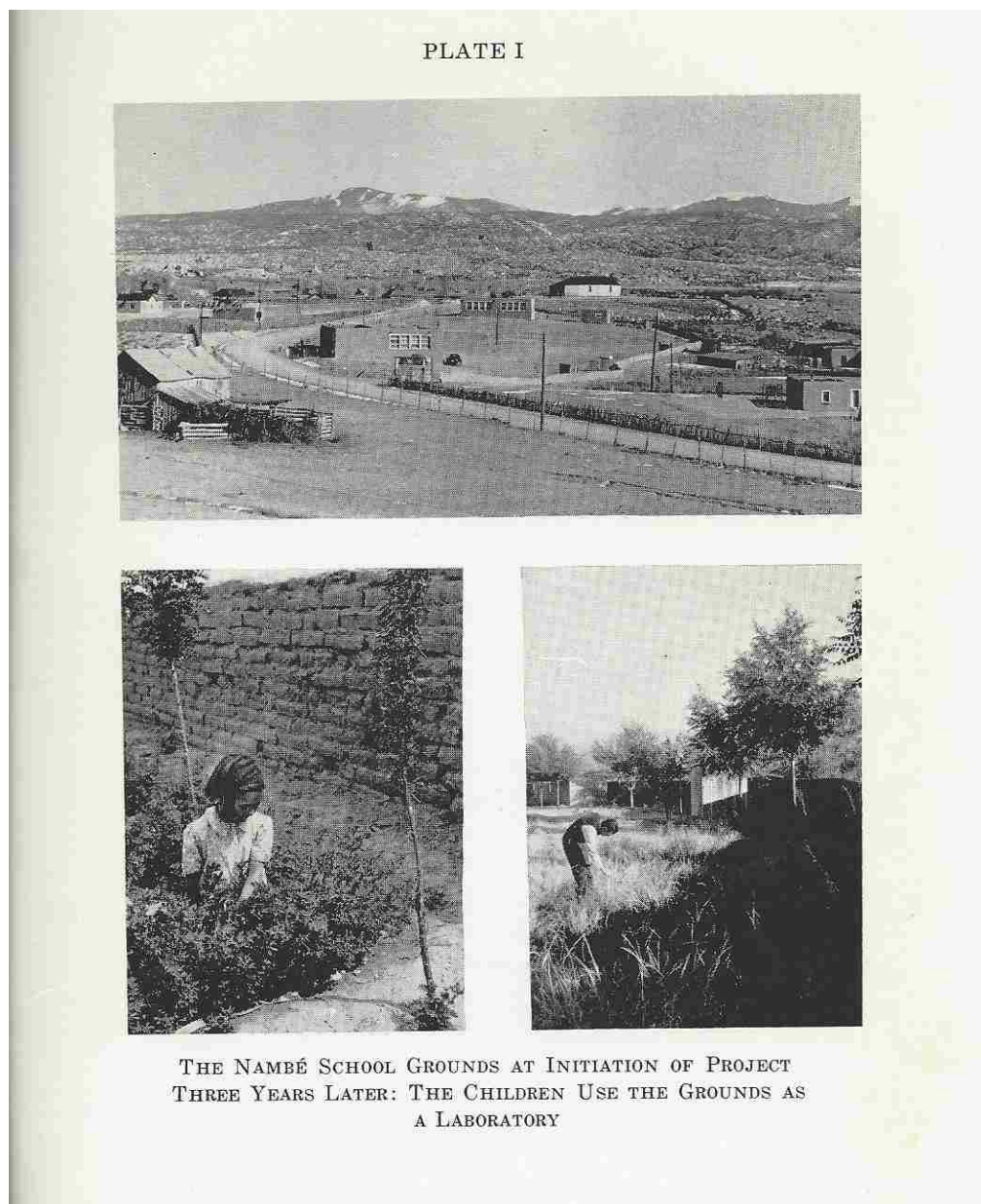


Figure 33. Page from Tireman and Watson (1943) depicting the land around NCS. (ca. 1937 – 1942)

I think, that while the students in the higher grade levels at SJTS received less in the way of arts-based activities, as they went up in grade level, the students at NCS were steeped in them. The work they did outdoors, was reflected in the murals in the classrooms and outside the school building itself (the Coronado mural referenced earlier), and the songs

sung dramatic performances in which they engaged were often based on the lessons being learned in their “outdoor laboratories.” As well, when they were not reading, or writing descriptive paragraphs of what they had done outside that day, or what they had seen on their nature walks, they were encouraged to participate in arts-based activities both in and outside of class.

In the first year of the school, the woodworking shop was also completed and, it remained open in the evenings for use by the entire community. Boys from the school, and men from the village, worked into the night creating not only furniture and fixtures for the school, but for their homes as well. Many of the families made beds for their children which were the first they had ever had. There was, even for a time, a mattress factory where they could get ticking and so, the girls and women who took part in the sewing classes offered by the school helped to make mattresses for the beds, though the details on how this came to be were vague. Once the furniture and fixtures were installed in the classroom, it was often noted by teachers, especially in the seventh and eighth grade classroom, that the boys were hand-carving the window boxes, or creating hand-carved planters to go over the coffee cans in which the classroom plants grew.

At the request of the teacher who taught the Special class, as well as the fifth and sixth grades, the school invested in a number of texts that pertained to a variety of crafts, including woodworking, carving, and other projects, in order to support the students and the community in these efforts. Her diaries included goals for her students, which were more arts-based than I had expected. She set as one of her main objectives that (especially) those boys who were the lowest performing, academically, should become responsible and contributing members of the community. She believed that one means for

doing this was to allow them the experience of accomplishment in arts and crafts, but she refused to neglect the basics of a conventional education that she felt were necessary to their success. This teacher was “sassy” with Dr. Tireman with regard to her expectations.

One particular exchange which I believe goes to the devotion of this teacher to her struggling students and to the use of arts-based activities not only in literacy content, but across contents (and with math, in particular, for her) surrounded their building of miniature houses as the core of a lesson on arithmetic. She asked, through her diary for an address so that she could order a woodworking book called *Building America*. Dr. Tireman provided the address and wrote, in his response, “I’m pleased that you have been able to work out a program to fit the shop schedule. Also that you can find time to give so much attention to the retarded pupils.” That comment obviously hit a chord with her, and in reply, she wrote:

I’ll refer to your comment on my giving attention to retarded pupils.

During the year I have given these children a great deal of time, in fact much more than I did the two upper groups. I have debated the question in my mind whether I was spending too much time or not with them. But if you feel that O. R. has made progress the time I’ve spent is not to be begrudged. It made me feel as if I was accomplishing something, really. V. V. too is a very poor reader but he is trying hard to learn to read.

If we can hold these boys in school for three years more they will have gotten something by that time. Most of those boys are not able to do addition

with carrying. I am trying to get them to become accurate in addition, subtraction, and multiplication by one number... (NCSTD, January 1940, Box 20, Diary 4)

The remainder of the entry cited specific student examples of achievement in arithmetic. In a separate entry, in response to Dr. Tireman's praise for the wonderful oral reading he heard in an observation of her class, and which he thought was being done by the B Level students, the teacher thanked him, but also corrected him, pointing out that he had been listening to the C level students—some of whom had been moved up from the D level group. I cited these examples because despite the fact that this teacher's diary entries went daily to the making of art in the classroom, she was also keenly aware that the students needed to be functional in reading and math (if that was possible), regardless of whether they went on to high school. She did, by the way, get the boys for the three years she requested, and reached many milestones with them.

Arts-based activities in this classroom also included the building of a cider press and a "jelly factory," (a definition for which I could not find) as well as a screen cage for collecting spiders. In this classroom, the students regularly painted and sketched and after one student brought an easel to school and the other students clamored to try it out, the teacher asked Dr. Tireman if they might have another for the classroom, but also noted that there wasn't much room left in her classroom for an easel; Dr. Tireman suggested that they should have it immediately. In this teacher's diary case studies, she referenced the specific artistic talents of some of the students. Murals covered the walls in her class and included the animals being studied and a pictorial map of the trails leading in all directions from Santa Fe with historical references being added as the students studied

explorers. In her plans for the following school year, she noted that she was planning on having “bead work, rug weaving, not on looms, carving in the room, more painting on the walls, sewing, and other things...” (NCSTD, spring 1940, Box 20, Diary 3).

While the plans for the following year’s arts-based activities were, I thought, more likely as comprehensive as they were due to this particular teacher’s passion for art, I then read the diaries of the seventh and eighth grade teacher (as discussed earlier, the only male teacher on the staff, and the person who became a professor of education at UNM and New Mexico Highlands University after the war). That teacher was as enthusiastic, if not more so, about the use of creative expression as a teaching tool in his classroom. But first, by way of introduction to him, I will briefly describe his curricular focus, which was natural science.

Although a traditional school in that era also required its students to learn natural science at the seventh and eighth grade levels, in this teacher’s class everything the students learned actually took place either out in the natural world of their own community, or the grounds of the school. In the classroom, they viewed slides under the microscope and then drew or painted what they had seen, or they added to their root, tree bark, or plant collections, wrote notes in their plant diaries, or added to their ever-growing collection of small, preserved animals or skeletons (which were sometimes borrowed by schools as far away as Albuquerque for their own science programs). Everything they learned or produced in the classroom was useful either in concept or product within the community. This meant that the students were working the land around the school (terracing it to prevent soil erosion), and writing letters of inquiry to agricultural extension people to acquire seeds that would grow best in their community.

They took field trips into the surrounding area and examined plants, and their classroom, ultimately, resembled a cross between an art gallery and an agricultural museum, according to one teacher's description. In his classroom, the lowest level students were reading at a third and fourth grade level, but the teacher wrote regularly and over the years about the great interest students showed in the reading materials provided in his class, and in the activities accompanying the reading, which were often arts-based. Students regularly requested, and received, materials for independent reading that were related to everything from seed studies to woodworking.

In his first year at the school, this teacher was so taken aback at the poverty that he thought a malnourished infant suffered from a disease that caused his head to be grossly mismatched in size in comparison to his body. He learned that this was a starving baby and that one incident alone changed the tone of his diary writings from critical—noting, at first, the alcoholism that was prevalent in the neighboring Nambé Pueblo in a judgmental fashion, and referencing some of the superstitious local customs in not-very-friendly adjectives—to empathetic beyond what was apparent in most of the female teachers. By the end of the fall of his first year, he was a trusted member of the community, whom the locals turned to for farming and irrigation advice, and whose students came eagerly to his classroom. The realization that a baby could starve because the soil on his father's farm field was eroding to an extent that it could not be cultivated led him to dig in with gusto in his teaching, and his students readily left his classroom each day with information for their parents. Eventually, he worked directly with the farmers themselves and helped them to understand how to utilize their resources to an extent none had known were possible. They would learn not only how to grow crops that

could sustain their families (and that went beyond corn and chile), but which were also marketable enough to earn a living so that the exodus that had begun as former farmers left the village to find work, might be slowed, though I don't believe the latter was ever achieved.

The teacher was very frustrated by the increasingly prevalent use of standardized tests—with a special disdain for the timed ones because of the pressure it put on especially the lowest performing students. He worked regularly with Mrs. Watson and the two, with Dr. Tireman's help, designed test practice sessions designed to help the 8th grade students succeed not only on the assessments, but in high school the following year. Mrs. Watson believed, as did this teacher and Dr. Tireman, that the students needed to be able to achieve “fundamental problem solving,” in order to do well in their lives and they were all put off by the increasing amount of time they were forced to devote to testing. I will discuss this further in my synthesis, but must admit that I was very surprised that standardized testing was prevalent even in the 1930s. I don't believe there were as many or as many types as there are currently in Albuquerque Public Schools, for example, but the tests that were taken at the end of the school year at the seventh and eighth grade levels took valuable class time over the months of April and May.

As I may have stated earlier, when I was in school, the only standardized tests I remember taking were at the fourth, eighth, and eleventh grade levels, but they were not tied to any type of teacher evaluations, and the one in high school was even a little on the fun side as it went to abstract thinking. In eighth grade, I did well enough that my teacher, when discussing my performance with me at the end of the school year, cried and said my scores were “off the charts,” and that she wanted me to know that because she wanted

me to make the right decisions in high school so that I could go to college. I tucked that praise away in my mind, but like the students of SJTS and NCS, in my family, college was not something that was considered as viable, and later, when I gave my dad paperwork so that I could receive federal grant monies and attend, he refused to provide his income (out of shame), and I was reminded by him and my guidance counselor at school that we were not college material. For several of my siblings, those tests were nothing but torture, and yet another way in which they were reminded that they were not good enough, and would never measure up. In today's terms, they would have been called "beginning steps," or "SPED" kids.

Regardless about how he felt about the tests (and just like the teachers today, who find them too time-consuming and intrusive), the tests had to be taken and the school held regular test practice sessions for the eighth grade students, which were attended in the evenings. This meant a day that was at least 12 hours long for students whose school days were already longer at the higher grades in NCS than those of the younger students.

Despite having a background in science, the seventh and eighth grade teacher was a lover of the arts as well, and he shared that with his students. He requested and received a phonograph and some "standard records," because the students sang together every morning so that they could feel united and start the day on a positive note. As to the teaching of reading, he had to learn how to teach to especially the lowest level students in his classroom from Mrs. Watson and Dr. Tireman. He took their suggestions to heart, asked questions regularly in his diary, and by all accounts, had success in that arena as well. Yet, he was never satisfied at the slow rate of the progress and in one particularly

poignant response from Dr. Tireman to the teacher's pondering about whether they were doing right by the students this was said:

When dealing with such a complex thing as society and teaching pupils (not changeless machines) we will do well not to be too arbitrary. There is no "one way" to heaven, there are many ways. If we know the direction and are going forward, I'm satisfied (for this year). (NCSTD, January 1938, Box 25, Diary 1)

He continued to ask questions, and Dr. Tireman continued to answer them, and over time, it was clear that a deep and abiding respect came to exist between the two men, such that virtually anything the teacher asked for was provided by Dr. Tireman. And he asked for materials and supplies that were arts-related frequently.

