ART EXPERIENCES IN WALDORF EDUCATION: GRADUATES' MEANING MAKING REFLECTIONS

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Doctor of Philosophy

by
Carrie Y. Nordlund

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The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School, have examined the dissertation entitled

ART EXPEREINCES IN WALDORF EDUCATION:
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Presented by Carrie Y. Nordlund

A candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

And hereby certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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ABSTRACT

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to implement a descriptive inquiry about the nature of art experiences in Waldorf Education through the lens of Waldorf graduates' reflective stories. This qualitative study sought to gain insight into the meanings graduates attribute to past Waldorf school arts experiences. Gathering the storied knowledge of the Waldorf graduates provided a description of the Waldorf arts-inclusive pedagogy and its impact on graduates' perceptions. The central research question for the study was as follows: *What meanings do Waldorf graduates attribute to their lived Waldorf school art experience?*

Procedures

Three-interview Series (Dolbeare & Schuman, 1982) were utilized to gather data from Waldorf graduates. This semi-structured interview protocol was designed to first, ascertain the graduates' overview about art experiences; second, narrow to their reflections about key moments (epiphanies) within arts experience; and third, attribute meaning to their art experience reflections. A semi-structured interview protocol with open-ended prompts was utilized to collect Waldorf graduate narratives from 15 participants who attended 17 diverse Waldorf schools in the following geographical areas: West, Southwest, Midwest, and Northeast. Computer-mediated Communication (CMC) interviews were utilized in order to access Waldorf graduates throughout the United States.

Memos (Denzin, 1994) were the starting place for interpretation of the data. Through inductive examination of these memos, relationships and classifications were identified among memo impressions as well as seeing new impressions. By narrowing and refining the memo interpretations, themes and dimensions were determined for the entire data set–three interview transcripts per each of the 15 participants. The data was reduced and narratives were organized into emerging interpretation themes. Codes (Merriam, 2002) then became an organizing principle for themes. Constant comparison analysis across the participants' interview data afforded a discovery of both data contradictions and conformations. Guided by the themes across all 15 biographical narratives, summaries of the themes were drafted with support from graduate narratives.

Conclusions

Prior to this study, there existed a limited view about art experiences within Waldorf schools as well as the outcomes of such experience through the eyes of Waldorf graduates, those who intimately experienced the phenomena. The findings of this study provided a baseline for further investigation on the phenomena of arts experiences within both Waldorf Education and other arts-infused school initiatives. The results articulated benefits stemming from students' involvement in seamless arts integration and hands-on arts experiences in Waldorf Education: (1) expanded ways of knowing; (2) internalized knowledge through visual representations; (3) afforded will-developed intelligence, flow experience, creativity, and emotional intelligence; and (4) balanced the whole (sense and reason) being.

As a result of the findings of this study, possible alternatives and considerations could enable educators to more appropriately teach to the whole child. In a climate where the arts are at risk of being deemphasized within mainstream curricula design, the findings of this

study expose benefits generated from an alternative paradigm supportive of arts integration. Understanding Waldorf graduates' epistemological view of their schooled art experience may guide others (i.e. policy makers, educators, parents…) who have similar values and educational priorities.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

> The description of human experience from any point of view is extremely difficult, and the characterization of what Abraham Maslow once called the farther reaches of human nature–its creative, imaginative, and spiritual peaks, for example–is perhaps the most difficult of all (Smith, 1995, p. 58).

As an art education researcher, I was interested in constructing an inquiry that described the nature of art experiences– the creative, imaginative, and spiritual– as defined through the lens of American Waldorf Education graduates. I sought to understand the nature of lived art experiences of Waldorf graduates as reflected in their stories of past schooling. Thus, through this descriptive study I gathered Waldorf graduates' reflective stories about their K-12 art education in terms of both crystallizing experiences and paralyzing experiences (Armstrong, 1994, p. 22; Dewey, 1934; Feldman, 1980; Walters & Gardner, 1986). Within results of this study, I have presented the storied knowledge of Waldorf graduates and in turn provided a view of Waldorf Education art experiences through the words of those who lived the phenomena.

Conceptual Framework for the Study

Before embarking on my journey with Waldorf Education I had only discovered Waldorf curriculum briefly referenced in three mainstream art education resources: Efland, (2002); Jensen, (2001); and Oddleifson, (1996). At that time I was an experienced K-12 art teacher and an administrator of art programs for a large school district; I was embarrassed that I was so uninformed about Waldorf Education arts curriculum practices. Now, in reporting the research findings of this study, I have offered a broader view of Waldorf students' experience in the arts. I intended the findings of this study to become a vehicle for rumination on current art education practices both in and beyond Waldorf school settings.

My Perspective on Waldorf Education

As a reflective practitioner, this study afforded me the opportunity to refine my art curriculum ideas and practices based on comparisons with Waldorf Education pedagogical practices. My pedagogy has always been conducted through a social reconstructivist lens. My passion to be successful in the classroom has hinged on the intention for my work with students to mark the world beyond the classroom doors. Similar to Rudolf Steiner's (1861-1925) intentions for creating Waldorf Education, I have viewed my pedagogy as a means to empower others to face the world as free-thinking, reflective beings fully prepared for their potentiality and seeing anew in our society.

I entered this study with interests in humanistic approaches to pedagogy. Before gathering data from participants in study, I noted from my literature review of Waldorf Education and from my previous investigations and conversations with Waldorf teachers (Nordlund, 2004) how the whole child was cherished, supported, and even holistically challenged or engaged in Waldorf schools. I recognized how some Waldorf schools provided students with developmentally appropriate quests in a multitude of realms and often through simultaneously engagement: cognitive, physical, moral, social, emotional, spiritual, aesthetic, and so forth. I discovered how my humanistic view of learning corresponded with Waldorf Education's consciousness of teaching the whole being. As a educator who has been informed by brain research, I welcomed the possibility of Waldorf schooling as an educational model that supports learning theory where connectionism and the lack of compartmentalization in knowledge construction is honored. Narratives from the Waldorf graduates participating in this study confirmed my hypotheses and informal discoveries prior to this study.

My Perspective on Arts and Aesthetics in Waldorf Education

Rudolf Steiner (1923/1964), the originator of Waldorf Education, claimed, "Gradually the conception has arisen that art is something which does not necessarily belong to life but is added to it as a kind of luxury" (p. 15). I have perceived Waldorf curriculum as a counter to this concept of art as frill or luxury. From my literature view, I perceived art making within Waldorf Education pedagogy as an allegory of life. Art forms and expressions in Waldorf schools seemed to welcome emotive connections in order to explore phenomena and the human condition. Within the art making process both internal and external reality was being created, transmediated, and transformed. Steiner (1923/1964) maintained that in order to teach to the totality of a person then the whole person including the willing, feeling, thinking being must be present; in doing so, art curriculum became a vehicle for accessing and developing the whole child and person. Mann (1971) argued, "It would be fatal to imagine that humanity divides into the artistic and the non-artistic" (p. 3). In other words, my pedagogical position has been that all students should be humanized by arts education. Before entering this study, I hypothesized Waldorf Education was accomplishing this notion.

Before beginning this study, I contended that artists (even student artists) were altered by their experiences with art. In the process of art making, every time you chose something you were implicitly not choosing something else. From my perspective both before and after the implementation of this study, Waldorf educators seemed to recognize how imperative it was to set up learners with art experiences–to afford student awareness of individual choice making. In other words, Rudolf Steiner professed that willing, feeling, and thinking through art experience was essential for preparing free-thinking, inventive, balanced citizens.

With as much relevance today as in Rudolf Steiner's lifetime, art education has been necessary so as to prepare citizens for solving our great, complicated unknowns. In *A Whole New Mind: Moving from the Information Age to the Conceptual Age,* Daniel Pink (2005) acknowledged our future belongs to creators, empathizers, and big-picture meaning makers who can mediated in and through what he termed *The Conceptual Age*–where abilities to construct new knowledge and integrate concepts across disciplines become necessary. Similarly, Rudolf Steiner's (1923/1964) ideal for arts within Waldorf Education corresponded to Eric Booth's (2005) premise in his essay *Making Worlds and Making Them Better*:

> Art happens outside of what we already know. Inherent in the artistic experience is the capacity to expand our sense of the way the world is or might be…to open into the zone to the possible, to imagine and create things that extend how it is to make things better (para. 9).

Upon entering this study, I perceived that in Waldorf schools the arts (visual art, music, drama, and creative movement) were used to discover the world. So, I defined the arts in this study as *life*: art as inquiry and meaning making about life, art as reflection on life, art as expression of life, art as a way of doing and living, and so forth. I had known that throughout Waldorf curriculum art forms existed interrelated to other disciplines and where the arts were infused. From my perspective the arts existed in Waldorf Education as pedagogical tools to engage learners with their artist dialog, in those deepest layers of artistic reflection. From my experience as an art teacher, I have viewed the arts as meaning making tools–a means too investigate and sort life out into meanings and values.

Within Waldorf Education, I found visual arts, instrumental and vocal music, drama arts, and dance often overlapped each other. Thus, when interviewing Waldorf graduates for this study I was careful not to direct my prompts toward one art form or another; I was

careful to use the term *arts experience* when having the graduates reflect on their past schooling. I entered this study as a practicing visual art educator and artist, yet perceived all types of art expressions hold the promise of individuality and uniqueness.

Current Theoretical Perspectives

Clearly, individuality is threatened in our educational climate where educators and students are pressed to ensure uniformed, standardized results. The United States Department of Education federal initiative *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) mandates American schools to attain the goal of 100 percent student proficiency in reading and math by the year 2014. The ramification of this mandate is evident in the overdependence of standardized tests and pedagogy supporting standardized tests by K-12 public school administrators and educators. In *What Does it Mean to Educate the Whole Child?* Nel Noddings (2005) argues the aim of NCLB is too narrow. As well, she questions why a democratic society would limit education to just reading and math prominence. Likewise, Eisner (2005) in *Back to Whole* states that current pedagogy has gravitated towards a technical orientation void of what it means to fully human. Further, Eisner says, "The arts make it possible in vivid ways to eliminate a distinction between cognition and emotion" (p. 18). Not bound by the federal mandates of *No Child Left Behind,* Waldorf educators can maintain a vision and effort to ensure development and potentiality of the whole person–the inseparable willing, feeling, thinking being.

Given "feeling pervades all thinking" (Berghoff, Bixler Borgmann, & Parr, 2005, p. 30), exploration of self as an emotive being seems to be an appropriate element in school curriculum. Psychologist Daniel Goleman in *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter more Than IQ* (1995) and *Working with Emotional Intelligence* (1998) demonstrates why

emotional intelligence curriculum is imperative for the development of our future leaders and problem solvers. He states that the way we handle ourselves and relationships can determine life success more than IQ. Emotion, self-awareness, and self-regulation as well as empathy play a role in success. Goleman (1995, 1998) not only infers that emotional intelligence is a cognitive system he deems emotional intelligence as the master of all other mental capabilities. Arts education supports the recognition, management, motivation, and appreciation of emotion (Jensen, 2001). Emotional knowing is at risk in our educational climate of *No Child Left Behind*.

Recent education trends (within mainstream public schools) focusing on achievement in math and reading have further marginalized the role of the arts as meaning making devices. Visual representation as meaning making has become a frill or add-on within mainstream schooling (Sanders Bustle, 2003, 2004; Shephard, 1993). Our postmodern culture predominantly relies on visual forms of media, communication, and sign systems (Freedman, 2003). Given that our written and textual sign systems are in continual reconfiguration, school curriculum should prepare students to be able to traverse discipline boundaries and negotiate in our visual culture. "Visual representations–the most accessible, plentiful, and powerful meaning-making devices in young peoples lives–are left largely unexplored and unchallenged in the current U.S. educational system" (Sanders Bustle, 2004, p. 417).

Concepts and communications are formed by mediations–symbolic vehicles (signs) that metaphorically stand for or signify things, meanings, and values (Berghoff, Bixler Borgmann, & Parr, 2005). Words are not the only denotations of the concepts. Curriculum that allows students to practice transmediation (meaning making between sign systems and

symbolic art systems) better prepares students to navigate within our postmodern world. Waldorf Education recognizes transmediation, pictorial thinking, and metaphorical thinking between various sign systems and art forms as venues for effective meaning making and cognitive connection making. Interdisciplinary and integrated curricula rely heavily on the transfer of knowledge from one domain to another (Efland, 2002).

Knowledge is no longer seen as evolving through divided discrete intellectual or social domains (Cornett, 2003; Efland, 2002; Freedman, 2003; Gardner, 1983; Jensen, 2001). Art, as defined in postmodern theory, infers that art is contextualized within diverse domains as a source of meaning making across disciplines and sign systems (Marshall, 2005). Knowing and learning are no longer conceptualized as experiences within discrete domains, but rather seen in terms experience orchestrating within integrated systems (Efland, 2002; Freedman, 2003; Marshall, 2005). Both our current culture and brain research/theory now makes the case for the integrated arts curriculum approaches such as those utilized in Waldorf schools since 1919.

Neurologist Wilson (2000) asserts that neglecting the interdependence of hand and brain function in education systems is grossly misleading and fruitless. Neurologist Bergstrom (1990) claims the neglect of creativity through the hands makes for value-damaged society members. Knowing that thoughts are not the whole living reality and value comes from handmade creations, Rudolf Steiner would agree. Making or composing art, music, theater, and dance offers students the process of problem rectification as well as a vehicle to greet the world and respond to the world through their individual spirit and perception. The arts are also a means to honor the idiosyncratic thoughtful communications from all the student voices in the classroom. Art expressions promise individuality and

uniqueness that are clearly threatened in our educational climate where educators and students are pressed to ensure uniformed or standardized results. I had entered this study much as I first entered the profession of art education with the belief that education in, with, and through the arts holds out hope for our future and bestows in each of our youth an individualistic, anew seeing that marks our world.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to construct and implement a descriptive inquiry about the nature of art experiences of Waldorf graduates through an analysis of the graduates' individual reflective stories. This qualitative inquiry sought to gain insight into the meanings graduates attribute to past Waldorf school arts experiences. Collected narratives from the study's participants provided personal art education accounts that speak specifically to Waldorf schools arts-infused curriculum.

A semi-structured interview protocol with open-ended questions was utilized to collect Waldorf graduate narratives. These questions not only gathered descriptions of the Waldorf students' lived art experiences, but likewise provided the means for collecting meanings and values that Waldorf graduates had assigned to their experiences. The Waldorf graduates' reflection process (established in the interview task) assisted the participants with the following: (a) describing arts education involvement; (b) placing their art education experiences into context; (c) noting any crystallizing and/or paralyzing experiences with art experience; and (d) attributing meaning to art education experience and epiphanies from art experience. Gathering the storied knowledge of the Waldorf graduates provided a unique description of the Waldorf arts-inclusive pedagogy (see *Chapter 4, Results*).

Statement of the Problem

In this study, the central research question to be examined was as follows: *What meanings do Waldorf graduates attribute to their lived Waldorf school art experience?*

Four secondary questions complimented and guided the study:

(a) What are the graduates' descriptions of their Waldorf school art experience?

(b) Within the framework of the Waldorf graduates' schooled experience, what were their art experience epiphanies?

(c) What meanings do Waldorf graduates attribute to their epiphanies?

(d) How do the meanings attributed to Waldorf Education art experience relate to the graduates' education and art philosophies?

Design of the Study

I entered the study with this premise: the stories (or narratives) one tells are vehicles for determining the meanings one holds as significant. Likewise, I implemented this study under the influence of Seidman's (1998) interview method and constructivist ontology that inferred the best manner to understand how people perceive their world experience is to ask them about it. A narrative research tradition guided the methods for this descriptive study. Bruner (1986) contended that narrative knowledge is storied knowledge; thus I captured storied knowledge of Waldorf graduates through their act of reflexive storytelling about arts experience as to glean the context, meanings, and values graduates' attribute to their past experience.

Following the suggestion of Seidman (1998), Dolbeare and Schuman's (1982) *Three-interview Series* methods were utilized to gather data from individuals who attended a variety

of Waldorf schools. A semi-structured interview protocol was designed to first ascertain the graduates' overview about their art experiences and then narrow to their reflections about key moments or epiphanies within arts experience. The narratives provided a co-constructed (between the participants and researcher) interpretive biographical report. Shared narratives provided in the study's findings (see *Chapter Four*) were carefully selected in an effort to best reconstruct the participants' meaning making as well as the emergent themes stemming from these narratives.

Significance of the Study

At the start of this study, limited view on the ecology of art experiences within Waldorf schools existed. Review of the literature demonstrated little availability of Waldorf graduates' reflections about their art experience along with their values and meanings attributed to the arts. No such study was available in the literature specifically directed to the meanings Waldorf graduates attribute to their arts experiences; thus, this research provided the baseline for such information. Findings of this study articulated the nature of arts-infused curriculum within Waldorf Education as seen through the lens of those experiencing the phenomenon as well as provided an examination of one alternative educational paradigm.

Understanding Waldorf graduates' epistemological view of their schooled art experience may guide others (i.e. policy makers, educators, parents…) who have similar values and educational priorities. Revealing the impact of Waldorf Education art-infused learning activities demonstrated alternative visions, values, and counter practices than current mainstream education paradigms. As an educator, the vivid portrait of meanings the Waldorf graduates assigned to their arts-infused learning experience, allowed visions of alternative

pedagogy based on the benefits, consequences, and values of those art experiences and practices.

"If the aim of education is to fully activate the cognitive potential of the learner, ways have to be found to integrate knowledge from many subjects to achieve a fuller understanding than would be provided by content treated in isolation" (Efland, 2002, p. 103). Description data on how Waldorf schools integrate the arts within other disciplines may encourage additional impulse for Waldorf Education by those who seek the benefits of arts-inclusive curriculum. Likewise, viewing the outcomes of "Waldorf aims, theories, and practices can inspire teachers [and educational reformists] to rethink their [current] educational paradigms and structure conversations about how educators can respond more creatively to particular needs of children" (Easton, 1997, p. 94). In a climate where the arts have been at risk of being deemphasized within mainstream curriculum designs (Jensen, 2001), the findings of this study provided an alternative paradigm supportive of arts integration. Studies on lesser-known "private schools [such as Waldorf schools] can provide a view of what school can be" (Henry, 1993, p. 11).

Arts education journals have been devoid of literature about Waldorf Education. Even though "the Waldorf school movement is the largest non-denominational system of education in the world, it is almost completely ignored in academic publications" (Soutter, 1994, p. 39). Markedly limited research has been conducted about Waldorf schools by researchers, like myself, who represent a voice from mainstream education (Easton, 1995; Uhrmacher, 1991; Whitmer-Foster, 1981). The American Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA, 2003a) expressed a need for establishing a presence in national education debates and "to bring Waldorf education into the world's eye" (p. 2). This study

strived for a foundation or baseline of understandings in order to construct other investigations about the relationships between Waldorf Education and other non-Waldorf educational practices.

Definition of Terms

Anthroposophy - Rudolf Steiner, as head of Theosophical Society of Germany in the early 1900's, created a split in the Theosophical Society's ideology by originating his own spiritual philosophy called Anthroposophy (Whitmer-Foster, 1981). "Anthroposophy is a path of knowledge to guide the spiritual in the human being to the Spiritual in the universe. It arises in a human being as a need of the heart, of the life of feeling; and it can be justified only inasmuch as it can satisfy this inner need" (Wilkinson, 1996, p. 5). Waldorf Education champions the Anthroposophical ideal that each individual partakes in a personal and constant journey of an ascending path of knowledge where each is endlessly coming into being. Within the ideals of Anthroposophy, each and every student has her/his own potentiality.

Arts Integration- For the purpose of this study, arts integration is the practice of infusing artistic intelligences and art-based learning throughout the curriculum, but to not dismiss teaching arts as discrete academic subjects of their own right.

Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) - "AWSNA is an association of independent Waldorf schools and Waldorf teacher education institutes. AWSNA's mission is to strengthen and support the schools and to inform the public about the benefits of Waldorf Education" (Association of Waldorf Schools of North America, 2003b). Founded in 1979, AWSNA has developed mentorship and accreditation policies to nurture North

American Waldorf school initiatives. AWSNA is organized into eight geographic regions to service their membership.

Crystallizing experience - Originating with Feldman (1980) and further defined by Walters and Gardner (1986), this term is the turning point or spark in the development of a person's abilities, an *ah ha* or *key event* moment in intelligence development. A crystallizing experience is compatible with John Dewey's (1934) educative experience.

Epiphanies – These are significant events in a person's life that may become moments of revelation within the life story. "Life is shaped by key, turning point moments. These moments leave permanent marks" (Denzin, 1989, p. 22).

Eurythmy – Eurythmy is a movement art originated by Rudolf Steiner. Eurythmy is often referred to as visible speech. "Eurythmy is a disciplined art movement of the arms and body that visibly expresses the vowels and consonants of speech and the tones and intervals of musical melody…eurythmic gesture in speech emulates the definite forms we produce in the air when we speak a word" (Ogletree, 1997, p. 1). The kinesthetic gestures of eurythmy are forms that manifest speech and song (Steiner, 1913-1924/1971). There are three types of eurythmy: speech, music, and therapeutic (referred to as curative). Speech and music eurythmy are dubbed artistic eurythmy typically performed to music, poetry, or as drama as it "makes visible the meter, cadence and rhythm of poetry; the vowels, consonants, and nuances of speech; the scales, melody, and rhythms of music" (Ogletree, 1997, p. 6). Eurythmy is also a professional performing art form with training institutes in Europe and the United States. Therapeutic eurythmy is utilized in the professional practice of medicine.

Interpretive Biography – Denzin (1989) coins this research methodology as the process of "creating literary, narrative accounts and representations of lived experience–the telling and inscribing of stories" (p. 11).

Lived experience – Denzin (1989) defines this as a period of existence where a person is "confronting and passing through life events" (p. 47).

Paralyzing experience – This term originated with Armstrong (1994), representing the converse of a crystallizing experience where "intelligence is shut down within the experience" (p. 23). A paralyzing experience is compatible with John Dewey's (1934) mis-educative experience.

Spirituality - In viewing spirituality within Waldorf Education, this term is conceived as "a definitive element of human nature and human potentiality, an abiding expression of our predicament and our creative response to it" (Abbs, 2003, p. 30). Spiritual activity, as viewed by Rudolf Steiner, is a capacity to fully and consciously notice, pay attention, and reflect on one's own thinking, feeling, and willing (Easton, 1995).

Waldorf Education - "The first Waldorf School opened its doors in Stuttgart, Germany in 1919. Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) founded the school for children of workers of the Waldorf Tobacco Company, and he designed the curriculum (K-12) based on his belief that children progress through three stages of development. Within each stage one of three governing forces–willing, feeling, or thinking–dominates an individual's mode of consciousness" (Uhrmacher, 1993, p. 434). Waldorf schools, today numbering over 870 around the world, are self-administering, non-sectarian, and non-denominational schools that utilize age-inspired and an arts-infused curriculum (European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education,

ECSWE, 2005). Waldorf schools are located in more than 60 countries (ECSWE, 2005). In Europe, Waldorf schools are termed *Steiner schools*.

Waldorf graduate - For the purpose of this study, a Waldorf graduate is an individual who has graduated from a Waldorf School (K-12, K-8, or high school) or an individual who has attended the majority of his/her school years within the Waldorf school setting.

Summary

Wright (2003) argued for a reform that challenges the status of our current education paradigm:

> To broaden and humanize the focus of educational reform by promoting a vision that honors the role of arts in the curriculum, gives all forms of learning meaning, and considers learning settings to be idealized microcosms of the larger society (p. 310).

Within Rudolf Steiner's initial vision of school reform, with the founding a Waldorf school, a humanist curriculum agenda paid homage to arts learning as meaningful ways of knowing. This study sought to gather the storied knowledge of Waldorf graduates, those who were schooled with arts-inclusive learning experiences. This descriptive study provided meanings Waldorf graduates have attributed to past Waldorf arts experiences as a means to better understand Waldorf Education's counter-culture pedagogical practices. Evidence of the benefits of Waldorf's arts-inclusive curriculum found within these cited meanings provided an opportunity for educators to consider, defend, and promote an inclusive position for arts within the education of children.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

Introduction

To implement a study that investigates the art experiences of Waldorf graduates, it was necessary to establish in a review of the literature the theoretical underpinnings of Waldorf Education and the specific fundamental theoretical concepts of Waldorf schools' unique approach to educational experiences in the arts. From a review of the literature the following topics were presented below: (a) the underpinnings of Waldorf Education (including the philosophies of its originator, Rudolf Steiner); (b) the pedagogical structures of Waldorf arts curriculum; and (c) pertinent research on experientially learning in, with, and through the arts. This review of the literature provided a framework for the study. The review was associated with the study's central research question: *What meanings do Waldorf graduates attribute to their lived Waldorf school art experience?*

Underpinnings of Waldorf Education

Before presenting the underlying conceptual framework for Waldorf Education and its unique position on learning through the arts, the school institution itself should be placed into context. Waldorf schools, today numbering over 870 around the world, are self-administering, non-sectarian, and non-denominational schools that utilize age-inspired and an arts-infused curriculum (European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education, ECSWE, 2005). Waldorf schools are located in more than 60 countries (ECSWE, 2005). In North America there are over 170 schools affiliated with the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (2006), a non-profit association of autonomous, independent Waldorf Schools. "The first Waldorf School opened its doors in Stuttgart, Germany in 1919. Rudolf Steiner

(1861-1925) founded the school for children of workers of the Waldorf Tobacco Company, and he designed the curriculum (K-12) based on his belief that children progress through three stages of development. Within each stage, one of three governing forces–willing, feeling, or thinking–dominates an individual's mode of consciousness" (Uhrmacher, 1991, p. 434). Today's Waldorf curriculum and school structures are designed in relationship to Rudolf Steiner's ideologies about human development. Waldorf schools value holistic lessons that appropriately correspond to children's three developmental stages of willing, feeling, and thinking.

Rudolf Steiner's decision to open the first Waldorf school, *Free Waldorf School*, was a political decision intended to better underprivileged children of a working class society and responded to apparent disarray in the social, economic, and political order of warring Europe. Given the social climate of Germany in 1919, Steiner (1919/2000) opened the school with aspirations of students becoming "free, responsible, active human beings" (p. ix) who could alter the direction of an oppressive society. Waldorf schools emerged as an education reformation within German society. Intentions of today's Waldorf school communities remain closely aligned to Steiner's pioneering vision, especially his ardent desire for Waldorf graduates to enter the world with a strong sense of humanity. Ernest Boyer (1928-1995), former president of the Carnegie Institute for the Advancement of Teaching, affirmed, "Waldorf students are encouraged to live with self-assurance, a reverence for life, and a sense of service" (Association of Waldorf Schools of North America, 2006, para. 1).

Threefold Order of the Social Organism

At the heart of Rudolf Steiner's proposed social reformation for Germany (and subsequently the world) was his insistence on a much needed balance between three

dimensions of society: Spiritual Life, Legal Life, and Economic Life. In other words, the societal organism would be balanced, healthy and elevated beyond the material, when these three entities were equally embraced and nurtured. Rudolf Steiner's (1920/1977) ideology of the *Threefold Social Order,* his proposed social structure, had common ground with Anthroposophy in that each person should be viewed as having a distinct inner psyche with a unique path to walk in life (individualism) and individual gifts to give to larger society (potentiality). Steiner recognized that both in society and education, "individual signature matters" (Eisner, 2002, p. 166).

This view of humankind, along with seeing the whole of each child, embraces the concept of multiple modalities present within everyone, including each person's creative potentiality (Nobel, 1991). As Waldorf educators honor the multiplicity of human development, they recognize the brain is not central to all thinking (Easton, 1995; Jensen, 2001; Wilson, 1998). Both Anthroposophy and the concept of *Threefold Social Order* "provide a framework for envisioning a renewal of thinking that integrates imagination, inspiration, and intuition into our ways of knowing" (Easton, 1997, p. 94).

The Influences of Anthroposophy

Understanding the school vision that was birthed from Rudolf Steiner's worldview allows a more effective analysis of Waldorf Education and its art curriculum outcomes. The school vision, with its arts-inclusive curriculum, stemmed from Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophic worldview. Steiner, as head of Theosophical Society of Germany in the early 1900's, created a split in this organization's ideology by originating his own spiritual philosophy called *Anthroposophy* (Whitmer-Foster, 1981). Today, Anthroposophy still guides spiritual quest with the purpose of obtaining one's highest self-end or potentiality (to

be everything you potentially can be). "Anthroposophy is a path of knowledge to guide the spiritual in the human being to the Spiritual in the universe. It arises in a human being as a need of the heart, of the life of feeling; and it can be justified only inasmuch as it can satisfy this inner need" (Wilkinson, 1996, p. 5). Rudolf Steiner believed that "denying the human need and capacity for beauty, purpose, meaning, and value, modern science has diminished our image of what it means to be human and to live a human life" (Smith, 1982, p. 62). Beauty and aesthetic education still perform a formative role in Waldorf Education with its emphasis on awakening the spirit–one's slumbering higher self (Steiner, 1905/1982).

The term *spirit* is an especially loaded word and generally considered out of bounds within the context of education. From Steiner's worldview, what is meant by *spirit* is "everything that brings forth 'culture' through human thinking, feeling, and willing" (Steiner, 1921/1986b, p. 272). Anthroposophy translates as *becoming aware of one's humanity* (Nobel, 1991). "The capacity to consciously notice, pay attention, and reflect on one's own thinking, feeling, and willing, Steiner calls spiritual activity" (Easton, 1995, p. 95). Coleman (1998) similarly defines spiritual activity as "intuitive receptivity and an existential posture–one that engages the total self, i.e., intellect, heart, and will" (p. 40). Artists use this same holistic perception capacity (an integration of all human faculties–thinking, feeling, willing) within their creating process (Howard, 1998). As confirmed in literature, art is a means to express and experience spirituality (Apostolos-Cappadona & De Staebler, 1998; Campbell, 2005; Coomaraswamy, 1956; Cunningham, 1998; Howard, 1998; Lipsey, 1988; Nobel, 1991; Yob, 1995).

Nobel (1991) states the Anthroposophist's ideal of art, as a central role in human development and Waldorf Education, is "not to train people to become artists, but to develop

the artistic aptitudes inherent in each and every person. By training our sensitivity to the arts…we can introduce movement and drama and also warmth, aspiration and energy into the process of acquiring knowledge" (p. 266). Nobel's *Educating Through Art: The Steiner School Approach* presents a study that attempts to comprehend why Anthroposophists strive to integrate artistic elements as part of practical daily realities. Nobel asks, "Why do they [Waldorf educators] attach such significance to art and artistic exercises in the teaching of children and young people, as well as in adult education?" (p. 29). Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophical tenets assert that the arts should play a central role in Waldorf Education in the quest to "use the arts to remake ourselves" (Walker, 2001, p. 112).

Although a Waldorf teacher does not have to be an Anthroposophist to teach at a Waldorf school, Waldorf teacher certification process and training materials are grounded in Anthroposophy. A Waldorf teacher influenced by Anthroposophic ideals views the student as partaking in a constant journey, on an ascending path of knowledge where s/he is endlessly coming into being (Nordlund, 2004). The task of a Waldorf teacher is to help his/her students to develop as individuals who are able consciously choose how they are going to be in the world. Thus, Waldorf students are nurtured in such a way that when called upon they can embrace and respond to discovery and remain empowered by their holistic capacities–an integration of all senses and modalities (Nordlund, 2004).

In viewing spirituality outside the historic Christian connotations it can be reconceived as "a definitive element of human nature and human potentiality, an abiding expression of our predicament and our creative response to it" (Abbs, 2003, p. 30). This vision of spirituality within the students and the school vision, allows the Waldorf teacher to view each and every student as having her/his own creative potentiality, each moving along

their own learning path with their own creative responses (Nordlund, 2004). The child as a developing three-fold being–willing, feeling, thinking–and a developing seed of potentiality is an Anthroposophical view that can be heard from this Waldorf teacher's comment:

> Anthroposophy [within Waldorf Education] to me is about having a certain view of human beings as evolving over time. I'm talking about observable changes over time that can be emotional, intellectual, and spiritual. Essentially what Anthroposophy holds out is this view that this human being comes into the world not just as an empty vessel newly formed without any sort of past, but that there are these experiences really geared towards allowing that human being to come back into an earth life [reincarnation] with a certain destiny that this individuality will work upon the world in a certain way–to bring certain beneficial changes to the world around him or her. There are necessary experiences for that individual to have and that it is basically for the good of humanity that every individual is connected to every other individual in the world in some way. It's a web of connection, a web of spiritual connection (Nordlund, 2004, p. 44).

The Spiritual in Art

"Immanent space in the heart" is Rudolf Steiner's (1923/1964) frame of reference for art (p. ix). Art, then, is a manifestation of the spiritual. Steiner's notion of artists consists of creators who have an access to a realm beyond the physical world, where truth and beauty lie, outside most individual's notion of such. Viewers of the artist's product, by devoting themselves to the artist's work, also have an opportunity to be elevated into the artist's "cosmic mission" (Stockton, 2003, p. 62).

The Russian artist Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944), who was greatly influenced by Rudolf Steiner, likewise believed there is an interlinked relationship between art and the spiritual (Nobel, 1991; Ringbom, 1970). Ringbom discovered summaries of Rudolf Steiner's (1904/1994) *Theosophy: An Introduction to the Spiritual Process in Human Life and in the Cosmos* within Kandinsky's notebooks. Kandinsky noted that Steiner's theosophical

movement was one of the great spiritual movements of his time (Nobel, 1991). Kandinsky (1912/1980) in *On the Spiritual in Art* said:

> A creative work is born from the artist…liberated from him [her], it takes on its own independent, spiritual being which also leads a material and concrete life. It is a *being*. Consequently, this is not an accidental phenomenon indifferent and insensitive to spiritual life. But, like any being, it is a phenomenon which possesses its own creative, active forces. It lives, acts and participates in the creation of the spiritual atmosphere (p. 98).

It is this spiritual being among many other facets of the developing self that Rudolf Steiner (and subsequently Waldorf Education) aspired to ignite through a spiritual atmosphere of purposeful and sensitive art making. Michael Howard (1998) in *Art as Spiritual Activity: Rudolf Steiner's Contribution to the Visual Arts* concurred with Kandinsky by stating that art experience encompasses the following: (a) an encounter as part of the sense world; (b) interaction with a physical substance, appearance, or medium; (c) an invitation for creative manipulation (active force); and (d) a qualitative dimension raising the artist and others into the spiritual. Art, viewed as a spiritual force, was the mediator of dynamic living qualities (Howard, 1998).