I believe that Figure 34, a small woven rug, was created by a student in this class though I am not certain of this. The students had done an in-depth study on the process of making wool and had visited a local sheep farm where they not only saw sheep, but the wool, cards, spindles, yarn, and dyes that went into the making of woolen products, and blankets and scarves made from the wool. This lesson was designed to show the students the importance of sound land use as well as teaching them about the craft of weaving. The students in the class even learned from the local weaver they visited about which vegetables she used for making the dyes. The small rug was placed in a separate folder and it was unclear what diary it was connected to, but this teacher conducted numerous lessons with the students surrounding weaving.



Figure 34. Small woven rug made by student. [n.d.]

(NCSTD, [n.d.], Box 19 or 20, Separate Folder)

I wish I could have seen this teacher's classroom. His room hosted a regular art club, so some of the fixtures included in it surrounded the crafts of photography, the making of willow baskets, woodworking material and supplies (for activities ranging from carving, to making the materials for weaving—the spindles, and cards, and looms—room decorations, game boards, and room fixtures and decorations). There were aquariums, terrariums, planters, display cases, niches, and musical instruments (he taught the violin and guitar, if I understand correctly). Because he also became the local Boy Scout troop leader, he integrated the arts into that, noting that the scouts in his troop enjoyed the hobbies of boat-building, sketching and drawing, and painting. He requested, regularly, to have more brushes, paints of different types, charcoal and drawing paper. On the diary page for one such request, Dr. Tireman replied “I am very pleased with this type of work.”

This teacher recognized not only the relevance of art for art's sake, but also its potential for bringing people together, and for offering opportunities for fulfillment. Two examples follow.

When a new student came to the school (something that was rather rare in Nambé), the teacher wrote this in his diary:

The new boy likes to draw. He had taken an old piece of tagboard from the basket and smuggled it to his desk. I here [*sic*] he had filled with designs and had kept it under cover, assuming that I disapproved, when A. spied it and came up to me with it, J. running after him, pleading with A. not to show it to me. After I had praised it and shown it to the students who approved of it, J. beamed. Here is an embryonic [*sic*] creativeness to foster. And probably the means of socializing J. (NCSTD, [*n.d.*], Box 25, Diary 5)

And, in a later entry:

I am especially happy about J. V. because academically he is a flop; be he can use his hands and he makes numerous contributions to the group and is successful in carrying out his plans. He has made several picture frames, a chair for the primary school, games for his house, work on the aquarium, helped carve a window box, made the hole for the wall niche, and now that we have lumber, will work on the frame and doors. With much guidance he is becoming a much better boy. He has also lost his flippant manner... (NCSTD, [*n.d.*], Box 25, Diary 5)

When I picture this classroom, it reminds me of the art class I took in high school, and how it was filled in every corner with something interesting to look at, or touch. It

was one of two classes (along with photography) that I felt I could do well in, not because I was brilliant in my efforts in either, but because I was supported in my efforts. I did have some success though, and two of my art projects were put in the display case. (I later gave them away because I was pathetic and gave away most everything I prized in order to try and get people to be my friend... seriously.)

The teachers in those classes, like the last two I have carried on about in the last few pages, were very aware that their “presence” was as important as the curriculum they were teaching. The teachers of the older students were regularly called on by them when they wanted to share something personal, or get advice, including the eighth grade girl who was trying to decide what to do about the young man of Japanese descent who had moved to the village to make art, and was in love with her. I enjoyed the same kind of comfort level with Mr. Tula, who often just let me sit with him, or who allowed me to escape from the larger group following particularly difficult times in my family about which I knew he was aware (everyone in town was) but never caused me to be embarrassed over.

The artistic endeavors, as well as the efforts in land management, both of which were guided by the seventh and eighth grade teacher with the help of Dr. Tireman and Mrs. Watson, brought the community closer together and when one of its members went to a CCC camp and learned how to turn barrel cactus into lamps, and musical instruments, he came back and was eager to share the knowledge with not only this teacher, but the entire community. The man’s reception from the school generally, and this teacher in particular was so successful, he not only shared ukuleles, a violin and several lamps he made, he also taught the staff of the school the gardening skills he had

learned while working for a Japanese gardener in California. Thus, this one example alone went to the art-making and reciprocal relationships that were ever-present at NCS. But, there were so many more.

There was much reciprocity that was taking place between and among the teachers and the community with regard to arts-based activities at all grade levels and outside of school time literally every day of the week. While the community members were teaching the students traditional Spanish crafts, the staff at the school was teaching what they knew. Sewing lessons for students and mothers were very popular by the end of 1940, and notes were often sent by mothers with their children, asking teachers for patterns, which were shared readily among the community members. At one point, when the 8th grade girls were missing opportunities to finish their dresses for the spring fashion revue due to a conflict involving their scheduled testing practice, Dr. Tireman rearranged the times so that the girls would not miss out on sewing. (The fashion revue became a much anticipated event in the community as the girls modeled the clothing they had made for themselves throughout the year, and were accompanied by their toddler siblings, for whom they also sewed.) Additionally, the sewing club worked with the nurse to ensure that newborns returning home would have layettes and blankets on their arrival home and continuing throughout their childhoods if needed. Like the woodworking shop, the sewing room at the school remained open in the evenings so that members of the community would have ready access to the machines.

There were many other examples of so-called “household arts,” like cooking and baking, and preserving of food that was previously unfamiliar to the community. Recipes were exchanged and the meals shared that featured foods everyone found more

interesting and exciting due to the increased variety of crops being grown. Knitting and crocheting, weaving and basket-making were also activities enjoyed both during and after school hours. So, while Bachelor (1991) may have been correct in his assertion that the revival of Spanish Colonial arts was initiated by the McCormicks, it did not take long before reciprocal teaching and learning of all manner of arts and crafts was occurring in the village.

Certainly, not all students fared well at NCS. That would be impossible, but there were literally thousands of diary entries, pieces of correspondence, notes from parents about the efforts made toward students of all levels. Initially, I was taken aback that a student might be “written off” as academically incapable and steered toward crafts, despite that being much the point of my research (the meaning-making that comes with art-making for students with disabilities, in part). But, as I read these diaries, especially the ones for the teachers who worked with students in the higher grades, I realized that what they were offering, they often considered as being at least *something*, but it may have actually been *everything* for the students with whom they worked.

It is important to remember that virtually every student in the school was performing below grade level when the community venture was begun. For many, there was no possibility of academic achievement at the level that would be demanded in high school. Their deficits were often not caused by merely poor instruction in the past, and could therefore, not be ameliorated by traditional methods alone. Many had come to school with disability attributes that were permanent and representative of physical, mental, and emotional challenges.

For those whose psychosocial disability attributes might be seen as the type that could be readily overcome, I am an example that this does not occur in the space of a few years' time, and cannot be "cured" by academics. I have lived for over half a century and now believe that I will never overcome some of the trauma experienced in my childhood as a result of disability attributes, poverty, stigmatization and marginalization, and abuse of various types. What I *can* do, however, is take advantage of the relationships that offer support and encouragement, and I can continue growing through my artistic endeavors. I would like to learn to work with new mediums and my dream is to play the cello, and the piano—I wake up nearly every morning hearing the cello's plaintive sound in my head, as if I were playing it all throughout the night in my dreams. I've also had dreams in which I see my hands flying across the keyboard of a piano, and even in my dream, I marvel that those are my hands and I know how to play the music somehow. What is that?

Had some of these students not been exposed to the wonder of art-making, and after reading page after page on the efforts made to help them to achieve more academically—often to no avail—it is my belief that they were gifted with the skills necessary to give back to their community in the way Dr. Tireman (and John Dewey) initially envisioned, and they learned these skills from all of the adults in their lives who were there to not only teach them, but to hear them as well.

A note about the tests. For those who hold fast to the idea that traditional teaching methods are best suited to preparing students for the expectations they will encounter in high school and beyond, I don't believe that is necessarily wrong. From a practical standpoint, there is no way around knowing some of the basics of reading, writing, math,

and science in order to progress through the higher grade levels. But, I know that for many students, there need to be more options. They will never achieve at an academic level beyond a certain point, either because of disability attributes, or simply lack of interest. At NCS, they broke all of the rules of convention in education, with their larger general focus being the health and well-being of the community than on school concepts learned in a vacuum. And while they did not blow the naysayers out of the water, they certainly held their own on the mandated standardized tests given to 8th grade students in the spring of 1941.

I will not produce here much in the way of actual data, as that was never the focus of this research. I will, however, point out that the eighth grade students of NCS (in 1941) outscored three other schools in the county in all areas, including vocabulary, technical terms, application and comprehension on the Land Management Test. Natural science, with a focus on proper land management was mandated at all schools at the eighth grade level during the period following the Dust Bowl era. The table below, reprinted from Tireman and Watson (1943), and presented as Figure 35, shows that the NCS students outscored three others in the county in all four categories of the test. I have no context for the percentage correct or not, but the totals clearly indicate that the NCS students did significantly better than their peers at the other three schools in Santa Fe County, which is noted in the text accompanying the table. Additionally, Dr. Tireman and Mary Watson hypothesized that students in the following years would improve further in their performance on the test as more eighth graders progressed through the school from the lower grades.

Additionally, on the Master Achievement Test from April and May, 1941, in which some content areas tested all grade levels in reading, all NCS students, at all grade levels tested, scored at or above grade level. In English, which was tested from the fifth grade forward, NCS students scored slightly above grade level in all but grade 7, when they were .05 below (scoring 6.95 out of 7). For all other tested areas (required only of seventh and eighth grade students), NCS students scored slightly above grade level in all content areas—inclusive of math, geography, history, and science and health—with the exception of seventh grade history (6.75 out of 7).

Table IV
APRIL, 1941, Md. SCORES LAND MANAGEMENT TEST

School	Age	Vocabulary	Technical Terms	Application	Comprehension	Total
School A	14	25.5	23	3	12	58.5
School B	15	31	20.5	4	12.5	70.5
School C	14	30.5	32	3	10	73
Nambé	15	37	41	6.5	17.5	104

It appears from Table IV that the Nambé children did significantly better work on all sections of the test than the children of the other schools.

Since some aspect of natural science, including land management, is developed in every grade at Nambé, there should be a gradual accretion of knowledge as the pupils progress from the lower to higher grades. Theoretically this suggests that successive eight grades should make better responses on the test. However, as we had only one form, we were unable to verify this hypothesis.

Figure 35. Grade 8 Test Scores with Additional Textual Commentary from 1941.
Tireman and Watson (1943), p. 114

Their scores were comparable to the two traditional schools to which they were compared. That there was this much testing in 1941 was surprising to me.

If test scores were any indication, most of the students at NCS should have fared well in high school, but that was not the case for many—although, unlike SJTS, most of them did opt to attend high school. Many of the students, according to a few diary notes

as well as comments on the subject by both Tireman and Watson (1943), and Bachelor (1991) had difficulty finding a way to fit in a more traditional model of school where they were expected to sit at a desk all day and take notes. Dr. Tireman further pointed out that these students were used to higher order thinking, and had not mastered the art of memorization, which was (and remains) at the center of much high school coursework. They came back and visited and thanked the teachers for what they had given them, expressed how much they missed the activities in which they had participated, but many dropped out of high school (though in fairness, in 1943 rural America, most of the population did not complete high school). Tireman and Watson asserted that “the influence of the elementary school is limited...” and that while a child may go on to secondary school knowing how to “care for the land or a sick brother” (pp. 127-128) unless the same type of teaching and learning continued through high school, these students were not likely to progress to the extent one might expect. At one point, Mary Watson had discussed in her diary the possibility of seeking funding to continue the NCS experiment into at least the first years of high school, but I do not believe that ever happened.

And (to the likely delight of my readers) I will say nothing more on this particular subject.

The end of the era of NCS. Despite the fact that the original agreement between Cyrus McCormick, Dr. Tireman, and UNM was for funding of NCS for five years, correspondence in the Zimmerman collection indicates that Cyrus McCormick had agreed to continue doing so beyond the original five-year agreement. In December of 1941, a quite lengthy letter from Mr. McCormick expresses relief that the University had

decided to continue its involvement with the experiment at Nambé, indicating that this had been in question. In that letter, he agreed to continue providing his monetary support and expressed that he was looking forward to hearing from Dr. Tireman, who was apparently in Washington D.C., but had not been in contact. (I believe this may have been around the time Dr. Tireman was diagnosed with the chronic illness that would ultimately lead to his death in his early 60s.)

There was no further correspondence in the file until October 1942, at which time there were several letters of exchange between the University and Cyrus McCormick in which UNM sought to convince Mr. McCormick to allow them to keep the check he had sent and apply it to one of the other rural education projects that were still ongoing. Mr. McCormick said no, and in no uncertain terms, expressing that he believed all along that the success or failure of NCS as an experimental school could not be determined until a full generation of students had been educated there from first through eighth grades. It was also likely not helpful that President Zimmerman died in 1942, suddenly, according to Bachelor (1991), and he had been one of the main supporters of the community school concept generally, and NCS specifically. So, again, I got no answers from the materials available to me.

Bachelor (1991) indicated that the villagers themselves voted to discontinue their relationship with the school and the university. U.S. involvement in the war was growing, and there were many more job opportunities in the industries that were growing around the war that were outside of the confines of the village itself. Additionally, progressivism as an alternative to traditional educational models was losing popularity by the early 1940s. Dr. Tireman himself alluded to the possibility that the students' failure (generally)

to thrive in high school after leaving NCS may have influenced their parents and younger siblings who came to have less confidence in the school's mission and practices.