When something or someone was considered beautiful, it was so because we perceive the internal (spiritual) in that thing or person (Steiner, 1923/1964). Howard (1998) specified a type of perception that can be developed "whereby soul and spirit substance become as real for us as physical substance is already" (p. 35). In *The Arts and Their Mission* (and as previously stated), Rudolf Steiner asserted thoughts are not representative of all living reality and creating art compensates for what ideas alone cannot represent. Given that reality was (and is) viewed as layered, mysterious, and fluid in Waldorf schools, the arts remained dominant and inclusive within the students' meaning making and discovery processes.

Waldorf educators have viewed self as raw material where spiritual, artistic activity strengthens and develops one's core being, one's spiritual individuality (Howard, 1998). "Artistic creation rests not on what it is but on what it might be, not on the actual but on the possible" (Stockton, 2003, p. 58). Creativity, as a means to access potentiality, has had spiritual connotations in Waldorf schools. Here, Rudolf Steiner's concept of creativity involves the following: (a) force greater than our self; (b) attention or perception directed to our willing, feeling, and thinking; (c) evolution from two possible sources, impressionism (an intuitive impulse from outer sensibility) or expressionism (an imaginative impulse from inner sensibility); and (d) balance of the originating impulse with its opposite in an inner/outer exchange (Howard, 1998). Much of the Waldorf school curricula rely on student recognition of the possibility of choice and this initiation is driven by individual inner activity; some would say spiritual activity.

Influences of Friedrich Schiller's Aesthetic Education

Friedrich Schiller's (1759-1805) *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters* was a vital force for Rudolf Steiner's conceptualization of Waldorf Education. Both Rudolf Steiner and Friedrich Schiller desired social reformation to counter the fracture of man's character that they perceived as occurring from an emerging specialized society where art, religion, and science had lost their interconnectedness (Nobel, 1991; Saperstein, 2004). Within Steiner's 1919 Germany, imagination and reason were at odds with each other. Like Steiner, Schiller's (1795/1967) goal in the aesthetic education of humankind intended to harmonize these polarities of sense and reason within our being through transcendental experience with art.

Friedrich Schiller's theory of aesthetics began with support of Immanuel Kant's (1724-1804) theory of free play. Kant (1790/2000) proposed that there was no one steadfast concept for intuition, since the active experience of being intuit towards beauty allowed a harmonious free play between sensibility and reason. Immanuel Kant (1790/2000) and Friedrich Schiller's (1795/1967) theories do differ in their view of aesthetic experience and the purpose of free play. Schiller inferred that the basic instinct in art making was the instinct or impulse to play (Stockton, 2003). He viewed the rational reason faculty, humankind's *form impulse*, more active and dominate than our more passive and open *sense impulse;* thus, a balance between these two impulses was needed for humankind to be truly free (Stockton, 2003). For Schiller, an aesthetic experience had a transformative, educative power on mind and soul where beauty combined the two opposite conditions of perceiving and thinking "as the object of [free] play…actively engages our inner being, improving and unifying it" (Saperstein, 2004, p. 17). Kant did not profess this unity; Kant did not assume that hearts and emotions could be trained or actualized. The difference between Kant (1790/2000) and Schiller (1795/1967) was critical to Rudolf Steiner's goal of sense education. In other words, Kant's theories did not go far enough for Rudolf Steiner.

From Rudolf Steiner and Friedrich Schiller's perspectives, their emerging world of specialization was sacrificing human freedom. Free play countered such constraint with experience in momentary freedom that occurs within beauty and art–aesthetic experience. Steiner (1894/1992) stated in *The Philosophy of Freedom* that people become free when the spiritual and sensible are allowed to weave together. Further he said, that art has a redemptive power with a quality to restore wholeness by shaping freedom between the sense and reason faculties. Imperative to Waldorf Education has been the idea that everyone has

the capacity to become whole and to reach a higher truth through the moralizing influence of art.

Friedrich Schiller's goals of aesthetic education were (and are) synthesized into Waldorf Education as an impetus for internal change (transformation) within Waldorf students. Rudolf Steiner (1923/1964) desired a heighten disposition of sentiment that in turn shaped the students' rational, moral being. Schiller said (as cited in Howard, 1998), "If people are ever to solve the problem of politics in practice, they will have to approach it through the problem of the aesthetic, because it is only through beauty that individuals make their way to freedom" (p. 58). In other words, changes in sensibility and aesthetic attitude give rise to change in actions within our external world (Carlgren & Klingborg, 1962; Nobel, 1991; Read, 1956; Schiller 1795/1967; Steiner 1923/1964).

Today, as in Rudolf Steiner's time, Waldorf teachers have recognized that "aesthetics affect the way one feels, and the way one feels affects the way one thinks" (Uhrmacher, 1991, p. 270). And the way one thinks affects the way one acts. Steiner (1923/1972) asserted in *A Modern Art in Education* that it is "essential for men and women to be wide-hearted, to be able to participate with their hearts and souls in culture and civilization as a whole" (p. 211).

Influences of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

The influence of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's research and philosophies permeated the first Waldorf school and largely influenced today's Waldorf school curricula and forms of school governance. Rudolph Steiner carefully, thoroughly (for fourteen years), and with great intrigue edited Goethe's research on various subjects (Nobel, 1991). The

mobile life of nature and Goethe's (1790/1983) principle of expansion and contraction fascinated Steiner while likewise supporting his Anthroposophic vision:

> Within each seed is the possibility of the whole plant, but it lies there in a condensed, contracted form. The seed expands through root and leaf, contracts into the calyx wherein the future seeds form through the pollination process of the flowering expansion (Bloom, 2000, p. 15).

Steiner perceived Goethe's principle of expansion and contraction as a metaphor for the Waldorf student noting that in every person there are seeds that can be developed (expanded) or that can wither and decay (contraction).

There are two important implications of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's (1790/1983) principle of expansion and contraction upon art curricula within Waldorf Education. First, in the concept of expansion the child, as viewed by Waldorf educators, is the seed waiting to expand. Important to Rudolf Steiner and now Waldorf teachers, is the notion that all children are given the opportunity to broaden or expand the capacity of all their modalities including spatial, musical, kinesthetic, and so forth. Thus, the arts are notdenied within the Waldorf school for the Anthroposophic educator can never know if the child's destiny is to profoundly utilize the arts within her/his life path.

Secondly, in the concept of seed contraction, the decay of the seed is an opportunity to rectify conditions and become awakened to the future, a rebirth. Even if becoming an artist, musician, dancer, writer, actor and so forth is not in the Waldorf student's destiny, working with the arts teaches an emergent rectifying process that is not only practiced in creative problem solving, but imperative to conquering life's challenges (Howard, 1998).

Waldorf Pedagogy

Before discussing the structure of art curriculum within Waldorf Education, additional information about Rudolf Steiner's philosophy of human development should be

offered to the reader. Stockmeyer (1991) in *Rudolf Steiner's Curriculum for Waldorf Schools*, a summary of Steiner's indications for education, opened with this quote from Steiner:

> Today it is not enough merely to think about the world. One needs to think about the world in such a way that one's thinking gradually becomes imbued with a sensitive feeling for the world. For from out of such a feeling there grow the impulses for reform, for working a greater depth. Anthroposophy wants us to reach an understanding of the world which will not remain in the abstract but will evoke a sense of what needs to be done and in this way become a foundation for pedagogy and for the art of teaching (p. *i*).

As previously stated and inferred above, Steiner's Anthroposophical values professed societal reformation through the role of Waldorf pedagogy to remake the world (by fully making ourselves). Critical to how Waldorf pedagogy supports this reformation in today's society has been the notion of curriculum opportunities based on Steiner's developmental theory of children. Waldorf educators have carefully considered the developmental age-appropriateness of school activities so that children can fully be.

Waldorf teachers, as influenced by Rudolph Steiner, believe children progress through three stages of development and "within each stage, one of three governing forces–willing, feeling, or thinking–dominates an individual's mode of consciousness" (Uhrmacher, 1993, p. 434). In stage one, *willing and doing* ages 0-7, the child learns through student-centered physical explorations, creative play, and imitation of adult actions (Easton, 1997). In stage two, *feeling* ages 7-14, a child learns through hands-on explorations of the imagination with direct artistic challenges and tactile experiences (Easton, 1997). In stage three, *thinking and judging* ages 14-21, the young adult learns through self-reflection, self-regulation and open-ended, abstract problems (Easton, 1997). In carefully designing curriculum around these three phases of child development, Waldorf teachers intend to

provide each and every student the opportunity of her/his individual potentiality and, in turn, support potential improvement in society.

For comparison purposes, Piaget (1954) and Steiner's (1919/1970) stages of development are similar; only with Piaget's Sensorimotor Stage (ages 0-2) and Preoperational Stage (2-7) are combined into Steiner's *willing and doing*. Like Piaget, the Steiner developmental philosophy supports children developing by experimentation in the world while moving through their natural stages and progressing towards more complex thinking. Waldorf teachers, as directed by Steiner's worldview, speak emphatically about being careful to not burden children with irrelevant information that does not correspond to their developmental stage (Nordlund, 2004). Readiness (not age) determines how a child moves onward in a Waldorf school.

Rudolf Steiner's developmental stages of *willing, feeling, thinking* (often referred to as teaching to the Hands, Heart, Head) is relative to Plato's concepts of human behavior. "Human behavior, says Plato, flows from three main sources: desire [willing/hands], emotion [feeling/heart], and knowledge [thinking/head]" (Durant, 1927, p. 29). Through the Waldorf developmental stages, the Waldorf teacher recognizes that cognition involves visceral, intestinal, electrodermal systems and more – the whole of the body (Easton, 1997). Waldorf teachers are trained to be conscious of the child's changing of teeth, posture, gestures, and limb development as a means to better serve the child through appropriate curriculum.

Benedictus Spinoza's (as cited in Durant) said, "An idea as a part, along with 'bodily' changes, are one complex organic process" (1927, p. 194). Educational activities in the Waldorf setting have been presented with the intention of meeting the organic, holistic needs of each child: cognitive, physiological, emotional, and spiritual. Waldorf schools have been

brain-friendly, multi-sensory, multiple intelligence, and arts-inclusive schools before their time (Jensen, 2001).

Rudolf Steiner's 12 Senses

"Life is the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations" (Spencer, 1910, p. 99). Rudolf Steiner's philosophies suggest the possibility for completeness in life when there is an ongoing correspondence or interaction between inside (individual) and outside (world/ community). This sense awareness, a coupling of the inside and outside, is both supported and instructed within Waldorf Education (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004). Oppenheimer (1999), after his observations of various American Waldorf schools, feels as if students were experiencing layers of sensory foundations.

In Waldorf Education, "the senses are the gateways to the world" (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004, p. 35). Rudolf Steiner's philosophies designate 12 sense impressions that are in turn divided into three layers of experience: willing, feeling, and thinking. The first four senses are inwardly directed affecting the *will*. These physical senses are (a) sense of touch; (b) life sense; (c) sense of movement; and (d) sense of balance. The second four senses that direct *feeling-perception* are (a) sense of sight; (b) sense of warmth; (c) sense of smell; and (d) sense of taste. The final four senses that direct the *imagining/thinking* of the outer world are (a) sense of hearing; (b) sense of words (speech); (c) thinking sense (imagination); and (d) sense of I.

The physical senses, the first group of four, are stimulated at the beginning of primary school, since they are imperative to intellectual and emotional intelligence at a child's early age. Children use their sense of touch to participate in activities such as to sculpturally model in beeswax, explore materials in nature, prepare bread, and build with objects.

Waldorf teachers have children work a particular non-objective color painting to evoke the life sense–emotive reactions in our living body such as calm, quiet, and enthusiasm. Children explore their sense of movement through traditional movement games, folk dances, rhythmic activities, painting exercises, and form drawing. Form drawing (see *Form Drawing,* page 37), invented by Rudolf Steiner and unique to Waldorf Education, is an art medium that develops fine motors skills, eye-hand coordination, along with "an aesthetic sense for form" (Embrey-Stine & Schuberth, 1999, p. 1). Sense of balance is explored both in Eurythmy (see *Eurythmy*, page 68), a movement language invented by Rudolf Steiner, and through painting compositions.

"The second group of four senses is related to the human soul, the feeling and perception world" (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004, p. 37). Activities related to the sense of sight, sense of warmth, sense of smell, and sense of taste entail the recognition of opposites such as beautiful/ugly, black/white, warm/cool, pleasant/repellent, and sweet/bitter. The third group, considered the highest senses, entails relationships of inner being with the outward world; once again these are the sense of hearing, sense of words, thinking sense, and sense of I. Expanding the concept of sense perception through Steiner's 12 senses (all of which related to either willing, feeling, thinking) amplifies ways of knowing. "What we know results from what we perceive" (Uhrmacher, 1991, p. 146).

Sense-making in, with, and through the arts is prevalent in K-12 Waldorf curriculum as one of many ways of knowing and as a means for expanding perception. "The initial [lower senses] 'looking' and 'seeing' at best become 'letting speak' and 'hear' and consequently enjoying art and dealing with art" (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004, p. 39). Collaborative and imitative art processes dominate learning activities prior to age seven,

because the sense impressions are amalgamated. After age seven or at the changing of the teeth, Waldorf students normally begin to pursue more independent open-ended artistic processes with personal imagery as oppose to imitative activities such as non-objective color painting processes directed by teachers (Bruin and Lichthart, 2004).

From its inception, Waldorf Education commits to ensuring children's well-developed senses in order to implant within their students a unique inner feeling towards living in the world. The intent of Waldorf teaching methods is to have students observe life in a deeper way than simple, undifferentiating recognition, rather to sense dynamic structural features and uniqueness. From Waldorf educators' perspective the students' desire to learn and sense is more imperative than knowing specific things (Uhrmacher, 1991). In other words, Waldorf children are learning to learn and perceive. "The aim is not so much that the pupils should accumulate a great deal of knowledge, but that [Waldorf educators] prepare the ground for them to acquire the right feeling for the world" (Steiner, 1921/1986a, p. 178).

Teaching as an Art

Waldorf teachers inculcate within students a desire for discovery and a view of how discovery can be played out in the world. To fulfill this goal, the role of the Waldorf Teacher is one of maintaining personal inquiry, always becoming, and to view their pedagogy as art. Waldorf teachers are artists. Experienced Waldorf teacher and Coordinator of the Waldorf Training Program in the Education Department of Antioch New England Graduate School, Arthur Auer (2003), reflects on his teaching methodology:

> I have found education is profoundly enhanced when it uses its artistic-experiential method to achieve lasting and integrated capacities of intelligence– intellectual, emotional and volitional (will). Such as education is not intended to train or produce artists, but uses the experiential methodology of the arts to gain knowledge, values in life, and a healthy practical sense among other things. Herbert Read called this '*Education as an Art'*, an

> expression also used by Waldorf schools. The arts are not frills but rather the great, largely untapped fountain of educational renewal (p. 7).

Waldorf teachers create hands-on, multidisciplinary lessons where the arts are seamlessly integrated. The presentation of such lessons places the teacher in a performance role– teaching as an art. For example, Waldorf teachers may artistically perform the teacher input portion of their lessons through dramatic storytelling, acting in costume, illustrating intricate blackboard drawings, singing, creative movement, and so forth. Given that Waldorf teachers use artistic-experiential lessons, this requires each teacher to be a creative thinker and to be skilled in the arts. Thus, Waldorf teaching certification includes study in literature, poetry, music, eurythmy, drama, visual arts including sculpting and painting, the practical arts such as woodworking, and handwork such as knitting. The Waldorf classroom teacher instructs with painting, drawing, and modeling lessons from preschool through eighth grade. Depending on the size and resources of the Waldorf Lower School (1st- 8th grade), handiwork, practical arts, and eurythmy classes are taught by certified teachers and/ or masters of those art forms. Once the Waldorf student enters high school, the student is instructed by a variety of discipline specific Waldorf teachers much like American mainstream schools.

The Waldorf teacher accesses imagination and intuition while instructing. Waldorf teachers are challenged to inventively think when presenting learning material. For example, in many non-Waldorf schools a science teacher might present a concept and then demonstrate it through an experiment. A Waldorf teacher might reverse this process by providing an experiment and then giving the children exploration, observation, reflection, and discussion time (Oppenheimer, 1999). There is a difference between the students' level of cognition within these two scenarios; the latter, where the child leads the discovery process, requires a higher order of thinking and is based in inquiry. Waldorf science teacher

Mikko Bojarsky (as cited in Oppenheimer) sums up the non-Waldorf scenario (above) by saying the learning activity "takes the kid out of it" (1999, p. 81).

"Waldorf educators view their own self-development not only as a personal striving but as one of the most fundamental aspects of their qualifications as teachers" (Easton, 1997, p. 88). As lifetime learners, Waldorf teachers continually improve their pedagogical approaches through the practice of what is termed as *child study*. Child study is a collaborative endeavor where Waldorf teachers meet in their school to study Rudolf Steiner's works and Waldorf curriculum strategies, create works of art, share verses and songs, participate in meditative exercises, along with studying each other and each other's students (Coulder & Rawson, 1998). Often, this group of learners is called the College of Teachers who are the heart organ of the school community, leaders in the absence of the typical hierarchal school structure; there are no superintendents or principals making the pedagogical decisions in Waldorf schools (Smit, 1992). Waldorf teachers "never assume that there is no more to explore and discover" (Coulder & Rawson, 1998, p. 116). Waldorf teachers' ongoing self-education and continuous practice of creativity have ramifications for the growth of the entire school community.

Although there is an established sequence of curricula based on the Waldorf three-stage theory of child development, willing/doing, feeling, and thinking/judging, the Waldorf teacher has much latitude to determine which teaching strategies are effective in order to meet curriculum goals. Rudolf Steiner (1924/1983) set the precedent for this pedagogical freedom in his lectures with the first Waldorf teachers:

> We must also be very clear that there is no need to make our [teaching] methods rigidly uniform. For, of course, one teacher can do something which is very good in a particular case, and another teacher something else which is equally good (p. 25).

Waldorf teachers are specially certified through several years of intense study at Waldorf colleges, thus it seems as if little contradiction exists among Waldorf-based pedagogical decisions.

Pedagogical intentions are not thrust upon the Waldorf teacher; Waldorf teachers' philosophical agreement about school intentions create a consensus for the necessary ingredients found within the Waldorf pedagogy (Uhrmacher, 1991). For example, Waldorf teachers and schools agree that textbooks are ineffective or provide "dead knowledge" (Steiner, 1919/1995b), p. 60). "Waldorf teachers avoid textbooks, considering their digested information a poor substitute for original material" (Oppenheimer, 1999, p. 71). Waldorf teachers digest the information as a learner with the purpose of delivering knowledge in a new way to the students– in a manner that is engaging, creative, and centered to the student developmental needs. The Waldorf teachers bring the learning material alive through drama and storytelling, sounds, music, rhythmic games, and elaborate blackboard drawings. Here, a Waldorf teacher describes active learning in her classroom by saying:

> The curriculum materials seem like 'this is real'; this is soul food. Every [main lesson] block is nutritious for the whole human. How it's taught, you really teach children through the bone. You get the children moving and elasticity comes into the cognitive process. Then you can see it work and hear it working. You can see that the children have bright eyes and they are sitting on the edge of their chair and they are so eager to hear the stories and the subject matter that comes out of the curriculum and is so fine-tuned to that age (Nordlund, 2004, p. 33).

Given that the Waldorf main lesson teacher remains with the same children from first through eighth grade, there is continual creative demand for the teacher to bring to life diverse experiences and new curriculum presentations every school year. In doing so, the Waldorf teacher is an artist (Carlgren & Klingborg, 1976; Fisner, 1994; Spock 1985). The

teacher's role, intentions, and expectations change with each phase of children's growth (Easton, 1997). "The result of the teacher's pedagogical art is to influence the child's activity so that his [her] experiences in school are continuous and congruent with the child's own ongoing process of becoming" (Marshak, 1997, p. 49).

Aesthetics of Waldorf School Ecology

The ecology of the Waldorf classroom and school is unlike "the 'industrial model', which has come to dominate the view of public schools" (Henry, 1993, p. 5). Waldorf school ecology is important given that Rudolf Steiner believed the child absorbs what is happening in the environment: each child has an "absorbent mind" (Whitmer-Foster, 1981, p. 133). Waldorf schools and classrooms are structured in a manner where students have constant opportunities for scanning beautiful and intriguing objects of nature and art. Natural play areas and gardens are priorities to the school community. Waldorf school sites are carefully selected and whenever possible include natural environments and undeveloped land.

Within Waldorf schools, the interiors are also carefully considered. In Waldorf schools natural wood and fibers are utilized for school furniture and learning toys (as opposed to plastic contents). Often the school furniture is handmade, not mass-produced. Walls are painted with the technique of lazüre. In 1911, Rudolf Steiner (as cited by Stockton) lectured on the relevance of lazüre, a technique of transparent layers of paint unique to Waldorf classroom walls, saying, "the color of the room surrounding a person in certain states of his soul is indeed important…the influence of certain colors on people of various temperaments, intellectual gifts or characters has to be considered" (2003, p. 120). "As the [Waldorf] children progress through the grades, they move to classrooms that are painted a progression of hues from the colors of the spectrum, from reddish pink to pastel

orange, then on to yellow, green and eventually blue and purple in the later years" (Petrash, 2002, p. 79). The color of lazüre on the walls of the Waldorf classroom corresponds with the children's developmental stages.

Rudolph Steiner's (1911/1979) lectures and publications on the subject of organic architecture demonstrate his insights leading to progressive approaches in architecture. Steiner's organic architecture styles can be seen in the design of seventeen buildings. Organic architecture is a branch of architecture that encourages harmony between man and nature where buildings, furnishings, and natural surroundings become a unified, interrelated composition. Waldorf schools often build with green-designed architecture and organic style in mind. This includes careful integration of sustainable environmentally friendly constructs that celebrate the rhythms of nature such as the passing of the day and changing of the seasons. Changing of the season festivals are infused into Waldorf curriculum. Whenever possible the school's ecology is designed to support learning objectives related to the natural environment. Given the emphasis on organic designs and structures, the aesthetics of Waldorf schools differ from many non-Waldorf schools.

Rudolf Steiner's Blackboard Drawings

For Rudolf Steiner, the image was a great instrument of instruction. From 1900 until his death in 1925, Steiner's lecture circuit included over 5,000 appearances speaking about art, architecture, medicine, Anthroposophy, agriculture, economics, among other subjects (Rinder, 1997). At these lectures Steiner produced "luminous and evocative" pedagogical drawings on chalk blackboards until Steiner's colleague Emma Stolle began placing large sheets of black paper over the blackboards in 1919 (Rinder, 1997, p. 17). More recently, in 1990, these collected chalk drawings, numbering over 1,000, were exhibited in Germany,

Switzerland, Austria, Japan, and the United States. "A German museum director recently remarked that if Rudolf Steiner's blackboard drawings do not fit within any current definition of art, then a definition must be devised to include them" (p. 7).

Artists such as Mondrian, Kandinsky, Jawlensky, and Beuys were influenced by both Steiner's lectures and drawings. "Beuys, who is known for his 'expanded idea of art' (his own chalkboard drawings) coined the phrase *everyone is an artist"* (Rinder, 1997, p. 17). Blackboard drawings as instructional tools are grounded in Steiner's pedagogical concepts: everyone has art sensibilities, pictorials are vehicles for learning, and the teacher, as artist utilizing blackboard illustrations or pictorials, can access students' imagination and intuition.

Teaching with Image

The power of image and the ability to expand perceptions through imagery is well understood by Waldorf teachers. For example, from his study Uhrmacher (1991) shares a view of a Waldorf teacher that reminds her students about the proper use of a comma through this enduring image: "Now the traveler walking along on his journey, he needs a rest and so he dips his legs into the stream" (p.112). The concept of the comma now becomes internalized through imagery–pictorial thinking.

For Waldorf educators, metaphoric images are powerful tools for meaning making and are widely used to access imagination. James Hillman (1975) on imagination has says:

> In the beginning is the image, first imagination then perception; first fantasy and then reality. Or as Jung puts it: 'The psyche creates reality everyday. The only expression I can use for this activity is fantasy'. Man is primarily an imagemaker and our psychic substance consists of images; our being is imaginal being, an existence in imagination. We are indeed such stuff as dreams are made of (p. 23).

The collection of images and manipulation of images determines a person's perceptions. Waldorf intends to engage imaginations in order to expand the students' perceptions, dreams, and ultimately their reality in the world.

Waldorf students are afforded opportunities to make meaning by forming metal images as well as creating drawn images. Waldorf teachers often speak of "living into the story" (Sokolov, 2004, p. 1). When the student is living into a story, s/he forms imaginative inner pictures in response to the words they hear or read (Sokolov, 2004). Much like Rudolf Steiner as the master of his dynamic lectures, Waldorf teachers intimately know the art of dynamic speaking (storytelling) through their certification process. For example, Waldorf teachers can make history alive through an imaginary trip to another time and place; "Stories become opportunities [for students] to create mental pictures that do not depend on immediate experience" (Easton, 1997, p. 88).

For the young child, the forming of mental pictures or pictorial thinking is automatic and constant; more importantly mental images become the basis for decoding words and reading (Bransford, 1979; Carlgren & Klingborg, 1976; Sanders Bustle; 2003). We all begin as creators; as young children we instinctually dance, draw, and sing (James, 2002). In Waldorf Education learning the alphabet emerges from a multi-sensory verbal/visual approach where reading ready first graders carefully draw (or learn) all the letters and related words.

In the Waldorf first grade (in Waldorf schools, termed as *Class 1*), letters are first perceived as pictorial symbols. For instance, children may receive a teacher told tale about a fish and then the letter *f* becomes, through the children's own drawing, a fish image. Another example, the *s* could emerge as a drawing from the story the silversmith's smoke where the

illustrated smoke becomes the mnemonic device for the letter *s*. Goldberg (2006) in *Integrating the Arts: An Approach to Teaching and Learning in Multicultural and Multilingual Settings* calls this method picto-spelling. J. F. Gardner (1996) exemplifies a view of this dawning language methodology within a Waldorf classroom:

> Letters fill the room with sound, and will be put on paper with loving care, in color, using great strokes. They will be painted large with fantasy before being drawn small in the conventional style. The shape *B* for instance, may be extracted from a bumblebee, or a butterfly, or a bear. This retains in its form something of burgeoning, blooming, bountiful things of which it speaks. The children quickly sense the relationship. They will do the walking, dancing, or modeling of *B* and the painting, drawing, and writing of a sense for the formative quality that lives both in its given space and in its shaping sound (p. 81).

Waldorf's early childhood and Class 1 programs flood the child with fairy and folk tale narratives. Albert Einstein (as cited in Petrash) says, "If you want your children to be brilliant, tell them fairy tales. If you want them to be very brilliant, tell them even more fairy tales" (2002, p. 48). The Waldorf teachers' notion of dynamic storytelling requires their stories being told from memory only, so that "the magic of the spoken word, spiced with rhymes and little songs, can captivate the children holding them spellbound in fantasy, expanding both their vocabulary and their attention spans" (p. 47). In the Waldorf Lower School (1^{st}-8^{th} grades), the spoken and living word of the Waldorf teacher becomes the foundation of pictorial thinking.

Imagination

Waldorf Education utilizes storytelling as a vehicle to imagination, the ability to transport thought to witness events outside our here and now. Imagination via storytelling may access perspectives of another person such as experiencing the world as a historical figure of the past. Through spoken word journeys, Waldorf students develop the ability to

see in the mind's eye and travel inwardly to visualize places outside one's immediate community. In *The Gift of Imagination: the Nature and Nurturing of a Unique Human Capacity,* Waldorf educator Michael Preston (2005) summarizes the outcome of imagination. He suggests that imagination can:

- create what does not and has not existed
- transports us to far-off times and places
- quicken and enliven our understanding
- synthesize disconnected experience into a coherent whole
- help us see the world from other points of view
- help us become empathetic, moral, and loving persons
- help us objectify ourselves and bring about changes in ourselves (p. 17).

Imagination is valued in Waldorf curriculum as a means to transform children by developing a foundation of empathy, morality, and personal internal transformation (Preston, 2005). Imagination can transport one into any situation; thus it provides awareness and abilities that can facilitate redirection of one's life path. Waldorf educators view imagination as dormant and undeveloped unless it is honored and nourished (Preston, 2005). In Waldorf schools imagination is encouraged through daily soulful artistic activity, aesthetic play, and annual collaborative theatrical plays where acting allows children to empathetically enter into the other.

The importance of cultivating imagination in the Waldorf setting can be heard in the following:

> The imagination…is not an addendum or accessory to the human personality. It is an intrinsic, necessary human attribute. Nor is it something that an individual creates for himself. It is transpersonal, an elemental life force that is bestowed upon us by higher powers. Imagination is a mysterious gift, and its true source and nature are hidden to us. It conveys us to exotic realms, brings unexpected insights, and bestows intimations of the transcendent with our scarcely being aware of it, without out knowing how it operates (Preston, 2005, p. 17).

Main Lesson Books

Main lessons are typically two hours of study during the Waldorf school day presented through artistic and dramatic teacher input. Main lessons assist in propelling Waldorf students into imaginative journeys and magical inquiry. The main lesson teaching strategy, universal to all Waldorf schools, consists of the following: first, students listen and observe a teacher's presentation of new learning material (through engaging stories, drawings, experiential activity, and/or artifacts) and secondly, students integrate their developed mental pictures into the design of their own illustrative book about the main lesson study. Creating a main lesson book is an arts-based learning activity for representation and assessment of student understanding. "In essence, [the students] compose their own texts, which preserve for them what they have learned in their own personal format, documents and treasures of their learning experiences" (Pope Edwards, 2002, p. 4). Often the student "continues working at home, amplifying, condensing, restating, transcribing [their main lesson book]– actions that encourage and enforce the learning process…the child's own doing" (Barnes, 1978, p. 12).

The main lesson book teaching strategy is utilized from Waldorf Class 1 through Class 12; so, the student could have full documentation of her/his learning from first grade through graduation. The main lesson is an exceptional example where the arts and academics are so seamlessly integrated that discipline boundaries are blurred. These lusciously illustrated personal notebooks or textbooks are artistic reflections on the Waldorf curriculum. Uhrmacher (1993) noted in his study on Waldorf pedagogy, "A good story cathartically charges the information at hand" (p. 98). Dynamic, dramatic words are well

received from the teacher if students are allowed to respond in their main lesson books as "active authors of their own development" (Pope Edwards, 2002, p. 4).

Imaginative Play

The reader may have noted above that Waldorf schools do not emphasize the mainstream focus on early childhood (preschool and kindergarten) reading interventions. From the point of view of Waldorf educators, today's increased emphasis on early reading and math in school has come at the expense of imaginative play. Uninterrupted imaginary play is considered one of the most important child-centered works of art in the Waldorf school setting. Petrash (2002) notes that imaginary play develops the following: emotional maturity, skills with social interactions, well-rounded personality, cooperation and collaboration, thoughtfulness, concentration, and problem solving abilities. Most importantly, in terms of viewing play as an art, play gives rise to imagination and divergent thinking.

For the young child, Waldorf teachers carefully choose props for intrinsic learning or play that have uncluttered colors and natural-made materials (Schwartz, 1996). For example, after visits to Waldorf schools Oppenheimer (1999) noted seeing open-ended playthings such as blocks and stumps of wood, modeling beeswax, and self-made dolls with minimal details, all of which are open-ended to the children's interpretation and creativity. Waldorf classrooms are known to have nature tables for tactile exploration and play stands where young children build and express as an artist might with her/his canvas. In this type of setting the child is in charge of play as much as the adult is in charge at her/his workplace.

Form Drawing

Rudolf Steiner (1919/1970) educational philosophies support movement and engagement of the hand also educates the brain. Neurologists and brain researchers now agree with Steiner's belief (Bergstrom, 1990; Hannaford, 1995; Jensen 1001; Wilson, 2000). Form drawing, originated by Steiner in 1919 and exclusive to Waldorf Education, is utilized in elementary grades to develop flexible intelligence and fine motor skills, strengthen eye-hand coordination, and spur an aesthetic sense or feeling for form (Embrey-Stine & Schuberth, 1999). More complicated forms, especially related to geometry and math, are explored in fifth through twelfth grades.

"In form drawing, [Waldorf teachers] give the line its full value" (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004, p. 165). During form drawing exercises children draw line types, movements, and formations as the spatial subject, not as a picture of something in the outer world. Drawn linear formations become a trace, an echo, of a process of movement (Embrey-Stine & Schuberth, 1999). While practicing form drawing great attention is given to both the line movement and the negative space consuming the line. Form drawing, at its core, is about developing an aesthetic sensibility for a curve, a straight edge, or a movement within the forms existing around us.

Eurythmy

Eurythmy, another art form originated by Rudolf Steiner, is directly related to movement. The Waldorf curriculum is viewed as a living organism energizing an element of imagination throughout the K-12 program. Eurythmy, with its educational, artistic, and therapeutic implications, is one of the living components exclusive to Waldorf curriculum. "Eurythmy is a disciplined art movement of the arms and body that visibly expresses the

vowels and consonants of speech and the tones and intervals of musical melody…eurythmic gesture in speech emulates the definite forms we produce in the air when we speak a word" (Ogletree, 1997, p. 1). In a sense, the kinesthetic gestures of eurythmy are forms or "definite mental images of the corresponding manifestations of speech and song" (Steiner, 1913-1924/1971, p. 10). "When we form a word, our mouth presses the air into a certain invisible gesture, imbued with thought, which by causing vibrations, becomes audible…one imitates these gestures with the whole body…as visible gesture" (Barnes, 1978, p. 13). In other words, Rudolf Steiner's writings refer to eurythmy as visible speech.

Today, there are three types of eurythmy: speech, music, and therapeutic (referred to as curative). Speech and music eurythmy are dubbed artistic eurythmy and are typically performed to music, poetry, or as drama as it "makes visible the meter, cadence and rhythm of poetry; the vowels, consonants, and nuances of speech; the scales, melody, and rhythms of music" (Ogletree, 1997, p. 6). Eurythmy is also a professional performing art form with training institutes in Europe and the United States. Therapeutic eurythmy is utilized in the professional practice of medicine. For the purposes of Waldorf educators, the usage of eurythmy centers on its support and enhancement of the child's total development as s/he moves through the stages of willing, feeling, and thinking. "The exercises are prescribed to integrate what Steiner (1909/1965) calls the threefold nature of man" (Ogletree, 1997, p. 3)– hands (physical), heart (emotional), head (cognitive).

Waldorf educators assert that eurythmy encourages grace, harmony, body awareness and self-control from its participants. Eurythmy curriculum closely follows along with the main lesson curriculum and interacts in an interdisciplinary manner; thus eurythmy is used to enhance knowledge in the areas of speech, writing, music, geometry, literature, history and

especially creativity (Ogletree, 1997). For example, at a Waldorf school "geometry is first experienced in motion. The first grader runs the forms of a triangle, circle, square, pentagon…He knows with his [her] entire body how different the turn of a right angle is from the 60 degrees of an equilateral triangle. Keeping equal distance from the center at every point on the circumstance of a circle…it is the experience through the body that says 'circle' to his six-year old mind" (Barnes, 1978, p. 4).

Although eurythmy can be performed individually, practically all eurythmy lessons begin with the actual forming of a circle of people, a collaborative endeavor (Van Oordt, 1973). Images of balance and rhythm are considered throughout the eurhythmy exercise. Eurythmy skills build upon each other from grade to grade beginning with Waldorf Class 1 students' dramatization of the fanciful pictures found in fairy tales and rhythmically marking poetry structures. "The children listen to the sounds and carry out the movements that belong to them" (Heydebrand, 1966, p. 16). As the children progress through the grades (classes), so progress the topics explored: letters, words, numbers, geometry, lines, sense of space, handwriting, stanza forms of poetry, scales, rhythm and melodies, grammatical elements and so forth. Eurythmy begins in the Waldorf curriculum as an integrated pedagogical strategy where it "becomes an illustration and confirmation of what [the students] have learned" (Harwood, 1958, p. 156). During the last years of high school the fruits of the students' labor widen into sophisticated artistic work through such eurythmy performances as Shakespeare, Greek plays, and other classical drama (Ogletree, 1997).

Human Experience with Music

Rudolph Steiner pedagogical beliefs support the notion that all teaching is more appropriate if the human element is taken into account (Wilkinson, 1996). Steiner

(1923/1964) states, “Man, as nerve man, is inwardly built up of music, and feels is artistically to the degree that he feels its harmonization with the mystery of his own musical structure” (p. 37). Waldorf schools build on a human musicality that is already exists, natural and base in humans. “Toddlers spontaneously exhibit music behaviors, using music in their play and communication, composing songs, and inventing original musical notations” (Weinberger, 1998, p. 37). In visiting a Waldorf early childhood class, one hears songs throughout the day as children play, tidy up, bake bread with the teacher, and so forth. A Waldorf Lower School day begins with a musical verse and corresponding creative movement or possibly with attendance taking through song (Uhrmacher, 1991; Easton, 1995). Many Waldorf Upper Schools likewise maintain a start-of-the-day rhythmic verse. It is not uncommon to find music incorporated into each class and within the main lessons on a daily basis.

Although each Waldorf School is independently administered and maintains its own unique resources, an overview of typical types of skills and activities related to music follows. Class 1 Waldorf students use recorders to play pentatonic scales and utilize songs and rhythms to accompany kinesthetic learning especially in math as well as other subjects. By Class 3 the Waldorf students typically have the abilities to begin instrumental music beyond the recorder such as violin and they perform music notation. As the Waldorf student moves through the lower school, s/he learns to read music, sing acappella, study fractions from the violin, study acoustics and sound theory through science, performs in chorus and orchestra, and studies principles of Greek, Middle Ages, Renaissance, Elizabethan, American music, and Negro Spirituals.

By high school the Waldorf student can interpret elements of music and instrumentally improvise within diverse genres of music. Waldorf teachers, Wil and Cat

Greenstreet (AWSNA, 2001), demonstrate in *Waldorf High School Research Conference Performing Arts Presentations* the abilities of high school students in creating original scores from their improvisations with indigenous music throughout the world. These Waldorf students were able to arrange their own musical phrases based on interpreting the roots, the scales and rhythms, of the indigenous sounds they heard for the first time. Improvising and feeling the music allows the students to achieve Rudolf Steiner's intention of spirituality in and through the arts. Music has become a vehicle within the Waldorf curriculum to understand the culture of diverse peoples as well as exploring, understanding, and creating one's self (Spock, 1985).

Research suggests that music has the ability to facilitate and foster language acquisition, reading readiness, mathematical and spatial cognitive systems, perceptual-motor systems, sensory acuity, attention and memory systems, positive attitude, and self worth (Jensen, 2001; Wilson, 1998; Weinberger, 1998). Neurologist Frank Wilson (1998) states that playing an instrument neurologically connects and refines motor brain systems. Neurologist Norman Weinberger (1998) insists:

> Learning and performing music actually exercises the brain– not merely developing certain skills, but also by strengthening the synapses between the brain cells. Literature in neuroscience now strongly supports the conclusion that synapses grow stronger through use and become weakened through disuse…. Brain scans taken during music show that virtually the entire cerebral cortex is active while musicians are playing (p. 38).

Similar to Rudolf Steiner's ideas about music, neurobiologist Mark Jude Tramo (as cited in Jensen, 2001) states: "Music is biologically part of human life, just as music is aesthetically part of human life" (p. 13). Waldorf teachers would agree that mind and body are interconnected where singing, knitting, sculpting, painting, or performing eurythmy are cognitive, emotional, physical, social, spiritual, and aesthetic endeavors.

Handwork and Practical Arts

Neurologist Frank Wilson's (2000) case study research and interviews with people who value work with their hands and heavily rely on particular fine-tuned skills from their handwork such as musicians, surgeons, jugglers, magicians, puppeteers, surmised an extraordinary link between hand and mind; he infers:

> When personal desire prompts anyone to learn to do something well with the hands, an extremely complicated process is initiated that endows the work with a powerful emotional charge. People are changed, significantly and irreversibly, it seems, when movement, thought, and feeling fuse during the active, long-term pursuit of personal goals (p. 9).

Waldorf Education recognizes the students' motivational and cognitive gains from this interrelation of movement, thought, and emotion.

Both the Waldorf educators and Waldorf graduates make claim to the powers gained in long-term, hands-on, project-based lessons such as one finds in the handwork and practical arts curriculum (AWASNA, 2003b; Nordlund, 2004). Peter Nitze, Waldorf, Harvard and Stanford graduate, alludes to what the arts provide towards self and towards society when he says, "If you had the experience of binding a book, knitting a sock, playing a recorder, then you feel you can build a rocket ship" (Easton, 1995, p. 101). In creating a form, inventing a new entity, there is a struggle that only the creator can find his/her way through. Participation in the practical arts at Waldorf schools assists the students in being aware or more consciousness of this struggle or problem solving. Through the struggle, "the desire to learn is reshaped continuously as brain and hand vitalize one another and the capacity to learn grows continuously as we fashion our own laboratory for making things (Wilson, 1998, p. 59). Ultimately the long-term handwork assignments found in Waldorf schools afford a means for the brain to develop insight, judgment, and will to define, represent, and mark the

world in new ways. "Body [willing], thought [thinking] and emotion [feeling] are intimately bound together through intricate nerve networks, and function as a whole unit to enrich our knowing" (Hannaford, 1995, p. 50).

As implied earlier, "the whole human body, and not the brain alone, is the vehicle of consciousness" (Harwood, 1958, p. 20). Hand explorations and manipulations create routes in our inner neural circuitry to our brain (Hannaford, 1995; Mitchell & Livingston, 1999; Wilson, 1998). The inclusion of handwork and the practical arts within the Waldorf curriculum ensures building the mind and making meaning through hand exploration; "the brain deciphers what the fingers explore" (Mitchell & Livingston, 1999, p. 8). In creating an object the individual's thinking is exercised and myelin, the insulation around our nerve pathways in neurotransmission, grows; the capacity to repeat and remember the problem solving activity is enhanced (Mitchell & Livingston, 1999). Handwork such as knitting and crochet and practical arts such as woodworking and metal chasing provides a neurotransmission that "traverses back and forth across hemispheres matrixing information through many interrelated brain centers" (Mitchell & Livingston, 1999, p. 106-107). Thus, "a primary vehicle for weaving the world 'into our minds' is the active engagement of our hands" (Auer, 2004, p. 2).

First Rudolf Steiner and now Waldorf educators insist that developing children's full potential includes educating the will– the inner force behind the outer activity (Howard, 2004). The handwork and practical arts curriculum aim at educating the will– preparing a self-regulating, self-reliant person. "Educating the will is awakening the pupil's own activity" (Glocker, 2004, p. 5). In the struggle (problem-solving) of making something new, the Waldorf student extends self to overcome limitations and transforms instinctive impulse,

the will, through self-controlled thinking; the will is exercised into conscious outer motives. This self-initiated inner drive emerges from individuality; thus, the practical arts and handwork curriculum encourages awareness and development of individuality. "The will is the power within us that allows us, through our deeds, to interact with the world" (Mitchell & Livingston, 1999, p. 7). Teaching toward students' will-development has implications for the potentiality of society.

Handwork and practical arts involves learning how to learn through discovering purpose, implementing intentions, finding resolutions, translating into actions and engendering confidence (Mitchell & Livingston, 1999). Early childhood handwork begins in Nature by decorating trees, fastening leaves, and building with natural materials (searching, picking, knotting, harvesting). By grade school (by Class 1) the Waldorf students are knitting and crocheting. Imaginary stories are often told while Class 1 students finger knit a scarf (Mitchell & Livinston, 1999). Two-handed crochet exists as early math lessons in Class 2 curriculum. Waldorf Class 3 and 4 students can embroider and cross stitch symmetrical designs on sachets, tablemats, and pencil cases. Waldorf Class 5 and 6 students design patterns to create stuffed animals and puppets, while Waldorf Class 7 and 8 students are capable of using the sewing machine to create costumes for their plays and hand embroidering garments. Rhythmic singing or work songs are often employed during handicraft lessons.

Woodworking projects for Waldorf students begin with carving egg forms and bendable snakes to more complex moveable toys. Woodworking typically begins in Class 4 or 5 (fourth or fifth grade) and continues through Class 12, by then Waldorf students know the personality, color, and smell of diverse woods. In Class 7 and 8, Waldorf students can

chase copper sheets into forms and bowls, carve wood blocks for printmaking, build dovetail boxes and carve three-legged stools (Mitchell & Livingston, 1999). As with other art media explored in Waldorf schools, often these long-term projects are interconnected with the students' main lessons.

Rudolf Steiner's visions for Waldorf Education included high school students having practical life studies such as mechanics, spinning and weaving, metal work, stone carving, basketry, surveying, house building, bookbinding, and papermaking. Example Waldorf projects in this area of study consisted of constructing an instrument such as a guitar, carving a kayak, or studying the Middle Ages in order to create a stain glass window. The value Rudolf Steiner placed on the practical arts within Waldorf school curriculum stemmed from crystallizing educational experiences within his own childhood. Steiner's childhood fascinations revolved around a railway near his home and emerging technical inventions of his time. Although he feared that "his great interest in practical and mechanical problems sometimes threatened to dominate over feeling and his experience of the beauty of Nature" (Nobel, 1991, p. 82). Early educational experiences, such as learning to bind a book on his own, balanced Steiner's internal polarized needs–the measurable object merged with the a self-directed, aesthetic spiritual discovery. For Steiner, the students' self-directed inquiry remained at the heart of the practical arts hidden knowledge (Stockton 2003). "Steiner's view on art and human evolution may lead to the conviction that the value of a work of art lies not in its outer appearance but in the quality of creative activity that went into it–particularly, the degree to which it is born out of inner freedom" (Howard, 1998, p. 67).

Painting throughout Waldorf Curriculum

Rudolf Steiner states (as cited in Stockton, 2003) that color is the "soul of the world" (p. 119). Where in the experience of color, one embraces living spiritual reality of warmth and coolness. For young child experiencing color, "the capacity to experience the qualities of red, yellow, and blue is the same as the ability to perceive and know the joy or sorrow of another, as though it is [his/her] own" (Howard, 1998, p. 100). Color studies within the Waldorf curriculum are a means for student exploration of emotional intelligence.

Waldorf early childhood painting does not involve painting things; many paintings are image-free where "colors are important in their own right" (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004, p. 33). Artist Wassily Kandinsky calls this type of painting *Seelengemalde*, soul painting, an abstract painting emerging from inner feelings (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004). As outlined by Rudolf Steiner (1923/2001), Waldorf teachers recognize that color is consciously experienced by perceptions of the outer world, while simultaneously color is subconsciously experienced by our inner image human soul. To simplify this concept one could say color has and creates mood. Observation of color's mood, movement, and interacting nuances is the focus of initial Waldorf early childhood painting–to really see and experience color.

As previously stated, Rudolf Steiner's thoughts were heavily influenced by the works of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Thus, Goethe's (1810/1970) *Theory of Color* guides Waldorf arts-infused curriculum. Goethe's view of color consists of the following: (a) colors cannot be divided as they belong to 'crossings-over' of image (not Newton's notion of the prism); (b) colors are light in transformation from two opposite poles of light-dark (Newton's notions excluded the role of dark); (c) colors are a concordance between inner/outer reality;

and (d) colors are a process and subjective interplay, such as life (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004; Goethe, 1810/1970; Nobel, 1991).

To best achieve a relationship between color and soul mood, Waldorf teachers rely on the transparent and mobile medium of watercolor and more specifically techniques of wet-on-wet painting and veiling. "[Watercolor] is an ideal medium for the mobile, growing being of a child" (Jünemann & Weitmann, 1994, p. 2). Employed by the early childhood student through high school, the wet-on-wet technique entails painting on a stretched moist paper. Veiling, utilized from Class 6 (sixth grade) onward, entails painting thinned transparent layers of color that dissolve on a stretched, fixed paper. More veils equal increased strength of the color–a building up process. Bruin and Lichthart (2004) explain the painting process found at Waldorf schools:

> Time and time again the children will experience, with each painting, the wet mobile paint which slowly dries up to fixed color forms or transitions. The process of becoming is the most important, in which the children can experience the working of color most intensely and give expression to their creative imagination. The less condense the painting, the more it approaches the essence of color. The purest form would be 'painting with light' (p. 41-42).

Up to age seven, Waldorf teachers' painting pedagogy involves students imitating their teachers' color play with paint. In other words, the teacher models color relationships and mixes without an emphasis on specific images–non-objective art making with fields of color (Bruin and Lichthart, 2004). For example, early childhood students explore the interactions of pure primary colors of red, yellow, and blue without specific assignments in painting objects. Another Waldorf teaching scenario is to utilize an orally shared fairy tale with the children in order to arrive at characters with moods and feelings that have a place

(mood) in the color circle. Vain, shy, dull, clever, cheerful, beaming, angry, reckless, and so forth would be expressed in painted color fields.

Rudolf Steiner's (1909/1965) developmental stages support that after the age of seven, typically Class 1 (first grade), the 12 senses become more independent; thus, the child, now with his/her own force, can begin creating more independently-driven images. An image can now be translated from and coupled to a fairy tale. "In the lower classes [Waldorf teachers] connect the colors to mood and quality, with adverbs, adjectives, verbs, and nouns" (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004, p. 57- 58). Color exercises now become specific assignments or tasks of mixing colors to obscure degrees looking for active and passive color relationships, the polarities.

The Waldorf painting lesson is often not a detached activity, but is linked by content and rhythm with other subjects (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004). The painting curriculum is spiraled as with all other Waldorf curriculum where subjects occur and reoccur in correspondence with the child's developmental maturity from year to year. Fables and legends about saints and animals are explored in Class 2 where narratives about opposites lend themselves to complementary color painting or what Goethe (1810/1970) calls harmonious color. Curriculum for Class 3 students explores a feeling world by the presentation of dramatic adventures, tragedy and joy, and journeys through various lands, all from the Old Testament; these become inspirations for narrative paintings that now include silhouette figures. Within these elementary grades, color conversations found within the stories are reflected on and then painted by the children. For example, children could think about a question such as, 'If we wanted to paint this meeting of our two characters, which colors should we choose' (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004)?

Waldorf educators believe arresting changes occur in the child's ninth or tenth year of age (Fisner, 1994; Steiner, 1924/1995a). The child's relationship to the world changes where they question and judge within their environment and even become self-critical and insecure. Waldorf educators try to take advantage of this awareness by enticing the Class 4 students' discovery of nature and environments that have previously been taken for granted. The act of painting changes from soul mood (inner self) to nature mood (outside self) where children explore painting subjects related to the animal kingdom and the corresponding habitat. For example, children may contemplate, 'What is the essence of a cow and how is it different then me' (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004)?

Waldorf Class 4 students study Norse mythology where warm and cool paintings can illustrate *Niflheim*, the mist land of darkness and icy winds, along with *Muspelheim,* a fiery, scorching world. Exploration in geography with its time, seasons, place, and weather conditions continue onward through Class 8. First maps are created from local history in Class 4 and then during subsequent grade levels (classes) the maps expand out into the world, while the painters learn how to illustrate diverse points of view and visually describe temperatures and heights of diverse land and water masses.

Waldorf Class 5 students explore botany lessons where they paint plants, flowers, trees, and world habitats. Students observe "everything in the plant world that grows and flowers between the polarity of light and darkness" (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004, p. 95). They likewise study Greek mythology with its rich motifs of heroes and heroines. Other ancient civilizations, in India and Egypt, provide stimulus for paintings and drawings involving ornament, design, and architecture. Class 5 students begin to utilize more color perspective to explore depth, perspective, and illusions of space.

Painting in Class 6 becomes "the path to exact observation" (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004, p. 106). All senses are open and required in the Class 6 curriculum with an importance on the students' self-built foundation of knowledge (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004). Careful exploration of the changing of the seasons occurs with tree paintings that utilize the skill of leaving open spaces– visualizing and preparing steps ahead. The physics of light, sound, temperature, and so forth are explored. The veiling paint technique is introduced in order for students to capture or illustrate what they observe within their science experiments and with object observations such as viewing crystallized minerals. Image-making is still linked to literature stimuli as in some of the earlier grades. For example, an indigo painting activity, with properties of producing rich shadows, might spur from a verse such as this:

> In the subterranean corridors
> Leading to vaults
> Sound without interruption
> A murmuring river.
> My newly lit torch
> Casts many a capricious shadow
> Reflects in the water
> In a mysterious way.
> Only now do I see the world
> In which I'm going to be
> So many colors
> To meet me, radiating
> As always shining here
> I feel overwhelmed
> Whoever suspected this
> That so deep in the earth
> Secrets are hidden
> Which only reveal themselves
> When light shines around them?
> (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004, p. 111-112).

Waldorf Class 7 brings new explorations of the night sky– moon, stars, and the planetary. Stories of geography's fantastic, mysterious localities enter into the curriculum again and combine with seasons and times of day/night. Color inspiration now can come

from biology and chemistry main lessons. Class 7, from Rudolf Steiner's view, is the last grade level for the child's "multicolored inner emotional life" (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004, p. 123). In Class 7 and 8, children are in a "period of contrasts" (Carlgren & Klingborg, 1976, p. 141)– the polarities of black and white. Thus, the Waldorf teacher moves the children away from multi-colored paintings into black and white drawings.

Class 8 students have a need to accentuate and this urge often results in producing outlines within drawings and paintings. Waldorf visual art processes avoid these outlines where color perspective and value change is preferred over line-dominant perspective (Steiner, 1923/2001). The Waldorf students are challenged to illustrate geometric themes from the Industrial Revolution, yet may be shown works of Turner to inspire soft play between light and dark. Pencil and charcoal media are now alternated with paint media. From Class 6, beginning the path of observation, through Class 8, students explore black and white charcoal still life drawing such as with cylinders, pyramids, cubes, bowls, and so forth along with on site perspective drawings (i.e. corridors, houses). Naturalist drawing or copying of life phenomenon (such as a still life) is not encouraged in Waldorf school curriculum until these upper grades. By the end of Class 8 the Waldorf student can draw in perspective complicated dissections of bodies and planes intersecting at various angles (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004).

Before leaving the topic of painting and color theory, it is important to note that in Waldorf Education student work with colors can have therapeutic connotations for balancing children's temperaments (Steiner, 1919/1997). "Learning to know the temperaments of his [her] pupils is one of the [Waldorf] teacher's most important tasks" (Carlgren & Klingborg, 1976, p. 61). Waldorf teachers pay attention to each child's paintings and expressions in

order to be informed about the child's temperament and to harmonize temperament through the art pedagogy. In other words, Waldorf student painted expressions are a means to assess and respond to the child's inner being of the outer temperament.

High School Art Curriculum

Waldorf lessons of pure imagination diminish at age fourteen. Upper Waldorf school students enter into Rudolf Steiner's last developmental stage termed *thinking* and their art becomes a balance between imagination and visual reality (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004). Will, emotion, and now judgment can interact for students to answer the following: 'Who am I?'; 'What is happening here?'; 'Why are things this particular way?'; and 'Do things have to remain this way?' Higher order thinking takes the form of discernment, observation, comparison, analysis synthesis, and in depth investigation.

In *The Disciplined Mind,* Howard Gardner (2000) says, "An education for all human beings needs to explore in some depth a set of key human achievements captured in the venerable phrase 'the true, the beautiful, and the good'" (p. 19). The Waldorf high school student uncovers the curriculum through inquiry of the big ideas of humanity. One way Waldorf Education achieves Gardner's premise is their use of the history of the arts and analysis of diverse historical and personal points view in order to think about beauty, the good and right, and reality and truth. During Class 9-12 discriminating judgment is developed in the following way:

> When one considers the great exponents of the various arts in connection with their social origin, their individual destiny, their particular styles and their historical background, it is hardly possible any longer to dismiss their works with a simple 'this I like' or 'that I don't like' (Carlgren & Klingborg, 1976, p. 181).

Beginning in Class 9 form drawing, painting, and clay modeling skills from lower school experiences blend and unite into high school students' investigations with art history. Changing ideals about beauty are examined from diverse cultural points of view and throughout humankind's cultural evolution. Waldorf high school students intensely analyze works of art from various art movements and by recreating the art they not only practice artistic problem solving and media techniques, they become closer to the art itself. Works of art by Dürer and Rembrandt are often heavily utilized in Waldorf curriculum for their emphasis on light/dark contrast while Impressionists and Expressionists are utilized for their non-naturalistic approach and inner/outer impression of phenomena (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004). In *Waldorf High School Research Conference Visual Arts Presentations,* Waldorf teacher Jean Balekian (AWSNA, 2001) presents his high school students' studies and paintings on Masters along with their own creations influenced by the Masters. These student works of art have a marvelous sophistication that can be attributed to long-term sensitivity and exploration of art history and a drive to make visible something equally beautiful as the technique and craftsmanship of the studied Master artwork. What takes place in the Master studies is an aesthetic metamorphosis within the student (AWSNA, 2001).

Additional explorations possible in the Waldorf high school visual arts curriculum include theme paintings of polarities, such as sunrise/sunset, summer/winter, before battle/ after battle; these explorations speak to the underpinnings of Waldorf Education– Rudolf Steiner's worldview. As Class 11 students investigate modern art, the beginning of the twentieth century, music history is explored from Apollonian and Dionysian aspects, again positions of polarity. Although media has expanded beyond watercolor painting to various drawing materials, printmaking, and oil painting, the act of shading with Goethe's

(1810/1970) theories in mind still dominates the visual art curriculum. By Class 12 the Waldorf students are able to reflect on the essence of the human being by uniting their previous studies of history, philosophy, chemistry, physiology, and so forth into their idea of humanity. Art history may include architecture and humankind's relationship to building structures. The students' painting curriculum now places the human at the center; painting subjects become portraits and self-portraits in succession of themes.

From lower school throughout upper school, Waldorf pupils experience a sequential in depth investigation of the world and its people through its art forms. Waldorf pupils "come through the general superficiality of their own experiences and develop an eye for the individual contribution made by each artist, each person, including the pupils themselves" (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004, p. 170). In Waldorf Schools, creative art making is a living process– an allegory to life. Reality (life) is always being created and transformed. "Idealism is kept alive in the [Waldorf] high school curriculum when all the subjects are centered around the human being. A life philosophy is evolved when science, art, and religion are not artificially separated; the qualitative as well as the quantitative experience are cultivated" (Mitchell & Livingston, 1999, p. 115).

Research Related to Waldorf Arts Experience

As previously stated, this literature review supports an inquiry into the nature of art experiences within Waldorf schools as described by Waldorf schooled graduates. Relevant to this endeavor is a survey of the literature within the following topics: (a) experiential learning; (b) aesthetic experience; (c) arts integration experience; (d) creative experience; and (e) Waldorf school graduates' experience. At the center of all these topics is the role of experience within education. Baadh (2001) speaks of experience in the following way:

> Man's journey through the long ages and different peoples and cultures of the world takes him from one experience and stage of consciousness to another. Nowhere are these stages of inner experience accidental or arbitrary. His journey follows the same laws as the serene growth of a flower, which sends out leaf after leaf, puts forth buds, opens blossoms and bears fruit, each in its own time and each containing its own irreplaceable, unsurpassable, eternal value (p. 3).

The experiences offered in any educational setting seed and bud the fruits harvested in post-school experience.

Learning through Experience

"According to [John] Dewey, teachers do not provide experiences for students. What teachers provide are classroom conditions that guide the kinds of experiences students are likely to undergo" (Uhrmacher, 1993, p. 435). Arts-infused conditions are purposely positioned in the Waldorf classroom. Jackson (1998) expands on Dewey's (1934) theories on art experience in his overview of Dewey's *Art as Experience*. Jackson interprets how people may live differently through art experience. He says:

> The contents of the world have been increased by one more painting or poem or piece of music, and, more important, both the experiencer, whether artist or art appreciator, and the object experienced have changed. The experiencer changes by undergoing a transformation of the self, gaining broadened perspective, a shift in attitude, an increase of knowledge, or any of a host of other enduring alterations of psychological nature… Interchanges with art objects that result in enduring changes in both the experiencer and the experienced is to label them *educative* [italics added]. They are so, Dewey would say, because of their liberating effect on future experiences. An educative experience, he explains, is one that does 'something to prepare a person for later experience of a deeper and more expressive quality'. Conversely, 'any experience is *mis-educative* [italics added] that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience (p. 6).

Rudolph Steiner ideals correlate with the above premise that the "experiencer changes by undergoing a transformation of the self" (p. 6) when experiencing interchanges with art. The goal of arts within the Waldorf curriculum is to afford students educative experience.

John Dewey's concepts of educative and mis-educative experience compare to Armstrong's (1994) "crystallizing experiences and paralyzing experiences" as "activators and deactivators of intelligence" (p. 22). Crystallizing experiences are the activators or "turning points in the development of person's talents and abilities" and paralyzing experiences are the deactivators or key events with the "shut down [of] intelligences" (p. 22-23). Although Armstrong coins the term *paralyzing experiences*, the phrase *crystallizing experience* originates with David Feldman (1980) and develops even further with Howard Gardner (1983) and Walters & Gardner (1986). Whether experience results in a positive or negative educational epiphany, Dewey's (1934) notion, " an experience is a product, one might almost say a by-product, of continuous and cumulative interaction of an organic self with the world" (p. 224) is relevant to Rudolf Steiner's pedagogical aims.

What children learn is what they see repeatedly; the more experience with something the more it is internalized and remembered (Cornett, 2003). Shaping of children's knowledge and their future ultimately stems from their banked day-to-day experiences. Hausman (1991) speaks about the shaping of self through experience:

> No one among us lives alone. People and events make a difference in the shaping of self-image and personal identity. Each of us develops a concept of 'self' that is ever-changing, subject to dialogues and interactions as memories and predispositions, hopes and aspirations interact with an evolving reality. Our mechanisms of 'memory' serve as powerful forces in the shaping of our lives (p. 4).

John Dewey (1934) likewise acknowledges the idea that "attitudes and meanings derive from prior experience" (p. 71). In *Art as Experience,* Dewey states that physical occurrences and events do pass, "but something of their meaning and value is retained as an integral part of the self" (p. 109).

Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, and Whalen (1993) considered the impact of meaningful experience in their study on whether the quality of talented teenagers' experiences predict the level of commitment to their area of talent four years later. Concerned about the act of "disengagement from talent" (p. 6), Csikszentmihalyi, et al. investigated creative activity (experience) of teenagers. Through an Experience Sampling Method (ESM), a random paging, the participants documented behaviors and subjective states of mind in a self-report book directly after being paged. Csikszentmihalyi, et al. concluded, "the desire to keep enjoyment alive forces us to become more complex–to differentiate new challenges in the environment, to integrate new abilities into our repertory of skills" (p. 15).

This deep state of intrinsic enjoyment, involvement, and concentration is a type of self-transcendence that Csikszentmihalyi (1975; 1990) coins as *flow* or *flow model of optimal experience*. "Flow is a subjective state that people report when they are completely involved in something to the point of losing track of time and of being unaware of fatigue and of everything else but the activity itself" (Csikszentmihalyi, et al., 1993, p. 14). The concept of flow has connotations for educators, especially those influenced by Rudolf Steiner, as they seek to engage students in self-transcendence inquiry with intellectual, physical, emotional, and even spiritual metamorphosis.

Educator Custodero (2002), working with flow experience for children in the music classroom, defines flow experience as "the belief that one's actions will sustain or heighten the level of experience" and "freedom of choice to generate possibilities is at the core of the creative impulse" (p. 5). Similar to Dewey's (1934) ideas on the aesthetic nature of play, the experience of flow fuses emerging ideas with the possibilities of actions. The nature of play and flow in school curriculum has connotations for educators who intend conditions of

creative thought and inventive action. As stated earlier, Kant (1790/2000), Schiller (1795/1967), and Steiner (1923/1964) call the basic instinct in art making the impulse of free play where at the core of the creativity is the art-maker's realization of being an "agent of possibility" (Custodero, 2002, p. 3).

"The process of thinking though an [arts curriculum] activity, such as creating with one's hands, the flow of bodily movements, or the compilation of knowledge structured by disciplined action, technique, and experience makes the arts unique" (La Pierre & Zimmerman, 1997, p. xv). Experiential learning through the arts entails shifts and alterations in perspectives, attitudes, knowledge, and psychological nature. Experiential learning in, with, and through the arts involves an observation that Einstein establishes (as cited in Csikszentmihalyi, 1993): "The goal of… the arts is to transform reality as we know it and therefore escape its limitations" (p. 322). Experiential learning through the arts is transformational.

Impact of Aesthetic Experience

In considering the implications of Waldorf schools' arts-infused curriculum as a catalyst for shaping the meanings and values of Waldorf schooled graduates attribute to arts experience, a survey of literature on the development of aesthetic attitudes is provided below. John Dewey (1938/1959) says, "Every experience affects for better or worse the attitudes which help decide the quality of further experiences, by setting up certain preference and aversion and making it easier or harder to act for this or that end" (p. 29-30). Eisner (1985) speaks about predispositions developed by students from experiencing both what is included and emphasized within curriculum as well as what is ignored. Attitudes are not innate; they are considered socially based and developed by social contacts or experiences (Burkitt, 1991;

Luehrman, 1999; Morris & Stuckhardt, 1977). Given that attitudes germinate from experience and social constructs, it could be expected that the greater emphasis on aesthetic experiences, arts-infused curriculum, and the social endorsement of the art making within the Waldorf school ecology may further particular arts dispositions and attitudes among Waldorf students and graduates.

In *The Art of Appreciation*, Osborne (1970) asserts that during aesthetic experiences a heightened awareness makes the participant feel greater freedom in thinking and rewarded by discovery–gains in percipience. This aesthetic mode or attitude "in part takes us out of ourselves into new worlds" (Smith, 1995, p. 62). This new view of reality, through aesthetic experience and engendered percipience, corresponds to Goethe's and Steiner's worldview that includes the notion of artistic creations based not on what exists, but on what could exist or what could be. Osborn's view of percipience speaks to Goethe's (1790/1983) concepts of expansion and metamorphosis–change of form. "The aesthetic 'attitude' is restless, searching, testing–is less attitude than action: creation and re-creation" (Goodman, 1976, p. 242). In this sense, being open to aesthetic experiences, a particular art attitude, involves remaining flexible to transformation (metamorphosis action).

In *An Aesthetics for Educators*, Kaelin (1989) proposes that art and aesthetic experience intensifies and clarifies human experience. Kaelin's "theory of aesthetic education thus helps to define the kind of individual any free society would wish to produce–an individual who embodies the human values of tolerance, communication, judgment, and freedom" (Smith, 1995, p. 65). Steiner would agree with Kaelin's humanistic objectives of art serving awareness of human powers and potentialities, thus benefiting both society and the individual. Human potentiality, an Anthroposophical ideal within Waldorf

Education, includes students achieving a capacity for aesthetic experience and capacity for aesthetic response. Smith (1995) proposes, "one can argue convincingly that aesthetic experience is a special form of human awareness that serves individuals in ways other forms of awareness do not and that it accordingly contributes to the actualization of worthwhile human potential" (p. 75). An aesthetic code, art attitude, assists an individual in realizing "a significant part of their humanity" (Smith, 1995, p. 75).

Stockmeyer's (1991) collection of quotes from Rudolf Steiner's lectures about Waldorf curriculum indicates Steiner's intentions for developing an aesthetic or art attitude:

> So many people go through life without even noticing what is most significant in the objects and events in their environment. As a matter of fact, we have to learn how to do this before we can see and observe in the way that gives us our true position in the world (p. 38).

Developing art attitude is intentionally trained, informed, or cultivated at Waldorf schools, so that the sense organs function and unfold beyond what is normally expected (Ghose & Richard, 1956).

Arts Integration

"The child becomes what the environment is", states Rudolf Steiner in *Lectures to the Teachers* (1923, p. 50). The Waldorf environment is arts-infused where typically no seams are apparent in the inclusion of the arts within educational activities. Within Waldorf schools, the arts are interrelated with each other as well as with other disciplines into a threading of global interdependence throughout the curriculum. Waldorf Education's arts integration intends to meet the needs of the whole child.

To Educate the Whole Child, Integrate the Arts (2005) is a national poll conducted by opinion research firm Belden, Russonello, and Stewart with consultation from Douglas Gould and Company. This survey study of 1,068 adult Americans provides opinions on the

following: (1) perceived level of arts emphasis or priority in schools; (2) level of support for arts integration; (3) reasons for the value of arts integration in education; and (4) perceived barriers to arts education. The findings of the study demonstrate that 60% of the American public perceived arts and music as high priority within public schools (7-10 ratings out of a ten point scale). Some proponents of Waldorf Education might disagree finding public schools lacking in adequate arts experience.