Certainly, the village of Nambé was impacted by the war. In the last year of the operation of NCS as an experimental school, the seventh and eighth grade teacher was no longer there, having enlisted in the military as many of the other men in the village had. The curriculum was adjusted, according to Dr. Tireman, to include a more expanded view of the world so that students could be informed about the changing world that was resulting from the actions taking place in Europe. The teachers took it upon themselves to ensure that the students at the school were informed about the realities of the war as many came to school frightened by rumors and there were few radios in the village. Each day, students from several classrooms would gather around the radio and listen to the news reports, then discuss them, and (of course) work on their mural of the European continent, keeping an especially vigilant watch on Hitler's advancement and which countries had come under his control. There was great fear among many of them that the Nazi movement would find its way to America generally and to their little village specifically.

Personally, I believe that the war was the main reason for the demise of Nambé, not just from the standpoint of the shift in focus for everyone in the village and America as a whole, but also because Cyrus McCormick's International Harvester Company was integral in the U.S. involvement from the standpoint of its manufacturing of many of the combat and transport vehicles that were used. The shift from farm equipment to fighting machines had to take up much of Mr. McCormick's time and energy and is a likely explanation for the lack of correspondence between January of 1942 and October of

1942. None of the information about International Harvester's role in the war was included in the materials I read. Rather, I looked it up on the Internet on a hunch.

Regardless of the actual main reason for the sudden end to Dr. Tireman's educational reform movement in New Mexico, it made a difference in the lives of hundreds of people who grew up in the two schools in which his efforts were focused. Dr. Tireman and Mary Watson themselves remained steadfast in their belief in the vision they held, and asserted right through the end of their text that there should be no special categories for Spanish-speaking students because they are no different from any other group—that in the end, “people are pretty much alike anywhere you find them.” And, that if “we place children in equally favorable environments they tend to react very much alike” (Tireman & Watson, 1943, p. 129). I would, of course, extend that statement to include students with disability attributes of all types.

If my family had been provided an NCS experience. My family is a classic example of what happens when children from the same background are taught differently due to perceptions about disability attributes. Granted, I have not been a shining example of achievement throughout most of my life, but there was always an internal voice that began with the supportive relationships I had early in my life. I'm just a slow starter.

In my family, though we all suffered the same psychosocial disabilities resulting from family trauma, only my siblings who struggled in the classroom were singled out—because of learning disabilities and/or mental health attributes that could not be hidden as readily as the anxiety, and depression that plagued all of us in our own ways. Even my OCD could remain a secret from my teachers because it was of the type that allowed me to control and hide it. My brothers and sisters were placed in remedial settings where they

were deprived of what I consider to be the most enjoyable facets of school—those that provide opportunity for individual and creative expression, and those that involve caring relationships from the adults at school who were the potential witnesses to their pain. They were like the babies in orphanages who are so deprived of any bonding experience with a nurturing mother figure; they never fully recover. It is referenced as failure to thrive for good reason.

For me, and my two youngest brothers, there were rewards in the form of electives classes in high school that were enjoyable because they were of our own choosing. Those rewards were given to us for no reason other than that we adapted to school more readily than our other siblings. The opportunities included photography and art in my senior year of high school. My siblings who struggled sat through the “drill-and-kill” method of teaching and learning right up until the bitter end, and it is probably no surprise that none of them (3 of my 5 siblings) had any desire to continue beyond high school. In that respect, they were much like the eighth grade students of NCS (though the reciprocity I enjoyed was definitely not at the level present in the community schools of Dr. Tireman’s creation); my siblings went from that more nurturing environment at a very small rural school, to being lost in the caverns of high school, sitting in classes that were overcrowded, able to remain anonymous, and suffering in silence. The NCS experiment didn’t just save students, it saved families, and since reading the archival documents of their experience, I have wondered more than a few times how my entire family might have been changed had we had a school like NCS in the little town (under 100) where my father built the home where all of my siblings would live out their adolescences, and where they would incur the most damage at home.

It is not just my brothers and sisters and me who suffered because of the disability attributes present in my family. My parents suffered as well. They were so young when they started their family, and once they moved away from the support system that was represented by my maternal grandparents, they were on their own. My dad's family was much like him and didn't want much to do with us. They managed as well as they could, and I do not believe that anything they did was done with malice or intent. The dysfunction in our family did not begin with them, but it is my hope that theirs is the last example of it to the degree that it existed, and still does to some extent. I see signs of hope in my nieces and nephews, one of whom is already raising children of his own, and is an amazingly wonderful husband and father. Some of my hope comes from the background work I had to do for this dissertation. Some will come from their own hard work. It is my fervent belief that we might all have had an easier time earlier if there had been people who bothered just a bit more. Once my grandparents were gone, and (for me) there were no more Mr. Tulas, we were left to our own devices and just didn't know what to do without help.

Chapter Five. Analysis of Emergent Patterns and Themes

When I revisit my own personal experience, and consider it in relation to the lives of the students who were educated at SJTS and NCS in their incarnations as experiments in educational reform, there are definite commonalities in the emergent patterns and themes. These patterns, subsumed under three major themes, include, but are not limited to, the disabling circumstances of poverty, the pain and long-term impacts of abuse, isolation due to disability attributes, geographical location, and secrecy, and relationships—both in terms of their potential for harm and for good. I consider these patterns, and their umbrella themes, to be influential on one another. These three emergent themes, labeled as Figure 36, below, represent the means to amelioration of

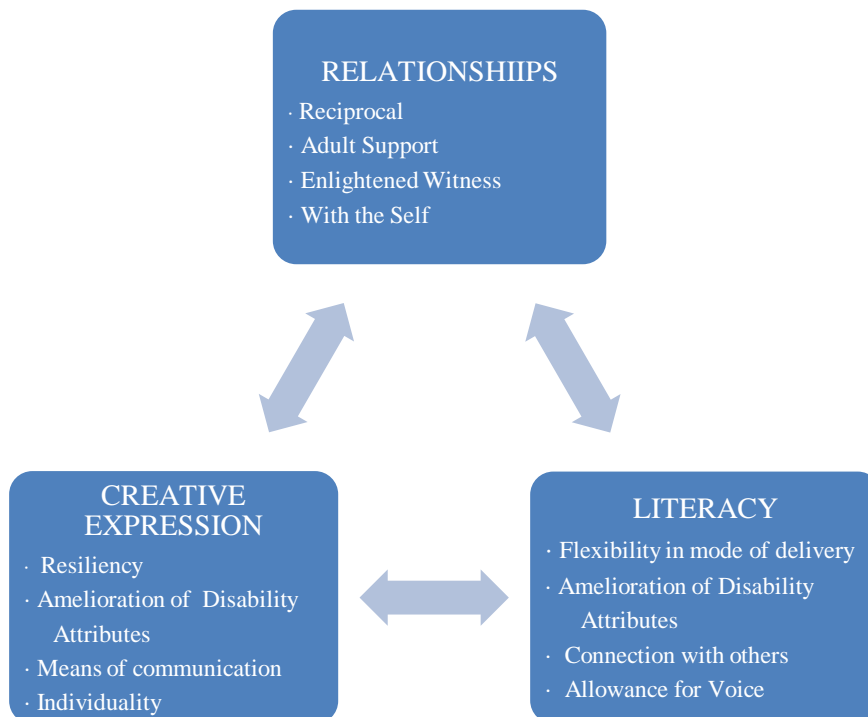


Figure 36. Representation of Interactions Among Three Salient Themes in Data Set One and Life Patterns that Comprise them.

disability attributes, regardless of the type or degree, and include: relationships, creative expression, and literacy. I consider these salient themes in their broadest sense and analyze each separately.

Relationships

Throughout my archival work, both the autoethnographical data collection and reporting, and that surrounding the records for SJTS and NCS, I found myself becoming ever more aware that relationships are key in terms of overcoming, or learning to better function with *any* type of disability attribute. The stigmatization and marginalization that occur as a result of disability circumstances cannot be improved by the individual who lives with them without the help of others. This involves, first, the exposure of the disability attribute in the first place. Some disability attributes are obvious (e.g., severe physical or intellectual/developmental disability, some illnesses, some forms of physical disability, or certain types of mental illness left untreated such as schizophrenia). Others are of the type that may be held close and remain secret (e.g., depression, anxiety, some mental illnesses, or hunger). Once the disability attribute is apparent, however, we must rely on our relationships with others as a means to ameliorate the negative impacts of them.

For me, although there was little family support beyond Grandma and Grandpa, their very existence in the world was enough to sustain me in the most difficult times during my childhood. My grandma continues, long after her passing, to do the same for me. I feel her presence in my sleep when I am struggling with decisions or difficulties and she sits on the end of my bed in the dark, and I smell her lilac toilet water. As I write this, and have to constantly overcome my insecurity that what I am doing is not acceptable and will not be understood or considered scholarly enough, she is there. When I wake up exhausted and start singing in the shower a song with lyrics I did not even know I had in my head, only to find out it was one of her favorites, I know she is there.

What my grandparents offered was heart-felt and I always knew that I was loved. I had already written the previous sentences when I had a conversation with Dr. Linney Wix, who referenced this as an example of Alice Miller's "enlightened witness." A web search seeking more information about this term brought me to Dr. Miller's website, which included the following statement, provided by Miller (1997) in the context of her own efforts to "expose the social consequences of child abuse" According to Miller, her original hypothesis surrounded "social consequences of child abuse." She used Hitler and Stalin as examples of such consequences. What she found, however, was "fierce resistance" from those who had been abused and challenged her theories. The common thread she found among all of them was the existence of:

...a person who loved them, but was unable to protect them. Yet through his or her presence, this person gave them a notion of trust, and love... Many have also been lucky enough to find later both enlightened and courageous witnesses, people who helped them to recognize the injustices they suffered, to give vent to their feelings of rage, and indignation at what happened to them. (Miller, 1997, retrieved from "Alice Miller child abuse and mistreatment," para. 4)

That same kind of love kept me from pursuing the actual act of suicide, which I had contemplated from the time I was very young. After my grandparents' passing, those thoughts came back as I lived a chaotic existence of abuse by myself and others, but there was shame, and I still dreamed of my grandmother and kept trying to do better. And one day, I was able to do better. I believed then, and continue to believe now that they are present in the Universe somehow, and watching out for me.

The intervention of others into the lives of children who are living with the impacts of poverty as a psychosocial disability attribute is life-changing, and for the students of (especially) NCS, was actually *life-saving*. If a child comes to school having slept on a floor and without adequate nourishment, no learning can take place. If a child comes to school recalling the physical or emotional abuse he endured the night before, no learning can take place. If a child comes to school too embarrassed to acknowledge that there was no dinner last night, or no breakfast this morning, or no clean clothes to wear, no learning can take place. The adult support and efforts of the staff at NCS literally saved the lives of many of those children. And, once there was learning that *could* take place in the classroom, the ongoing caring took on many forms whether it was providing shoes and warm clothing so a child could walk to school, serving a cup of cocoa before class began on a cold winter morning, providing a warm and nourishing hot lunch and fun conversation during the meal, or offering paper and paint and saying “Here... tell me what *you* see.” No one was merely throwing a free lunch at some of them—a free lunch that just served to further stigmatize them (as was done with my siblings and me during the already fragile times in which we were the most impoverished). Rather, their poverty was acknowledged in a kind and quiet manner, it was addressed, and then the work of learning could take place.

For me, the first school in which I was able to enjoy free hot lunch was the one that housed the ever-warm and caring Mr. Tula, where I attended school from grade five through grade eight—a long stretch for my family. He is, along with my grandparents, a singularly influential relationship in my life and someone whom I consider as a personal life-saver. As well, my relationship with the lunch lady at that school was also stabilizing.

She allowed me to nibble on some of the food we were preparing in the mornings before school, and to take my tray from the lunch room (she was very protective of her trays) so that I could eat somewhere else if I was having a particularly bad day. The day I cried at the doors of the school to be let in so that I could escape the bullies, the custodian who opened the door and allowed me to help him wash the blackboards while he swept is remembered with great kindness by me. I wonder if he had any idea that his kindness would stay with me forever. That school was, as I recollect now, much closer in concept to NCS than most schools were then or are now, and the relationships of caring and concern I enjoyed there are the main reasons. Still, it was most definitely *not* a community school in that it was traditional in its curriculum, the reciprocal relationships between the school and the community were not as defined or as relevant to the functioning of the school, and the arts-based activities were decidedly limited. That said, the school's people and the caring and concern they showed to me in their relationships with me are examples that should be followed by all school personnel, I think. That I remember those people and their specific acts of empathy and caring for me all these decades later is indicative of their importance.

Unfortunately, some of the relationships and support systems that I enjoyed, especially those with teachers and other adults outside of our household, were instruments of more abuse for my younger siblings who struggled in school (this primarily from the Catholic nuns). Where my own resiliency attributes emerged from these relationships, for some in my family the impacts of the lack of them are still ongoing. Even when I consider my two youngest brothers, for whom school was not an instrument of torture, the lack of supportive and reciprocal relationships from adult role

models when they were young, proved to be a source of problems in their adult lives. For them, even my grandparents were less of a presence, since they both became ill during my brothers' formative years. They knew they were loved by them, but the amazing sense of support I felt from them was not as prevalent in my youngest brothers' lives. One brother has benefitted from a wonderful relationship with his father-in-law that, in his adult life, has served to help him to overcome much of the trauma of our childhoods, even before he acknowledged much of it. Both of his in-laws serve roles as his enlightened witnesses, and I hope that I do as well. My youngest brother is more a puzzle to me. His struggles with relationships are, I think, more obvious to me than they are to him. He has great resiliency, and picks himself up and moves forward at each failure, but I want him to be truly happy inside, and I don't believe he is.

When I think about the students of SJTS and NCS, and the adults with whom they established relationships, I wish I could know how those relationships impacted who they became as adults, and I believe that it is likely that I would find, much like my own family, that the mix of circumstances, gender, placement in the family, and the extent of the impacts of the disability attributes with which they lived were likely all factors in who they became.