Possibility shocking to practicing K-12 mainstream arts educators, 56% of the participants in this study perceive arts and music as given higher priority in public school settings than standardized tests. Only 48% of the surveyed American public state that too little emphasis on arts and music is at public elementary schools and 36% state that too little emphasis on arts and music is at public high schools. 46% of surveyed Americans state that they support arts integration with the majority citing arts integration as valuable, because it educates the whole child. Within the recommendations section of the report *To Educate the Whole Child, Integrate the Arts* (2005), researchers state, "For all the target audiences identified in the survey, the overarching theme of communications should be that schools need more emphasis on arts throughout the curriculum to 'educate the whole child' and 'nurture the whole child'" (Belden, Russonello, & Stewart, 2005, p. 76).

Integrated teaching methods inclusive of art are becoming more accepted as educators note and advocate how integration engages learners with the nature of contemporary connected knowledge (Althouse, Johnson, & Mitchell, 2003; Mississippi Arts Commission, 2004; Parsons, 2004; The Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 2002). Besides Waldorf Education, other alternatives to mainstream schools support arts-infused curriculum and arts integration pedagogy such as Keys Schools, Mississippi's Whole School

Initiative, and Multiple Intelligence Schools. Recently published is a four-year study on an arts integration school reform initiative called *The Arts Are An "R" Too: Integrating the Arts and Improving Student Literacy (and More) in the Mississippi Arts Commission's Whole Schools Initiative*. The Whole Schools Initiative is an example of comprehensive school reform in Mississippi schools where the arts are embedded within interdisciplinary curriculum and become a vehicle for promoting high quality instruction for the whole child.

The Arts Are An "R" Too: Integrating the Arts and Improving Student Literacy (and More) in the Mississippi Arts Commission's Whole Schools Initiative report includes data collection from interviews, school tours, and surveys. The evaluation by an external, third-party team reports the following outcomes of the *Mississippi Arts Commission's Whole Schools Initiative*:

> Participants–adults and children–identified a host of academic, social, and personal benefits other than test score improvement that students enjoyed as a consequence of arts integration. The arts, therefore, not only appeared to help schools meet formal accountability requirements … educators argued that integrating the arts into math, language arts, science, and social studies heightened students' comprehension and retention of content and sharpened their ability to think critically and creatively about the material…students became more confident in school because those that had heretofore been unsuccessful academically often found that they stood above their classmates in the arts (Mississippi Arts Commission, 2004, p. 4).

Learning is never confined to one modality in these schools. The efforts of Waldorf Education in providing connected learning–where content is not treated in isolation–is congruent with how the brain functions (Jensen, 2001; Marshall, 2005; Wright, 2003). Brain research literature supports the theme of cognition being centered on connection-making (Jensen, 2001; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999; Martindale, 1995; Preston, 2005; Ricoeur, 1981; Thornton, 2002). The arts within Waldorf schools enhance connectionism across disciplines

and learning modalities. As previously stated, integrated arts-infused curriculum initiates Waldorf schools as brain-friendly way before their time.

"Integrated approaches to instruction rely heavily on the transfer of knowledge from one domain to another" (Efland, 2002, p. 103). Ricoeur's (1981) Theory of Imagination infers that a leap in imagination occurs when the mind links or bridges between constructs; imagination is a projection of connection-making. These leaps are often mental-images. "Imagination is commonly thought of having its root meaning in the word *image*. Thus we usually think of imagination as an inner seeing. We sometimes talk of 'picture thinking'" (Preston, 2005, p. 16). Preston speaks to the importance of integration, connectionism, and imagination in Waldorf curriculum:

> Imagination also supports our ability to enter deeply into a subject of study…if our imagination is active, it can in a moment grasp connections and set of connections not perceived before can suddenly create relevance and meaning. We can find ourselves swept into a journey of exploration, discovery, and mental transformation… This experience frequently opens connections to other fields of study and leads to the discovery of the beauty, paradox, and reference to the macrocosm inherent in every microcosmic, finite phenomenon. Every study can be experienced as a journey of exploration, discovery, and personal transformation" (p. 17).

"Transmediation occurs when meanings formed in one communication system are recast in the context and expression planes of a new sign system (for example, we take something we know verbally and recast it in art)" (Leland & Harste, 1994, p. 340). Waldorf curriculum allows this kind of transfer of knowledge between diverse sign systems including arts intelligences as one of multiple ways of knowing. Lakoff and Johnson (1999) suggest that metaphor is where creativity and learning intersect. Metaphors are links and the means of transfer between domains.

Art defined within a postmodern theory infers that art is contextualized within diverse domains and is a source of meaning making across disciplines and sign systems (Marshall, 2005). Knowing and learning then is no longer conceptualized as experiences within discrete entities, but rather seen in terms experience in orchestrating within integrated systems (Efland, 2002; Freedman, 2003; Marshall, 2005). "As long as schools operate on an essentially linguistic modality that gives place of privilege to a kind of literal, logical, or mathematical form of intelligence, schools limit what youngsters can learn" (Eisner, 1990, p. 37). Zaltman and Schuck (1995) report that two-thirds of all stimuli reaching the brain are visual, where the balance of information conveyed through sound, touch, taste, and smell. Experiences with numerous sign systems is considered necessary to obtain a constellation of cognitive, aesthetic, and psychomotor skills that in turn fully develop diverse perspectives to mediate our world (Suhor, 1992).

Sanders Bustle's (2004) research specifically focuses on the intersection of literacy and image as well as the role of integrated visual meaning making devices in the assessment of learning. She remains "convinced that having an art type of component [integrated in learning activity] is a way for children to internalize what they've learned. And then to have a venue to express that and to show that is another learning mode, and it's every bit as important as reading and writing and math and music" (p. 420-421). Although Sanders Bustle shows vignettes of teachers in mainstream schools who utilize lessons that entail creating images with writing, her cases endorse the same value Waldorf teachers place on their main lesson book curriculum. Teachers in Sanders Bustle's research "speak of visual representations as both a process *for* and representation *of* understanding" (p. 421). Artistic and expressive engagement that is interrelated to several sign systems assist students to

internalize connections between themselves and new constructs in profoundly personal and emotive ways (Sanders Bustle, 2004). Learning and creativity are essentially connection-making (Marshall, 2005).

Studies on Creativity

Creative ideas comprise of taking ideas from one discipline and transmediating them into another (Martindale, 1995; Marshall, 2005). Koesler (1990) notes that creative ideas emerge through bisociation (juxtaposition or connection) of previously unassociated entities. In other words, seemingly dissonant pairings compel the brain to imaginatively bridge those paired concepts. Both Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Hummel and Holyoak (2002) suggest that creative thinking is analogous thinking. As previously stated when discussing art integration, teaching with metaphorical thinking is at the core of imagination and subsequently creativity. "In metaphor, 'seeing as', which is the core of learning, becomes closely aligned with 'seeing differently', a cornerstone of creativity" (Marshall, 2005, p. 230).

"Virtually all accounts of artistic creativity agree that it springs from a subconscious inner impulse" (Getzels & Csikszentmihalyi, 1976, p. 3). In *The Creative Vision: A Longitudinal Study of Problem Finding in Art,* Geztels and Csikszentmihalyi investigate creative vision as studied in art students. Their findings provide a view of creativity as an act of problem finding where problems are discovered, envisaged, and posed in a cognition process that is continuous and cumulative. After studying the act of creating, Geztels and Csikszentmihalyi summarize creative vision as the following:

> The ability to formulate problems seems to be a faculty of a different order. It entails a process far more in touch with the deeper layers of being than reason alone usually is; it is far more holistic in that it encompasses the person's total experiential state…It seeks out similarities between external objects and

> internal states; it uses symbolic means to express formless feelings, thereby disclosing that which otherwise would go unperceived, articulating what otherwise would remain unarticulated. Problem finding may well be at the origin of the creative vision (p. 250).

Geztels & Csikszentmihalyi speak to the values and objectives Rudolf Steiner held for Waldorf Education and its arts-infusion goals: holistic experiential learning, internal and external dialog, and balancing sense and reason. "Creative studies [such as Getzels & Csikszentmihalyi] have found that individuals with more sophisticated problem-construction abilities produce more creative solutions…to present students with an artmaking problem, but also to encourage them to reshape, redefine, restate, and reconsider artmaking problems from a personal perspective throughout the artmaking process" (Walker, 2001, p. 52).

In *Steiner Education and Young Artists: A Comparison of Drawing Ability in Steiner, Montessori, and Traditional Schools,* Rowlands and Cox (2001) present their hypothesis: "Due to emphasis on art and creativity in Steiner [Waldorf] schools, we predicted that these children would draw pictures judged to be superior" (p. 20). In this study, Waldorf, Montessori, and traditional private schooled students in Europe ages five to eight with similar demographics participate in three drawing assessments: free drawing, scene drawing, and observational drawing. At the conclusion of the study, Waldorf student drawings are rated significantly higher in each of the three drawing categories, drawing quality, color usage, and amount of color. Rowlands and Cox note in their findings, "It would appear that if children are provided with an environment rich in creativity (as in Steiner schools) they do develop more artistic skills without the need for formal instruction" (p. 36). The researchers also provide a word of caution with their findings in suggesting that Waldorf schools may attract parents who are predisposed to supporting the arts and children who are already creatively-minded upon entering the school community.

In *The Comparative Status of the Creative Thinking Ability of Waldorf Education Students: A Survey,* Ogletree (1996) presents his hypothesis by stating disparate educational practices between Waldorf schools and State schools in England, Scotland, and Germany were influenced by disparate educational philosophies: idealism versus realism. Using the *Torrance Test of Creative Thinking Ability,* Ogletree offers comparisons between 1165 third through sixth grade students of Waldorf and State schools in the creativity categories of fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. Test tasks presented in the study include the following: (a) Ask and Guess Task; (b) Product Improvement Task; (c) Unusual Uses Task, Picture Construction Task; (d) Circles Task; and (e) Picture Completion Task. In this study, Waldorf students obtain significantly higher (.01 significance level) creativity scores than the participating State school students. Ogletree's findings suggest that school philosophies, such as Waldorf schools' vision of idealism, influence creativity.

In *Rudolf Steiner in the Waldorf School: Lectures and Addresses to Children, Parents, and Teachers 1919-1924,* Steiner (1924/1996) remarks on the idealism that is at the center of Ogletree's (1996) study:

> Idealism must be at work within the spirit of [Waldorf] pedagogy and methods, but this must be idealism that has the power to awaken in growing human beings those forces and abilities that they will need for the rest of their lives in order to work competently for their community and contemporaries and to have a livelihood that will sustain them (p. 2).

For both Ogletree and Steiner, creativity and freedom of thought cultivate idealistic graduates and citizens in the world.

Studies with Waldorf Graduates

The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (2003b) presents *Learning to Learn: Waldorf Alumni Reflections*, a collection of 26 Waldorf graduate reflections about

their schooling experience. Besides autobiographical reflections formatted into brief paragraphs, this resource provides an overview of the Class 1-12 Waldorf curriculum and a list of colleges and universities that Waldorf graduates have attended. The text provides a broad, general view of some graduates' Waldorf Education experience. The participants represent a cross section of careers and professional achievements, yet the publication is lacking any information on how the reflective graduates' narratives were gathered and selected (the methodology for obtaining the presented information). Neither researcher(s) nor any relationships between researcher(s) and participants are described to the reader. It is difficult to ascertain whether or not the publication is research driven.

The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America [AWSNA] (n/d) publishes a four-page brochure compiled by the Kimberton Waldorf School of Pennsylvania Admissions Office called *The Results of Waldorf Education*. Included are three brief articles about Waldorf graduates written by a private academy history teacher, a Professor of Biology at Adelphia University, and a German news reporter (a translated article from 1981 news magazine *Der Spiegel)*. Not all of these writings refer specifically to research studies, but they provide anecdotal observations of Waldorf graduates. In these articles Waldorf graduates are described as "remarkable, bright, energetic, and involved" and "they intrinsically understand the difference between thinking about an issue and merely memorizing the right answer" (Shipman, n/d, p. 1-2). In this publication, Dr. Warren Eickelberg (n/d) states, "I feel certain that all Waldorf School graduates believe in the orderliness of our universe, and they believe the human mind can discern this order and appreciate its beauty" (p. 3).

The last article within *Research on Waldorf School Graduates* provides an overview

of the first empirical research study of the Waldorf movement entitled *The Educational Background of Former Waldorf Students*. "Three independent scientists, paid by the Born Department of Education, interviewed 1,460 former Waldorf students born in the years of 1946 and '47 and came to a prevailingly positive result in favor of the Waldorf Schools…an educational plateau well above average" (AWSNA, 1981, p. 4). This German longitudinal study demonstrates that Waldorf schooled graduates pass the Abitur (a high stakes college entrance exam) at higher percentages, triple the rate of State-school students, without having specific training for this state exam. For an American comparison, Oppenheimer's (1999) states "despite Waldorf student's unfamiliarity with standardized tests, their SAT scores have generally come well above the national average, particularly on verbal measures" (p. 82). Oppenheimer's view is not documented in any empirical study at this time.

A three-year research project, *Swedish Waldorf School Evaluation Project* (2002), examines six questions: (1) How large a proportion of Swedish Waldorf graduates go on to higher education?; (2) What knowledge targets are attained by Swedish Waldorf pupils compared with municipal school pupils?; (3) Do Swedish Waldorf pupils get help to develop social and human competencies that are needed to be active democratic citizens?; (4) What do Swedish Waldorf schools do for students with learning disabilities?; (5) In what way does the socioeconomic background of parents contribute to increase segregation or increased understanding between different population groups?; and (6) Do Swedish Waldorf schools need a special "tailor-made" teacher-training program? (Dahlin, Anderson, & Langmann, 2005). This project primarily utilizes quantitative survey data. Although this study seeks information about Waldorf graduates the data is exclusive to Sweden's Waldorf culture and is not focused specifically on American Waldorf arts experience.

"In the last decade the number of United States and Canadian Waldorf high schools has grown from 15 to 37" (Gerwin & Mitchell (Eds.), 2005, p. 1) and with this growth further studies there is a need to assess American Waldorf outcomes. Research on Waldorf Graduates in North America Phase 1 a resent study sponsored by Research Institute for Waldorf Education involves Waldorf graduates. Gerwin and Mitchell's (Eds.) year-long study inclusive of twenty-seven Waldorf high schools and North America Waldorf graduates from the past ten years demonstrates a high matriculation of graduates to a variety of higher education institutions. The quantitative study likewise reveals 22.8% United States graduates differ going immediately into higher education in order to explore the world in other ways.

Phase 2 of this study is now being initiated to assess American Waldorf graduates career choices, perceptions of higher education professors and employers, and perceptions of how well the graduates feel they are prepared for post K-12 life. Phase 2 will focus on the lives of the Waldorf graduates. The study's will utilize telephone interviews of Waldorf graduates to focus on "determining the level of emotional intelligence, social awareness, cognitive flexibility, and unique qualities and deficiencies the students brought to [their current] class or work situation" (Gerwin & Mitchell (Eds.), 2005, p. 11). In combining Phase 1 and 2, the researchers intend to provide both anecdotal qualitative information and statistical data to present their portrait of Waldorf graduates.

Summary

> Life is pure adventure, and the quicker we realize that, the quicker we will be able to treat life as art; to bring all our energies to each encounter, to remain flexible enough to notice and admit when what we expected to happen did not happen. We need to remember that we are created creative and can invent new scenarios as frequently as they are needed– Maya Angelou (Mitchell & Livingston, 1999, p. 176).

In Waldorf schools, the creative art making process is an allegory to life where internal and external reality is always being transformed. As implied earlier, Rudolf Steiner says, "Thoughts are not the whole living reality; something else is needed…to attain reality one must begin to create, must pass over to art. Ideas alone cannot present the world in its full rich content" (Stockton, 2003, p. 168). This prevalent passing over to art within Waldorf curriculum suggests a possible influence upon Waldorf graduates. Review of the literature suggests attitude develops from continuous, culminating experiences (Dewey, 1934; Getzels & Csikszentmihalyi, 1976). This literature review suggests that experience, especially sustained experience in the arts, has a transformative quality upon people. Narratives about Waldorf school art experience has relevant significance to those interested in the development of community members living with percipience, in the state of flow, and to their potential. Much like Maya Angelou's quote suggests (above), Waldorf Education intends for its graduates to live in a manner that brings all energies to each encounter and to creatively invent new scenarios as needed.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Paradigm and Tradition for the Method

I entered this inquiry within a constructivist paradigm. Given that my worldview supports multiple realities and the notion that knowledge is constructed, a qualitative method was utilized to collect and honor the individual realities and meanings of participating Waldorf graduates. Through co-constructed understandings obtained from interviews, Waldorf graduate narratives provided a means to exam Waldorf art experiences as well as individual meaning making about such experience. Given that this study sought to discover the meanings individual Waldorf graduates attribute to their art experience, the study's method was approach through a lens of hermeneutic phenomenology. In hermeneutic phenomenology the meanings attributed to experience are the objects of study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Eichelberger, 1989). In the case of this study, meanings were gathered and interpreted from Waldorf graduates' reflective storytelling.

A narrative research tradition also framed this inquiry as it gathered, interpreted, and described the reflective stories and meanings that Waldorf graduates attributed to lived, schooled art experience. Bruner (1986) inferred that narrative knowledge is storied knowledge. Thus I have collected the storied knowledge of Waldorf graduates through their act of reflection and attribution of meaning about past art experiences. More specifically, the employed methodology was an adaptation of the Interpretive Biography research tradition, "a literary, narrative account and representation of lived experience through the telling and inscribing of stories" (Denzin, 1989, p. 11).

Interpretive Biography is a particular type of narrative research. As such, it not only supports a notion found within the narrative tradition of sense making and mean making through participant storytelling, but it "seeks to identify the representative features in an individual's life trajectory" (Rustin & Chamberlayne, 2002, p. 10). This specific method of gathering life-history is primarily interested in processes of change and metamorphosis of the individual.

Since this research study considered the impact of Waldorf arts experience upon Waldorf graduates perceptions and attitudes, the Interpretive Biography tradition was utilized to support the examination of key events that impact one's attitude and life. Denzin (1989) defined the Interpretive Biography method as a process of describing the "turning-point moments – epiphanies – in an individual's life" (p. 69). This study focused on the representation of a particular portion of the Waldorf graduates' life-history, their schooled art experiences. A semi-structured interview instrument, was implemented to elicit descriptions of biographical key art events within the graduates' individual Waldorf schooled experience.

Charles and Mertler's (2002) concept of interpretation on present and past biographical conditions was relevant to this inquiry. Charles and Mertler emphasized that the purpose of descriptive or narrative research is "to show status by first describing and then, to the extent possible, interpreting present and past situations, conditions, behaviors, interactions, events, and trends" (p. 265). This study sought to understand the historical and philosophical evolution of the participants' relationship to art.

Design of the Method

Vygotsky (1987) considered narrative from storytelling a microcosm of the narrator's consciousness. Data for this study, the participants' stories, were collected through open-

ended interview questions and prompts designed to ascertain meaningful moments–the participants' consciousness–within Waldorf graduates' art experiences. Relevant to the concepts of experiential learning that were previously cited in the literature review for this study, the interview protocol included prompts for Waldorf graduates to discuss both crystallizing and paralyzing art moments or experiences (Armstrong, 1994; Feldman, 1980; Walters & Gardner, 1986). The methodology elicited participant reflections about the nature and context of their art experiences as well as the priorities, values, and emotional attitude assigned to those experiences.

The Interview Instrument

Interviewing was the data collection strategy for this qualitative study. I utilized in-depth phenomenological interviews from a three-phased model called *Three-Interview Series* (Schuman & Dolbeare, 1982; Seidman, 1998). This interview methodology consisted of three-step structures: (1) establish the context of the participants' experiences; (2) allow participants to reconstruct the details of their experience within its context; and (3) encourage the participants to reflect on the meaning held within their reconstructed experiences (Schuman & Dolbeare, 1982: Seidman, 1998).

During Phase I of the interview, foundational and contextual questions were posed so that the individual participants would reconstruct past art experiences in broad terms. During Phase II of the interview, the prompts sought to narrowed the participants' reflections to specific key events and epiphanies. As the participants arrive at Phase III of the interview process, participant questions sought meanings attributed to these past art experiences and epiphanies. Between the three interview phases, follow-up questions were considered and designed as a means for member checking and opportunities for participant elaborations.

Follow-up questions differed from one interviewee to another based on their provided answers, stories, and their posed questions to myself as the interviewer. A copy of the foundational, semi-structured interview protocol was provided in *Appendix A*.

The design of the interview method accounted for my lack of proximity to Waldorf graduates. This study utilized email interviews to access a diverse sample otherwise unobtainable to myself as the researcher. Murray and Sixsmith (1998) argued that Computer-mediated Communication (CMC), such as an email interview, has been a "viable and valuable qualitative interview methodology that may replace and/or complement face-to-face interviews" (p. 104). Murray and Sixsmith noted many advantages afforded by email interviews, such as: (a) minimized interviewer bias through the lack of transcription errors and social presence (Kiesler et al. 1984); (b) better organized and richer conversation from participants given the possibility of reflection and extension of time (Rice and Love, 1988); (c) opportunity for clarity and ongoing questioning by participants which likewise provides additional clues to the researcher about the status of the participants (Oppermann, 1995); (d) empowerment of the participant through co-constructed writings; (e) reflection and interpretation time for the researcher/interviewer before additional input to the participant; and (f) ongoing and immediate member checking by participants allowing them to feed into their own ideas (Reay, 1996). Given that I was not privy to body language and social cues normally accessible in face-to-face interviews, careful member checking in order to qualify participants' comments was utilized through the series of interviews.

Email interviewing within this study afforded "multi-interviewing and cross-fertilization of ideas" (Murray & Sixsmith, 1998, p. 111). Cross-fertilization occurred when I utilized insightful participant comments in order to prompt other interviewees. Cross-

fertilization resulted in additional storytelling and expressed opinions fed directly from the participant pool. Within this study, cross-fertilization of ideas from one participant to another occurred when I, as the researcher, was involved in ongoing email interview exchanges with many participants. The interview process became a multi-interviewing format with my maintenance of ongoing cross-case analysis and synthesis of gained knowledge into additional participant/interviewee prompts.

In considering an email interview method for this study, I contemplated how Waldorf graduates have been greatly exposed to journaling as a means for providing their thoughts and insights throughout their schooling. Unique to Waldorf Education curriculum, students daily reflect within their main lesson books; main lesson books are the students' personal textbook based on reflection about the learning experiences or prompts. Journaling, as in this interview format, would be familiar and natural to the interviewees. The advantages to letting the participants write their own stories within their own setting and on their own timeline outweighed the lack of visual cues usually gained in face-to-face interviewing.

An email method as well as the three-phased interview structure provided in-depth reflection and meaning making and storytelling with significant breath. The emailed writings of Waldorf graduates provided expanding meaning making as the reflections progressed through the three interview phases. The Waldorf graduates' writing process became a purposeful means for processing thoughts, internalizing one's ongoing thinking (Vygotsky, 1978). Writing was both the medium of thought and a potential compelling vehicle for developing thoughts and views. The intention of my interview methodology was to utilize reflective writing as both an act of discovery and means for meaning making.

Participants

For the purpose of this study, the term *Waldorf graduate* has been defined as a person who graduated from a Waldorf school (K-12, K-8, or high school) or had attended the majority of her/his school years within the Waldorf school setting. Although individual Waldorf schools are self-administering, their curriculum activities have been viewed as fairly universal. Waldorf teachers have prescribed to the philosophies and curriculum intent of the Waldorf Education founder, Rudolf Steiner. As previously described in the review of literature for this study, Steiner's philosophy of art influenced the seamlessly integrated arts and hands-on curriculum found within all Waldorf schools. This study gathered stories from graduates of Waldorf schools that were representative of the larger population of Waldorf graduates in the United States. The Waldorf graduate participants in this study attended 17 different Waldorf schools in the following geographical areas: West, Southwest, Midwest, and Northeast (see *Appendix B*).

Immediate and easy admittance to Waldorf graduates was not accessible to me as a mainstream education researcher without lived experience within the Waldorf community. My initial attempt to access Waldorf graduates was focused on recent graduates such as those graduating in the last 5 years. Gatekeepers at the American Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) and Waldorf Research Institute did not provide me access to recent graduates.

The participant pool for this study represented Waldorf graduates with high school graduation dates from 1967-2003. Given that this study utilized Waldorf graduates' reflections of past art experiences as data, some could argue that including a participant with a 1967 graduation date is inappropriate for such recollection. The reader should note

graduate Paul, the 1967 graduate, became a unique case included in this study because he had only recently returned to the art of his Waldorf childhood after much reflection about recent life epiphanies. Each and every participant was carefully (purposefully) considered for inclusion in this study. Beyond the consideration of demographics and the years the participants attended Waldorf schools, I purposefully sampled interested candidates in terms of their abilities to provide deep reflection and to provide uniquely varied experiences in Waldorf Education including negative experiences. An overview of the participants' demographics was provided in *Appendix B*. Biographical sketches of participants were provided in *Appendix C*.

Diverse participants were pooled from two sources: (a) contacts provided by some Waldorf high schools within the United States (recent graduates) and (b) contacts made available by graduates themselves through the American Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) Alumni Internet bulletin board (recent and non-recent graduates). A description of this study and letters of informed consent were provided to all Waldorf high schools within the United States, yet very few alumni contacts were provided to me from the contact with these Waldorf high schools. In an effort to gain more participants as well as achieve a stratified sampling of participants, I emailed letters of informed consent to all United States Waldorf alumni listed on the American Waldorf Schools of North America website. From a initial return response of 90 recent and non-recent Waldorf graduates with the majority being non-recent graduates, I utilized purposeful sampling of participants so that I achieved maximum variation (diversity) within the following criteria (Patton, 1990): (1) participants who graduated from different Waldorf schools throughout the United States; (2) participants who represented different schooling experience–Lower (K-8 grades) and Upper (9-12 grades)

Waldorf schools; (3) participants who represented diverse graduation dates (recent and non-recent); (4) participants who were engaged in both art related jobs/activities and non-art related jobs/activities; and (5) participants who have been engaged in Waldorf related jobs/activities and non-Waldorf related jobs/activities. To meet the stratified criteria, the contacts were interviewed as unique cases until redundancy occur at fifteen (15) participants, nine (9) females and six (6) males.

Kvale (1996) suggested that the qualitative researcher should "interview as many subjects as necessary to find out what you need to know" (p. 101). Thus, 15 in-depth, three-step interview series were conducted with this Waldorf graduate participant pool. The participants were selected as diverse "information-rich cases" (Patton, 1990, p. 182). For example, when I asked consenting participant, Vincent, why he was interested in volunteering for this study he replied, "I figure my attendance at many [Waldorf] schools gives me some perspective on the range of ways Waldorf curriculums play out in particular communities" (personal communication, December 8, 2005). Thus, Vincent became an information rich case due to his varied experience in five Waldorf schools. (Note that all names for participants in this study, such as Vincent, are documented with pseudonyms. And the participants created most of these pseudonyms). I examined each consenting participant for qualities of uniqueness in order to narrow the sample in a way that not only added depth to the data collection and likewise enhanced the authenticity and trustworthiness of this study. As previously stated, I utilizing purposeful sampling with maximum variation of participants (Patton, 1990) the storied knowledge on Waldorf art experience was varied and dependable.

Procedures of the Study

A research proposal was submitted to the University of Missouri Institutional Review Board; the data collection and analysis was conducted in accordance with the Board's policies involving human subjects. All participants were provided details about the project's goals, risks, benefits, time commitment, and confidential processes. A letter of consent was obtained from each participant (see *Appendix D*). Data collection began post the collection of consent letters. Throughout the collection of narratives, analysis was ongoing. Likewise, further data analysis was conducted after all interviews were complete. Each interviewed case was analyzed through constant comparison method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The end product narratives, rich descriptions from each individual's meaning making, were the units of analysis.

Data Collection

As stated above, biographical narratives were collected via email interviews from all participants using the *Three-Interview Series* protocol. Also previously stated, graduates' ongoing written reflections spurred from interview prompts and addressed the nature of Waldorf art experiences. Data collection continued until thick written descriptions about Waldorf arts experience were obtained from each of the Waldorf graduate participants. Sufficient data was collected from each participant in order to provide both a broad contextual base for their arts experiences as well as narrowed, detailed epiphanies within the art experiences. Data collection continued until redundancy (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of emergent themes occurred within the interview transcripts.

Data Analysis

Memos became a starting place for interpretation of the data. Denzin (1994) described memo writing as a means for "sense making" on how to decide "what will be written about, what will be included, how it will be represented, and so on" (p. 503). As interview narratives were collected in subsequent phases (three stages), I utilized memos as a means to reflect on the incoming data and in turn assist me with the design and direction of the successive interview prompts. Documentation of memos was the first analysis tool towards analyzing emergent themes and noting methodological practices. As data arrived from the participants' three interview phases, I recorded memos–my written impressions, hunches, and queries as the research processes and data unfolded (Denzin, 1994). Working with the data in this manner (analysis of the individual's subsequent interview data as the data arrived) allowed for co-constructed evolving conversations where meanings and understandings emerged from the developing participant constructions–not dialog solely generated by me as the researcher. The interview transcripts were read and reread many times throughout the interpretive memo process. Through inductive examination of these memos, I identified relationships and classifications among memo impressions as well as new impressions. An example of a memo analysis as well as other steps of data analysis was provided in *Appendix E*.

At the start of data collection (and data analysis, since these coincided), I made no assumptions about how many participants I would need to secure dependability through redundancy (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Thus, I began analysis of each incoming interview transcript directly after collecting each participant's written interview reflections and continued until redundancy occurred. By analyzing data as it arrived, as opposed to waiting

until I had a complete set of Phase I responses from every participant, I was able to more readily meet the needs of the participants' timeline for interviewing. Also, I was able to utilize the incoming interview data to inform me in ways to better dialog and prompt future participants in the study and future interview phases. This staggered method of data collection and analysis allowed me to focus on each of the participating individuals and to honor individuality and unique perceptions.

After all interview narratives were collected, read many times, and analyzed through memos (Denzin, 1994), then the memos were systematically examined. This began a type of comparison analysis across the entire collection of interview transcripts for all 15 participants. By narrowing and refining the memo interpretations I began to determine themes and dimensions for the entire data set, all 15 participants' three-series interviews. The themes were not data, but abstractly derived and driven by the data (Merriam, 2002). By studying, sorting, and organizing the collection of memos into salient interpretations, I created data reduction linked to the research questions and purposes.

After this refining or data reduction, I systematically reread and deductively searched for narratives that relate to my emerging interpretation themes. In order to examine the entire data set with a sense of the whole, I first analyzed and coded each participant's three-phase interview narrative as a unit. To do this, each participant's emailed texts were reread and analyzed for emerging themes and coded. Codes then became an organizing principle for themes (Merriam, 2002). Themes and interpretations unique to these individual cases were then compared across all of the cases through constant comparison analysis. Connections and commonalities of themes between and among the cases were considered in order to interpret the data. Constant comparison afforded a discovery of both data contradictions and

conformations. Guided by the themes across all 15 biographical narratives, I drafted summaries on my understandings of the data. Throughout revisions of my summaries, I identified data excerpts (participant quotes) that supported the themes and my interpretations. My iterations were continually refined and reviewed as I linked Waldorf graduate quotes, as evidence, to the emerged themes.

Limitations

For the study's data I have relied on participants' subjective autobiographical storytelling and writings as their means to process meaning. Within the participants' recall and reconstruction of lived experience, there was room for discrepancy between real events and states of mind. Thus, the presented biographical narratives and perceptions have limitations (Wengraf, 2002). Derrida (1972) said "there is no clear window into the inner life of a person for any window is always filtered through the gaze of language, signs, and the process of signification" (p. 14). Within the told story, participants made choices about their inclusions and responses and their personal assumptions framed the accounts of their lives. Their memories had selective biases (Beach, 1977). Even so, what the graduates recalled and selected to present in their narratives still informed us about the impact from Waldorf arts experiences; what storied knowledge they chose to reveal was significant in meaning to them–these scenarios stood out in their memories.

This study gathered 15 three-phased interviews for a total of 45 interview transcripts before redundancy occurred (where no new themes emerged). Limiting this study to only 15 participants left room for future studies to expand the breath and depth of this inquiry. Each interview represented in this study was an individual's storied knowledge. Although the 45

interview transcripts (the data) provided a wealth of themes, the availability and diversity of other Waldorf graduates' stories remained inexhaustible.

Although the tradition and method of this study was most appropriate for obtaining the attributions of meaning by Waldorf graduates, the study was limited by only utilizing biographical stories. The graduates' reflective narratives, as data, were not triangulated with other data sources. To counter this lack of triangulation, I utilized my extensive literature review and gains from a previous pilot study about two founders of a Waldorf school as a means to comprehend and analyze the graduates' narratives. I also triangulated each participants' interview narratives through a cross analysis of the three separate but related interview transcripts (see *Trustworthiness* below).

I began this study with an open viewpoint of what the arts and art experience could be as defined through the lens of the Waldorf participants. Without my prompting, most participants' narratives (the data of the study) focused on visual forms of art and art experiences (as opposed to music as an art form). Thus, the literature view for this study as well as the discussion of findings center more on the art forms that emerged from the participating Waldorf graduates' narrative reflections. This occurrence limited this study to a predominant discussion on visually oriented arts (rather than music). Future investigations of music's role within Waldorf schools may be warranted.

Delimitations

Referring to another limitation of qualitative narrative studies, participating Waldorf graduate in this study, Arjelia, noted:

> It is probably those who have been most affected and have the most to say who have answered your questions. But whether or not others take time to do so, I believe they have all been strongly affected by this way of education (personal communication, April 11, 2005).

Arjelia's comment reminded me of the participating graduates' answers to my question about why they desired to participate in the study. Most participants had convictions about why they sought to participate and desired their story to be shared. An emotional connection to experience or phenomena may lead to an increase willingness to communicate or have a voice in the discussion of such experience. I delimitated this study by utilized purposeful sampling so that the participant pool included those with both positive and negative art experiences and those I felt would not fall prey to the Pygmalion Effect (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968/1992) or Hawthorne Effect (Mayo, 1933) (see *Trustworthiness* below).

Trustworthiness

As previously stated, participants for this study were provided informed consents with the option to discontinue participation without consequences. I strived to minimize any participants' feelings of vulnerability by ensuring pseudonyms for the participants' names; the identities of all interviewees have remained obscure in the reporting of findings. The semi-structured interview protocol for this study elicited open-ended expressions and participants' self-determination in interpreting past relationships to Waldorf arts experiences. Throughout this study I monitored the trustworthiness of my methods so as to best provide a means for the Waldorf graduate participants to freely interpret past Waldorf art experiences. *Appendix F* provided a *Summary of Techniques for Establishing Trustworthiness*.

Seidman (1998) presented these notes about interview trustworthiness to which I employed as tenets for my actions: (1) be equitable within the co-dialog; (2) honor the participants' words and avoid researcher ego; (3) recognize that I as the researcher can never fully understand the participants' realities; (4) collaborate with the interviewees; (5) appreciate and manage the fluid, moment-to-moment formation of correspondence; (6) ask

value-free, appropriate questions; and (7) recognize the complexity of interview transcript analysis as it is a process of analyzing another's thoughts. The core tenet of my methodology was to enter and maintain collaborative, reciprocal, and graceful relationships with all participants.

Credibility

Building and extending trust within the Waldorf Education community had been a fluid process throughout the study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that a credible researcher should understand the context of the data, minimize distortions within the data, and build trust among participants. My prolonged engagement in the act of learning about the Waldorf Education culture over the last three years afforded me a particular knowledge allowing me to speak naturalistically with Waldorf community members and to place data into context. During several years prior to the implementation of this study, I participated in Waldorf school visits as well as networked specifically with community members of two Waldorf Developing Schools in order to have established cultural context and relationships to work in a trust manner with the participants in this study.

As a mode for gaining credibility and confirmability, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested member checking. The format of the *Three-interview Series* provided participant member checking between interview phases. Given that this study was designed with one interview phase subsequently leading to the next, follow-up questions and interpretations were inserted in the dialog as ongoing member checks. Confirmation of the participants' dialog was ongoing.

In knowing that the human instrument is never value-free within qualitative inquiry, my reflexive journal was a means for monitoring trustworthiness (Denzin, 1989). Throughout

this study I maintained a reflexive research journal for recording of thoughts, experiences, and methodological intentions. Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that a reflexive research journal is "a kind of diary in which the investigator on a daily basis, or as needed, records a variety of information about self and method" (p. 327). A running record of my queries, actions, methods, decisions, and insights throughout the duration of this study was documented in the journal. This reflective journal assisted me in maintaining a trusted relationship with participants and honoring their words.

As another step towards monitoring myself as the researcher, I have utilized peer review or peer debriefing (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) for this study. Ongoing peer review of this study's methods and outcomes facilitated greater trustworthiness within the data and results of the study. I employed two peer reviewers, a peer educational researcher within the Waldorf community and a peer non-educational researcher outside the Waldorf community, for debriefing me on my thoughts and actions as well as the outcomes of the study.

From a constructivist stance, the participants of this study had co-ownership (with myself) of all relationships, data, and findings generated from the research. The participants of this study were engaged in storytelling practice that ensured contextual, dependable, and transferable findings. I utilized the *Three-interview Series* method to promote trustworthiness as it places the interviewees stories into the appropriate context. Credibility of this study was enhanced by the inclusion of sufficient lived experience excerpts and participant quotes. Amount and types of themes appropriately corresponded and were compatible with collected data.

Seidman (1989) strongly encouraged researchers to utilize *Three-interview Series* as it provides validity and consistency. To enhance trustworthiness, I utilized triangulation

(Lincoln & Guba, 1985) within each participant's interview set–the three separate (yet related) interview transcripts. In other words, the set of narratives from each of the three phases of interviewing were multiple sources of the participant's recollections and reflections. Themes emergent within one of the participant's three-interview transcripts was checked for correlation with his/her other two interview transcripts. As the three subsequent phases of interviews occurred for each participant, the incoming interview data of one phase was validate with other cohort data from the other two interview phases.

Transferability and Dependability

Through a constructivist method, I honored the participants' words and meanings by continuing their conversation through presentation of co-constructed findings. Thick description about Waldorf arts experiences as well as the meanings the graduates have attributed to such experience ensured transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The *Three-interview Series* model fostered thick description and contextual meaning making by the participants. Through my researcher reflexive journal, I reflected and monitored the contextual nature of the participants' narratives. My reflexive journal was helpful in monitoring redundancy within participant interview data to facilitate and determine a dependable close of the data collection. (In other words, I appropriately determined when to not elicit any additional participants for interviewing).

I maintained research record keeping in my reflexive journal. Such records allowed an outside peer reviewer to make connections between the raw data and my assertions within the study's findings. In terms of dependability, a peer reviewer examined the processes of my inquiry (my methods) in order to confirm the study's dependability. Likewise, this peer

reviewer examined the products of my inquiry (data, findings, and interpretations) for comfirmability.

Comfirmability

Since my study ascertained perceptions of Waldorf schooled individuals, their realities about arts experience, I delimited data collection to only their recollections–the lived stories of the Waldorf graduates. Thus, the method appropriately focused on interviews of Waldorf graduates in order to cross case analyze–looking for patterns among the whole of the interview data. Contextual validation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was obtained through viewing themes both within the individual narratives and among the whole–all participants' stories (across all interview transcripts). Credibility emerged from the compelling evocation of the individuals' experiences followed by demonstrated connections among the graduates' experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Given that the research question for this study asked Waldorf graduates to attribute meaning to their past schooled arts experiences, I purposely limited the collection of data to interviews–the graduates' words. In an effort to ensure greater credibility and comfirmability, improved interpretations of the Waldorf graduates stories and reflections, I have utilized a review of the literature and secondary data from *Biographical Sketches of the Shimmering Lakes School Founders* (Nordlund, 2004) to further inform analysis of data. This contextualization provides verification and extension of the information gained from the participants' interviews. In other words, the use of these additional sources of information about Waldorf Education and Waldorf teachers' intentions assisted in verifying and extending interpretations of the primary data in addition to improving confidence in the reported findings.

With the aim of enhancing confirmability for this study, I utilized purposeful sampling (Patton, 1990) with negative case (Kidder, 1981) participants specifically in mind. I purposeful searched for participants to interview that may discount any hypothesis and perception I had at the start of this inquiry. For example, two participants (graduates Patrick and Michelle) were selected for the participant pool based on their initial negative comments about their Waldorf arts experiences. Interview data from these seemingly exceptional cases merely confirmed the findings of this study. When these participants were asked about their intentions for participating in the study, their comments confirmed that they would more likely not fall prey to the Pygmalion Effect (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968/1992) or Hawthorne Effect (Mayo, 1933) where participants skew data so as to please the researcher or participants' alter individual behaviors and dialog because they know they are being studied. Both dependability and comfirmability for this study was enhanced through my conscious purposeful search for independent thinking participants. Similarly to the methodological approach of searching for negative cases, throughout the study I also remained aware of any possible and emerging participant dialog about paralyzing arts experiences (as oppose to only collecting crystallizing arts experiences).

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

Introduction

Utilizing the methodology described in *Chapter Three*, common themes about arts experience within Waldorf Education were ascertained from the interview transcripts (the writings) of 15 Waldorf graduates. Through constant comparison analysis among the thick descriptive narratives themes were categorized for the report to follow. (Of course, no view of any phenomena is ever complete or without multiple interpretations). Given that the Three-interview Series format provided extensive narratives, I made a conscious effort to select portions of the graduates' writings that afforded as complete a view of the emergent germane themes as possible.

In this chapter, I presented the co-constructed themes and the evidence that support these themes–excerpts from the Waldorf graduates narratives. Themes were presented in a format that corresponds to the graduates' process of meaning making during this study. As previously stated, the participating graduates attributed meaning to past Waldorf arts experience by reflecting in the following way: (1) first, describing their arts curriculum activities and placing the experiences into context; (2) second, noting key moments (epiphanies as well as crystallizing and paralyzing experiences) within such described arts experiences; and (3) third, attributing meaning to these past Waldorf arts experiences and key events. To answer my research question, *What meanings do Waldorf graduates attribute to their lived Waldorf school art experience?,* I have organized the results of this study in the following ways:

(1) *Waldorf Graduates' Descriptions of Arts Experience*
(2) *Waldorf Graduates' Key Moments in Arts Experience*

(3) *Waldorf Graduates' Attribution of Meanings to Arts Experience*.

Although common descriptions and themes evolved across the participant pool, some clear differences were demonstrated between how art experiences existed in lower Waldorf schools than in upper Waldorf schools. For example, participating graduate Janna described differences between lower schools' purpose for art-infusion and upper schools' arts agenda:

> Since art is considered…a way of learning, it isn't necessarily about creativity in the younger years…Waldorf doesn't believe that children need to be artistic visionaries (although self-expression is still encouraged), because art is used to help them grow, like math or any other subject. In high school, this changes and it becomes more about the individual's artistic ability and vision. High school seems to be pretty equivalent to art classes in college (personal communication, May 31, 2005).

Throughout my presentation of themes, I interjected (for the reader) points of reference when lower or upper school differentiation was necessary. Also, graduates' perspectives about arts experience differed between those who attended K-12 Waldorf schooling (Waldorf lifers) and those who did not have an early foundation in Waldorf schools such as those who enter Waldorf Education later at the high school level. Such types of differences and contexts were addressed when applicable within *Chapter Four* and *Chapter Five*. Note that each participating graduate's Waldorf school(s) and the founders administering those schools were considered unique resulting in each participant's experience distinct and exclusive. Care was taken in my reporting to not make sweeping generalizations about Waldorf Education. Thus, throughout my presentation of themes, I interjected (for the reader) points of reference and contextual information unique to each individual graduate's lived school experience.

Waldorf Graduates' Descriptions of Arts Experience

At the start of Phase I interviews, contextual demographic questions were asked of each of the 15 participants such as: (a) general demographics; (b) family's involvement with Waldorf; (c) current and past involvement with Waldorf communities; and (d) interest or intent for participating. The semi-structured interview protocol fro this study was provided in *Appendix A*. In choosing the participant excerpts for reporting this study, I considered and utilized the graduates' contextual demographics, school backgrounds, and personal lived experience (their whole portrait) in order to portray both a varied and authentic view of meaning making about Waldorf arts experience.

During Phase I of the interview process, graduates were asked to describe their lower school and upper school arts activities and aesthetics of their Waldorf school environments. Thus, Phase I best answered the sub question: *What are the graduates' descriptions of their Waldorf school art experiences?* The graduates were also provided follow-up questions on how they valued such described art experiences. The resulting narratives corresponded to Waldorf Education literature and additional research literature previously reviewed in *Chapter Two*.

As a means to remind the reader of the Waldorf school ecology previously described in *Chapter Two*, some graduates' descriptions of Waldorf schools follow. Each participating graduate was asked to provide an example of a typical day spent in a Waldorf lower school and/or a Waldorf upper school. Graduate Emily shared an overview of her lower school day experiences:

> There was a lot of art incorporated into all our lessons, as well as movement and imagination. We did not learn to read until after learning to write; writing in first grade and reading in second. In kindergarten we painted and heard stories and played most of the day…from 1st- 8th grade we were brought

> slowly from fairy tales in first grade, stories of saints in second grade, old testament in third grade, world mythologies in 4th and 5th grade then Greek and Roman history in 5th and 6th, Renaissance in 7th to American history and modern world history in 8th grade; a slow move from fantasy to harsh reality (personal communication, March 31, 2005).

Graduate Havela also shared an overview of her lower school day experiences, yet her comments were specific to the arts:

> In kindergarten we'd do crayon drawings or watercolor paintings. We'd bake bread in the shapes of birds and turtles or strange blobs that were supposed to look like something. We would do puppet shows and plays and sing songs and learn poems. In first grade we learned to knit and made squirrels and chickens. We did a lot of work with bees wax and after listening to a story our teacher told us we would sculpt something from the story, which would then go on display in the class room till the next time when we'd roll it back into a ball and start again. We also did a lot of geometric drawings, 'form drawing', we'd work with lines and geometric shapes. We did lots of watercolor as well, working with single colors and then blending and looking at the warms and the cold colors.
>
> As the years progressed we worked more with colored pencil and we would illustrate all of our main lesson books. In seventh and eighth grades we worked with charcoal and did still-lives and portraits. In handwork we learned knitting, crocheting, sewing. We had a class play every year in which everyone was required to participate. We learned to play two different types of wooden flutes, one from first through third grade that only had maybe five or six holes and then after third grade we started one with more holes. In third grade we also started violin. We did class music classes too where we would work up songs to sing for assembly on Fridays (personal communication, March 24, 2005).

Other graduates' lower school day descriptions were like-minded to Havela's and Emily's reconstructions, yet several of these also include statements about beginning the school day with circle time, an activity inclusive of verse, creative movement, and/or music activities. Availability of Eurythmy classes varied in lower school to lower school experiences. Several of the graduates' narratives also described how languages were taught in the primary classes/grades and how, in third grade (Class 3), an introduction of a variety of instruments such as violin or cello occurred.

Graduate Maryanne, provided an overview of her Waldorf upper school day experience. She said:

> School started earlier. I remember having to jump right into main lesson. We still had our main lesson books, but in high school our main lesson teachers changed every few weeks, as the topics changed unlike in lower school when all the main lessons were taught by the same teacher (the teacher stays with the class from 1 grade through 8). The day followed a similar pattern as lower school, but with the addition of math, science, English and history classes later in the day. I also had choir everyday after main lesson (some students were in orchestra or band according to talent). We were on the block system so every day of the week was different. Also our entire schedule would change every few months. We still had farming and PE, but we no longer went on walks. After school every day I had basketball practice, others were involved in sports or drama, but pretty much everyone was involved in some extra curricular activity.
>
> In high school we had specific art classes, taught by teachers specialized in a particular medium. Some classes lasted for three hours at a time. Again we were exposed to a vast array of types of art. We also had some choice in terms of what kinds of art classes we wanted to take. I remember taking photography, and oil painting, veil painting and book making and cabinet making to name a few. Students were taught how to work with the material, but really encouraged to do something original with it. We had no cookie cutter projects or cases where all the students' work imitated the teachers (personal communication, April 7, 2005).

Other graduates' upper school day descriptions were like-minded to Maryanne's reconstruction, yet a few also state that they started the school day with a morning verse/circle, as in the lower school, and then moved to different classrooms to attend a variety of specialized teachers' courses. Some high school arts offerings varied from school to school; for example, not every high school could offer courses in sculpture, woodworking, metal work, eurythmy, or gardening.

A common description about the nature of Waldorf upper schools was represented in graduate Janna's narrative:

> High school is a lot more academic. The teachers are all experts in their field and expect a high level of learning. We would spend less time on arts and exploring various subjects [than lower school] and more time on memorizing material (personal communication, June 11, 2005).

Other graduates' descriptions likewise confirmed the curricula differences between serving the *willing* and *feeling* developmental stages at the lower school and the *thinking* developmental stage at the upper school. Descriptions of Waldorf upper school demonstrated that the schools were structured similarly to non-Waldorf high schools where students moved from specialized class to specialized class. From the graduates' reflections, arts integration and main lesson blocks still existed at the high school level, yet arts integration existed to a lesser extent than in the lower school curriculum.

In order to gain further contextual information, I asked the graduates to share some descriptions about their lower and upper Waldorf school aesthetics. The graduates were asked to describe the aesthetics of their Waldorf school(s) and classroom(s) such as artifacts, images, sounds, colors, textures, sounds, gardens, and so forth. Graduate Aniquiel shared the following:

> Waldorf classrooms are completely designed with a child in mind. Not only is everything child-sized, of course, but much attention goes into making it soothing and interesting to the young mind. Colors are soft and a little dreamy; the walls are painted with a sponge to resemble many-colored clouds. All the building materials are natural, lots of naturally finished woods, and each class has an 'altar' of sorts, usually a nice big stump of wood, upon which the kids collect and display all interesting things they find in nature, such as a bird's nest, pretty stones, brightly colored leaves, etc. In the toys rooms, all the toys are multi-purposed. Dolls are made of a handful of sheep's wool tied into a silk scarf for a head, and the child is encouraged to make it for themselves. There is always an abundance of cloth scraps, string, wooden dowels for building, big comfy fluffy pillows to sit on, a basket of wool

> (creative with it!) and there is ALWAYS an adult eager to help of you need a little input or a taller arm (personal communication, May 4, 2005)!

Many of the graduates' lower school memories included time spent outside in Nature. Graduate Aniquiel explained how such aesthetic activity expanded her motivation and imagination:

> [In lower school] my class's favorite thing to do was to go out into the woods and build lean-tos out of branches and leaves. We learned the art of building without using manmade materials and often we were permitted to stay out when it rained in order to test the effectiveness of our structures. It was great fun! We learned to garden as an art form, planting flowerbeds that turned into rainbows when they flowered, or spirals. We built dams in the nearby stream, designing structurally sound pools to swim in. It was usually on bad weather days that we did 2D art such as watercolor painting or drawing. Gardens serve as teachers in color, form, and function (personal communication, May 4, 2005).

Lukas, a 1995 K-8 Waldorf graduate, stated that his parents sent him to "Waldorf school because of the widespread use of natural elements/nature and art in the teaching. They, [his parents], thought this fusing of academics and art was better than simply studying either alone" (personal communication, April 26, 2005). Lukas described his K-8 Waldorf school:

> Each class level has a different color, green for sixth grade, yellow for third, etc… Nothing garish, tacky or otherwise unnaturally colored was presented to us. There was quite a lot of wood everywhere…desks and chairs were sturdy and wood. In terms of pictures, we generally had a wall covered with student art from our painting, drawing, or perspective classes. Any additional art was hung at the teacher's discretion. I remember pictures of Steiner and Darwin. I also remember still-life's and classical works (Botticelli, Raphael, etc.) and neo-classical ones as well. There was never a lack of books. I found a lack of books on the teacher's desk to be conspicuous when I visited other schools (to pick up a friend, say). Third graders are responsible for the garden which was beautiful. We had flowering rose vine that I planted in third grade which provided wonderful colors and smells in the spring. In the mornings the whole school resounded with song. That's actually how I knew I was late (and thus in trouble) in the morning. In kindergarten we did a lot of assisted cooking so the smell of bread baking and soup usually reminds me of those days. I'd say over all the impression is of some idyllic/bucolic German

> township or something. Think *Heide*. It was all very comfortable and beautiful. Great place to explore academia (personal communication, April 26, 2005).

Many of the graduates' comments included descriptions of Anthroposophical architectural style as often found within Waldorf campus communities. For example, graduate Manx described performing eurythmy in "a gigantic Gothic Tudor barn with dark wood on the inside…no artificial lights…it was quite an atmosphere" (personal communication, May 4, 2005). Other graduates stated, "Gorgeous. Never a right angle anywhere in the room" (Patrick, personal communication, May 17, 2005) and "The wood [of the student desks] was carefully crafted and all of the corners of the desks were cut so as not to have right angles" (Anna, personal communication, April 4. 2005). Jonathan, a 4th-12th grade Waldorf graduate, said of his Waldorf school, "Very pleasing compared to the public school that I attended…you rarely ever see [in Waldorf schools] any rigid right angles or box shaped classrooms, you see a lot of weird angles, but it never looks out of place" (personal communication, May, 15, 2005). Given that the organic architecture of many Waldorf schools exists counter culture, graduate Anna's aesthetic dilemma with non-Waldorf students was interesting to note:

> I was always pleased by the soft edges on many of the buildings around the school. I also remember this being somewhat of an embarrassment. In high school, when sports teams would come from visiting schools, they would always comment on how weird everything looked. I remember wishing I could explain the reasoning for the odd shaped buildings, but I could not. I am still not quite sure why they are shaped the way they are (personal communication, July 5, 2005)!

Although it was clear from the graduates' descriptions that their Waldorf communities strived to create an aesthetically organic environment, classroom and school, each school's aesthetics vary based on the level of established funding for each self-

administering school. For example, graduate Arjelia, who attended a well-established Waldorf high school (over 60 years old), reflected, "I found my beauty place. Before graduating I used to walk barefoot in the wind, trying to feel and remember everything" (personal communication, April 11, 2005). A few graduates shared that when some of their Waldorf schools were just being initiated the schools resided in less ideal and temporary settings that lacked typical aesthetics of Waldorf schools.

The above introduction intended to provide the reader with some pictorial context for Waldorf schools. To follow, themes were reported within the context of the three-phased format of data collection and graduates' meaning making process: (1) Phase I–descriptive themes; (2) Phase II–epiphany (key moment) themes; and (3) Phase III–meaning making themes. The following themes emerged from Phase I, the graduates' descriptions about their particular Waldorf arts experience:

1) *Descriptions of Seamless Integration of the Arts*
    - *Arts-inclusive Worldview*
    - *Art as Meaning Making*
    - *Art for Memory and Retention*
2) *Descriptions of Teacher as Artists*
3) *Descriptions of Hands-on Learning*
    - *Will-developed Intelligence*
    - *Expressive Problem Solving*
4) *Descriptions of Play and Imagination*
5) *Descriptions of Balancing the Whole Being*
6) *Descriptions of Emotional Intelligence Curriculum*

Descriptions of Seamless Integration of the Arts

Arts-inclusive Worldview.

> Looking back, one of the most significant things I gained from my Waldorf Education is the idea that art, song, and movement do not have to be separate classes in a specified room but can be incorporated some in every class you take (Layla, personal communication, April 25, 2005).

Graduate Layla and other participating Waldorf graduates spoke about the manner in which the arts were infused into everyday multidiscipline curriculum and how this interdisciplinary approach impacted them. Recognized by Waldorf Education and heard within the graduates' narratives, learning was not confined to one modality. Waldorf teachers at various grade (class) levels have utilized brain-friendly lessons that in turn afford connections to be made across intelligences and disciplines–the world as a convoluted, interconnected entity. Comments from all the graduates spoke to the nature of the arts seamlessly integrated within Waldorf school curricula– arts as a part of everything. For example, graduate Anna said, "It is difficult to reflect specifically on my involvement on the arts because it was not something separate from the academic curriculum itself. The arts were integrated into everything not something separate to be assessed independently" (personal communication, July 5, 2005).

Given that Rudolf Steiner's premise for Waldorf Education envisioned for all students the availability of all possibilities ways of knowing and growing within the interconnected world, Waldorf schools have allowed everyone to learn in, with, and through the arts. Graduate Janna elaborated on this view of arts intertwined with life and humanity:

> Art was a part of everything–every subject and every class. For example, we wouldn't just learn Spanish, but we would get to experience its culture through its art, music, dance, and traditional clothing and learn the language through these explorations. Since there were no textbooks, we would learn everything through experiencing it directly or from our teacher. We would create our own books–with drawings, essays, maps, etc… By the time I graduated from high school, there wasn't a type of art that I hadn't experienced… *I think art was such an integral part of the education, that it was just a part of life. I didn't think of art as something separate from me or from learning in general. It was in everything I did* [italics added]. I didn't realize how important art was for me until I graduated from high school and no longer got to do it every day (personal communication, June 4, 2005).

It is important to note that Waldorf Education has not utilized the arts strictly for

integrated curriculum. In Waldorf schools, the arts likewise have had their own inherent value. Graduate Arjelia enlightened this concept as well as concurred with Janna's statement (above):

> I have come to see arts in education as both a series of skills and practices taught for their own sake and as aids to learning about other subjects. Arts were so integrated into my education that it took me a long time to think of them as something one might have a talent in rather than *something everyone did* [italics added]….The arts were a part of nearly every class in lower school.
>
> We sang and played recorders every morning and had music classes with a specialty teacher. In 5th grade, I started playing flute, and played in the orchestra through junior high. In junior high I also sang in the girl's choir. We drew in every main lesson book, and did form drawings and watercolor paintings in class. Every year our class did a play. In middle school we wrote poems. Once a week we had eurythmy classes. Even in foreign language classes we drew pictures and learned poems and songs. *Arts were not entirely separate from other subjects* [italics added] (personal communication, April 11, 2005).

Graduate Lukas described the purpose to which art was taught in Waldorf lower schools as "an explanation of phenomena and of humanity" (Lukas, personal communication, April 26, 2005); thus, art was not treated as a discreet thing that people do. In his reflective writings, Lukas stated that Waldorf Education provided "a world view of interconnectedness and causal relationships" where "concepts are easier to understand because you can relate them to something else" (personal communication, June 15, 2005). Lukas shared gains from his connected active learning:

> Art was everywhere and integrated into everything. We had painting, drawing, handiwork, and other art classes, of course, but in addition art would be woven into our main lesson or even language classes. I learned anatomy by drawing detailed diagrams of the various bones, appendages, skull plates, and skeleton as we were learning about flexors and neurons and what not…I remember in geometry we of course learned angle theory and used compasses and all that, but we also colored our creations according to what scheme we devised individually. Through this I began to understand not only the static nature of say, the golden ratio, but how it can be transformed, or, how

> geometry can define even seemingly complex or random places in the environment. A grove of trees, for example, or the curve of a baseball.
>
> It's hard to explain how this came about without showing you how I colored my drawings, but I hope you get the picture (personal communication, April 26, 2005).

Interestingly, Lukas stated above (in the last sentence) how difficult it was to describe in words what he could show more readily in an image. He trusted us to utilize pictorial thinking to understand his ideas. He provided a view of Waldorf driven skills– transmediating meaning through imagery and pictorial thinking.

Art as Meaning Making.

Graduate narratives supported Waldorf Education's recognition of art as a form of meaning making. Graduates pointed to their main lesson book learning activities as an example of the arts as meaning making tools. Main lesson books were an integral component within the 1^{st} –12^{th} grade Waldorf curriculum of all participants. Through main lesson book activity, the graduates were learning how to create, organize, store, and later display internal representations of knowledge.

As previously discussed in *Chapter Two*, Waldorf students create main lesson books for personal learning in lieu of utilizing mass produced textbooks. Graduate Anna defined main lesson book learning activity as such: "an exploration of a subject through writing, poetry, and art…how we individually experienced the subject [and] our imagination was the only limit" (personal communication, July 7, 2005). In discussing main lesson books, other graduates said, "We recorded everything we learned and then illustrated it. Even classes like German and crafts had these [main lesson] books" (Maryanne, personal communication, April 7, 2005) and "We would have a lesson and then we would write about it and draw a picture to illustrate it and that was normal" (Havela, personal communication, June 11,

2005). As meaning making instruments, main lesson books were described both as arts assessment of student learning and a reflection of their life knowledge.

Graduate Michelle said that the arts in Waldorf schools "provide another way of knowing or learning–another point of access" (personal communication, March 25, 2005). Michelle, who attended public schools until transferring to her Waldorf high school (her 9th-12th grades), reflected about how she valued the main lesson book experience as a instrument for powerful, personal, and motivational meaning making:

> Regarding the main lesson books, it was very satisfying to look at a record of what you had learned over the last few weeks, told in your own voice–something somewhat polished rather than a stack of notes. Having to write it out in narrative form really pushed you to understand the topic better…for 12th grade biology, which went through the phyla of the animal kingdom, I drew examples for each grouping and they were quite good. As part of the mammal section I included an oil painting sketch of an elephant.
>
> It was significant to me because the drawings were the main lesson and told the story well. I was so proud of the quality of the drawings and sketches. I felt that I was able to use my drawing ability to illustrate, literally, what we were learning in the science class and that was particularly satisfying for me…There were some main lessons books that were particularly beautiful that I kept. I was quite proud of them–the handwriting, decoration, artwork–as well as the content…It gave me a feeling of accomplishment to be able to produce something tangible at the end of a block (personal communication, April 19, 2005).

Given that Michelle is a 1979 Waldorf graduate, it was remarkable to hear how this arts experience remained significant to her. Almost all of the graduates, including those who were not recent Waldorf graduates, stated that they saved and maintained main lesson books for purposes of utilizing the content outside Waldorf schools such as in college studies, marveling at the past works, reflecting on past learning experience, and so forth. (One participant's main lesson books were accidentally destroyed).

Speaking to the nature of main lesson books as vehicles for transfer and transmediation of meaning, graduate Havela said, "It is almost like an art diary in which I can see the progression of maturity, creativity, and awareness that was transferred into the physical" (personal communication, June 11, 2005). Similarly, other graduates referred to their main lesson book(s) as "a personal map through the years" (Havela, personal communication, June 9, 2005) and "my personal textbooks–a testimony to what I learned in all those years–…beautiful objects that trace a story of growing up" (Layla, personal communication, June 15, 2005). Main lesson book practices afforded personal meaning making and crystallization of thought through individual sign systems. Graduate Havela elaborated on this notion:

> In the public schools for their main classes all they have at the end are maybe a few test grades that are impressive or a paper or maybe a little art project, where with the classes that we [Waldorf students] have, everything was documented in our main lesson books so we could really remember everything. I just find it very fun to look through my old main lesson books and remember those little moments of hard work or a funny story or something like that. There are so many memories woven into everything [within the main lesson book] (personal communication, August 16, 2005)

Graduate Vincent, who saved all of his 1st-12th grade handmade lessons books, described a personal human connection and aesthetic with handmade objects. He said:

> Even today, I am enamored with the idea of making artifacts. Everyday things increasingly get made with no love, with the love almost intentionally driven out of their manufacture, things made to conform with marketing schemes and financial bottom lines. I like the idea of making things that accomplish their primary goal admirably, but that have an aura of personality, a particularity that demands human engagement, discourages being taken for granted. This may have a lot to do with the more than 100 main lesson books I made at Waldorf schools (personal communication, July 11, 2005).

Vincent suggested that his current aesthetic code could have been influenced by his Waldorf school experiences in crafting artful artifacts such as main lesson books.

Art for Memory and Retention.

Main lesson books were the Waldorf graduates' "own personal textbooks that were expected to be works of art" (Layla, personal communication, April 25, 2005). During a main lesson book learning activity, the meaning making was personally, emotively connected to the maker. Graduate Anna's reflection about her main lesson learning process supported Sanders Bustle's (2004) research previously reviewed in *Chapter Two*; children internalized what they have learned when immersed in learning activity inclusive of art components. Anna supported this notion:

> Many of the visual art activities that I found most powerful were those images that went along with the stories and essays in my main lesson book. *We were using the visual arts to further comprehend and remember the subject matter brought in the lesson* [italics added] (personal communication, June 12, 2005)

Other participants also confirmed that creating main lesson books assisted them in internalizing the teacher presented information. Graduate Emily, who still utilizes her Waldorf gained skill of drawing for comprehension, said, "It was nice to be able to organize the difficult concepts in a manner that was clear to me….There is something about drawing that really helps memorization. I [now] do this at college sometimes when I am studying for exams" (personal communication, June 1, 2005). For some of the Waldorf graduates, creating and composing a main lesson book acted as a vehicle for immersion, internalization, and summarization of knowledge and information.

Graduate Aniquiel spoke about main lesson books' mnemonic properties. In reflecting on her documented learning in her main lesson books, she said:

> I still have ALL my Waldorf work. I like to look back on it for inspiration. There are pages in my main lesson books that I spent days decorating and illustrating and when I look at them I can still hear my teacher's voice reciting the lesson and sometimes it reminds me of things long forgotten (personal communication, May 4, 2005).

Likewise, speaking to the reflective and mnemonic properties of main lesson illustrations graduate Vincent stated, "I expect that because of the pre-verbal engagement involved in the drawings contain, they [main lesson books] are a uniquely powerful conduit for memories I may some day want to revisit" (personal communication, May 30, 2005). Due to the time spent working on main lesson books, graduate Jonathan inferred that he was emotional connected to the Waldorf artifacts. He stated that as a reflective and emotive tool these artifacts were "always something fun to look back at" (personal communication, May 15, 2005). Similarly, other graduates stated that main lesson books connected them to their past schooled experiences.

Other graduates related their descriptions of past main lesson book experiences to their current life practices. For example, K-12 Waldorf graduate Maryanne shared:

> One thing that I do is keep a journal of original thoughts. I try to think of things that no one has thought of before. I don't know if that is a product of Waldorf Education or just me. I have always kept some sort of journal or another, since I was able to draw. When I was very young I recorded my experiences with pictures that I drew. I guess I started a thought journal when I was in high school and *I was exposed to so many different subjects* [italics added]. I found that in college some classes really prompted me to think about things more than others. Calculus, for example, lets me come to all sorts of realizations, not necessarily related to math at all. My journaling could have come from the main lesson book experience, but it definitely would have been an unconscious transition (personal communication, April 15, 2005).

Maryanne expressed how her journal was a vehicle for sorting and internalizing experiential knowledge much as the main lesson book accomplishes within Waldorf curriculum. Lukas concurred, "Through art we created our [main lesson] textbooks and, I think, we gained a deeper retention of the material because we were actively engaged in processing and presenting the information" (personal communication, April 26, 2005).

Descriptions of Teachers as Artists

Graduate Jonathan stated, "I was quite involved [in the arts], there wasn't really a way not to be. They, [Waldorf teachers], made art an integral part of the curriculum" (personal communication, May 15, 2005). It would seem that the seamless integration of the arts with other disciplines necessitated Waldorf teachers' worldview, school vision, and pedagogy were inclusive of arts. From both the literature review and participating graduates' reflections, Waldorf teachers carefully considered art media, techniques, subjects, and color theory within arts-infused lessons, so that curriculum became deliberate and specific to the students' developmental stage. An example of Waldorf teachers operating as artists was apparent when graduate Maryanne was asked to reflect on an impressionable Waldorf artwork (that stood out in her memory). With awe (as she said), Maryanne recalled, "I remember the amazing puppet shows put on by the kindergarten teachers; they made each puppet especially for that story with silks and trinkets on the table for landscapes. They would sing the story; it was all very enthralling" (personal communication, April 15, 2005). Maryanne also stated that this arts-based learning scenario left an impression in her mind because it was emotive. Her Waldorf teachers modeled creative expression in the artful way that they present curriculum–teaching as an art form.

Graduate Paul recalled emotive storytelling within his *History Through Art* course. This high school class stood out in his memory "because of the richness of [the Waldorf teacher's] ability to bring a world to life" as well as the Waldorf teacher's dramatic descriptions that allowed her students "to 'get into' the minds of artists" (personal communication, March 28, 2005). Paul described his artist/teacher as follows:

> Her talks could draw you backwards into the artist's life describing details of places where they lived and how that became apparent in their work. Most of

> the artwork I do is deliberately designed to provoke thought on many levels–reality presented in small slices of time; her lectures allowed me to reflect on my art (personal communication, March 28, 2005).

As reported by participating graduates and documented in Waldorf literature, Waldorf teachers did not utilize audiovisual aids or picturebooks for their storytelling; instead, they often utilized blackboard drawings to assist students in forming images in the mind's eye. Although Rudolf Steiner originated Waldorf Education's blackboard drawing pedagogy (see *Chapter Two*), the practice remains widely utilized in today's Waldorf schools. As described in a graduate's words, Aniquiel said, "The [main] lesson is usually accompanied by an intricate illustration which the teacher has drawn in colored chalk on the blackboard… we write our lesson, take notes, and draw…in order to form strong mental images pertaining to the lesson" (persona communication, May 4, 2005). Graduate Maryanne stated, "I remember often maps were drawn on the board. They were of certain countries or regions. This really helped me form pictures of the world in my mind" (personal communication, April 15, 2005). Likewise, other graduates (especially the K-8th Waldorf participants) referred to their pictorial thinking in relationship to the blackboard drawing teaching strategy.