Creative Expression

That I was afforded opportunities for creative expression not given to my siblings who struggled in school is notable. It strikes me, after talking with them (my brothers and sisters), and thinking back on my own school experience, that I was in essence being rewarded for finding school easier than they did. While I was learning about Picasso in the 4th grade A Room, they were being buried in phonics cards and reading stories that

were uninteresting and below their age levels in the C Room. While I was moving forward with peers who were matched in age and grade level, one sister was struggling to get through 3rd grade until she was 11 years old, and two others were at least a year older than most of their grade-level peers. I believe that the marginalization they experienced by that fact alone could have been greatly helped if they had been allowed to experience at least some success in the form of opportunities for artistic activities, but this never occurred. Later, in high school, while I was learning about *f* stops and shutter speeds on the camera, and taking and developing my own photos, these siblings were struggling just to be done with school... period.

Those opportunities to understand the creative expression of others and to experience my own were forgotten for decades, but have reentered my life and are key to my personal growth (my relationship with myself), and to the way I function with others. When this journey of school (at least from the student end) which has now taken up literally half my life is finished in the formal sense, I know that my art-making will continue, and I sleep better knowing this because for a very long time, I was not sure what old habits or bad behaviors might emerge again if I were forced to face each day with nothing but my memories, my anxieties, and my OCD. Because of the NCSTD, I also know that I will continue to help others to find their own joy in creative expression. I do not know if this will be in a classroom of younger students, of pre-service teachers, or as a volunteer in another setting, but I feel like a preacher who is compelled to spread the word now.

Of all the things I would like to have the opportunity to discuss with the students of SJTS and (especially) NCS, one of the most important for me would be to know if they

felt, throughout their lives, the impacts of the opportunities for creative expression that were afforded them in the community schools they attended. As I handled some of the drawings, or read the diary descriptions of some of the art projects in which the students (and community members) took part, I wanted to be able to transport myself back in time and join them. I wanted to draw, and carve a pueblo out of soap; I wanted to paint *on the WALLS* (a dream for every kid who ever took a crayon and went to town on her bedroom); I wanted to learn to play the violin, or guitar, and to start the day singing with my friends. And, I would still like to know which vegetables are used to make the dyes in the weaving that the students learned to do.

I would especially like to know if the students with disability attributes felt like they were accepted and allowed the same opportunities to express themselves creatively as their less struggling peers were given. In reality, nearly all of the students attending the last years of SJTS' incarnation as a community school, and the first years of the NCS project presented with disability attributes of—at least—the psychosocial type because the impacts of the Depression were greater during the mid-1930s than they were before or after that time. Especially for students at the higher grade levels at NCS who were steered more and more toward artistic endeavors as their academic deficits became more obviously limiting during that time, I would like to know if they found fulfillment and joy in any of the artistic activities they learned and practiced, or if they just felt short-changed and somehow less. I would also like to know whether any of them found that the forms of creative expression to which they were most drawn became tools for a sense of self-satisfaction, and for participation in their communities when they grew up.

I must admit that I found it difficult, at first, to read a teacher's diary note indicating that a certain student was being steered more toward the woodworking shop because he was in the eighth grade and could not yet do simple multiplication, or read beyond a second grade level, or that a female student was taking more sewing classes after school, or joining the cooking club because she had become "overage" at 16 and in the eighth grade and was expected to leave school and marry. However, when a discussion of the very situation described in the latter example above was recorded in the seventh and eighth grade teacher's diary, I took off my "presentism" hat (in a nod to Bachelor's [1991] assertion that we should not look at the past with the bias of our experience and societal rules in the present), and viewed it anew. The diary entry which was meandering in its length and thoughtfulness, read, in part:

I. E., one of my eighth graders, is to be married sometime in the near future. If she is, her formal school is at an end. She is 16 years old... Her work in skills has been poor, partly I think because of the developmental stage she's in and partly because of a not too great intelligence. As I pondered over it I asked myself this question: "Is she through our efforts any better off for the life she is going into than other girls in different schools?" I think I can definitely answer "yes." Furstly, [*sic*] she has had 1 year of cooking and 2 or 3 years of sewing... she has acquired poise and sureness, willingness to do her bit in contribution, and an acute sense of social sensitivity... She has been keeping a tree diary this year and has been exposed to all our conservational activities which has sensitized her to land use and care... she has been encouraged to think critically, accept responsibilities, express herself through several

mediums, song (choir) music, dancing, drawing, sewing, cooking and home making activities...

He then adds, later on the page:

I cannot help but think of what use academic skills to a high degree of mastery (would be) in a regional culture such as this. It seems that living here demands more skills in areas such as home-making, land use, cooperative skills and such skills as can be utilized in making the environment yield for carrying on a well-rounded life. (NCSTD, [ca. 1940], Box 25, Diary 5)

Clearly the above diary entry indicates both concern for what was *not* taught and learned, and an awareness that what *was* may be of more use. Where the arts are concerned—whether fine art, or that which is primarily referenced in this diary entry as household arts—there is often a diminution of its relevance both in one's personal life, and in terms of what it brings to the world. Especially now, when science and math are touted too often as the only sure way to success for individual students, and the means to saving the planet for humankind, the creation of something that speaks to beauty, or that nourishes, or that embraces the body in warmth and comfort, is often relegated to something less than its life-enhancing status, just as teachers are often relegated to something less than the nurturers of mankind.

In my childhood home there was little in the way of art on the walls, art materials with which to play, music to soothe, or books to read. I was, however, driven to bring some of this into my own life. I sang constantly, and still do often. I recall walking down the dark street late at night, after my waitressing shift was done (in my senior year of high school when I lived alone and had no car). To comfort and protect myself, I sang every

song in my repertoire—J. J. Cale, Cat Stevens, Olivia Newton John, and even the Everly Brothers. It was a way to scare away the bogey man if I was afraid, but it was also just a genuine way to feel joy. I also played the piano by ear when we moved into one house in which the instrument was stuck by virtue of an ill-planned remodel. I wrote poetry all the time, wrote stories, and drew—at least when I was younger. The need to bring creativity into one's world is, I think, universal, and that it was so central to the lives of these student-participants in educational reform at a time when much in their worlds was uncertain at best, and frightening at worst was, I hope, a comfort to them.

With poverty, comes hunger—both physical and emotional. Currently, it is referenced as “food insecurity,” (just as soldiers dying in war are referenced as “troops” instead of people). But if we asked a child who comes to school without breakfast if he is food insecure, we will likely get a puzzled look. Hunger is hunger. The mind becomes obsessed with the need to fill that hunger. When I was really young, I was constantly peeking into the pantry to see if there was still anything in there to eat, and I was shocked at the amount of food in the cabinets of friends' homes (which made them, in my mind, rich). I was always lurking around corners and eavesdropping on my parents' conversations, and I processed what they were saying not in terms of the rent not being paid, the electricity that was about to be shut off, or the phone that was already disconnected, but in terms of the food that we would not have. *How would we live if we had no food?* The Salvation Army came to our rescue during the holidays, and when the new books of food stamps came at the beginning of each month, my mom would trek to the grocery store in her leaky boots and ugly coat, and shop for the entire four weeks to come. In my adolescent years we got food (not just the stamps) from the federal

government (USDA). It was the best time of month when we went to pick up those plain white boxes with the black lettering on them... five-pound blocks of American processed cheese food, giant cans of peanut butter, huge plastic bags of cereal. We felt rich when we first brought that food home. But that program either didn't exist at all, or didn't exist for us until just before I moved out on my own. Before that, my babysitting money became the way I could buy food for myself. I'd hoard it (much like foster children are inclined to do even when they find themselves in homes that have ample food). I hid it in my dresser drawers, and in back corners of my closets. I continued to do that even when I lived on my own; I developed a weight problem because I not only ate foods with poor nutritional value, but I ate them in secret, and usually late at night.

There was great shame in the fact of my food hoarding, and even when I worked in the restaurant and lived on my own that last year of high school, I never ate in front of anyone at work, not even in the break room where most of my colleagues enjoyed their meals. I went home and ate my hoarded stashes of cookies, or Twinkies, or potato chips. As I gained weight, I would tell people who commented on the fact that I had a "gland problem."

In younger years, while my peers were using their earnings to buy records, and expensive jeans, I was expected to pay for all my own toiletries (shampoo, deodorant, and even sanitary napkins), and my own clothes for school. Anything left after that was spent on food. To this day, I obsess over items that I have run out of in my pantry, even if they're things I don't use much. I write them on my shopping list just before I run out of them, and there is a compulsion to replenish the items quickly. I have a store of non-perishables that could feed me comfortably for probably two months even if I bought

nothing else. My fruit basket is always full—something I vowed would be the case when I was younger and we never had fresh fruit. I always have orange juice, and vegetables for salad, and even though I rarely go on binges with food anymore, I have the same mindset about its presence, and often wake up in the morning with first, the cello playing in my mind, and then as I wake up more, thoughts about the food I will eat that day.

The means to create art has ameliorated some of my physical and emotional hunger. Instead of a package of cookies, I may buy some sponges and a jar of Modge Podge and make a collage. Instead of a pound of cheese, I may buy a sketchbook. And always, there is music. There is, I am learning, more comfort in those, and I will live longer for the “dietary” change.

Literacy

Across my 44 moves, and even during the times I was living in my car, I was never without books. Some were lost to circumstance, some never mine to keep, but always they were there, and often, they were my only friends.

For those of us gifted with the means to communicate through the written word, or to carry a conversation about the merits of something we read, there is comfort and belonging. For many persons with disability attributes, there may never be such comfort and belonging. To the person who has never learned to read, or write, or to the person who is unable to speak (or who speaks and understands a language other than that which is dominant around her), there is an unfathomable imprisonment, I imagine. As humans, we are the most social of creatures and literacy is often the central component to that socialization. That said, I know that there are many for whom words will never form in

the mind or on the lips to be spoken, or be understood on a page, or be expressed in writing.

As a teacher of language arts and all that is represented by that label (both literacy and art), I strived to elicit the words from my students that would allow them to be empowered, to communicate with others in formal and informal settings, to make their needs known, and their opinions understood. But often, this was not something readily achieved by students with disability attributes, regardless of the nature of the disability. The brain is a complex puzzle, and while it is the tool for learning literacy, it can also be the reason that conventional literacy will never be achieved. One blip in the neural pathways of a child with intellectual/developmental disability can prevent the acquisition of literacy learning. Trauma in early childhood might also close the door to literacy learning in the conventional sense. Therefore, I reasoned in that same whispering inner voice, there must be another way for the voice to make itself known, regardless of whether that means leads ultimately to conventional literacy functioning or not.

As shared earlier in this work, it was my own experience of using art as a component piece of a project I was completing about the brain's function in literacy learning that turned on the proverbial lightbulb as to how art could and should be a component part of literacy teaching in my own classroom. I never looked back, and when I look at old lesson plans, or student work samples, it is a rare unit that did not include an artistic component. I noticed immediately that my students were more responsive to the reading and writing components of my lessons when there were also included opportunities for arts-based activities. I can also share that I was told (more than once) by one parent that the artistic pieces to the work I assigned was very welcome and was the

motivator for her child completing the first homework assignment that involved writing in all the nine years of her school experience. In fact, this mother shared that because of the element of choice, the entire family contributed to the project from the choosing of the subject matter (Sitting Bull), to the menu options for “showing me what you know” and even the creation of the display board. She said this was because they were able to honor their own personal culture and share in family time as well. As I write this, I still get chills. It also did not hurt that this sharing occurred during literacy night at our school.

The memory of the conversation with that parent reminds me now of the children at NCS. When asked why they did not contribute their family preserves, or breads, or crafts to the school fair, their answer was “We have shame.” I read that over and over in teacher diaries and the diary of Mary Watson. I did not understand it at first. But when I think about the nativist and nationalistic movements that were prevalent in the era in which NCS existed, I get it. Those children and their families had been told that their worlds were not as important, that the crafts their families did were not *real* art, that the tortillas their mothers made were not *real* bread. Their shame was wrought by a dominant culture of which they both wanted to be a part, but struggled to belong. One of the gifts of NCS was the *regifting* of the students’ own culture both back to them and as contributory to everyone in the school and community. They were reminded that they mattered and were wonderful just as they were. All children need to know this.

When someone creates a painting, or composes a piece of music, sculpts a cow out of compressed breadcrumbs, wraps string around a child-sized shopping cart, or picks up a chewing gum wrapper and some sticks and re-envisions them as composite parts of a new piece of art, she is speaking to us—perhaps, in the way she is most comfortable, or

perhaps in the only way she knows how. Persons who live in communities where a common language is spoken or written, and who understand that common language and are able to function within its boundaries become used to that as the means to communicate with one another. And those among them who become teachers, naturally, wish to impart that common language to the students with whom they are charged. When that does not happen, especially after years of schooling, many students are further isolated from the rest by being offered no alternative to the standard, conventional form of communication.

Dr. Tireman seemed to understand that literacy learning was, at a minimum, more interesting, and optimally, better enhanced when it was taught within the context of creative expression. The students who attended the two experimental schools in New Mexico were disabled by poverty, by illness, and by language. Many of them were able to overcome these deficits and learned not only to speak, read, and write proficiently, but to excel at it. For others, that did not come to fruition, and I cannot help but wonder who had the better experience? Was it those students (like the ones who attend the community schools in this study), for whom the attempts to learn literacy were made in the context of creative endeavors, and in outdoor excursions into their communities, or those (like my siblings with disability attributes that made literacy learning difficult) who were given flash cards, phonics charts, and books that had nothing to do with anything in their own lives—and were also just plain boring?