Waldorf artist/teachers mentioned in the participants reflections valued and promoted pictorial thinking. Often the blackboard drawing itself was an anticipatory set–for students to imagine what story would follow. For example, graduate Aniquiel said:

> What a better way to capture a child's interest than to walk into a room that has a 4 foot tall illustration of Christopher Columbus embarking on a ship on the board? I was always excited to learn about the fantastic stories behind the pictures. It was almost like a movie, listening to the teacher speak and seeing the image come to life before my eyes. Also, there were always little side stories which accompanied the details of the picture, like the explanation of how to navigate by stars which explained the strange instruments on Chris's belt. A picture like that could predict a lecture on sailing or stargazing as much as historical events and often did. *The pictures made me eager to learn* [italics added] (personal communication, May 4, 2005)

Graduate Vincent concurred, "Blackboard lessons were lavishly prepared with colored title headings and illustrations–sitting at my desk early and trying to guess what stories might go with the illustration once the lessons started was something I still remember" (personal communication, March 30, 2005). Other graduates' comments were consistent with Aniquiel's and Vincent's ideas on how the blackboard drawing teaching strategy awakened a passion for learning.

When graduate Vincent reflected on blackboard illustrations and the illustrators (Waldorf teachers) he stated,

> Art provides access to meanings through figures: representation, metaphor, alliteration, sensualization…the blackboard drawings were created with love and it showed. The drawings encouraged a different kind of attention to the content they [Waldorf teachers] announced. They changed the way stories or even mathematical formula would take meaning. If not directly, then by the kind and number of associations I might make (personal communication, March 30, 2005).

Blackboard drawings were a point of access for making connections or as Vincent said making "associations". Waldorf teachers reflected upon in this study intended to use their artistry to engage students in analysis and interpretation.

As previously stated in the *Chapter Two*, the Anthroposophist's ideal of teaching through and with art is "not to train people to become artists, but to develop the artistic aptitudes inherent in *each and every* person" (Nobel, 1991, p. 266). By striving to develop everyday accessible art aptitude within each student, Waldorf teachers intentions were to later spur a balanced whole person– a thinking and feeling spiritual being. Reflecting on the impact of his Waldorf teachers' art attitudes, graduate Manx said, "They took art seriously and so without too much thinking about it, so did I" (personal communication, April, 4, 2005). Art attitudes may vary within Waldorf schools, yet accredited and mentored Waldorf

classroom teachers have learned creative and art-infused teaching strategies in order to motivate and open students.

Important to note and as four graduates reminded me in their reflections, Waldorf teachers do vary and will vary from school to school as in any educational system. Only two negative statements related to Waldorf teachers as artists were shared by participating graduates. Nevertheless, graduate Vincent's reflection about such a mis-educative experience reminded me that all teachers' visions and methods vary from school to school and not all teachers are effective. He shared:

> The craft teacher would take our work home and fix mistakes and make the [knitting] transitions to form the shape desired…where the craft teacher finished (or, actually, did most of) my work colored my particular experience in terms of this 'taking ownership' (personal communication, March 30, 2005).

This comment could be applied to any teacher of the arts who becomes distracted by art product, allowing product to overshadow art process (student creative problem solving).

Although the arts were described as prevalent in Waldorf schools, graduate Layla suggested that diversity of the teachers' art attitudes affected each individual school's practices. Layla said:

> Some think of the Waldorf art environment pretty limited to watercolor, eurythmy, and dolls without faces. This is a very dogmatic, crystal bearing, itchy wool stocking wearing group and I don't think they represent the Waldorf community fairly at all. Those who venture to explore a bit more will discover Kandinsky, the Blue Rider Group, and Joseph Bueys (to mention a few from art history) who really embraced the Waldorf philosophy ideals in art and carried it to a new level not limited to the Waldorf community. There are many innovative and exciting people based in the Waldorf community with very progressive attitudes towards art contemporaries (personal communication, June 29, 2005).

Graduate Arjelia, who attended several Waldorf schools, likewise suggested that the individuals at the particular Waldorf school site differentiate the arts learning experience.

Arjelia stated:

> There is not one Waldorf environment. One of the schools I attended is insistent that the original curriculum must be followed perfectly: 9th grade must have charcoal drawing, 11th grade bookbinding. The other school offers students choices, the opportunity for focus on music, eurythmy, pottery, painting. Each school and teacher brings different attitudes, beliefs, etc. about art, and these influence the students (personal communication, June 4, 2005).

Although Waldorf schools have been commonly guided by Rudolf Steiner's philosophies, some participants recognized and expressed that a community of individuals gave rise to any of their particular Waldorf schools.

Descriptions of Hands-on Learning

Will-developed Intelligence.

In mainstream education, hands-on learning has been typically thought of as experiential, active learning beyond paper and pencil work at students' desks. In Waldorf schools hands-on education likewise resembles this experiential learning, yet the philosophies behind the teaching methodology extends further with specific goals in developing the students' *will* as well as making the curriculum active and alive such as typical justifications for hands-on learning. Within the Waldorf Education framework, hands-on learning and knowing specifically through practical arts and handwork curriculum is initiated by an individual's inner drive–the will. As previously stated in *Chapter Two*, "will is the power within us that allows us, through our deeds, to interact with the world" (Mitchell & Livingston, 1999, p. 7). Ultimately handwork assignments as found in Waldorf schools offer a means to develop motivation, insight, judgment, and will to define, symbolize, and mark the world in new ways.

In reflection on hands-on learning, Graduate Emily said, " I don't think there was much pressure to be a good artist so much as to put good effort into what you created"

(personal communication, June 1, 2005). Possibly the Waldorf emphasis has been more directed towards internal dialog (process) rather than outer expression (product). For example, graduate Layla said:

> In many art and craft forms there is a long process between the creative idea and creative results, this process in between is often the hardest part to complete. I think that all of the arts and crafts we learned in Waldorf Schools at a young age gives us the confidence to complete this intermediate part of the process and have faith that we will get results… finishing the whole thing is the hardest part (personal communication, June 15, 2005).

Layla's ideas about confidence, faith, and strength utilized to resolve in art process dilemmas spoke to the purpose of Waldorf hands-on learning–gaining *will* in order to face daily challenges beyond the classroom walls. By educating the will the student's own impulse was awakened to struggle through creating anything new.

Although graduate Michelle said that her upper school curriculum could have changed over the years since her graduation, she felt more artistically supported in the public schooling before her Waldorf high school experiences. She said:

> While I was encouraged in my drawing, painting, and clay sculpture, *I felt pretty much on my own to figure out different* [italics added] techniques/ media…my drawing ability was much more sophisticated than anyone else in the class…it seemed that those teaching in the arts pitched their courses to the lowest common denominator. *Or perhaps what they [Waldorf teachers] were more concerned with was individual expression and not so much development of particular talents* [italics added]…it didn't seem as though the arts classes were as highly valued as the academic classes…perhaps it was the limits of a small school (personal communication, April 13, 2005).

Michelle's comment about Waldorf teachers' desire to develop more general skills of individual expression through hands-on experiences was insightful. Possibly, (within my interpretation), the upper school Waldorf teachers were not as concerned with teaching specialized techniques or media-driven arts curriculum as often found in many mainstream

high schools. Possibly, Michelle's struggle to figure things out was purposeful within the Waldorf curriculum.

The majority of graduates' recollections included the process of creating a class (grade level) theatrical play every year. Likewise, a few graduates described the process of creating an arts-based product for the school's weekly Friday assembly. At the end of each week a collaborative arts-based product was presented in order to summarize some of the students' gained knowledge of that particular week. Graduate Havela stated:

> Every Friday we had school assembly and each class would perform a song or poem for the rest of the school. It was fun working throughout the week on something and performing it. Sometimes it wouldn't turn out as well as we had hoped and sometimes it was amazing and that made us feel like we had worked hard and accomplished something. It was very rewarding…for many people it was a way of conquering public performance fears (personal communication, June 11, 2005).

These arts-based assessments communicated back to all the students of the school both where each individual class existed within the curriculum and the collaborators' will and successes towards communicate their place in learning.

Expressive Problem Solving.

The graduates' reflections express to me that their Waldorf hands-on learning through the arts had goals in both process and product. As graduate Vincent said, the hands-on expressions were the "immediate practical applications [products] for what one learned [process]" (personal communication, July 11, 2005). Just as plays, songs, poems, puppet shows, paintings, and so forth utilized in Friday assemblies were summaries of comprehension other Waldorf assessments of thinking were also described as hands-on. Historically, Waldorf Education has not utilized mainstream assessments such as standardized tests and participants noted the advantages. For example, graduate Jonathan

said, "I felt like the essay/hands-on format of our Waldorf school exams actually made us learn the material more thoroughly. Many people do not have the outlets or hands-on learning devices that we learned" (personal communication, June 1, 2005).

Intrigued by one graduates' listing of *baking* as one of her first hands-on learning experiences, I asked her to elaborate on the notion of baking as an art form. Graduate Emily replied:

> Well, we went about it like we did any crafts in kindergarten. We got to kneed and shape our own dough. I guess it was the collaborative use of hands and mind to create something that I refer to as art (personal communication, April 8, 2005).

As mentioned in *Chapter Two,* "a primary vehicle for weaving the world 'into our minds' is the active engagement of our hands" (Auer, 2004, p. 2). Even Waldorf early childhood learning activities afforded opportunities for the hand and mind to speak to each other during meaning making and problem solving. Emily's example of early exposure to practical arts–baking as art– reiterated for me Waldorf teachers' vision that "any one can access arts for everyday life expression" and "the brain deciphers what the fingers explore" (Mitchell & Livingston, 1999, p. 8).

The majority of the participating graduates described opportunities of freedom to explore many areas of arts and to express themselves through many artistic media both practical and fine arts. Only graduate Michelle, as mentioned previously, expressed limitations were placed on how much visual art media she wanted to explore. Several graduates discussed how their hands-on expression was crucial to their impulse to problem solve and desire to learn; For example, graduate Aniquiel said, "I am a tactile learner, I do not retain information well on a purely auditory basis. I spent lecture time in public school daydreaming, not learning, because I was not allowed to do anything with my hands"

(personal communication, June 17, 2005). Graduate Layla who had always been very confident in her art making said, "The only thing I was very involved with was our art projects" (personal communication, April 25, 2005). Given that Layla had a positive predisposition to the arts, Waldorf hands-on assignments motivated her to wonder and explore further with other academic disciplines. She said:

> The Waldorf schooling arts experience was wonderful for me. In a way the arts in the main lesson was able to channel my interest to the rest of the course work. As mentioned earlier I was a very dreamy child and far too much staring out of our lovely windows. The Waldorf Education was able to stimulate my interest through the arts, colors, and sounds and educate me without me even realizing it. I woke up to the world in fifth grade when we were studying Ancient Greece and became very interested in my academics at that point and ever since (personal communication, April 25, 2005).

It's important to note that not all graduate descriptions about hands-on arts experience were exclusively positive. Graduate Manx noted that hands-on learning and knowing may not be best for every learner or there may need more variety and flexibility with certain media approaches. He said:

> I loved [Watercolor] but I found it frustrating because we were using wet paper and so I couldn't get any sharp forms out of it. At first I liked it because it was fun to watch the colors run together– but in the end I was too much of a control freak for that style. And woodworking– very annoying– I could see the shape that I wanted to make, but hand rasps are very difficult for a child to use. It took too long. Everyone said that I didn't have enough patience and that I was flighty and sanguine– but there is was (personal communication, March 23, 2005).

Some may argue that Manx learned much about himself (and so did the Waldorf teacher) through these hands-on opportunities. Some may also argue that gains in learning were made within the process of struggle–the problem solving. It seems as if the offering of many ways of learning and knowing, afforded students discovery their learning styles.

While graduate Manx referred to a lower school hands-on experience, graduate Janna described some upper school experiences:

> As we got older, our art classes became more professional–similar to college level art classes. We learned drawing and painting techniques, learned to throw pots, do metal smithing, sculpture, printmaking etc. It was amazing. Every quarter we would start a new art block. I got to explore more art than many art majors in college (personal communication, March 23, 2005).

With such a curriculum in mind, one that likens itself to college coursework in the arts, Graduate Anna pointed out the importance of setting students up with appropriate prior knowledge for such hands-on and arts-based problem solving. She said:

> Arts classes in upper grades provided a safe environment for exploration …I imagine that someone who was not comfortable with his or her artistic ability or did not find solace in the class dynamics might have found the experience very difficult (personal communication, June 12, 2005).

Two participating graduates who transferred into Waldorf Education at the high school level (non-Waldorf lifers) described significant struggles with unfamiliar hands-on approaches and Waldorf techniques such as veiling painting and main lesson book processes. (Waldorf teachers should take note that a lack of lower school experiences in Waldorf could disadvantage such students). Graduate Patrick transferred into Waldorf schools at the high school level after attending schools that were not as arts friendly and where he had little to no drawing instruction within his early child development. Patrick described why he wanted to participate:

> I wish to communicate that not all Waldorf graduates are good artists or enjoyed it in school. I hated [arts experiences] because I could not draw or sculpt! If we expanded the discussion to include ARTS (music and crafts) then I want to say there was an easy transition into Waldorf Education. That stuff was fun (personal communication, May 16, 2005).

Any educator who utilizes arts-infused curriculum should be cautioned by Patrick's sentiments and pay attention to each student's prior knowledge in arts education.

In analyzing all graduate Patrick's interview reflections, I found that his descriptive and evaluative statements about Waldorf were full of both crystallizing and paralyzing experiences. Patrick was brilliantly kinesthetic throughout his childhood; he described that he was "working in NYC doing electrical work at 10 [years old] and got [his] first chainsaw (birthday) at 13 [years old]" and "great with tools, manipulating small objects with precision" (personal communication, May 18, 2005). His interview reflections demonstrated his love for Waldorf crafts such as bookbinding. Patrick recollected:

> Everyone agrees the books I made are artful and beautiful. No one would agree that a single thing I drew (without a ruler) is worth looking at. Also, I have [the Waldorf handcrafted books] in my bookcase, so I see them often (personal communication, May 18, 2005).

If you gave Patrick a hands-on task requiring precision such as technical drawing within Waldorf schools he thrived, yet provide him a portrait or still life assignment and he was greatly dissatisfied. In interpreting the participant's reflections on past exposure to diverse of arts media, I found their Waldorf teachers' actions seemingly based on opening children up to all problem-solving possibilities. Some may contend that without the range of experiences that graduate Patrick encountered he would know so much less about his needs, interests, and path through life.

Descriptions of Play and Imagination

> The word [imagination] resonates most vividly with my memories of early grade-school mornings, when the class teacher would tell myths and legends from around the world. I would picture places particularly clearly and I believe a common activity was to illustrate favorite scenes from the stories. (Vincent, personal communication, July 13, 2005)

Participating graduates described cognitive connection-making during learning that most often emerged from mental imaging or pictorial thinking (see *Descriptions of Seamless*

Integration). Imagination seemed key to participants' intellectual gains within many learning activities. Graduate Jonathan stated that his most significant Waldorf art experience was "creating something from a blank piece of paper that came straight from the imagination" (personal communication, June 1, 2005). Other graduates talked about developing skills of imagination and visualization (working in the mind's eye) particularly from their K-8th Waldorf environment. For example, graduate Aniquiel stated, "I see things immediately that others don't see at all. I see patterns and pictures in all manner of objects, and it is very easy for me to imagine things different from what they are" (personal communication, May 4, 2005). Imagination and play were obviously valued by the participants' Waldorf teachers. Five participants in particular highly valued imagination opportunities in Waldorf Education and relate such experience to being able to visualize and invent in the world post graduation.

Opportunities for imaginative play, key to the development of *will* during early education years, were revealed in the graduates' recollections. For example, recalling her kindergarten teacher's recitation of a poem about the process of a caterpillar becoming a butterfly graduate Arjelia said, "We rolled up in a blanket on the floor, unfurled, and wove around the room together in a spiral, singing a song–'waken sleeping butterfly, burst your narrow prison'" (personal communication, April 29, 2005). Both metaphorically and physically through drama and creative movement Arjelia and her fellow students practiced their self-initiated becoming. In the process of Arjelia's perceptions of the metamorphosis of a butterfly transforming into concept and content, she had intentionally experienced and mastered her own thinking and comprehension. Years later as an adult, Arjelia had vividly retained this arts-based activity in her memory.

Graduate Vincent said that all of the Waldorf schools he attended had play spaces on the school grounds that were "some sort of liminal margin-land where children escape… [into] dream-worlds…providing space where children's natural wonder can develop freely in each individual" (personal communication, July 11, 2005). Here children can be in a "different head-space", said Vincent. Vincent elaborated on this spirit of inquiry:

> Class teachers often blurred lines between 'play time' and classroom/study time. A 'recess' might go double length and include free-spirited observation of a pine cone, collection of different-sized pine cones, and a mini lesson about how the pollen from needles would fertilize seeds protected deep inside….We probably didn't even think to wonder whether we were playing or learning or why there might be such an impulse among 20th-century folk to consider these activities exclusive of each other. We were just being (personal communication, July 11, 2005).

Graduate Manx's reflection about play in the arts also corresponded to Vincent's idea about children just being. He said, "children are players–it's their language– when they play they are engaged" (personal communication, May 4, 2005). Manx related Waldorf notions of play to his daughter's learning process; he said,

> It is clear that children use play to reconcile their model of the universe with what they've been told…Why should we not utilize this natural channel of internalization as a path into their minds? I watch my child translate what she is learning into scenarios…it's all learning to hold a picture in your head and manipulate it (personal communication, May 4, 2005).

"Thoughts occur as images" (Zaltman & Schuck, 1995, p. 5). From these graduate reflections, imagination and play afforded the ability to make metal pictures while the will was involved in manipulating these. In Waldorf Education imagination and will-developed intelligence have been critical components to Rudolf Steiner's desired social change–foundational in visualizing and inventing our world.

When some of the K-8th Waldorf graduates described past school experiences inclusive of imaginative play, they revealed passionate opinions about the role of fantasy for

K-8th grade child development. I found in these participants' words support of the exploration of imagination through fantasy play. Fantasy explorations were incorporated into the early grade school Waldorf curriculum especially through storytelling and poetry. Graduate Emily explained:

> I'm glad I was allowed to believe in fairytale and fantasy as a child. I don't think children are allowed that enough anymore. I felt it enriched my life and childhood. I think fantasy helps build creativity. How can we progress if we cannot imagine anything, but the reality that we know?…I guess it [fantasy] just made things seem extra magical…I read at a higher grade level in 8th grade than most of my non-Waldorf friends. I love reading. I am so glad I had the time just to be a child and use my imagination and hear stories and play (personal communication, April 8, 2005).

Descriptions of Waldorf arts experiences supported the impulse of Waldorf curriculum treasuring artful play and exercises of imagination especially during the willing and feeling developmental stages of their students.

Descriptions of Balancing the Whole Being

Rudolf Steiner, influenced by the aesthetic theories of Friedrich Schiller (1795/1967), intended for Waldorf Education to harmonize the polarities of sense and reason within our being through transcendental experience with art. Some graduates' descriptions of arts experience included concepts of finding balance between dualities. Graduate Anna provided an example of Waldorf arts curriculum that addresses polarities. She said:

> After my initial reflections, I thought that the artistic activities that I experienced have an ascetic quality that was very much tied into the concept of beauty. In order to find inspiration for our work it was often suggested that we seek out inspiration from the natural environment around us, which was pleasing to the senses. In further contemplation, I remember one particular exercise in which the instructor of our "light and dark" drawing class asked us to draw a picture representing something beautiful and then to draw one representing something that was ugly, and lastly, to draw a picture that represented beauty and ugliness on the same page. *This was a clear example of how our art education allowed us to pay careful attention to our perceptions of the world* [italics added]. Some students represented ugliness

> in an image that I may have considered beautiful, however the polarity was experienced by each student in the art class and I experienced these same polarities (of light and dark, good and evil, beauty and ugliness) when I entered the 'real world' after graduation. *My Waldorf art experience has allowed me to perceive and pay careful attention to these polarities and also assisted me in finding means to balance the two* [italics added]. I think that this awareness enables me to make sense of my experiences and form my actions to meet predetermined goals (personal communication, July 7, 2005).

Rudolf Steiner's education goal of developing free-thinking citizens who perceive and act from both a place of sense and reason was confirmed in Anna's learning scenario.

Steiner (1923/1972) asserted in *A Modern Art in Education* that it was essential for citizens to be wide-hearted participating with their hearts and souls in culture and civilization as oppose to perceiving and being guided just by reason. As heard in graduate Anna's (above) statement, Waldorf arts experiences carefully positioned her and other students in a manner that encouraged them to consider the dissimilar other–the other side. When graduate Layla was asked to state a bottom line description of the outcomes of her Waldorf arts experience she said, "Creating a balance in your life" (personal communication, July 29, 2005).

Comments about balancing what the participants referred to as academics and the arts (developing academic skills and expressive skills) were included in participating graduates' descriptions about Waldorf arts experiences. Graduate Vincent spoke about escape from reason or the rational. He said:

> Many complained about having to go to EurYTHmeeeee!, especially after 3rd grade or so, but I liked it through all the grades: the arts provided a nice break from more focused intellectual work. The water color exercises, and eurythmy, and knitting all created a kind of *no-time* [italics added] where the mind could disappear into the essence of the moving, or the crafting of the movement of liquid over paper—melding with the material or the space itself. Put another way: encouraged or allowed to be 'spaced out', but in connection with particular activities…Eurythmy continued to be a time for my mind to

> 'space out' a bit, which felt like a nice break from other types of class work (personal communication, May 30, 2005).

Vincent's reflections on the value aesthetic breaks where the mind could disappear into arts experience, should remind educators how the arts balance the students' day and their being. And in doing so arts curriculum components become motivational tools to more successfully and energetically move through the school day. Graduate Emily likewise metaphorically described Waldorf art making as a revitalizing, peaceful nap.

Graduate Vincent described a heightened meaning making through Waldorf's holistic approach to learning with dualities of rational and aesthetic. He said:

> Perhaps the intentional addressing of rational/aesthetic aspects in each subject has something to do with one of the chief benefits I feel came to me from Waldorf Education: the ability, perhaps even the impulse to understand specific subject-matter within an idiosyncratic context that tends to draw analog parallels or develop mutually reinforcing metaphorical links that heighten one's emotional connection with the specific—and therefore one's ability to comprehend, or at least take in a real way, the meaning of specific things (personal communication, July 11, 2005).

Waldorf Education philosophies have embraced the concept of developing potentiality (the possible whole) of each student through learning activities purposely designed with multisensory and multiple intelligence (sense and reason) juxtapositions. Such holistic educational approaches reminded me that the real of anything is more accessible by seeing and perceiving the whole of anything.

Descriptions of Emotional Intelligence Curriculum

Some of the participants' descriptions of arts experiences included threads of emotional intelligence objectives. Thus, I was reminded that the arts are "containers for, molders of feeling" (Dissanayake, 1992, p. 46). It was apparent from seven of the participants' reflections that their teachers viewed the arts as containers for feelings and their Waldorf Education recognized the emotive property of the arts as a tool for students to cope

with and discover feelings about self. Graduate Anna said that art is "a medium through which people can become more in touch with their subconscious feelings and thoughts" (personal communication, July 7, 2005). Graduate Aniquiel provided an example of coping with emotions through art making. She said:

> Another aspect of early art [at the Waldorf lower school] that I can now appreciate is that the children are encouraged to vent their frustrations through art rather than violence. I remember many times I was angry at another child and a teacher put me alone in a room and asked me to draw my feelings…it [art] actually served a purpose and allowed me to express my frustrations as well as communicate. Sometimes I was so mad that I just scribbled a lot, other times I tried to draw an action, game, or object that I wanted (personal communication, June 17, 2005).

In graduate Emily's reflections on Waldorf arts experiences, she concurred, "Art is a means of figuring out your emotions as well, and coping with them" (personal communication, June 1, 2005).

Viewing that the arts as molders of feelings, some of the participants' Waldorf teachers' utilized art-infused curriculum to motivate and build confidence for students. Graduates in this study state that they gained confidence from the Waldorf hands-on and arts-infused pedagogy. Graduate Anna spoke about a safe environment for taking risks to explore and discover in the arts. She said:

> The feeling of safety that I experienced in my explorations in art at the Waldorf school was paramount. There were students in my class who had artistic skills, and there were those who had creative imaginations, some of us were lucky enough to have both. Yet, even those students who had very little either felt safe bringing their art into the world and what is more, they felt entitled to do so (personal communication, July 7, 2005).

Concurring, several other graduates' reflections revealed they felt safe and entitled to express emotive communications.

Graduate Arjelia was shy as a child, yet loved to sing and play instruments as long as she didn't have to perform alone. Her Waldorf teachers noticed her struggles with feeling inferior. She said, "class by class my teachers helped these feelings ease…I graduated feeling stronger and more capable than before" (personal communication, April 17, 2005). Graduate Aniquiel described how her Waldorf teachers could "see into the child's soul" through the arts experience–knowing the child through his/her art (personal communication, April 22, 2005). Narratives clearly showed that the Waldorf teachers utilized art products to assess students. Teachers modeled how art can be a type of biofeedback for one's thoughts and feelings. Graduate Paul noted how individual expression was afforded to all; he said, "A lot of attention was given to the individual student without making any of us feel inferior" (personal communication, March 24, 2005). Graduates' reflections seemed to point to the notion that they were free to feel within their Waldorf environments.

Becoming emotionally connected with a particular art form assisted some of the graduates in discovering identity. For example, graduate Arjelia said that variety of arts exploration allowed fellow students to find a confident place with the arts. And specifically for her, poetry was where Arjelia found her arts intelligence. She said, "When we began writing poetry I realized it was an art I could love and continue" (personal communication, April 17, 2005). I heard from the participants that Waldorf curriculum allowed art to be an emotive extension of self. As graduate Janna suggested:

> Everyone in my class could identify who painted each painting easily; we knew each other and our different styles well. Art…becomes an expression of ourselves. What we choose to do and how we do it, seem to be an intimate picture of ourselves. Through our art, we revealed who we were (personal communication, May 31, 2005).

Summary

From interpreting the graduates' descriptions of Waldorf arts experience, their Waldorf schools were environments where teachers were conscious of their potential artistry–viewing pedagogy as a form of art–while designing curricula that afforded everyday arts in the areas of visual and practical arts, music, drama, creative movement, literature/creative writing, and eurthymy. As discussed by the Waldorf participants of this study, the arts were both seamlessly integrated with other disciplines as well as offered in specialized classes such as knitting, gardening, woodworking, etc. Thus, arts were taught both for their own sake and as a means to facilitate learning other subjects. As reported by the participating graduates in this study, the arts allowed them to access causal relationships and connections among diverse content areas leading to deeper retention of information.

In Waldorf Education thinking in, with, and through the arts has been valued as a mode of knowing/learning that anyone can access. Graduates reported that K-12 main lesson blocks situate art as an integral part of everyday meaning making; thus, art was not discreet or subordinate activity in Waldorf curricula. The task of main lesson book art making required the Waldorf students to utilize their imagination in order to create an individualized expression that reflectively assesses what gains they have made from a lesson. These works of art demonstrated the students' transferred and transmediated meaning making– their internalized summaries of knowledge.

Graduates in this study credited much of the success of the main lesson pedagogical approach to their artist teachers' expertise in intricate blackboard drawings and dramatic storytelling. Clearly some of their Waldorf teachers teaching strategies engaged the graduates in pictorial thinking and emotional connections/associations except for Patrick who

struggled given his lack of early educational input on drawing. Participating graduates reported their eagerness to learn with such creative experiential opportunities except for graduate Patrick who detested most drawing startegies.

Garnered from the participants' descriptions, the main lesson book activity was only one of many hands-on learning approaches in the Waldorf classroom. In some cases and as noted, such experiential learning developed will intelligence through an inner drive and dialog–the creative problem solving process. Graduates described the activity of struggle as an awakening of confidence and faith building in order to individually see an art-based dilemma through to fruition.

Graduates in this study noted Waldorf arts experiences as opportunities to explore one's whole being. Three graduates were adamant about the importance of not drawing lines between play and learning during children's early developmental stages (Rudolf Steiner's willing/doing and feeling stages). They described margin-lands where children can escape and their appreciation for fantasy activity. Graduates also described moments of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975; 1990) were activities utilizing imagination brought them to heightened sense experiences. Such arts experiences were intended for a harmonization of the polarities of sense and reason (see *Chapter Two* on the aesthetic theories of Friedrich Schiller). Graduates' descriptions of arts experience included concepts of finding balance between dualities and careful consideration of the other side.

As previously stated, the participating graduates seemed free to openly feel within their Waldorf schools. Some graduates provided specific examples of the manner in which they could explore their emotional intelligence and even cope with difficult emotions through arts-based activity. These participating graduates seemed to recognize their Waldorf

teachers' intentions to utilize student art making as a means for safe wondering, taking risks, and copying with self and identity.

Waldorf Graduates' Key Moments in Arts Experience

During Phase II of the interview process, graduates were asked to consider key moments from their Waldorf arts experiences–events that stood out in their minds. These key arts events could be the graduates' recalled turning point epiphanies, crystallizing moments, or paralyzing experiences within their past Waldorf schooling. The participating graduates were also asked follow-up questions regarding why they think they could recalled such key moments in art experience and why they valued them as significant. Thus, Phase II of the interview process best answered the research sub questions:

(1) *Within the framework of the Waldorf graduates' schooled experience, what were their art experience epiphanies?*

(2) *What meanings do Waldorf graduates attribute to their epiphanies?*

Phase II intended to assist the graduates in focusing on details and particulars from their broader perspective of Waldorf arts experience as stated in Phase I interviews. In turn, this focus allowed the graduates to begin to narrow towards their personal meanings gleaned from Waldorf arts experiences (Phase III). The following themes have emerged from Phase II, the graduates' key moments in Waldorf arts experience:

1) *Key Moments with Seamless Integration of the Art*
2) *Key Moments with Teachers as Artists*
3) *Key Moments with Hands-on Learning*
4) *Key Moments with Play and Imagination*
5) *Key Moments with Balancing the Whole Being*
6) *Key Moments with Emotional Intelligence Curriculum*

Key Moments with Seamless Integration of the Art

During the interview process, all graduates cited examples of arts-infusion with other disciplines. As previously stated, some graduates specifically spoke about how such integrated curriculum provides a worldview of connectivity. Graduate Arjelia recalled "most clearly, a large poster mapping of the circles of hell in Dante's *Inferno*" (personal communication, June 2, 2005), a project that stood out in her mind. She said, "I spent one long night in the art studio with paints, pencils, and pastels creating this [illustration]" (personal communication, June 2, 2005). In summarizing this memorable high school arts experience Arjelia said, "This experience crystallized my thinking, both about Dante and my own way of artistic working. The project gave me concrete [art media] practice as well as larger insights into ways of connecting art and language" (personal communication, June 2, 2005). Thus, the art integration described here by Arjelia afforded access to learning inherent to the visual arts as well as objectives and connections beyond the visual arts. Confirmed by Arjelia's interview conversations, her pictorial map of Dante's hell remained a mnemonic imprint in her mind–memorable meaning making.

Although the participating Waldorf graduates were invited to share both crystallizing and paralyzing arts experiences, these significant moments were overwhelmingly positive. Many graduates shared key events related to their annual class theatrical play that had been integrated with their yearlong classroom studies. Some graduates spoke to how the entire class of students were involved with all aspects of the show and valued seeing all their collaborative work come together. For example, Graduate Aniquiel shared recollections about her 8th grade class play *Cymbeline* by William Shakespeare:

> This was a year long project, including researching costume patterns, sewing them by hand, memorizing the lines, learning to act on stage, designing,

> building and painting the set, doing makeup effects and plaster casts for the severed-head scene, and learning the music to be preformed. We [the students] also choreographed the battle scene. We made our own swords and roman sandals…It was great! We even did our own lighting…When I talk to my 8th grade friends, we still brag about it…I think we still have our scripts…Now I play with the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA), a medieval re-creation society, in which I have earned awards for costuming. I can sew almost any costume you can draw me, without a pattern. *It was fun, and involved so much work in so many different areas* [italics added]. I was very proud, as were we all, that it was such a success (personal communication, June 17, 2005).

Aniquiel's gains from her crystallizing experience were skills transferable into her current work in theater. As Aniquiel clearly stated, this experiential curriculum was motivating while interrelating both the arts and disciplines outside the arts.

As previously inferred in graduates' excerpts, motivation for learning was enhanced when curriculum was offered through arts integration and multiple intelligent ways. Graduate Michelle recalled a crystallizing experience from her Waldorf upper school (that occurred over twenty years ago!). She said:

> The drama in geometry [class] was a kick–completely unexpected. We did a skit of the dot and the line. It broke up the year nicely and gave the topic more life…It made the geometry class much more tangible, hands-on…It was like being inside the basic components of geometry, sort of like the *Magic School Bus*…It was the last time that math made sense to me! Forget trig and calculus. It made the learning experience more dynamic. And it was fun to work on a skit in math (personal communication, April 13, 2005).

Transferring into Waldorf Education from K-8 public schools, Michelle, who described herself as very artsy during her middle school years, was surprised with finding the arts included in her Waldorf math class. The arts-based teaching strategy connected math in a manner that made sense to her!

Key Moment with Teachers as Artists

As previously mentioned, graduate Michelle reported that her Waldorf teacher was an exceptional storyteller artist. Michelle shared another crystallizing moment that incorporated creatively designed teaching activities inclusive of "several different artistic media…layering literature, poetry, drama, and music" (personal communication, April 13, 2005). She shared:

> The best example [of a key arts event] would be the Parzival main lesson block during the senior year. The course was taught as a story-telling experience. The teacher was very gifted dramatically and told the story from memory. The story unfolded over the full 3 weeks, with discussion and response papers [that were frequently in the form of poetry]. The capstone was a trip to the Met to see Wagner's opera…it was a treat to listen to the story being told to us by a true teller of stories–especially as seniors (personal communication, April 13, 2005).

Other participating graduates described the esteem they held for their Waldorf teachers' creativity and motivational strategies. The graduates' Waldorf teachers were remembered by name and remain valued as artists, performers, and creative thinkers.

Graduate Janna also shared a wonderful example of Waldorf teacher as artist/actor:

> I loved going to school because each day was a new adventure. My strongest memory of those early years was learning math. My teacher introduced us to four people that represented four math signs– for example, there was Prince Plus, who was very fat because he was always eating (adding) more, and Doctor Divide. Unknown to us, our teacher was the one dressing up and being these characters for us. We caught on towards the end, but we were never sure (personal communication, May 31, 2005).

In reflecting on the graduates comments about their teachers, I am reminded that educator as artists take students on imaginative journeys and make learning adventurous fun. Learning then becomes experiential.

Key Moments with Hands-on Learning

Hands-on learning and thinking through artful kinesthetic, physical modalities allowed "a point of access" (Michelle, personal communication, April 13, 2005) for some

graduates that may have been more difficult to achieve through only verbal/ language intelligence strategies that are predominant in mainstream schools. Graduate Aniquiel entered her Waldorf early childhood school as an ESL (English as a second language) student. Hands-on expression was critical to her success in communicating and making intellectual connections. Aniquiel shared an epiphany:

> One day that will always be with me was when the teacher was explaining about a bird's nest that we had found (in preschool, I think). When I understood that birds lived in the nest, I had trouble asking for confirmation to this suspicion, so I spent recess making a model of a bird out of pine needles and mud. When I asked the teacher if this sort of creature lived in a nest, she placed the model bird on the nature table in the nest, and it stayed there all year. I was proud, and I never forgot that 'bird' in English is 'oiseau' in French (personal communication, May 4, 2005).

With access to a different symbol system Aniquiel was successful at learning and being able to communicate what she had learned.

Art, as hands-on meaning making, was utilized in the participating graduates' Waldorf Education in order for students to make experiential connections. As previously stated, graduate Lukas defined art's role within Waldorf lower schools as " an explanation of phenomena and of humanity" (personal communication, April 26, 2005). It seemed as if art within the Waldorf Education philosophies was a vehicle for sustaining a sense of wonder– to discover world phenomena. Lukas spoke about a significant moment of discovery:

> One [moment] that I remember vividly was when I was in kindergarten and I was drawing a sill life of a picnic and I just put blue at the very top of the page, because the sky was up and earth was down. My teacher (very kindly) instructed me to fill all the air with blue. At that moment, I think was the first time I realized that the atmosphere was around us. I remember it because it was an epiphany moment. The fact that the sky extended to earth slapped me in the face (personal communication, April 26, 2005).

When I asked Lukas if he thought his teacher was conscious of the way art making and posing questions during art making could push students' awareness beyond just the doing or

action of drawing, Lukas replied, "Absolutely…everything they [Waldorf teachers] do is deliberate" (personal communication, April 26, 2005). As Lukas noted, visual observations are vehicles for the "phenomenal instructing the philosophical" (personal communication, April 26, 2005). Within his key moment, art imparted Lukas a cognitive discovery. His kindergarten arts-based discovery was significant enough to be recalled many years later as an adult.

Continual art making opportunities with self-directed and focused decision making and creating problem solving "establishes aesthetic confidence" (Mitchell & Livingston, 1999, p. 7). Many of the graduates' descriptions of crystallizing experiences included statements about gaining pride and satisfaction of self through art processes. For example, Havela shared:

> I remember working on the cover of one of our main lesson books and I was drawing the sword in the stone from King Arthur and it was due the next day I was working all through the night and I remember when I finished it, stood back to look at it, and I couldn't believe that I just drawn it. It looked amazing that I couldn't comprehend that it had come from me. I remember it because it just seemed so powerful and I was literally awestruck. I don't know, I have a couple pieces that I look back and can't believe that I actually drew them (personal communication, June 11, 2005).

Graduate Janna spoke about a crystallizing moment where she experienced purposeful, self-directed "will-developed intelligence" during art making (Mitchell & Livingston, 1999, p. 7). She said:

> I think the copper bowl I made in 11th grade is still probably my favorite art piece. There wasn't anything particularly original about it; we were learning how to form a bowl out of a piece of metal. However, metal working was completely new to me. Although I had been making art since I was little, metal was a completely different medium. It took different skills and different perception of art: it required us to be patient and methodical as we guided the metal into the shape we wanted…I was fascinated with the beauty of its simplicity. It was nothing like most of what we view as art. I think this was the first time I actually felt that I excelled in art. I could see and guide the

> form in metal. *It was as if I was part of the metal and I could, without even trying, guide it into the shape I wanted* [italics added] (personal communication, September, 10, 2005).

An awaken *will* guided thinking. Janna's process of exploration through a sense of wonder, will-driven vision for what she wanted to happen with the metal, and perseverance through intuitive flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975; 1990), all readied her in becoming an active, self-determined citizen; Waldorf Education intended this for the graduates of this study.

Key Moments with Play and Imagination

Most of the graduates' descriptions about play and imagination referenced lower school arts experiences (appropriate to the Waldorf termed K-8th grade developmental stages of *willing* and *feeling*). Nevertheless, upper school crystallizing experiences utilizing imagination were also provided. Graduate Layla remarked about such a high school experience that spoke to her creative innovation and capability of seeing in new ways. She said:

> One project that stands out was when a visiting drawing teacher came…he would tell us mythological stories or play music and we were supposed to draw based on what we were hearing and how it made us feel or what we saw in our imagination…this was one of the first times that our art classes were not very specific to certain materials or instructions. I felt like my artwork was different from other students…There was no formula to this art; it was all about the artist. It was the first time that I felt like I could take full credit for what I created…Part of what made this period of art making so creative was the challenge of a new technique and process. I still see that in my work today, when I have the energy to tackle a completely new medium I find I am capable of making things I never expected I could (personal communication, June 15, 2005)

Pride, empowerment, and personal ownership of an idea can be heard in Layla's recollection. Layla's commented about capabilities transferred to her life after Waldorf Education; this supported Waldorf Education's philosophy of developing the *will* through opportunities with imagination and hands-on discovery.

Key Moments with Balancing the Whole Being

Waldorf educators have utilized eurythmy for the enhancement of a person's total development. Rudolf Steiner (1913-1924/1971) defined Eurythmy as "a kinesthetic form of art that spurs "definite mental images of the corresponding manifestations of speech and song" (p. 10). Steiner (1909/1965) wanted Eurythmy to integrate what he called the threefold nature of man–hands (physical/will), heart (emotional), head (cognitive). Graduates' reflections articulated equally both positive and negative experiences with eurythmy. The negative experiences seemed to emphasize the ineffective manner in which eurythmy was presented or taught by the teacher. One kinesthetically gifted graduate seemed resentful about the way eurythmy was utilized in place of other kinesthetic activities and sports for his particular school. (One should not assume this was a practice for all Waldorf schools). On the other hand, other graduates noted a great appreciation for how eurythmy allowed them to access grace–a side of their being beyond the typical academic mode.

Graduate Anna described a moment with eurythmy as her stand out Waldorf arts experience. She said:

> I think this type of experience [an aha moment] came in my latter high school years, when I began to understand the thinking behind the art form of eurythmy. This was an extended process, obviously, though I remember one day in particular when I watched a few of my classmates practicing for an assembly. I began to see the music. This is the intent, I believe, yet I hadn't really put the forms and the music together in a manner that made sense before this point (personal communication, July 5, 2005).

From a follow-up question asking how she relates to this event now, Anna responded, "I think I often try to observe ideas and phenomena more carefully–to fine the implicit meaning that is trying to be conveyed" (personal communication, July 5, 2005). In reflecting on the narratives provided during this study, Eurythmy among other Waldorf arts curriculum

seemed to strive to balance graduates–the development of fuller beings able to experience and perceive a greater breath and depth of phenomena.

Key Moments with Emotional Intelligence Curriculum

Art making was transformative for some of the graduates as they were personally and emotionally connected to the expressions. For example, graduate Janna shared a crystallizing experience where a Waldorf arts happening expanded the discovery of her identity. She reflected:

> I think the scariest project I ever had to do was a painting that was to depict something in motion. For some reason, I couldn't think of what I wanted to do. I had this need to be original and innovative, but at the same time I didn't think my painting skills were sufficient to even try to do the assignment. I ended up painting a picture of a woman on a swing hanging from an old oak tree. She is swinging out over the fields with the countryside disappearing behind her. I wanted to make the woman seem free, which was the opposite of how I felt at the time. The weeks I spent on the painting were frustrating to me.
>
> When I look back on it now, I realize that I was trying to paint what I wanted to be: free to be myself. The painting coincided with my own transformation into, and discovery of, who I am. I was throwing off the self-conscious binds of adolescence and becoming my adult self. Part of the transformation was reflected not only in the person I painted, but in the process of painting her. I had to release myself to paint and creative. I think I'm still in the process of letting myself be me, in art and in life, but that was the first time I became conscious of it (personal communication, September 10, 2005).

Janna's painting process provided reflection and connection with her emotional state or place. The art process was the meaning making tool for sorting her feelings. And ultimately the art product was the evidence and communication of her emotional state and transformation of self.

Within Phase II of the interview process graduates were not only asked about key arts experience that stood out during their Waldorf reflections (crystallizing or paralyzing arts experience), but they were also asked to comment on any particular work of art that remained

notable and significant. Graduate Lukas described a cooperative art project as significant in his memory. The project was noteworthy in that the art making afforded emotive connection, discovery of identity, as well as communication self. Lukas reflected:

> We made our teacher a batik silk quilt as a goodbye present after our graduation. Not only was it beautiful, but each panel was so finely done. I was shocked that we could make something that looked really quite masterful. I remember it because while we all thought of and created our [quilt] panels independently, they almost universally centered on themes of journeying, or of leaving home. But they also *showed our personalities* [italics added]. For example, my panel was a view of a shoreline at sunrise (hearkening back to the kindergarten experience) [see *Key Moment with Seamless Integration of the Art*] with the most attention paid to the sea (carrying me away from what was solid and known) and the sky/rising sun (opened possibilities)…As another example, the boy in our class who was so adept at science and math drew a rather boring room. Just four walls, unadorned, with a table and chair but the scene outside the single window in the room was a fantastic geometric reality of intersecting lines and tangents (personal communication, April 26, 2005)

This arts activity was initiated by a class of K-8 Waldorf graduates as a means to emotively summarize their relationship with their class teacher, the educator who taught and journeyed with them throughout 8 years of grade school. Several K-8 graduates have expressed how this transition to high school was emotionally charged and referred to the time period as a coming of age. Lukas and his classmates channeled this poignant and reflective time period into art expression.

Summary

During Phase II, class plays were common memorable events as graduates addressed the connectedness between subjects, tasks, and people's collaborations. Most crystallizing moments included statements about being emotionally charged during the learning activity such as when Michelle dramatically acted out geometry in her high school Waldorf math

class. As in Phase I, graduates credited their Waldorf teachers as artists who designed such activities that stand out in their memory.

Some epiphanies consisted of hands-on arts events that confirmed a student's hypothesis or new discovery. For example, graduate Aniquiel confirmed her hypothesis that birds can live in nests as well as discovers the English word *bird* through her handmade model of a bird when she could not communicate by any other means. Another example, Lukas had a revelation during painting where he discovered that the atmosphere existed all around him. For these epiphanies, art existed as a meaning making device.

Some graduates described their key moments as activity in the arts where they were lost in fully being (flow) and at the conclusion of the arts activity they were shocked at the marvelous outcome. Graduates' reflections of significant moments cited pride and personal satisfaction associated with memorable Waldorf arts experiences. Revelations of empowerment through will-developed intelligence experience was heard in some graduates' key moments such as when Layla said, "There was no formula to this art…I find I am capable of making things I never expected I could" (personal communication, June 15, 2005). Shared key moments focused primarily on significant happenings or epiphanies during the process of art making. For example, it was the process of problem solving in art that afforded graduate Janna to garner revelations about her emotional state and restricted identity during adolescence (see *Key Moments with Emotional Intelligence Curriculum*).

Waldorf Graduates' Attribution of Meanings to Arts Experience

All previous interview excerpts from Phase I and Phase II contained some meaning making as Waldorf graduates reflected, described, and valued past arts experience. For example, when graduates described Waldorf arts experiences and key moments some

included value statements–what the experience meant to them. Nevertheless, Phase III of the interview process sought to ascertain the significant meanings that graduates' attributed to their arts experiences. Questions during this phase contributed to the discovery of Waldorf arts curriculum outcomes, transfer of skills, and any philosophical impact upon the graduates' post-graduation ways. Phase III best answered the research question: *What meanings do Waldorf graduates attribute to their lived Waldorf school art experience?* The following themes emerged from the graduates' Phase III attribution of meanings:

1) *Meanings Attributed to Seamless Integration of the Arts:*
   Sense of Wonder about the Interconnected World
   Multiple Ways of Knowing
2) *Meanings Attributed to Teacher as Artists*
3) *Meanings Attributed to Hands-on Learning:*
   Becoming Creative Problem Solvers
   Will-developed Intelligence
   Appreciation of Aesthetic Experience
   The Optimal Experience of Flow
4) *Meanings Attributed to Play and Imagination:*
5) *Meanings Attributed to Balancing the Whole Being*
6) *Meanings Attributed to Emotional Intelligence Curriculum*
7) *Meanings Attributed to the Role of Arts in K-12 Schools*

Meanings Attributed to Seamless Arts Integration

Sense of Wonder about the Interconnected World.

Participating graduates in this study acknowledged that Waldorf arts experience spurred their "interests in many things", "well-roundedness and capability in a variety of contexts" (Vincent, personal communication, July 8, 2005), "sense of wonder" (Lukas, personal communication, June 15, 2005), and "appreciation of many cultures and ideas" (Layla, personal communication, June 15, 2005). Graduate Janna shared:

> I think I am very different from other people I meet who have not experienced Waldorf Education I don't think I realized how different until this last year at law school, where I became friends with people just because they sat next to me in school due to assigned seating (not from any real choice). I think I have

> very different values–I love art and learning, whereas most others will do the bare minimum required. I want to learn everything that I can, but most others just want a degree. When I went Europe…I was eager to see the museums, the architecture, the Shakespearean plays (we were near Stratford), and the cathedrals. Nobody else was interested–even though they claim they like art. They would just prefer to go shopping. I don't think an enthusiasm for art and learning is isolated to Waldorf students, although every Waldorf student I have ever met has had it (personal communication, September 10, 2005).

Graduate Havela also remarked about her continuous quest to perceive and experience; she said, "We [Waldorf students] were immersed in so many different things that we were able to really start to develop our likes and dislikes…I know that I am always wanting to learn" (personal communication, June 11, 2005)

Graduate Arjelia hypothesized that "the integration of arts in academic work would probably allow a broad way of thinking and finding connections between disciplines and subjects" (personal communication, June 2, 2005). Graduate Layla contributed her current interest in various disciplines and ability to make connections among different subjects to her Waldorf schooling. She said:

> I think my choice of a career has a lot to do with my [Waldorf] education. In college I found it very difficult to focus on just one major when there were so many interesting courses to take. Especially for an education in art where anything can become influential to your work. When I first started working with art conservators I knew that it was a perfect career for me to pursue, rather than focusing and specializing in one thing like most careers I would be required to expand my interests and capabilities. Other careers that I considered for a while included medical illustration and art therapy, clearly it is important to me to have different disciplines in my daily life.
>
> The art experiences I had throughout my Waldorf Education and home life gave me confidence in my college art courses. I feel quite comfortable exploring new media and incorporating into my daily life in a very casual way. I, in fact, was shocked at how seriously some of these 'artists' had to take themselves, for me this was all very natural. I felt the same way when I decided to study art conservation, the combination of art, science, and history seemed very logical to me, even though the chemistry department was surprised to learn that I was an art student, and the art department gawked at

> seeing that I had 25 units of chemistry and warned that I would go on academic probation if I took more classes that did not apply to my major… Art should not be limited to a particular classroom or day of the week. It can be incorporated in other studies and parts of your life just as easily (personal communication, June 15, 2005).

Both graduates Janna and Layla recognized their self-driven needs and take advantage of possibilities, journeys, and discoveries. They insisted that their investigations in the world include the arts even when their art attitude ran counter with their post-Waldorf communities.

As previously discussed in *Chapter Two*, Waldorf teachers have intended to predisposition these students/graduates to an intrinsic sense or drive towards potentiality and possibility. Graduate Lukas's reflection about Waldorf arts curriculum corresponded to humanistic education philosophies with goals toward instilling broad holistic thinking and opportunity. Lukas said:

> [Art] infuses things with humanity. For example, math becomes much more a creation of man (or a discovery, depending on your view—in any case, linked directly to humans) and less a sort of disconnected concept pulled from the ether, when you can see it's relation to other human creations like music or perspective painting. Basically it, [art], makes concern for humanity, or at least acknowledgement of causal relationships foremost, and not the other way around. If you look at the actions of many from 'traditional' educations, (Enron, Halliburton, etc.) this understanding of the world seems to be absent. Also, it, [art], makes for a fuller education, a broader education and ultimately a broader base of personality. I find other people tend to be highly specialized and certainly experts in their fields, but lack the ability to understand other fields in more than a superficial way (personal communication, June 15, 2005).

Graduate Lukas's comment (above) demonstrated the impact of Rudolf Steiner's goals of expanding moral intelligence through arts-fused curriculum components. Steiner once said (as cited in Stockmeyer), "One needs to think about the world in such a way that one's thinking gradually becomes imbued with a sensitive feeling for the world" (1991, p. i).

Lukas recognized that within Waldorf curriculum art makes concern for humanity so as to assist in developing a sensitivity of what needs to be done in the world.

Similarly, graduate Janna has opposed "isolating subjects into math, science, English, etc." (personal communication, September 10, 2005). For in this specialization, she said, "we lose complexity and the interrelationships between subjects". Janna agreed with the above graduates' statements:

> I think art should be incorporated as fully in education as it has in Waldorf…Waldorf education emphasizes viewing each subject through a myriad of experiences. Art allows us to bring creativity to everything we learn, which can enhance our understanding…Art allows us to express ourselves and use all parts of our minds, not just the 'intellectual' part that is so highly valued in our society. It integrates *all* [italics added] parts of ourselves into learning and exploring the world (personal communication, September 10, 2005).

Janna provided strong evidence for why students should experience a humanistic education inclusive of the arts when she said that she had the opportunity to "view each subject through a myriad of experiences" and integrated "all parts of [herself] into learning and exploring the world" (personal communication, September 10, 2005). She stated that she now has the opportunity to fully live and to be her potential whole.

Although similarities of Waldorf arts integration could be drawn to other non-Waldorf schools, the vision of art as a valuable human creative product seamlessly interconnected within our world, influenced participating graduates. For example, graduate Lukas said:

> It [Waldorf Education] means a lot to me especially the way in which they included literature to such a great degree in their definition of "art". Reading literature not only as a chronicle but as a *creative product of man* [italics added] really helped me to understand Foucault, poststructuralism and historical relativism, key concepts in higher level history and anthropology (and crucial to my Thesis) (personal communication, June 15, 2005).

Graduate Layla likewise commented about a humanness that was spurred by arts integration pedagogy. She said, "Since everything seems so closely related to me I make ties and relationships between different subjects very easily and that has proved invaluable" (personal communication, June 15, 2005).

Multiple Ways of Knowing.

As previously noted, opportunities to think in, with, and through the arts provided some graduates greater access to learning and knowing. For some of the graduates the arts-infused pedagogy assisted them to actualize what was in their head–validating how they predominately problem solve or make connections. Graduate Layla's learning style was validated in Waldorf Education; she shared, "I could have easily been one of the students that fell through the cracks in a system without such a focus on the arts" (personal communication, June 15, 2005). As reported by some graduates, their parents purposefully enrolled them in Waldorf schools as a means to provide arts-friendly, multiple modality education opportunities. Although graduate Michelle was predisposition to the arts by her interests and exposure to a variety of public school arts media, she wished the arts had been even more prevalent during high school years in Waldorf. However, Michelle said, "I probably have a deeper feel for multiple ways of knowing or expressing than I would have had without attending a Waldorf school" (personal communication, April 19, 2005).

The graduates who attributed meaning to the Waldorf methods of learning made comments about being afforded opportunities for pictorial thinking. Aniquiel, a K-8 Waldorf graduate, joked that she had to pay for many of her public high school textbooks "because of all the doodling in the margins" (personal communication, June 17, 2005). From her Waldorf arts experience, Aniquiel's learning style evolved into her present day pictorial

thinking where, as she said, “details are usually lost if I cannot picture them” (personal communication, June 17, 2005). Graduate Maryanne likewise noted that main lesson assignments not only afforded her opportunities to draw pictures related to what she was studying, but she also learned how to create “pictures in [her] head that don’t go away, like simple words might” (personal communication, April 15, 2005). Maryanne shared how this skill of pictorial thinking plays out in life: “I think that the ability to form pictures in my mind helps primarily with memory. It is easier to remember something if it is stored as a picture in my mind” (personal communication, April 15, 2005). Graduate Emily, currently a college student, currently utilizes these same skills gained from main lesson blocks; she revealed, “I study by drawing and rewriting concepts I’m learning, this helps me to organize and imagine them” (personal communication, June 1, 2005).

Graduate Layla, also a current college student, has used cognitive skills gained from main lesson activities during her K-10 Waldorf Education; she commented:

> For me the process of transferring information from the board into my main lesson book was very meaningful. In fact I still use a version of it today, and it may be even more important to me now that I can decide what goes in my book. For chemistry I find it very helpful to rewrite my notes from class when I get home and start studying, it gives me a chance to think through the lecture and often reorganize it in a better way.
>
> I also have beautiful books I made when studying anatomy for art in college, I included drawings and studies and notes and lots of copies I made from other artists that demonstrated in my eyes what we were studying in class. These are casual main lesson books and still valuable to me especially since at that point I was learning general anatomy for artists but using it very specifically for my interests, there were no textbooks that could sum that up for me. The practice of combining my lectures with my personal research and studies and drawings in one book was an essential step to the process of the retaining information beyond the end of the course (personal communication, June 15, 2005).

Layla noted how main lesson books contained her "whole thinking process" (personal communication, June 15, 2005). Within the books, she made learning connections. Today, she maintains a goal of retaining knowledge through her current practices with learning journals much like her past Waldorf main lesson books. Layla has taken upon herself to infuse past Waldorf arts experiences into her current life.

Recent graduates participating in this study expressed disappointment for how higher education existed beyond Waldorf Education. Arjelia, a current college student, said:

> Ideally, I would like my college education to integrate arts with academic subjects, rather than completely separating the two realms. Doing arts projects that complimented academic work or something incorporating arts and academics, along the lines of Main Lesson Books, would give me an extra way of understanding academic work and a chance to include the arts in my education (personal communication, April 29, 2005).

Arts-infused curriculum was a vehicle for additional meaning making opportunity or as Arjelia said, "an extra way of understanding" (personal communication, April 29, 2005). It would seem obvious for education institutions to offer students the arts as another way of comprehending and in doing and to grant access to greater gains in student achievement.

Art has played multiple roles within Waldorf Education. In Waldorf Education art has been expressive, motivational, and spiritual in itself as well as a vehicle for internalizing information from other disciplines. Graduate Aniquiel discovered how to integrate multifaceted roles of art into her post-graduation life. She shared:

> I feel that my art experiences in Waldorf weren't emphasized until I learned to integrate art into my life as a useful tool, a fun hobby, and of course for visual pleasure. I find that I use art as a tool more than anything else, to aid my memory and create visual links to information that I am given (personal communication, June 23, 2005).

Graduate Janna concurred with Aniquiel's idea about the multifaceted role of arts. She said, "Art allows us to bring creativity to everything we learn, which can enhance our

understanding….It can be a part of our education through its own intrinsic value" (personal communication, October 22, 2005). Other Waldorf graduates participating in this study recognized that "art has the unique quality of being simultaneously communicative and significant both in itself and beyond itself" (Walling, 2006, pp. 18-19).

Meanings Attributed to Teachers as Artists

When the graduates were speaking about the notion of teachers as artists and as advocates of art-infused curriculum, they immensely praised the Waldorf teachers' abilities as illustrators and storytellers of myths, legends, history, literature, and so forth. For graduate Michelle, her Waldorf teacher's storytelling was aesthetic experience that afforded her a deep state of intrinsic enjoyment and involvement with heightened senses. She shared, "I loved being able to close my eyes and just take it all in" (personal communication, April 13, 2005). Michelle has come to appreciate the elements of storytelling as a dramatic art form such as "pace, time, repetition, and description" (personal communication, April 19, 2005) and to this day she claimed these elements are utilized in her own Sunday school teaching. In a sense, Michelle said that she imparts to her students the aesthetic experience she once received from her Waldorf teacher.

Key to the success of the arts-infused curriculum established in Waldorf schools has been the arts training and accreditation of Waldorf teachers. The concepts of *art as everyday* and *art in everyone* hinged on the teachers' artistic and creative abilities to demonstrate art in such philosophical ways. As confirmed in brain research, when spatial intelligence isn't reinforced and stimulated at early ages, then young students' aesthetic code and arts intelligence was limited later (Gardner, 1983; Jensen, 2001). Graduate Havela commented on the value of both teachers and parents providing her early adventures in art. She said:

> I think that much of my art interest is attributed to the Waldorf school because it was such a hug part of everything we did everyday. However, I also come from a very artistic family so I am sure a large part is genetic or just having it encouraged by my parents.
> I love the arts. It runs in my family very strong. I am so happy that I was able to grow up in such a creative environment that could nurture that love. I don't know if I would be as artistic today if I hadn't had so much exposure as a child. I think I would be artistic, but maybe not as artistic. I loved that art was involved in every class and almost everything we did. I actually think I learned more about art in [Waldorf] elementary school and middle school than I did in my three years of public school art classes (personal communication, June 11, 2005).

Conversely, 9th-12th grade Waldorf graduate Patrick "hadn't drawn a thing since [he] was three" and "was forced for a few months in grades 7th or 8th to take piano and guitar lessons, but [he] hated it so much [his] mother eventually gave up" (personal communication, May 18, 2005). Thus, prior to his Waldorf high school Patrick had little access to arts. He shared his high school frustrations with Waldorf arts experience:

> I hated art class. I still draw stick figures and had no idea how to sculpt. I would draw in my main lesson books by gridding out or tracing things I was expected to put in the book. It took FOREVER.
>
> Everyone was better than me at art…I am certain that those who were Waldorf students since THE BEGINNING were the best artists in the class (personal communication, April 17, 2005).

Patrick's comments suggested to me that when teachers do not model the arts to students little neural development, interest, and confidence in the arts could develop in young students. Patrick was disadvantaged in his Waldorf setting by not having art access and artists as his teachers at an early age (before attending his Waldorf high school).

As a teacher myself, I recognized in the graduates reflections that their teachers' attitudes affected them as students. Participating graduates were asked to describe their perception of their respective Waldorf teachers' art visions, attitudes about art, and/or art beliefs within the Waldorf school environment. Graduates attributed interpretations and

meanings for what they thought were the Waldorf art philosophies. Some of the graduates' responses were as follows:

> • The attitude is that [art] is important and necessary part of developing the child's imagination and self; it helps the child grow in many ways and makes them a more able and interesting person. (Havela, personal communication, August 16, 2005)
>
> • I think the attitude is to create free-thinking human beings who are to make choices with their hearts as well as their minds. (Emily, personal communication, June 1, 2005)
>
> • Hand crafts are skills that anyone can pick up… crafts should be part of everyday life and allow personal expression in a more informal context as opposed to specific 'art venues', i.e. museums, concerts, theaters. (Michelle, personal communication, April 19, 2005)
>
> •Anyone can make art; maybe we are alive and conscious only when we act in an artful way. Art is not just paintings in frames, poems that have line-breaks and rhymes, or just those things that we make when we stop our everyday life and say to ourselves, 'Now I will make Art'. We breathe it into those things we do with love. (Vincent, personal communication, August 17, 2005)
>
> • The art activities at a Waldorf school are very much connected to the individuals' perceptions of the world as well as the development of imaginative forces that inspire creativity. (Anna, personal communication, July 7, 2005)
>
> • I think the [Waldorf] teachers saw our art as a type of 'window to the soul'…I think they were specially trained to diagnose child psychology through art! (Aniquiel, personal communication, June 23, 2005)
>
> • Waldorf philosophy is a form of subtle animistic/polytheistic Christianity–thus colors are not just the reflected vibrations of subatomic particles impinging on the eye–they are spiritual harmonics that entrain the soul. This kind of thinking suffuses the whole endeavor–art becomes a kind of prayer or meditation… (Manx, personal communication, April 4, 2005)
>
> • Art is part of the curriculum in Waldorf, so it has very specific purposes. It isn't considered an extra subject that can be eliminated, because it is part of developing and forming children. Teachers use art to understand each child and their difficulties and strengths; I guess it is called art therapy in the real world. (Janna, personal communication, September 10, 2005)

I gleaned a correlation between Rudolph Steiner's art philosophies with the graduates' interpretation of their Waldorf teachers' art visions. Learning in, with, and through the arts in Waldorf school was viewed as a means for (a) promotion of free-thinking citizens; (b) development of balanced (sense and reason) whole beings; (c) endorsement of aesthetic codes where art is everyday and for everyone; (d) continuation of creative, imaginative thinkers; and (e) assessment of each child's identity and emotional intelligence through the arts. From the participants' narrative, I viewed their Waldorf teachers as advocates for the arts as they made the arts necessary in their lives, in school curriculum, as well as within lives of others.

Meanings Attributed to Hands-on Learning

Becoming Creative Problem Solvers.

> The process of art making is very exciting to me; it's the problem solving aspect of it that I enjoy. You come up with some ideas but then the real challenge is putting it together, often your artwork changes significantly as you resolve the issues… Sometimes you have to give up some of your concept for the process and there is a challenge there that kept me working late at night (Layla, personal communication, April 13, 2005).

Above, graduate Layla articulated one experience in thinking through the arts where she had to synthesize and edit, thinking in higher orders of the cognitive domain (Bloom, 1965). Similarly, graduate Janna's reflected on her an understanding of the depth of cognitive skills within the act of art problem solving:

> Art was a completely different challenge that involved a greater part of me. With art, there is no formula–no right or wrong answer, nor any 'right' way…I had to work so much harder to bring my visions to reality, than I ever had to work to learn math or write well (personal communication, May 31, 2005).

Janna recognized the need for self-initiated will and depth of thinking to resolve arts' open-ended problems. Graduate Maryanne explained an advantage gain through her experiences

problem solving in the arts; she said, "I am not afraid to 'think outside the box'. When doing group projects I am often the one to bring analysis a step further" (personal communication, April 15, 2005).

In reflection of what their arts experiences mean to them, some graduates marveled at their abilities to uniquely problem solve during their past Waldorf experiences as well as in their current lives. Besides being "able to paint birthday cards for friends, knit socks, sing harmonies to songs" post-graduation, Aniquiel said:

> I love to build things for myself: bookcases, tables, curtains, etc…. I am easily drawn into a project, and able to pick up on inefficiencies and structural/ functional inadequacies quickly and accurately. A friend of mine just graduated tech design school, and was in the habit of calling me when he was too tired to think straight about a project. He'd describe it over the phone, and I'd be able to visualize the issue and make suggestions. In this way we'd feed off each other's ideas, and could usually solve the problem quickly (personal communication, June 17, 2005).

Other graduates gave examples of creating products from a blank slate (from their mind's eye) such as graduate Jonathan who currently creates websites. He noted the importance of this creative outlet: "I guess it's important to me because you create something from a blank sheet that people then find attractive and compliment on, it makes you feel like you made something meaningful" (personal communication, June 1, 2005).

Will-developed Intelligence.

Participating graduates commented on their lack of fear to take risks and their satisfaction with the struggle of a problem; some seemed to credit this no fear attitude to the wealth of arts exposure affording them problem solving creativity and flexibility. For example, graduate Maryanne said, "…after being given so many diverse and often challenging tasks, one does not think in terms of 'I can't do it', but rather 'what is the best

way to go about this new interesting problem?'" (personal communication, June 15, 2005). She explained further in this scenario:

> I had an au pair from Germany when I was 10, and she would always say that only a Waldorf student would be able to do it, when something around the house would break and I would fix it. I had no idea what she was talking about at the time, but now I think that it is kind of true. If something breaks like a toaster or bookshelf, I will work at it until it is fixed. I am not afraid to just do it, whereas others might toss the object and get a new one or have someone else look at it (personal communication, June 15, 2005).

Graduate Aniquiel suggested that Waldorf graduates have a particular hands-on attitude similar to Maryanne's above comments about being a critical thinker. Aniquiel said:

> All the Waldorf kids I know tend to take a hands-on approach to life. We are not content to only hear about the great deeds and adventures of others, but want to experience life to its fullest…I know I have the tools to succeed in anything I put my mind to. I am confident in my walk through life that no wall is too tall, no ocean to great, no conundrum too complicated (personal communication, July 17, 2005).

As previously noted practical arts and hands-on arts pedagogy in Waldorf Education was designed to further a "will-developed intelligence" (Mitchell & Livingston, 1999, p. 7). In such curriculum activities there exists the art maker's awareness as well as self-control of his/her expanding boundaries, such as when graduate Janna was forming her copper bowl (see previous *Key Moments in Hands-on Learning*).

Appreciation of Aesthetic Experience.

A common comment among the graduates regarded their appreciation for exposure to diverse arts media. Some graduates seemed to specifically credit the depth and types of the arts exposure in their Waldorf schools as influential on their current aesthetic code. For example, graduate Layla stated that the most significant gain from her past Waldorf arts experiences was her "chance to explore so many different art and craft forms"; further, she

said, “It raised my awareness and appreciation of things around me, whether it was man made or nature made” (personal communication, July 29, 2005). As stated in previous participants’ excerpts, others pointed out the possible impact of Waldorf Education upon their sense of aesthetic awareness, appreciation of the handmade, aptitude of creative expression and imagination, capacity for details or greater observational ability, and need for the arts or creative outlets in their lives. Graduate Aniquiel said:

> The art theory and basic techniques I learned in Waldorf have impacted every aspect of my life. *I see things immediately that others don’t see at all* [italics added]. I see patterns and pictures in all manner of objects and it is *very easy for me to imagine things different from what they are* [italics added]. As a child, I loved all types of art, anything that allowed me to express myself without words and I still do (personal communication, April 4, 2005).

Aniquiel confirmed that her past hands-on arts experience impacts how she now sees the world.

Graduate Maryanne has valued her aesthetic being. She said, “I feel lucky to be able to express myself using art. And appreciate the beauty found in everyday simple things, and the artistic products of other’s” (personal communication, April 15, 2005). She expressed of that concept of simple beauty:

> I ride my bike to school everyday and I am just amazed that everyday the trees and flowers are different. I love watching the flowers turn into young leaf buds on the trees. I think that a part of this beauty is that it is fleeting. One day it is there and the next it is gone. There is a tree that has a wisteria vine growing up into its branches and it has the most beautiful clusters of purple flowers, hanging like grapes from among the leaves (personal communication, April 15, 2005).