At NCS, in particular, the creation of art often superseded the written word, not only in the lowest primary grades, but in the upper grades as well. Some of the teachers noted in their diaries that for some students, first making a picture of the content being

learned and *then* adding written language to it was the most sensible order and resulted in the most progress where literacy learning was concerned. This was also the case for the students during the school year 1941-1942, as the U.S. was becoming involved in the war. The students in the upper grades created an elaborate mural map of Europe. The map was updated daily and showed the movement of the various armies, conquered territories, and most especially, the progress of the Nazi armies because Hitler's German army so frightened the students. Multi-modal literacy activities during that time included listening to radio reports of the latest news about the war on the classroom radio, with several students each day writing notes about the broadcast. Then, the entire class would review and discuss the day's news and the teacher would correct any misconceptions (in part, so that students would have the latest accurate news to bring home to their families, most of whom did not have radios or receive newspapers). Finally, the students wrote group or individual compositions and updated their European map mural.

I should make clear that I am *not* saying that there is no place for conventional methods of teaching and learning literacy. I am, however, saying that whether functional literacy is something that comes readily or something that never comes to a person at all, art-making and culturally-based art-appreciation activities can certainly not *hurt* literacy learning, and may actually aid in its achievement; this is one of the premises of the least dangerous assumption where literacy learning is concerned. The other premise of the least dangerous assumption asks that as educators, we begin with the presumption of competence when teaching all students. In other words, while my research has certainly not established causation (as in, making art leads to literacy learning), I believe there is ample evidence of a correlation as to the reciprocal relationships between the two.

Students who are offered arts-based approaches to literacy learning are exposed to the means to communicate and contribute to others in their communities regardless of the resulting outcome for their traditional literacy skills. Further, arts-based approaches to teaching and learning contribute to one's ways of knowing the world, and ways of showing what is known, as suggested by Paolo Freire (1994).

There is no one in my family who is not literate to some degree, but at least one of my siblings struggles with functional literacy, and speaks to his regret about that. When we attended a charity function several years ago, there was a massive group mural-making table in the back of the room. All manner of materials were supplied by the event organizers and anyone who wished to contribute to the mural—which was to be hung in the pediatric cancer ward at the local hospital—was welcome to work at the table. Most of the creativity was being enjoyed by children, but I asked my brother why they should have all the fun. At first, he was very hesitant, stating that he had not done art since he was around six years old (sad in itself). When I started making a person out of pipe cleaners, beads, buttons and ribbons, he joined in and we created the pipe cleaner lady together. It's a great memory, but also sad in that my wonderful, kind brother, I now realize, has neither strong enough literacy skills to escape from the world with a good book, nor confidence or comfort enough to enjoy making art. Had he been taught literacy with an arts-based approach, he may have that joy in his life which would help to ameliorate the impacts of his low literacy level, and of the psychosocial disability attributes with which he lives because of childhood trauma. That said, this is not a man who sits around feeling sorry for himself and he understands that he has many talents to

offer the world that are not restricted by the word. But, that has been a long time in coming.

For me, I consider myself beyond fortunate that I am fully literate, that I read myself to sleep every night, that I make art alone and in the presence of others with a comfort level that is new and exciting, and that the art-making serves to enhance my literate life as well. As I write this, I understand that the books I used to read to remove myself from the aspects of my life in which I least wanted to be present, are in no small way now a part of the reason that I am writing this dissertation.

Summary for this Analysis of Patterns and Themes from an Autoethnographic Point-of-View

The amelioration of the impacts of stigmatization and marginalization resulting from disability, poverty, and the isolation that can occur as a result of each can occur within an arts-based approach to literacy learning, especially when presented in a safe and nurturing environment.

Before that can happen, however, the relationships that serve to guide, support, and validate the experiences of students with disability attributes, and who live in marginalized conditions must be in place. In my own world, those relationships were provided by my maternal grandparents, several teachers over the years, and by some people who are not likely considered by many as potentially valuable in a child's life (including the lunchroom lady and custodian at one school, for example). My grandparents, especially, filled the roles of enlightened witnesses in my childhood, and long since their passing, their spiritual presence in my life still serves to spur me on and reminds me that I have a destiny to fulfill. I believe I have been an enlightened witness

for many of my students, though I did not know that term or make any kind of conscious decision to fill that role at the time. Like the teachers at San José and Nambé, I saw my place in the lives of my students as a necessary presence that went well beyond teaching them.

I am also the enlightened witness for my siblings and my work on this dissertation (and the conversations, text messages, and emails that resulted) has brought some of us closer and allowed us to begin to remove the shroud of secrecy that has hindered communication with each other, and happiness in our lives for many years. As children, my brothers and sisters and I learned to keep secrets really well. Many other facts about our lives that we would have liked to hold close, were fodder for bullying by the other kids when we were not able to prevent those secrets from getting out into the world. Children are cruel, and my brother recalls being made fun of for the fact that we were having oatmeal for supper—perhaps a small thing for someone whose childhood was never lacking where food was concerned, but obviously traumatizing enough for him to recall it four decades after the fact. I remember raucous laughter at the clothes I was wearing, my favorite fur hat being flushed in the toilet, and our entire family being the butt of many jokes because of our parents' dysfunction, and our appearances and behaviors. But, we strive to overcome, and for me, and (hopefully) some of the students of the two experiments in educational reform in New Mexico, that resiliency was aided by relationships and the gifts of literacy and creative expression in our lives.

Chapter Six. Conclusions, Limitations, and Implications for Future Research

The instinct to be creative is one of the most basic in the human condition. Too often, however, persons with disability attributes are deprived of opportunities to engage in artistic activities. As discussed earlier in this dissertation, there was once a strong-held belief that persons with intellectual/developmental disability (IDD) did not possess the ability for conscious creativity (Crawford, 1962; Sacks, 1970/2006). Crawford asserted that it was for this reason that persons with IDD were relegated to “tasks such as basket-weaving, sewing, and drawing where emphasis is placed on following carefully and repeating a prescribed pattern” (p. 67). That the “tasks” referenced would be diminished as accomplishable by anyone capable of following a pattern is offensive, but more important is the argument that there is some kind of cut-off point in terms of the capability for any person to be creative, merely because he lives with disability attributes.

In response to the argument that persons with severe disability are not capable of creativity, I would ask anyone to look closely at the work of Judith Scott and not be convinced that her cocoon-like fiber and found object sculptures were done with intent and were instinctually creative endeavors. I referenced Scott’s work earlier in this dissertation, and there are photos of some of the examples of her sculptures I found most intriguing. But recently, I was privileged to see those and many others, as well as some of the artist’s original works on paper on display at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, in the exhibition *Judith Scott—Bound & Unbound*. Scott’s work has been interpreted over the years by artists and historians to the extent possible, but because she lived with Down syndrome as an attribute, and was without hearing or speech, she was not, herself, able to speak to the art she created. That said, there is no argument that she *was* making art. After

living much of her life in an institution, the actual *work* of Judith Scott's life did not begin until she was freed first, by supportive, and validating relationships that included her twin sister Joyce, and the people at Creative Growth Art Center—a community-based art studio for persons with IDD—and next, the act of making art using the materials of her choice, and in the presence of others. I learned that Judith was, at first, provided with drawing and painting materials, but after being shown fiber art by someone at the art center, she chose as her medium the string, and ribbon, and fabric, along with the found items she chose to wrap within them and which changed over time.

At the exhibit, I was disappointed with the manner in which the sculptures were displayed, though I'm not sure these fragile-looking pieces could have been suspended so they could be viewed from all sides (perhaps, at least they might have been placed on a more raised platform). I appreciated, however, that they were not behind glass, or some other type of barrier. So, I got down on the floor and looked as closely as I could, at the intricacies of each piece. Everything was done with intent... a knot at a certain place, a particular bead added just before a change in color of yarn or other fiber with which she was working... there was definitely order and intent in the seeming chaos of each piece. Even someone like me, unschooled in such matters, got an immediate sense of purpose in Scott's work. She was also prolific, with many of the pieces, including the most complex, having been completed in the last two years of her life. A favorite of mine is shown below, in Figure 37. I love the irony of a crutch being used as the foundation for something that looks like it is capable of soaring like a bird, and I do not believe that this was an accident because the evolution of Judith Scott's work indicates a level of internal thought that belied her external disability attributes.



Figure 37, Judith Scott, *Untitled*. (1997). Fiber and Found Objects

It is one thing to see the images of art in books, and quite another to walk in their presence, to *feel* a small bit of what may have gone into their making. Judith Scott was showing us her way of knowing the world, and I am grateful to her sister, to the private collectors who donated pieces, to the art center in California, and to the curator of the exhibit. Just like the Universe gifted me with the diaries and student work from SJTS and NCS, it gifted me with this exhibition, taking place at the same time I was planning to visit Brooklyn.

Others who have been so relegated as incapable of creativity are those suffering from severe forms of mental illness, especially schizophrenia. Marinow (1963) shared a case study in which a patient with schizophrenia was so driven to make art she collected bread crumbs secretly and over time at each meal, using them to create small animals and human figures. Figure 38, below, is a representative sample—a bread crumb cow. The artist next used the bread crumb models to create paintings, which were subsequently used as models for clay figures. Marinow suggested that as the patient’s “clinical condition improved, so did her technical skill, until some of the products had artistic

value” (p. 120). What most fascinated me was the fact that this woman’s drive to make art was so strong, she often made these figures in her bed, and in complete darkness.

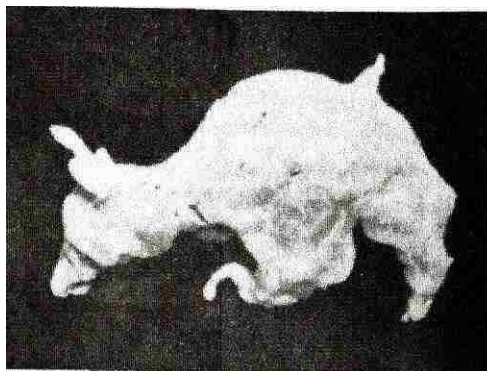


Figure 38. *Anonymous*. Bread crumb cow. (ca. 1962).

Much like some of the institutionalized artists discussed in my literature review (Soutter, and Grebing to name two), the drive to make art was so strong as to not be deterred by a lack of traditional media within which to work. I would also argue that there is artistic value in all of this artist’s pieces, especially the bread crumb cow.

Long before Crawford (1962), and Marinow (1963), there were students with all manner of disability attributes creating art in the context of an experiment in curricular reform in a state that many did not know then, and do not know now is even one among the 50 (48 in the 1930s). While the focus of Dr. Tireman’s work with the two community schools that comprise the NCSTD was not creative expression, there is ample evidence that he felt it important and not only encouraged its use in both schools, but actually came to favor it over many other activities as the years went on and the experiment bore fruit. Teachers merely had to request materials and supplies, and they were there. Conflicts with schedules that involved test practice were rectified so that the girls could finish their dresses in time for the spring fashion revue, and the boys could complete woodworking projects in the school’s shop. Whether it was Dr. Tireman, Cyrus McCormick, Mary

Watson, or one of the teachers who crafted an eloquent diary, rich in descriptive details about the lessons being completed by the children, the use of artistic endeavors as a central component of instruction, especially at the higher grade levels at NCS, was more than apparent. It was celebrated by everyone at the school and in the community.

While second grade students at NCS were studying Émile Bernard's *The Harvest*, and completing their own crayon renditions of farms to accompany their charts, the students in the seventh and eighth grade classroom were using the Spanish arts and crafts traditions learned from community members to carve the classroom planters and window boxes, to play the guitar, and in the completion of a mural to accompany their study of Diego Rivera. And as the years went by, and the U.S.' involvement in World War II went from a possibility to a reality, it is a poignant irony that the students of NCS were, unknowingly, connected by virtue of art to the students in Europe who fell victim to Hitler (the person the students of NCS most feared) and his Nazi regime. That artistic connection came in the form of the progressivist teaching, which allowed for the students in NCS to be provided with opportunities for creative expression in their school, and which allowed the children imprisoned in the Terezín Concentration Camp to make art under the loving guidance of Friedl Dicker Brandeis.

There were many similarities between the students at NCS, and the children who learned from Friedl Dicker Brandeis and other artists—many well-known and virtually all well-educated. Both groups lived in poverty, both were populations that might be said to be made up entirely of students with (at a minimum) psychosocial disability attributes, both groups were gifted with enlightened witnesses to their truths, and neither was allowed to be relegated or dismissed as unworthy of whatever education it was possible

for them to attain in the time they were under the tutelage of their mentors and teachers. Of course, the children of Terezín were in much more dire circumstances, and death was certain for most of them (of 15,000 children who entered the camp, only 100 survived), but while they made art, I'd like to think that the trauma they knew was assuaged for a little while. And I would also like to think that while they painted the flowers in the vase, or the view from the window of the building where they worked on their own "artistic acts of defiance," they were also able to hear one, in the form of Verdi's Requiem, another artistic act of defiance that was performed at Terezín sixteen times over a two-year period, using an ever-changing cast of 150 Jewish choir members who were replaced as their predecessors in the choir were murdered as part of Hitler's plan to eliminate every Jew from the planet. While the adults sang, the children painted, and drew, and made collages at Terezín. Their art defied their circumstances and was generally representational of hope, just as was the artwork of the Depression-ravaged children of NCS.

My own eighth grade students and I were privileged to see many of the original works of art created by Friedl Dicker Brandeis and the children of Terezín. We were all held captive by these pieces, many of which we had viewed in the book, *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*. We talked of them for many days afterward, and these students' later artwork was reflective of not only the art as representational of the books we were reading, but of the works they had themselves seen on the walls of the UNM Art Museum in the exhibit, *Through a Narrow Window*, thanks to the efforts of Dr. Linney Wix to bring the exhibition to UNM. As well, I was in attendance at the performance of *Defiant Requiem Verdi at Terezín* and was forever changed by that experience. That so many,

who endured so much suffering, would be compelled to paint, or to sing at the top of their lungs something as complex and technically challenging as Verdi's *Requiem* defies my ability to understand, and bears the argument that art is at the core of the human experience better than any I could make as the writer of this dissertation.

In my own teaching experience, I too was gifted to see my students' truths in their artwork. In the cases of some, I was fully aware of the disability attributes with which they were living. One example of such a student will always stand out in my mind. He spent most of every day in the Intensive Support Program (ISP) room, with occasional excursions out onto the school grounds, or walks in the hallways with an educational assistant (EA), but for the most part, his day-to-day school world was one room in a portable at the back of the main buildings. He did not speak, and every time I was in the room, it seemed he was still being asked to write his name, or identify the safety signs. But when I introduced him to watercolor painting, he showed an intensity of focus and happiness that I had never seen in him before. It was so joyous to behold! He knew the colors he wanted to use, and when he accidentally knocked his paint set onto the floor and the red tray fell out, he refused to move forward until he was offered a new set of paints (the red one had been marred in the fall, and it was his favorite color). After being presented with a new set of paints, he went on to finish several paintings. I am uncertain whether he was painting his own representations of spring, as the rest of us were doing, but I know he painted with intention. And when he lifted the painting from the table, and held it vertically that was also with intention. He smiled as the paint dripped from the top of the page to the bottom, through all the colors drying beneath it as it ran, and when an

adult tried to help him right the “error,” he immediately picked the painting up again and watched it drip once more.

Those paintings were hung in the display case of our school library, lovingly matted with coordinating background colors by our school librarian (a young male who was himself a student of art). When this student artist saw his painting in the display case, there were sounds of pure happiness that came from him, and I was privileged to be present for the unveiling. After that, the route of the excursions from the ISP room, and through the school grounds was altered so that the view of the display case outside the library could be taken in. One EA told me that the student (who was a 15-year old, male with a large build) nearly dislocated her arm trying to pull her in the direction of the library. His smile, she said, was bigger than she’d ever seen.

Many of my students had less obvious disability attributes, and some were carried deep within and unknown to anyone but themselves. But, in their artwork, there could be release and (I hope) some relief. These students were particularly empathetic to the plight of the children who were Hitler’s victims, and one girl, who made a collage that was inclusive of many tiny torn pieces of yellow and orange paper glued carefully outside of dark construction paper buildings with tall smoke stacks said that each of the small pieces was representative of a person’s soul on its way to heaven. She then told me that it was probably the same as the number of times she had cried since her dad went to prison. That she allowed me to bear witness to her truth is something I will always remember and hold with great respect in my heart.

Especially for students labeled as having Emotional Behavioral Disorder (EBD), opportunities for creative expression can serve as a means to “say” that which they may

usually not speak to. These are the kids who have my heart, and too often their days are spent in one small room filled with anger, and disruption, and pain. Two students labeled as EBD that stand out to me in terms of their art were a boy whose brother was found hanging in the family living room after the rest of the family took a short trip out to buy ice cream (likely the work of a rival gang, according to the family), and a girl whose parents had sold her to grown men who sexually abused her. They used the money to buy heroine. Their art said what they could not speak to.

Coming back around full circle. I originally sought to answer these research questions. *In what ways can an understanding of myself as a person who has experienced marginalization, disability, and the impacts of art-making on both, serve to inform and expand our understandings of the relationships between and among disability circumstances, creative expression, and literacy development, in ways that are reciprocal rather than hierarchical? What does this synergistic learning and reciprocity look like in practice? Can reciprocity of voice between and among myself as a participant/researcher and teachers who have come before me serve to inform future practice, both my own and others?*

In order to answer those questions, I had to move beyond myself and my family's experiences. I hoped that an archival search of educational collections might lead me to locate little niches exemplifying the ways in which teachers, and in particular those serving students at risk for failure due to disability attributes, may have done *better* by those students than the teachers of my siblings, and more recently, some of the teachers and other adults with whom I have worked. I did not know where or when that might have occurred—those who managed to find something more—how that would look, or if

it would be with intent. I just believed that in all the records we are inclined as humans to keep, and all of the things that mark our existence on the planet, someone must have cared enough to look out on her classroom and see the hunger in the eyes of her students and dare to try something new, and that maybe someone in her life held onto some evidence of her empathy and brilliance. Surely, I thought, John Dewey was not the only educator/theorist who recognized that the traditional way of educating is not always the kindest or most effective, nor the only way to attempt to move theory into practice where progressivist ideologies were concerned. Surely, Paulo Freire was not the only philosopher who believed that a person's knowing the world could be manifested in different ways of showing what he knows. I did not anticipate the treasure that lay in wait for me in the form of the Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries.

My discovery of the NCSTD collection necessitated an additional research question because it moved my research from primarily autoethnographic in nature to primarily phenomenological. This was due to the extensive means the collection provided me for exemplifying my belief that literacy learning is best served in the context of creative expression, and best delivered through reciprocal relationships that move beyond the walls of the school and involve the entire community, so that everyone's needs are being met, and everyone feels important in the process. A phenomenon, it seems, can be examined in the context of the past at least as well, and perhaps even better, as it can in the moment of its occurrence in our presence. Further, viewing these phenomena of the past through the lens of the present, and as a researcher/outsider, greatly reduced the potential for research bias, while still allowing me to speak to the role of aesthetic

empathy in a new characterization of creative expression and as central to a sound literacy pedagogy. The research question I added, in light of this new information was:

What does the lived experience of school staff, students, and community members, as shown through the teachers' diaries that are part of the NCSTD collection, reveal about reciprocity between and among art-making, literacy learning, and community?

I am not known for taking the shortest path when answering a question. In this case, the questions I posed of myself and my own research took over 400 pages to answer, but I am satisfied that each has been addressed and as noted earlier, while I have not established a cause and effect relationship between the allowance for creative expression and literacy learning, I have established clear correlational evidence that arts-based activities and literacy can have a positive impact on one another. I was fortunate to find many examples of the way this looks in practice when I found the NCSTD, and especially the records for NCS. But, my own and my family's experiences also establish correlation, as does the work of the researchers and educators discussed in chapter two and shown in Table 1. Most certainly the strength of art as a means of communicating was evidenced in this work by the outsider artists also discussed in Chapter two.

Throughout my archival diggings, I was regularly reminded of those artist outsiders upon whom I focused much of my literature review. I believe the reasons they kept coming to mind were the constant parallels of marginalization by disability attributes, especially of the emotional and mental types, that spoke to me as I read the teacher diaries and looked at the children's drawings. When the world is a place in which an individual finds it difficult to *fit*, creative expression can serve as a means for self-comfort, for resilience, and for healing. Ultimately, it can also be the means for validation

by others, and for growing relationships. Creating something artistically original is a way of leaving one's mark on the world, even if it seems as if that world is conspiring against that contribution, as was most certainly the case for many of the institutionalized artists discussed in my literature review.

Artists with and without disability attributes present their personal truths to the world and we are privileged for the gift. The students at SJTS and NCS, contemporary self-trained artists like Judith Scott, and Stephen Wiltshire, (the latter an artist with autism as an attribute, and famous for his ink-drawn urban landscapes drawn from memory), institutionalized artists throughout history—some who remained anonymous, and others who became famous as outsider artists,—and the child artists at Terezín, in the end, all contributed to the three themes that developed as ameliorating factors in the lives of students marginalized by disability and poverty. Along with my family's experiences, these themes and the patterns subsumed within them became clear and overwhelming to me and are inclusive of reciprocal relationships, flexibility in literacy teaching and learning that is relevant to student lives, and the allowance for and embracing of creative expression both for its own sake and as a component of multi-modal literacy learning. As to the impact of supportive relationships, and specifically, the importance of enlightened witnesses, in the amelioration of disability attributes inclusive of all types, and the marginalizing and stigmatizing impacts of those attributes, I feel strongly that I have provided ample evidence going to that truth.

In Chapter two, I also shared a wide variety of research evidencing the positive role of creative expression in literacy pedagogy that is taking place across multiple genres within disability populations. I discussed, extensively, the art-making of individuals

institutionalized primarily due to mental and emotional illness and the myriad ways it served them (or failed to do so) in their lives. However, the work done in this dissertation also included persons with psychosocial disability attributes often not considered in scholarly research involving persons with disabilities.

Disability is not limited to a medical diagnosis, and often does not involve one at all. The impacts of psychosocial disability inclusive of isolation, marginalization, and stigmatization due to circumstances of poverty, abuse, trauma, and language deficits, as well as the under-addressed and misunderstood disability attributes surrounding mental and emotional disorders are present in every classroom. Ameliorating their impacts is critical not only to the individual students living with them, but for the communities within which these individuals live and will contribute in their future lives.

My decision to share my personal experience was, at least in part, an effort to better understand the traits that have impacted me throughout my life, as well as those that I, as an educator, must possess in my classroom and beyond if I am to honor the many people whose stories contributed to this one and perhaps help to improve the experience of literacy learning and art-making for my students. There are many like me in the world who come to it damaged, but with a heart grown stronger by that damage, and who want to make a difference in the lives of others.

Implications. One of the implications for future research surrounds the need to evidence the practice of creative expression both within and outside of the classroom in order to better understand the ways in which such practice can serve to ameliorate the impacts of disability circumstances. I have shared examples in this work of the ways such practice has had a positive and life-changing impact on my own life, but it took me over

half a century to get there, and I believe, strongly, that students who are afforded opportunities to be creative in a safe and nurturing environment where relationships are encouraged to flourish can learn to thrive through the efforts. Some of the ways that practice might look were gleaned from the archival records of the NCSTD.

Yet, the very essence of what I have learned personally and what I was able to learn through the work of so many others is also part of the limitations of this research. I understand that the telling of a story based in memory of the self, and the word of others written on diary pages often inclusive of opinions and conjecture, and certainly open to interpretation by the researcher, leaves it vulnerable to criticism. As I have stated several times in this work, I understand that memory is fallible, and certainly where that memory is based in emotion and experiences of trauma and disability, it is prone to bias regardless of the intent to seek the truth. But there *is* truth, and when I can have a phone conversation with my brother during which we share commonality of memory for the first time in four decades or more, with little variation in its details, that is truth. When I can read the words of nearly 20 teachers whose interests were clear and heart-felt and who wanted to do right by their students to such an extent that they regularly used the diaries as venues for questions about their methods, ponderings about their own intent, and debates with themselves on paper about whether what they were choosing to do was the right choice, that too is truth.

I also believe that my research is transferable to other applications insofar as it serves to allow both an insider's and outsider's view of the impacts of disability attributes in order to both better understand the phenomenon itself, and the practices that may serve to ameliorate its impacts. At the core of all qualitative research, regardless of the

methodology used to collect, report, and analyze the data, there is the matter of what it can teach us. As educators we are asked to bring to our classrooms a ready “bag of tricks” that will help us to address the individual needs of many different students. Often, we are prescribed generalizable means to do this, and these means are derived quantitatively.

While I certainly believe there is a place for quantitative data that is relevant to education, where our students are concerned they are more than numbers, more than “bubble kids,” more than test scores, and even more than students. By using thick description in my data reporting, it was my hope that others could find the means to apply this research to their own particular needs, whether seeking to better understand similar experiences, or vastly different ones. Therefore, the implications for future research are unique to each of those held by teachers and others service providers who might find something usable here.

Additionally, and more broadly, I believe that this research holds great implications for the use of archival records that exist in every institution of higher learning, in town historical societies, in museums, and even in online archival databases (though the joy of touching, seeing, and even smelling the original documents as they were created is irreplicable). Bachelor (1991) argued that well-endowed institutions like Teachers College, Columbia University, and other institutions in the East often supply the materials for researchers interested in all manner of historical educational studies, in part, because the materials are vast and also because they have been treated consistently and are, therefore, easy to access and use. When dealing with less well-endowed institutions (which are most of those not in the Ivy League realm), researchers often have to dig a little harder, and put things together that are not necessarily plain. But, each time a researcher does that, there is another source of information that can serve us in our

decision-making as educators. Thus, the reciprocity continues between the historical past, the lived present, and the as-yet-to-be future.

It would also seem that a logical implication for future research might be in the community school concept itself. Community schools are those that seek to serve the individually unique needs of the communities within which they are set. They also provide not only education, but an array of additional social services, including (often) medical and dental services, counseling, and community outreach in which individuals who are not directly involved in the school, may still derive benefits from it. These types of services might include, but are not limited to adult literacy learning, career counseling and training, school/community gardens and accompanying lessons in how to improve nutrition, to name just a few.

Mary Watson, Dr. Tireman, and the teachers dialogued numerous times and throughout the years that encompassed NCS' incarnation as a community school about the merits of various methods they were employing to teach students as well as what they were deriving from the individuals in the community. When something was not working, they made the necessary shifts—remaining ever flexible in both their objectives and the processes necessary to reach them. I believe this was one of the main differences that distinguished NCS from SJTS, where the teachers at SJTS were not allowed that flexibility, and where the diaries were first, non-existent, and then not of the dialogue type. This was, in my opinion, a distinct disadvantage that served to thwart the success of SJTS.

What the diary authors and respondents at NCS never debated, however, was that students should leave school with a broad base of knowledge that would afford them the

necessary skills to navigate the world, regardless of the situations in which they would find themselves. They also believed the broad base of knowledge could be derived from the familiar and in their own community first, then later, be expanded to the larger world.

NCS was, in my opinion, as much a victim of politics as are many of our students today. Ongoing and ever-changing reforms, most all of which are short-sighted and many not supportable, prevent us from learning what may actually work because it is changed before it has been allowed enough time to show itself as a success or failure. Cyrus McCormick understood that when he suggested that the work at Nambé could not be deemed as either a success or failure until a full generation of students had completed school from first through eighth grades there. As well, Loyd Tireman understood it when he wrote that “five years look like a long time, but when social change is concerned they are ‘as a passing shadow’” (Tireman & Watson, 1943, p. 128).

There are stirrings in the air, both here in Albuquerque and on the larger national front that indicate it to be a good time for deeper research into the potential impacts of a community school approach to education. Recently, there was an insert in the *Albuquerque Journal* devoted to the Albuquerque Academy’s 60th anniversary as an institution. While not a community school, the Academy shares some of the community school’s approach to education, so it is unfortunate that it is a school that is far more accessible to students whose Socioeconomic Statuses (SESs) tend almost exclusively to lie on the wealthy end of the continuum. I read some of the articles with interest and was struck by the flexibility of their program. One example of the school’s break from traditional practices surrounds the lack of actual grades in the lower division (sixth and seventh grades) where students, instead receive a written evaluation covering course

work and broad basic knowledge, as well as individual student strengths and weaknesses. These are completed three times a year. As to the flexibility of the program, the lower grades have “a fluid schedule” in which time allotted for a particular content may be shortened or extended from one week to the next based on the material being taught. This is decided by all teachers in a weekly meeting. Flexibility in the upper division is less pronounced in the schedule, which is similar to most traditional schools, but with a wider variety of options in each. As well, seniors do not attend any on-campus classes for the last five weeks of the school year so that they can devote their time and energy to their senior projects which are a key component of their graduation requirements and are choice-based, and also often inclusive of community service. This choice also allows for a student to opt for arts-based projects if that is the preference of that individual and if the project is approved by appropriate school staff.

The areas in which students in the lower division at the Academy are evaluated are strikingly close to the four main focus areas of NCS, as cited by the seventh/eighth grade teacher in a diary from October 10, 1940. They included: social concern and responsibility, individual responsibility, work habits, and creativeness. (Coincidentally the head of the Academy [its principal] is Andrew *Watson*. Related to Mary Watson?)

There are other schools in Albuquerque that are also trying non-traditional approaches in an effort to raise graduation rates, and improve the dismal truancy numbers which are, in my opinion, higher in the past two years at least in part because of an overemphasis on testing and fewer offerings for students who may not be college-bound. The broad base of knowledge sought by those involved with the community schools in New Mexico that are the subject of much of my research, and referenced above as an

objective at the Albuquerque Academy is also something that is being sought by employers. According to a separate article in the *Albuquerque Journal's* Education section on a recent week, both business and non-profit leaders who participated in a survey that included 17 learning outcomes responded that they find recent college graduates to be lacking in broad-based knowledge, and the ability to think critically and make decisions in a variety of situations. The students scored themselves (613 participated) high in the same areas they were found to be lacking by the survey participants—potential employers for the group. Both groups agreed that broad-based knowledge inclusive of strong foundational skill sets that were not specific to only one area of study were important to career success.

Both of the referenced pieces noted above are very recent, and indicative to me that it is the right time for research into the feasibility of a variety of non-traditional approaches to education. It seems as though our efforts to improve student performance in the so-called STEM classes, have precluded the importance of the arts as also being a crucial component to our understanding of the world. Additionally, arts-based activities can serve as the means to better understanding in some of the science- and math-based curricular areas. The focus—as arts-based, or science-based—should not be a one-or-the-other proposition.

Finally, I also believe there are implications for future scholarly inquiry outside of school-age populations. There is interesting research being conducted about the role of art-making in the promotion of well-being for late-stage Alzheimer's patients (Walsh et al., 2011), as well as other under-researched groups. In Chapter two, I shared an earlier study that found correlation between the onset of frontotemporal dementia (FTD) and a

previously non-existent ability in the visual arts (Miller et al., 1998). This suggests to me that art-making should be researched for its potential as to what may ultimately be the last opportunity for communication by persons who lose (due to medical conditions) the ability to speak, or to remember, or to know joy in their lives. Since my personal interests tend toward adult populations, it would seem that the time is now, for me, to consider conducting more research among some of the older under-served groups where art-making is concerned.

What is the end goal, really? It is only fitting here to end this journey with a little story about one of the lowest level readers in the seventh/eighth grade class at NCS. This student was chronically absent in previous years. During one particularly successful week the teacher wrote about a variety of successes for this student. These included his assistance in the retrieval of an 18-foot chamiso root for the class root collection, as well as taking it upon himself to create two outline maps on cloth, using blackboard slate—one of the United States and one of Europe—for use in consultation as the war was becoming a more pervasive presence in the classroom. This student’s entire demeanor and sense of self had grown, according to the diary entry. The teacher considered this boy’s turns as amounting to “almost a rehabilitation... the loss of his flippant, indifferent manner, his academic gains... And it seemed he would never turn!” (NCSTD, [ca. 1941], Box 25, Diary 5).

Walking to school one morning, around the time of that diary entry, the boy ran to catch up with the teacher. “I sure like school this year. I wouldn’t like to miss a single day” (NCSTD, [ca. 1941], Box 25, Diary 5). Every teacher dreams of hearing that from a student.

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Appendix A

Photo and Illustration Credits

- Figure 1. Judith Scott sculpture, *untitled*, (n.d.). [Photo by Leon Borensztein] In Borofsky, A. R. H. (December 13, 2012). Where great art transcends disability. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <http://www.theatlantic.com/fif.html?v=2&appId=9fd30060>
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- Figure 3. Edvard Munch, *Anxiety*, (1894). In GoogleArtProject.jpg. Retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Edvard_Munch
- Figure 4. Louis Wain, *The Bachelor Party*, (1939). Retrieved from http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ALouis_Wain_The_bachelor_party.jpg
- Figure 5. Tony Robert-Fleury, *Pinel Freeing the Insane*. (1876). In Strawberige: Mental state: Madness. Retrieved from www.strawberige.com/2011/01/mental-state-madness.html
- Figure 6. Francisco Goya, *Yard with Lunatics*. (1793). In Ruth White's Research for Art Blog. Retrieved from <http://artistresearcher.wordpress.com/2009/12/03/goya...>
- Figure 7. *Hospital Real y Genereal en la Ciudad de Zaragoza*, engraving. [ca. 1799]. In Klein, P. K. (1998). Insanity and the sublime: Aesthetics and theories of mental illness in Goya's *Yard with Lunatics* and related works. *Journal of Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 61, 198-252. [Image, p. 209]. Downloaded from JSTOR. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/751250>

Figure 8. Andrew Kennedy, *Untitled* pages from a volume of illustrated work. In Andrew Kennedy Drawings, [ca. 1888]. The Lothian Health Services Archive (LHSA).

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Figure 10. Richard Dadd, Detail of *The Fairy Feller's Master-Stroke*. (1855-64). In

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Figure 11. Louis Wain, *untitled* arabesque cats. (*n.d.*). In Louis Wain – Wikipedia. Life

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Figure 12. Louis Soutter, *Trois têtes tropiques*. (1936). In Artnet galleries: Trois têtes

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Figure 14. Josef Heinrich Grebing, *Calendar of my 20th Century – Chronology for*

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Figure 15. Adolf Wölfli, *Skt.Adolf-Diamantt-Ring*, Pencil and Colored Pencil on Newsprint. (1913)._Artwork of the day #9/2011: Adolf Wolfli (1). Sunday, May 15, 2011. Retrieved from <http://noise-admiration.blogspot.com/2011/05/art>

Figure 16. Adolf Wölfli, *Saint-Mary-Castle-Giant-Grape*, Pencil and Color Pencil on Newsprint. (1915). In Adolf Wolfli. *Escape Into life*. Retrieved from <http://www.escapeintolife.com/artist-watch/adolf-wolfli>

Figure 17. Madge Gill, *Untitled*. (n.d.). Abstract Ink on Newsprint. In Madge Gill 130. Multiple heads in an abstract setting. Retrieved from <http://www.newhamstory.com/node/2201>

Figure 18. Martin Ramirez, *Untitled*. [ca. 1954]. Auburn, CA. Pencil and colored pencil. In Anderson, B. D. (n.d.). Martín Ramirez. Retrieved from <http://arttattler.com/commentarymartinramirez.html>

Figure 19. Re-creation of “Chart IV,” the 2nd floor of Dewey’s University of Chicago Laboratory School. In Dewey, J. (1900/2009). *The school and society & The child and the curriculum*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 55.

Figure 20. Re-creation of “Chart III,” the 1st floor of Dewey’s University of Chicago Laboratory School. In Dewey, J. (1900/2009). *The school and society & The child and the curriculum*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 58.

Figure 21. Story Quilt Code. In Tobin and Dobard’s (1999), *Hidden in plain view. A secret story of quilts and the underground railroad*. New York, NY: Doubleday, 22-23.

Figure 22. The Filling Station. [ca. 1937]. Box 4, Folder 1, Low first grade. Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries. (Collection Number MSS 306 BC). Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

Figure 23. Cows. [ca. 1937]. Box 4, Folder 1, Low first grade. Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries. (Collection number MSS 306 BC). Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

Figure 24. Introduction to San José Training School Second Annual Fair. (October 23, 1936), Box 10, Diary 1. Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries. (Collection number MSS 306 BC). Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

Figure 25. Health Poster by Fourth Grade Student. (1936-1937). Box 11, Diary 1. Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries. (Collection number MSS 306 BC). Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

Figure 26. [Photograph of boys popping corn in front of Mrs. Hughes' fireplace]. [ca. 1936]. Box 21, Diary 1. Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries. (Collection number MSS 306 BC). Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

Figure 27. Man with Sugar Cane or Bamboo. [ca. 1936]. Box 24, Diary 2. Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries. (Collection number MSS 306 BC). Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

Figure 28. Grain Elevator. [ca. 1936]. Box 24, Diary 2. Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries. (Collection number MSS 306 BC). Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

Figure 29. Student drawing of vegetable root systems with hills of Village of Nambé in background. [ca. 1937]. Box 2, Diary 5. Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries. Collection number MSS 306 BC). Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

Figure 30. Juliet's Farm. Drawing and chart. [ca. 1938]. Box 13, Diary 2. Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries. Collection number MSS 306 BC). Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

Figure 31. Émile Bernard, *The Harvest*, Oil on Canvas. (1888). Web Gallery of Art: The Harvest (Breton Landscape). Retrieved from <http://www.wga.hu/art/b/bernarde/breton2.jpg>

Figure 32. Recreation of teacher drawing of outdoor hand washing station. [ca. 1938]. Box 13, Diary 2. Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries. (Collection number MSS 306 BC). Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

Figure 33. [Photographs of the land surrounding the Nambé Community School at project initiation, and three years later]. [ca. 1937-1941]. Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries. (Collection number MSS 306 BC). Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

Figure 34. Small woven rug made by student. [*n.d.*] Box 19 or 20, Separate Folder. Nambé Community School Teachers' Diaries. (Collection number MSS 306 BC). Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

Figure 35. April, 1941, Md. Scores Land Management Test. Reprinted from Tireman and Watson (1943), p. 114.

Figure 36. Author/researcher-generated flow chart. Representation of interactions among three salient themes in data set one and life patterns that comprise them.

Figure 37. Judith Scott, *Untitled*. (1997). Fiber and found objects. In C. Morris & M. Higgs (Eds.), *Judith Scott Bound & Unbound*. New York, NY: Prestel Books.

Figure 38. Bread crumb cow. (Anonymous). [ca. 1962]. In Marinow, A. (1963). Modeling in the treatment of a schizophrenic patient. *Bulletin of Art Therapy*, 2(3), 120-126.

Appendix B

Table 1

Studies, Participants and Settings, Designs, and Brief Description of Study

Study	Participants and Settings	Research Design	Brief Description of Study
Curwood, Magnifico, & Lammers (2013)	Between 8 and 20 focal participants in each of 3 separate studies. Participants ranged in age from 11 to 23, and represented a variety of countries, including: the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. (Participants represent populations able and disabled)	Qualitative: (3) Ethnographic/Case Studies/Observational	<p>Digital Literacy-affinity spaces related to <i>The Hunger Games</i>, <i>Neopets</i>, and <i>The Sims</i>:</p> <p><u>Curwood</u>: 2-yr. study of <i>The Hunger Games</i>; fan practices in various portals; writing of fan fiction, creation and production of videos, composition of music and designing of role-playing games</p> <p><u>Magnifico</u>: 1-yr. study examining <i>Neopets</i>, a web-based game where players create virtual pets; players who write are known as Neopian Writers, and they produce graphic design work, write and make art surrounding their pets</p> <p><u>Lammers</u>: 2-yr. study of <i>The Sims</i>, a life simulation game; players create families and communities; study specific to <i>The Sims Writer's Hangout (SWH)</i>; pedagogical discourse used to create knowledge</p>
Fisher & Lapp (2013)	91 students, all speakers of African American Vernacular English (AAVE); located in San Diego area; all participants either previously failed CA state test required to graduate or had not yet taken; 6 teachers (incl. authors); 12 sections of 9 th , 10 th , & 11 th grade English	Quantitative: Non-Experimental/ Contrastive Analysis Instruction	<p>Researchers updated teacher practices in English classes for min. of 15 minutes per class (4x/wk) over 2 yrs. to include "Talking Like the Test," Incorporation of reading, questionnaires, digital literacy, code-switching registers charts, & lang. frames into lessons</p>

Table 1

Study	Participants and Settings	Research Design	Brief Description of Study
Grocke, Bloch, & Castle (2009)	<p>29 out-patients diagnosed with Severe Enduring Mental Illness (SEMI) in community-based programs chosen by case managers for participation; diagnoses include: schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, and/or bi-polar disorder; inclusion required stabilization of conditions by medications, ability to concentrate for minimum of 1 hour, and ability to participate appropriately; excluded from study were those with personality disorders that might preclude appropriate participation, and/or inability to focus for at least one hour</p> <p>Sessions in 5 community centers in Melbourne with 1 music therapist; 10 weekly sessions (1 introductory, 8 music therapy, 1 conclusion)</p> <p>All participants gave informed consent.</p>	<p>Mixed Methods:</p> <p>Quantitative: Quasi-Experimental</p> <p>Qualitative: Music Therapy/ Phenomenological Analysis of Interview Transcripts</p>	<p>Instruments used in quantitative measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -26-item version of WHOQoL; -SIAS 20-item questionnaire (pre- and post) designed to test social anxiety in social settings; -Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI)—goes to psychiatric symptoms, 53-item self-report -Semi-structured focus group post-project interview (re. experience with project, suggestions for improvement, whether would recommend to others, and which aspects most valued) NOTE: interviews transcribed verbatim <p>Qualitative components:</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) participated in group song-singing of participant-chosen songs; (2) conducted facilitated song-writing with lyrics/style/melody/harmony/rhythm; (3) added instrumental improvisations (range of instruments provided); (4) had their songs recorded in a professional studio (made group CD); and (5) participated in audio-recorded interviews in concluding session; CDs were distributed post-interview.

Table 1

Study	Participants and Settings	Research Design	Brief Description of Study
Hall (2013)	2 groups of 12 participants in 2 arts projects (Lung Ha's Theater Co. and Garvald—described as "art therapy plus") in Edinburgh, Scotland with making and gifting of art products and performances as objective; all participants identified as learning disabled (to include cognitive disabilities, and developmental disabilities); 6 staff participants from Lung Ha's and 9 from Garvald (for interviews only)	Qualitative: Observational Case Studies	Art in variety of forms is created by participants (performance, improvisational, pottery, mosaic, bread-making, painting, weaving); interviews and observations were conducted throughout study (length of time unclear); embodied engagement in process of art making, with others, with materials, and with ideas; practice of <i>Eurhythmia</i> (focus on movement, rhythm, and expression); hands-on, no restrictions (at Garvald), self-guided; performances and exhibitions connect groups to mainstream culture; gifting extends experience by connecting giver and recipient; safe "in-between spaces" created in shops where bread is delivered, at bazaars, in schools, and in exhibit spaces.
Hermon & Prentice (2003)	30 students between 13 and 16 years old in segregated school for students with disabilities (physical and neurological) in Brighton (S. of London); enrolled in project over 2 semesters	Qualitative: Interpretive Phenomenology (Hermeneutics)	Students explored and created different identity in context of art and contemporary fashion. New identities sought to enable, empower, engage, and extend, working at boundaries of contemporary fashion to reject images of disability and invisibility as perpetuated by media and mainstream culture; rejection of inclusion and focus on difference; fashions created from found and discarded items.

Table 1

Study	Participants and Settings	Research Design	Brief Description of Study
Huet (2011)	Staff members at a secure unit for people with learning disabilities (defined as primarily representing serious cognitive, behavioral and emotional disorders); originally 10 participants enrolled, only 2 participants actually showed up (possibly due to managing nurse's withdrawal); set in UK	Qualitative: Work-Focused Non-Therapeutic Art Therapy with Thematic Analysis	Art Therapy session designed to mirror those of patients in facility; 3 paintings pre-chosen for relation to context of staff's work; 2/3 of time spent in viewing and discussing art, 1/3 in art making; discussions recorded (mode unclear); staff created art in response to discussion (1 painting; 1 clay sculpture); art work was photographed, and a thematic analysis conducted.
Joosa (2012)	Young adult with Down syndrome; 6-mo. Study in Adult Enhancement Program (AEP) of Down Syndrome Association (DSA) in Singapore	Qualitative: Observational Ethnography/Case Study/Semiotic (semantic) Analysis	Participatory observations and interviews with "Billy" throughout; Billy created art and wrote stories; each session was video recorded, art and written stories collected and chronologized, field notes taken, and photos of work made; 4 sessions were selected for focus of article with multi-modal transcription of each session in which Billy's verbal and nonverbal communication and interactions were analyzed for purposes of understanding meaning making.
Kidd (2009)	200+ homeless youths (many thought to have undiagnosed mental health issues) in NY City and Toronto participated in interview/survey and drawing of experience of homelessness over 4 years	Qualitative: (Auto)Ethnography/Interview-Survey/Descriptive Thematic Analysis	Interview-survey of homeless youths; each partic. invited to do a drawing; discussions with each participant about artistic process; analysis of art, poetry & journal entries, with comps. to Art Brut; author's art making was discussed.

Table 1

Study	Participants and Settings	Research Design	Brief Description of Study
Lacey et al. (2007)	35 schools (predominantly non-mainstream); 122 lessons observed with 61 teachers; 10 focus groups and 5 expert witnesses; all students identified with Severe Learning Disabilities (SLDs)	Qualitative: Semi-Structured Observations and Interviews with Focus Groups of Teachers and Expert Witnesses (Author's note explorative nature)/Desk-Based Research	While teachers revealed a wide-range of literacy activities being taught, most lessons were observed to be conventional in nature (use of conventional texts and practices) with traditional orthography, guided reading, basic letter and symbol work; inclusive literacy practices occurred far less frequently, but included: writing with cut & stick symbols, puppets, Bag Books, photographs, dress up as characters, and making marks to note-take; interviews revealed adherence to conventional methods primarily due to government directives and limited training (primarily in mainstream settings); authors collected interview transcripts, observational notes, research literature and web searches for practice
McLeod & Ricketts (2013)	2 separate community arts projects in British Columbia, Canada related to benefits of dialogue in art making; senior women of Chinese heritage in both groups; no participants were fluent in dominant languages of Canada; some could not read or write in any language	Qualitative: Ethnography/ Case Study/Narrative Methods/ Narrative Analysis (both studies) Kinesthetic Methods framed as "Embodied Poetic Narrative" (Ricketts only)	McLeod: Descriptive stories produced from described experiences of informants from 6 families—2 recollections of Chinese senior women, 1 explored in depth; arts-based research piece was created by author from participant narratives and supplied photos and artifacts

Table 1

Study	Participants and Settings	Research Design	Brief Description of Study
McLeod & Ricketts (2013), Cont'd.			<p><u>Ricketts</u>: Residency with Chinese seniors, translator, and puppeteer ; used participant narratives to create improvisational performance, integrating mind and body to embraced cultural experiences; author sought understanding and empowerment of marginalized group through kinesthetic movement combined with narratives projected through translucent materials and Chinese calligraphy on rice paper (referenced as "movement through language).</p>
Miller et al. (1998)	69 patients with frontotemporal dementia (FTD); vignettes/narratives of 5 who became visual artists following onset of FTD	<p>Mixed Methods: Quantitative: Comparative Non-Experimental Qualitative: Interpretive Phenomenology/ Hermeneutics</p>	<p>Authors (primarily MDs) sought to elaborate upon reports of creativity resulting with onset of dementia; differences in anatomical and chemical differences among FTDS and other types of dementia were discussed; 69 interviews conducted and of these 5 FTD patients were found to have gained artistic abilities with onset of FTD; histories of each and manifestations and examples of artistic abilities were discussed and provided; final discussion involved dominant vs. non-dominant hemisphere dysfunction with disproportionate numbers of patients with dominant hemisphere dysfunction</p>

Table 1

Study	Participants and Settings	Research Design	Brief Description of Study
Parker (2013)	12 th grade seminar class, noted as collaborative, cross-curricular and required; within visual arts/media production component; small school within a larger public high school in an urban CA setting with racial demographics 49% Af Am, 25% Cau, 25% Lat, and 1% Asian; 55 students in class, with 6 selected as focal students (4 female, 2 male; 2 Af Am, 2 Lat, 2 Cau)	Qualitative: Participatory Observations and Individual and Group Semi-Structured Interviews/Participant Ethnography Components	School with broadened notions of literacy and commitment to social change chosen for study for those reasons; author observed and followed focal students to each of 3 required class components (genre in literacy, social studies, & advanced studio literacy); also listened to conversations among participants & paraphrased language back to students; observed and participated in video production, asking questions in process; observed post-production processes. Collected: tape-recorded 45-90 minute interviews on process and experience from 17 students.
Roswell & Kendrick (2013)	A secondary English class in New Jersey with 3 focal students in separate components of study, 1 in a support/remediation class; all boys aged 13-15	Qualitative: Phenomenology/Artifactual Literacies Longitudinal Study/Case Study	Students were asked to write narrative descripts of photographs as an in-class activity and to describe narratively (after multiple readings) images; because two of the students draw more frequently than they write, they were assigned narratives to write on illustrations they had created previously; student in English support class assigned task inclusive of taking photographs in 1 of 4 themes, then write a narrative to accompany; students were given disposable cameras and collected 24 photos on each; multi-modal literacy opportunities; emphasis on visual literacy

Table 1

Study	Participants and Settings	Research Design	Brief Description of Study
Sagan (2007)	Began with 12 adults enrolled in 3-yr. study in Phase 1; Case Study of 1 male with long-term mental illness, enrolled in basic literacy/creative writing course at an adult drop-in facility; limited verbal articulation; and low levels of literacy; participation in 3 10-wk. courses per year over 3 years	Qualitative: Critical Ethnography/Case Study/Life History/Biographic Narrative Interviews	All 12 of original participants suffered debilitating depression; author noted "Bertie's" position within "contestable social construction of mental illness," having been offered few opportunities for learning and fewer for creative expression; over 3 years Bertie acquired basic writing skills that moved him beyond the 9-year-old level at which he lived entire adult life; also gained abilities in creative self-expression; over time author collected narrative interviews, notes, observational notes, course documents and participant's creative work
Sagan (2008)	12 adults with mental illness, 24 to 65 years old, enrolled in basic literacy/creative writing course at local mental health drop-in center; all with literacy levels below average; all received disability allowances; diagnoses included: schizophrenia, psychosis, chronic depression, and anxiety; 7 Caucasian British, 3 Afro-Caribbean; 2 Asian British; evolved to 1 case study, "Marge," 65 year old who suffered head injury as a child	Qualitative: Critical (Auto) Ethnography/Interpretive Phenomenology (Hermeneutics)/Case Study/Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM)	In Phase 1, loss of "voice" was focus of descriptive narratives by participants; through observations and interactions with participants, author noted themes, including perception of literacy as critical to participant recovery; 3 interviews each year with each participant were conducted and were difficult for many (ranging from 15 mins to 1 hour); themes of loss and loneliness in narratives and interviews; Marge self-identified as thick, dim, and slow; her narrative biography and interviews were her first articulation of her life's memories

Table 1

Study	Participants and Settings	Research Design	Brief Description of Study
Sagan (2011)	Study with users of mental health services in a basic expressive literacy course; 4-yr study of 14 adults with mental illness between 24 and 65 years old in local mental health drop-in clinic; low literacy levels in all participants; evolved to 1 case study of "Phillip" in his '50s, married with 1 child	Qualitative: Biographical Narrative Interviews/Case Study/ Psychosocial Explorative Questioning informed analysis	Through observation of literacy sessions and biographical narrative interviews, author sought possible connections between reparative processes and autobiographical writing, noting that individuals with mental illness often have long histories of abuse and neglect as well as negative relationships with learning and writing; Phillip had been functional most of his life, but was declining and began hearing voices; Phillip's narrative referenced as "battle" by author; study sought to verify writing as imposition of order in chaos and disintegration often associated with mental illness
Sinason (2007)	2 Outsider artists with psychiatric illnesses, both appearing in Artsworld documentary --Valerie Potter --Ben Wilson	Qualitative: Phenomenology (Quasi-Grounded Theory?)	Author explored internal other as guiding and overriding force in artists; for Valerie, medications allow some normalcy, including holding a job, but feels best art created in her '20s at peak of schizophrenia, does not believe meds help with her relationships to the world; for Ben, modern world is too regimented and he feels need for spontaneous interactions with environment—art is often about environmental consciousness (e.g., art created on gum on the sidewalk); author invokes various philosophers

Table 1

Study	Participants and Settings	Research Design	Brief Description of Study
Stronach-Buschel (1990)	1 female, "Michelle," age 9, diagnosed with PTSD, in art therapy sessions	Qualitative: Life History Case Study	Non-custodial father brought Michelle for counseling due to increasing depression and defiance; initial art-therapy evaluation revealed Michelle with long history of abuse and neglect from all adults in her life; art therapy sessions over months in which Michelle primarily worked in clay revealed fear of abandonment and an undeveloped ego due to constant exhaustion resulting from constant need to be on guard; in one of last reported sessions, Michelle created a clay whale and Gepetto and Pinocchio figure; she verbally narrated the story to the therapist (love overcomes)
Wexler (2002)	Set in painting program conducted over several years on-site at Harlem Horizon Art Studio (located inside large hospital); children and adolescents primarily, but age range from 4 to 27; both in- and out-patients, disabled and non-; almost 100% African American; predominantly male	Qualitative: 3 Pilot Studies/ Purposeful Conversations, Unscripted/Case Studies (2)/Direct Observation in Natural Setting	Author observed and collected data consisting of words and behaviors; center run by professional artist, Bill Richards and program described as neither art therapy, nor art education, but professional and demanding; goal is to help young people with long-term disabilities to confront their lives through painting; Richards believes teaching art may be counter-productive (like Friedl Dicker-Brandeis and others) because young people need to self-discover; early participants were thought to have plateaued in their healing;

Table 1

Study	Participants and Settings	Research Design	Brief Description of Study
Wexler (2002), Cont'd.			<p>Case Study 1: Moses (age 15) was quadriplegic after injury at age 9; credits painting as genesis of his recovery which began with use of arms and ultimately led to use of legs (doctors have no medical explanation)</p> <p>Case Study 2: Ben (age 13) born with Spina-bifida; disability issues compounded by poverty; visual art abilities were low, but verbal abilities were strong and Ben credits program with his survival; dreams of being rap artist and sees verbal abilities as complementary to low visual art skills.</p> <p>Over years since opening in 1989, HHAS has helped hundreds of local residents, primarily males in wheelchairs (initially)</p>