Other graduates expressed similar statements about enjoying beauty in Nature including one graduate who even felt embarrassed in mentioning such examples of aesthetic experience as if the experiences were trite examples. While reflecting upon these supposedly trite aesthetic experiences in Nature, I concluded that most people I knew would not have even seen what

some of these Waldorf graduates shared as aesthetic moments. Thus, I dismissed triteness altogether.

Some graduates shared how their aesthetic code assists in connecting with others in their arts communities. For example, graduate Arjelia said that her past Waldorf arts experience "allows [her] to appreciate [her] friends' passion for the arts they center their lives around…[she] has a taste of understanding where they come from" (personal communication, April 17, 2005). On the contrary, some of the graduates' aesthetic sensibility or influences have set them apart within their communities. For example, graduate Lukas said:

> So many of my friends have no aesthetic inclination whatsoever and certainly no attention to detail in that sense. Their writing is flat, bland and while correct has no sense of flow or organization that brings the reader along. They cannot sing well, not do they have musical taste beyond pop. Many of them cannot appreciate art, nor do they care to. They're lacking half at least, of what it means to be human–that is the ability to elevate ourselves above grunts and impulses (This does not of course, mean I look down on them. They're only pitiable in that they were never given access to something that is quite important) (personal communication, April 26, 2005).

As previously mention, some participating graduates talked about a type of confidence (or lack of fear) garnered from the exposure to hands-on arts experience. This confidence with arts intelligence may contribute to the graduates' aesthetic code. To consider this further, K-12 Waldorf graduate Vincent discussed how not being able to draw was never conceivable:

> I remember new students entering the various [Waldorf] schools I attended often saying things like "I can't draw a horse!". By high school, it would never occur to me not to be able to draw anything. That's not to say I could ever draw a very convincing horse, but just that the process of representing, of using materials and color seemed very natural to me. I had no fear of 'art' and I appreciated that when new students' obvious fear made me realize this (personal communication, May 31, 2005).

When I considered Vincent's above story, I imagined how the arts could exist in a manner that is automatic in the every school day and in doing so could eliminate unimaginative or fearful adults who claim 'I can't draw'.

Provided in some narratives were scenarios of how Waldorf graduates may exist in our society with different skill sets and attitudes than those who did not have vast arts exposure. Graduate Arjelia articulated her post graduation arts attitude:

> The artistic experiences that were part of my education give me confidence that I can continue artistic practice–whether flute, poetry, or painting, I can pick things up again, because I have a foundation in them. I have the courage to take a dance class because I know I can learn to move my body in new ways, I can take up new art forms and feel my way into them (personal communication, July 4, 2005).

When I asked graduate Patrick to bottom line the outcome of his Waldorf arts experience, he shared:

> The outcome is that because I was exposed to so many forms of art, I can better appreciate how it all fits into the context of human expression. I now may choose from many more ways to express myself than I could before Waldorf Education. I can sing, play music, draw (shudder), sculpt, paint, or carve my feelings (personal communication, June 15, 2005).

Patrick also expressed how hands-on curriculum could have spurred his post-graduation ways:

> I remember there was considerable value placed on drawing things by hand, from memory, even when reproducing a drawing. Technical drawing must be done by hand, lettering must be done at a particular angle in block lettering for certain main lesson blocks. Perhaps that has influenced my perception that *things done by hand have far, far greater value than machine-produced things* [italics added], even if the end product isn't all that different. Think handmade shirts and shoes. I always *value things which really required someone to concentrate* [italics added] and do an excellent job. It actually *inspires me to do a better job and be more precise in my own work* [italics added] (personal communication, June 15, 2005)

Patrick suggested that both his will and aesthetic code were marked by his hands-on experiences and in turn impacts his sense of appreciation for the thoughtful and handcrafted.

The Optimal Experience of Flow.

Other graduates made value statements about how their Waldorf Education emphasized the thinking process over the end product. Even so, a statement from graduate Vincent reminds teachers to be attentive to issues of process versus product; he said, "I think there is a certain danger for all Waldorf schools of over-emphasizing the creation of an impressive finished product, however beautiful it may be, at the expense of individual children expression their own process of taking things in" (personal communication, December 8, 2005).

Csikszentmihalyi (1975; 1990) provided that art making is a form of individual meaning making and the product is a result of being in that zone of personal dialog and meaning making–the optimal experience of flow. Maryanne spoke about a state of humanness occurring during flow:

> Today I heard an ex-Waldorf parent say that all the art that is displayed in the Waldorf classrooms made by the students is just a big show for the parents to feel like their children are being productive. I have to say that I think it is not the final product that is important but the act of creating something. I think that by making art you are living in the moment and that is one benefit from all the art that I did as a child. *Being able to be totally in the present moment for hours* [italics added] (personal communication, June 16, 2005).

Important to note, not all participants valued hands-on arts at the upper school level. For example, graduate Jonathan explained his mindset and concerns during high school:

> I was looking into the future and saw SAT's, college admissions, etc. and was thinking how would painting ever help me get into a good school unless I'm majoring in art and need a portfolio. I think towards the end of high school I found art more of a boring burden that was unnecessary (personal communication, June 15, 2005).

Pressures from mainstream school ecology (i.e. SAT's, college admissions, etc.) impacted Jonathan's feelings and priorities during high school.

Likewise, high school only Waldorf graduate Patrick did not embrace all the arts during high school. (The reader may remember Patrick saying that he hated high school art classes except for bookbinding and woodworking plus lacked art training from his non-Waldorf schools). Yet, Patrick explained the value of his past and present arts experience as follows:

> I do occasionally do similar things [as bookbinding], like build an architectural model of a building or room, or make tiny furniture. It isn't common, but it does remind me of handwork like bookbinding and woodwork. Actually, a lot of it IS woodwork. Think matches, hot glue, and an X-acto®. I value what I did in those classes because I got to spend time doing something most people don't: producing objects which have no retail value, but which require similar skills and resources as productive labor (personal communication, June 15, 2005).

Overall, the majority of comments included graduates concluding that they were grateful to be exposed to hands-on learning.

Meanings Attributed to Play and Imagination

Some graduates shared how they consciously strive to find imaginative playtime within their present day-to-day. For example, Vincent who is a craftsman and electrician often working with (as he said) "only one right way to do it" shared his thoughts on play:

> I do make artistic/play time for myself. Playing hand-drums has helped me keep my sanity since I took it up again several months ago. I guess I value it most for the different head-space I get into while shaping rhythms and challenging myself to 'hear' and play ones that involve difficult timing (personal communication, July 11, 2005).

When graduate Manx was asked to bottom line his past Waldorf arts experience he eloquently said that "It was time travel, it was a waste of time. It was just what I needed"

(personal communication, May 4, 2005). To place this into context for the reader, Manx, an artist in diverse disciplines, said:

> The playing aspect in the early years [of Waldorf] must have been important– I didn't really get the 'work ethic' beaten into me until it was too late– I hate to think how many people (quite rightly of course) have altered their path to end up as CPAs, salesmen, or whatever just because they couldn't justify to themselves the sheer 'waste of time' art making is perceived to be by the general world (personal communication, May 4, 2005).

During graduate Manx's reflections, he was adamant about the importance of play within the early years of education. As Manx explained he did not have to internalize a type of censorship typically found in the early childhood classroom. He poignantly pointed out, "Children WANT to learn–and the way they internalize what they learn is through play. Art IS play" (personal communication, May 4, 2005). Play scenarios shared by participants in this study were self-discovery and self-empowerment through individual and personal generated content.

Bohm & Peat (1987) stated, "*imagination* means "the ability to make mental images, which imitate the forms of real things. However, the powers of imagination actually go far beyond to include the creative inception of new forms, hitherto unknown" (p. 261-262). Graduate Anna commented on this idea of the inception of new forms. She said:

> I think that art is tremendously important for the K-12 classroom. It not only allows the student an opportunity to feel a sense of mastery, make sense of their experiences, and create something to share with others, it also allows the student to exercise the creative side of their brain and imagine how "things could be otherwise" (i.e. new thinking, inventions, transformation, resolution) (personal communication, July 7, 2005).

Anna commented that art invites us to play or imagine in the territory of possibilities and to envision unknown. Some participating Waldorf graduates commented on how gained imagination and conceptual skills could now be applied to any area of study or lived

experience. For example, graduate Layla said, "Waldorf arts experiences played a very significant role in my life. I can enhance ordinary experiences…I have honestly never been bored in my life, there is always a way of making things a little more interesting with some imagination" (personal communication, June 15, 2005).

Meanings Attributed to Balancing the Whole Being

During the reflective meaning making process about their Waldorf arts experience, some graduates had a revelation about how they didn't notice the rarity of daily aesthetic experiences and arts making activity until they were beyond their Waldorf community. For example, graduate Janna noted:

> One day I realized that there was a huge hole in my life that I would have to consciously fill, since I no longer was in a Waldorf school. One thing I notice now, is that I never thought of myself as an artist, perhaps because it was just something I did, but didn't consciously choose to do…It was only after I took college art classes, that I realized I actually was an artist and that I was gifted compared to many people who are 'real' artists. Art was such a part of me, I never thought to define myself by it– instead I thought of becoming a biologist, a doctor, a psychologist. I love art and spend a lot of time going to museums and galleries…a rather shocking discovery for me, I could have been an artist (personal communication, June 4, 2005)!

Other graduates in this study also articulated a longing for art-inclusive or creative outlets now that they have been away from their past Waldorf environment. For instance, several graduates provided examples of how they purposely strived to balance their life with acts of art or imagination. Graduate Arjelia realized, "My days are not complete without some artistic practice or experience. When I feel something lacking in how I am living, the feeling can usually be remedied through bringing some art(s) back in" (personal communication, April 17, 2005). Graduate Layla discussed how significant her past Waldorf arts education was towards enhancing her current day-to-day; she said:

> Over the years since graduating I can appreciate my art experience there even more, it has taken me a while to realize that not everyone is starting little art projects on a whim and making their own woodcut Christmas cards and silk-screened t-shirts and batik Easter eggs…*My daily life is enhanced with small portions of art even if I don't consider myself an artist. That is the best thing I took with me from my education at a Waldorf school* [italics added] (personal communication, April 25, 2005).

Graduate Emily discussed how she successfully maintains balance in daily life:

> Early artistic freedom and learning helped me to figure out how to be freely artistic in very structured environments and how to structure myself in very free environments. I use art as an escape from structured science. This helps me a lot. I feel I am more balanced and in tune with who I am as a human being than some of my other college friends, and I really believe this is because of my Waldorf schooling (personal communication, June 1, 2005).

On the other hand, graduate Arjelia has struggled in trying to synthesize enough of the arts and her sense being into the day-to-day. She shared:

> It is hard to imagine my life without Waldorf Education, and I trust that other positive developments would have arisen. However without continued creative experience, I would be focused in ideas and words, intellectual activity only without much outlet for my hands and creativity. Poetry allows me to crystallize thoughts and experiment with ways of using language. Knitting and other crafts help me to focus in lectures and meetings, and provide presents for friends and family! I would be less without these…I am not living whole unless I am creating something, whether words, images or physical objects. Throughout my whole education I have been doing these things, and now, spending a great deal less time on them, I miss doing more. These days, poetry is a gap in my life. Sometimes I want my hands in paint. Walking into a yarn store, full of bright colors, is a relief. I know I need this (personal communication, April 29, 2005).

Arjelia claimed that if she had not been a Waldorf student she "would have probably become *one-sided* [italics added] and bound by intellectual tasks" (personal communication, April 17, 2005). Although graduate Arjelia also said that she was "not very actively engaged in arts these days, at least not as part of [her] education", she "still needs color in [her] life and a place to create, express, and represent [her] experiences" (personal communication, April 29, 2005). Arjelia suggested that she now misses Waldorf art making:

> I see myself as a creative person who loves and participates in artistic activities without making arts the center of my identity or choosing it as my life passion. My work and lifestyle are informed by the range of arts I have been exposed to, but they are a complement rather than a focus. In college where I am busy with academic work, primarily reading and writing, I miss doing pottery, batik, and eurythmy (personal communication, April 17, 2005).

Some graduates who continued their education in mainstream higher education schools struggled with the lack of availability of daily arts or arts-infused activity in those institutions. For example, graduate Maryanne claimed, "Attending a mainstream university kind of made me sad because I was not given the opportunity to directly use my artistic abilities" (personal communication, April 15, 2005). Similarly, graduate Jonathan discussed his search for "more opportunities to express or further [his] creative development" (personal communication, June 1, 2005). He said, "There was not much if any of this at Rutgers University. However, I think through my website design, graphics, and occasional cartoon designs I am able to satisfy my hunger for this, for now" (personal communication, June 1, 2005).

When I asked graduate Janna (who said above, *I could have been an artist!*) if she now feels balanced between arts and non-arts activity she noted how she would never be as immersed in art as she once was in Waldorf Education. She expressed:

> Nothing in my 'real' life–going to school and working–has an artistic part to it. Thus, I have to find art in whatever way I can–drawing, collage, designing, etc. Last summer I took a metal working/jewelry class that was every day for four hours a day. *I was ecstatic to be immersed in art once again* [italics added]. In Waldorf, every class was artistic, so for at least six or seven hours a day I was making art. I couldn't do that now even if I wanted to–unless I went to art school or become as artist (personal communication, September 10, 2005).

As previously mentioned in *Chapter Two,* Waldorf curriculum has been influenced by Anthroposophic ideals that view students partaking in a constant journey on an ascending

path of knowledge where they are endlessly coming into being. Further, in not knowing to what each individual child may grow into, the Waldorf teacher must plant diverse seeds that will afford every student an open head, heart, and hands each blossoming into future possibilities. Participants' narratives seemed to describe Waldorf Education as pedagogy that champions all components of humanness. Graduate Michelle said, "The arts play a significant role in what it means to be human, to express humanness" (personal communication, April 13, 2005). Graduate Vincent remarked, "I think a sense of well-roundedness and capability in a variety of contexts is common among long-term-exposed Waldorf students" (personal communication, July 11, 2005).

Comments demonstrating appreciation for the development of the whole child/ being was common among the graduates' reflections. For example, graduate Anna shared:

> I have had the opportunity to develop across multiple disciplines. I have often had people ask me how I know how to do so many different things, or why I am so good at everything. I think it relates to the notion of developing the whole child. When one feels whole he/she also feels that he/she can accomplish great feats, work in the world, and give back to the community (personal communication, July 5, 2005).

In graduate Emily's reflections, she stated that the most significant meaning she attributed to her past Waldorf experience was "having teachers that really cared about me and about my development as a human being, not just as an academically knowledgeable individual…A Waldorf teacher's job is to care for the soul-growth of every child in the class" (personal communication, June 1, 2005).

Several participating graduates discussed finding a balance between (in their words) sense and reason, rational and aesthetic, practical and impractical, or arts and non-arts activities. Waldorf teachers would be pleased that these Waldorf graduates seemed conscious of their holistic capacities and even talked about a need to nurture their sense

being. Graduate Layla stated that art experiences "awakens your sense to the world around you" (personal communication, July 29, 2005). As discussed in *Chapter Two,* Waldorf Education has recognized "the senses are the gateways to the world" (Bruin & Lichthart, 2004, p. 35).

Graduates in this study shared ideas about how they may be observing life in a deeper, more aesthetic way than others who are involved in simple, undifferentiated seeing. Graduate Havela revealed, "I think that my art experiences impacted me by making me more aware of the beauty around me and helping me to enjoy what I see and experience" (personal communication, August 16, 2005). Likewise graduate Janna commented on how her arts education has marked her senses and worldview:

> I really think art has changed how I see the world and thus what I value. I expect to find beauty, so not only do I see it, but I seek it out. I find beauty in whatever I do whatever I go, and in whomever I am with. I am not satisfied by making quick judgments or conclusions, without really understanding whatever I am considering. I think when you make art, you are forced to go beyond the exterior of whatever you are painting, drawing, dancing, or creating, and understand its soul. Because I grew up doing that every single day, I think it has changed how I interact with the world. I deeply explore everything in my life, whether it is where I live, or who I know. I don't think I judge other people as quickly, because I seek out who they are at their essence. I know that the surface is not the whole story, and thus I think I am open to going beyond it. If you are open and receptive, you can find the beauty in every person and thing (personal communication, September 10, 2005).

Meanings Attributed to Emotional Intelligence

> Art is one of the most important things in our society; it represents so much more than an assignment. The weight of a brush stroke or a color choice says as much about a person as the subject they choose to paint. It's therapeutic sure, just another form of expressing yourself. With young children art comes so naturally, maybe they can illustrate things they have no idea how to express through words yet. (Layla, personal communication, April 25, 2005)

Waldorf Education has recognized that art can be reflection and a disclosure of identity as well as a safe place for cathartic expression. Participating graduates shared ideas

about the arts as vehicles for revelation of self. When asking graduate Anna what her Waldorf arts experience means to her now, she said, "I often use art as for catharsis, a way to relax or make sense of a difficult experience. I think that it has served me well" (personal communication, July 7, 2005). In terms of identity revelations, Janna described discovery of self in past Waldorf art experience:

> Art was exhilarating! I loved it, even though I found it more difficult than academic classes. In art there is no way to make it 'perfect'–it becomes an *exploration of yourself and your own limits* [italics added]. I could easily master math and write good papers, but art was completely different challenge that involved a greater part of me. Being a teenager, the exploration of myself through art was hard, but allowed me to find and develop 'me' (personal communication, June 4, 2005).

Graduate Jonathan similarly described an awareness of self that he gained through art making. He said:

> You could attribute the [Waldorf] arts experience to a reflection process that helped me learn more about myself. I can't think of any specific examples, but I can think that being involved in the arts experience can help a person to deal with certain problems that may be experiencing in a different way then someone that is not exposed to art. This might sound silly, but if I'm frustrated I am able to express it through art rather then maybe through violence (this might also be off topic but it is what came to mind) (personal communication, May 25, 2005).

Since Jonathan currently is a musician, he said, "playing my instrument (which can be considered an art) is always a great outlet to let out some frustration, especially since I'm a drummer this works great" (personal communication, June 1, 2005). He also has utilized Photoshop art making as a means to calm down.

Graduate Aniquiel learned to cope through art making in a similar way to how some graduates described the process Waldorf teachers guiding angry children. She shared:

> Art gives me another way to release anger other than in a violet way. If I am mad, I'm more likely to tell whomever I'm mad at to leave me alone for a while, and go draw. Usually the topics are not angry or violent. I use the time

> to think things through and formulate a fair and reasonable solution to my anger (personal communication, June 17, 2005)

Meanings Attributed to the Role of Arts in K-12 Schools

In an attempt to further the attribution of reflection and meaning to past Waldorf arts experience, graduates where asked in Phase III: *With your definition of art and personal arts experience in mind, describe what role, if any, should art play in K-12 schools?* Graduate Janna's response revealed her developed art attitude where the arts are connected with humanness–our constructed world, culture, thought, spirit. Janna responded:

> I see the arts could be a part of everything, but our culture doesn't embrace that. Our economy is dependent on efficiency and specialization, not on self-expression. I also don't think that art is seen as essential. In public schools, it is an extracurricular subject not a required part of an education.
>
> However, there is an aspect of art in perhaps everything–whenever we design and form ideas of the world around us. By being creative, we participate in the world of art, even though the end product may not be conventionally called a piece of art (personal communication, September 10, 2005).

As viewed by Waldorf educators, Janna stated art is a legitimate necessity and it is imbedded in everyday life.

Graduate Lukas noted how the view and even experience of art as everyday is counterculture:

> Many people I've spoken to think it's 'weird' or 'stupid' to study so much art [in Waldorf schools]. There is much in the way of basic apprehension about a different system that is rather atypical, I think. I've found that more and more Americans tend to stress the "practical"…Will being educated in art, poetry and history make you money? Not necessarily? Then it has no worth. I, of course, disagree vehemently with this view (personal communication, April 26, 2005).

From Rudolf Steiner's worldview, the arts were practical in a *Threefold Social Order* (see *Chapter Two*). The above statement by Lukas advocated for arts curriculum even if art seems in peril from current business and mainstream education agendas. The use of the word

practical in Lukas's comment was interesting to me since Rudolf Steiner proposed the practical arts as a component in Waldorf Education necessary for the expansion of society beyond its limited state.

In describing the role, if any, art should play in K-12 schools, the graduates promoted arts-infused pedagogy such as what exists in Waldorf Education or in some cases even with greater amount of integration content. Most graduates' definitions or views of art seemed broad and interdisciplinary in nature including words such as: "world-explaining"(Arjelia, personal communication, July 4, 2005), "reflection of the human condition" (Patrick, personal communication, June 15, 2005), and "a relationship between the soul and the physical world" (Anna, personal communication, July 7, 2005). Graduate Aniquiel's response suggested that art should be accessible to all and exist fluidly moving in, with, and through disciplines:

> I think art should be made available and encouraged in all children (adults too, for that matter!). I still can't believe that art is so shunned, as if it was only ok to express yourself in pre-structured regimented ways, and only during a certain class. Ridiculous (personal communication, June 17, 2005)!

And graduate Arjelia added:

> Although I don't think complete adoption of the Waldorf curriculum is necessary or appropriate for all schools, I believe the Waldorf style of arts throughout the curriculum should be integrated into curriculums for all ages. All students can benefit from singing daily, learning state capitals to music, knitting socks, painting Nefertiti, acting out a Norse myth, carving a wooden spoon, writing a poem about Parzival (personal communication, July 4, 2005).

Graduate Jonathan was skeptical about Waldorf art-inclusive and hands-on teaching strategies until a recent revelation occurring in his university course *Community Psychology*. He recently realized:

> I have always been skeptical of the way the Waldorf system prepares their students for the standardized test format of the public school system, however

> I realized that a lot of the strategies they use work, so I guess it rekindled my interest in the system (personal communication, April 15, 2005).

Now grateful for his exposure to hands-on arts-infused experiences, Jonathan said, "Art shouldn't just be available to students…it should be engrained in the curriculum" (personal communication, June 1, 2005).

In seeking both the graduates' definitions of art and their opinions about how art should exist in any K-12 schools, I was most interested in hearing what graduate Patrick thought. As Patrick described himself, he had been a student since 1979 when he started Montessori nursery school and he is soon to complete his Doctor of Philosophy degree in Geology. To remind the reader, Patrick entered Waldorf Education at the high school level with no prior Waldorf experiences and little to no base knowledge in the arts such as drawing. Throughout Patrick's interview, his responses clearly demonstrated struggles and dislike of art processes such as sculpture, drawing, and violin all of which he had to confront for the first time in 9th grade. Certain Waldorf craft processes were satisfying to Patrick and he loved chorus. Given his struggles with creating main lesson books and the daily emphasis on arts, Patrick still supports the philosophy of arts-infused curriculum as a means for opening the child to her/his potentiality. Patrick candidly responded:

> I believe that art is human expression that goes beyond simple communication. By using music, or visual media with textural or stylistic elements not strictly necessary for communication of simple ideas, communication or expression can occur on even a deeper level.
> I think it is important for students to realize that not all forms of human expression and communication are most effectively accomplished with photographs and text. They should therefore be exposed to art, like drawing, craft, music, etc. I thought Waldorf Education was too focused on art, though. I could have used a bit more economics.
>
> I suppose the Waldorf environment would hold that art education, or giving a developing child experience of creating art is essential. I don't know whether I think it's essential. Do I believe it's worth doing? Yes. I believe in

> exposing people to ALL or as many possible experiences. In this fashion they may find what they truly enjoy. Given the choice I would have stopped art class (drawing) entirely, and done something I enjoyed more. I always knew I didn't like it (personal communication, June 15, 2005).

Although Patrick struggles with the concept of whether or not he thinks creating art is essential for the developing child or maybe even for himself, he recognized the role art can play as expression on an even deeper level. Art, therefore, may take students places they have not been able to access as well as transport society where it may need to go.

The ideal of planting the seeds of potentiality in Waldorf youth was implied in some of graduates reflections about what Waldorf means to them today. Graduate Layla eloquently advocated for all schools to inculcate students' diverse sense of wonder. She said:

> Since you can't learn everything in 12 years, I think the schools job is to plant little seeds of curiosity so that you will continue learning on your own long after you graduate. The more diverse seeds that are planted, the more interesting things might grow out of your curiosity (personal communication, June 15, 2005)!

During the graduates' reflection process, most participants overwhelmingly responded with gratitude to the manner that Waldorf Education actively opened them up to the world, a world inclusive of the arts.

Graduate Vincent's vision of K-12 schools credited arts as a possible means for becoming conscious of one's thoughts, feelings, and actions. Vincent imagined:

> School is a place where parents, administrators and teachers, can conspire to shape a very particular environment. This should be one that strives to charm away fear and inspire intrigue through magic (whether show or real doesn't matter, so long as it moves souls, much as comedy charms us through sleight-of-thinking)…My color-blind-created purple river and trees with brown leaves in a 2nd grade wax crayon drawing isn't 'stupid' or wrong…Students are motivated by the joy of letting love flow into everyday works…There is a sense of a long run, and a faith that students in an environment free of fear will develop closest to their full unique potential than in an environment of excessive monitoring and direction. Art classes play a useful role within the larger context of nurturing individuals' paths of development in environments

> of emotional safety, creating space and highlighting for students the possibility of full mind/body/emotional engagement in one's actions (personal communication, August 17, 2005).

Summary

The results of the graduates' meaning making about past Waldorf arts experiences corresponded to their description and key moment themes. Emerging themes from the graduates' meaning making of arts experience were categorized as the follows: (a) Sense of Wonder about the Interconnected World; (b) Multiple Ways of Knowing; (c) Teacher as Artists; (d) Becoming Creative Problem Solvers; (e) Will-developed Intelligence; (f) Appreciation of Aesthetic Experience; (g) The Optimal Experience of Flow; (h) Balancing the Whole Being; (i) Emotional Intelligence; and (j) Role of Arts in K-12 Schools. The participating graduates' visions for how the arts might exist in K-12 schools recounted their reflected and attributed meanings on their past Waldorf arts experiences.

In describing the role arts could play in K-12 schools, the graduates promoted arts integration such as what exists in Waldorf Education. In attributing meaning to Waldorf arts experiences, graduates valued their humanistic education and holistic education opportunities where the arts were interconnected varied disciplines. Graduates credited Waldorf Education for a sense of wonder about the world and curiosity towards art and its humanness. Within the graduates narratives there existed an attitude of the arts are "related to me" (Layla, personal communication, June 15, 2005). In regards to arts-infused curriculum outcomes, some graduates discussed having broader personality, interests, and views as well as feeling capable within diverse and new contexts.

Through the provision of daily arts experiences during their Waldorf Education, graduates seemed to recognize arts intelligences as one of many modes of learning and

knowing. The participating graduates noted how the arts allow them to express and utilize multiple modalities and afford a deeper feel for multiple ways of knowing. Further, some of these graduates specifically express increased retention and internalization of curriculum content during their Waldorf schools experiences due to the manner in which they utilized arts to reflect upon knowledge and see complex interrelationships.

Two graduates who currently are college students, shared how main lesson book learning strategies beyond their K-12 Waldorf experience are meaningful for retaining course information; the main lesson book technique of pictorial thinking and transmediation of information was being utilized during their studies. Thus, for some graduates the cognitive skills of synthesizing, editing, and organizing information through the assistance of image making has transferred beyond their Waldorf community. The participating graduates seemed to recognize that art has multifaceted roles where it has become meaningful to the graduates as a tool to access or make associations with other subjects as well as intrinsic aesthetic experience in itself.

As previously stated, the graduates considered their teachers as artists or advocates of art-infused curriculum and many praised the Waldorf teachers' creative abilities in the arts. It seemed that some participating K-8 graduates recognize and appreciate Waldorf teachers' education philosophy of emphasizing imaginative play and art making during early school years. Those without early childhood arts exposure such as high school only Waldorf graduates noticed a difference in abilities and expressiveness among long-termed Waldorf students and short-termed Waldorf students; Graduate Patrick stated, "Waldorf students since THE BEGINNING were the best artists in the class" (personal communication, April 17, 2005). Some of the graduates' perceptions of their Waldorf teachers' art attitudes were that

the arts are necessary for the development of all free-thinking people who make choices from a balance of sense and reason. Also, most graduates garnered from their teachers' attitudes and directives that anyone can make art and the handmade practical arts should be made accessible in everyday life. Living in an artful way seemed to be an undercurrent of Waldorf school ecology.

Graduates shared how their school day acts of problem solving in the arts were exciting and challenging and sometimes required much more of them than other forms of cognition (such as math and reading as one graduate states). In reflections about their hands-on arts learning, graduates inferred that they gained inventive, creative abilities that were garnered during constant acts of resolving arts' open-ended problems. Some graduates claimed they now bear will-developed intelligence to think creatively and to take risks in problem solving without fear. Graduate Jonathan reminded us about how empowering it is to be able to create from a blank slate. Graduate Aniquiel said, "All the Waldorf kids I know tend to take a hands-on approach to life" (personal communication, June 17, 2005). Other graduates' reflections likewise seemed to point to this type of adventurous will-developed intelligence that emerges from flexibility obtained by ongoing trials of producing while in the art making process.

Some graduates recognized Waldorf Education's goal of implanting a foundation in the arts that students can later accessed in life. A common statement among graduates was about their appreciation of exposure to diverse types of the arts exposure; some graduates surmise that such exposure partly influenced their current aesthetic code. The most significant gain from graduate Layla's past Waldorf arts experiences was her "chance to explore so many different art and craft forms" (personal communication, July 29, 2005). As

previously stated, graduates acknowledged the following as possible impact of Waldorf arts experiences: development of a sense of aesthetic awareness, appreciation of the handmade, awareness of beauty in Nature, aptitude in creative expression and imagination, capacity for details or greater observational ability, and a need for creative outlets in their lives.

Graduate Maryanne stated above that Waldorf arts experiences allow students "to be totally in the present moment for hours" (personal communication, June 17, 2005). She valued, as did other graduates, escape into the optimal experience of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975; 1990) afforded to Waldorf students. In a culture that does not equally value sense and reason, balancing their whole being (sense/reason) beyond the Waldorf classroom had been a challenge for some of the graduates. In post graduation life, play in life remained a valid form of self-discovery for some graduates. Rudolf Steiner's notion of developing the whole being included play and imagination as invitation for possibility. Many participating graduates seemed conscious of their need to nurture their sense being.

Some graduates stated that Waldorf arts experiences marked their senses and worldview. Graduate Janna said, "I think art has changed how I see the world and thus what I value" (personal communication, September 10, 2005). Some graduates in this study shared ideas about how they observed life with more aesthetic abundance than others who are involved in only undifferentiated seeing. They were passionate about how the arts complete their days or life experience. For example, Layla said, "Art is one of the most important things in our society; it represents so much more than an assignment" (personal communication, April 25, 2005). Some graduates inferred that at the heart of arts experience (both during their schooling and post graduation) was a discovering or sensing of identity.

Art represents more than an assignment when it is (as the graduates stated) reflection, exploration of one's limits, and a safe place of catharsis.

Gradautes suggested, as Rudolf Steiner intended, that art is not so much a product; rather, art is participating creatively in the world. Although not all graduates think art is essential for everyone, they overwhelmingly supported the idea of exposure of art to K-12 students in a manner similar to how the arts were embedded and connected in Waldorf curriculum. As previously stated, Waldorf arts experiences were referred to as world-explaining. In other words, arts experiences in K-12 schools could assist students in locating themselves in relationship to the world.

When the participating graduates were asked to state a bottom line description of what would communicate the outcomes of their particular Waldorf arts experience, some said:

- Art is life. To make art is to live (Janna, personal communication, October 22, 2005) .
- Awakening (Havela, personal communication, August 16, 2005).
- Expanding–mentally, spiritually, emotionally, practically, academically. (Lukas, personal communication, June 15, 2005)
- Open (Maryanne, personal communication, June 19, 2005).
- Freedom to think! (Paul, personal communication, April 24, 2005)
- I draw and I see how I am seeing; I look and sometimes I see myself or I see you. (Anna, personal communication, July 7, 2005)

I heard the graduates saying experience in art is a journey with life, an awakening of consciousness and identity, perception gained from all senses (seeing in the broadest sense), an opening of soul, expression of individual voice, and connection to humanness.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion and Reflections

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to construct and implement a descriptive inquiry about the nature of Waldorf art experiences and the meanings Waldorf graduates attribute to their schooled arts experiences. Through the collection and analysis of the graduates' individual reflective stories, this qualitative inquiry sought to gain insight into the meanings Waldorf graduates attribute to their personal art education accounts within their arts-infused curriculum. Waldorf graduates, those intimately involved in and impacted by Waldorf art activities, co-constructed the results of this descriptive study.

As previously stated, the central research question to be examined in this study was: *What meanings do Waldorf graduates attribute to their lived Waldorf school art experience?* Four secondary questions served to compliment and guide the study's over-arching research question. These sub questions were as follows:

(a) *What are the graduates' descriptions of their Waldorf school art experiences?*
(b) *Within the framework of the Waldorf graduates' schooled experience, what were their art experience epiphanies?*
(c) *What meanings do Waldorf graduates attribute to their epiphanies?*
(d) *How do the meanings attributed to Waldorf education art experience relate to their education and art philosophies?*

A semi-structured interview protocol with open-ended questions was utilized to collect Waldorf graduate narratives. The reflective interview process assisted the participants with the following: (a) describing arts education involvement; (b) placing their art education experiences into context; (c) noting any crystallizing and/or paralyzing experiences with art experience; and (d) attributing meaning to art education experience and epiphanies. A three-

phased interview format afforded thick descriptive narratives from 15 Waldorf graduates that culminated with the participants assigning meanings and values to their Waldorf arts experiences. Utilizing a purposeful sampling strategy of maximum variation (Patton, 1990), the narratives represented a wide contextual range and variety of Waldorf arts experience. The resulting graduates' narratives were analyzed through constant comparison methods in order to establish germane themes and categories.

In this chapter, a discussion of the study's results (that answered the research questions introduced in *Chapter One* and restated above) was provided. Per Wolcott's (2001) suggestion, I previously provided a summary of results after each of the three interview phase sections (in *Chapter Four*) as opposed to a lengthy summary within this chapter. In other words, such summaries in *Chapter Four* began my discussion of findings. In this chapter, the findings described in *Chapter Four* are interpreted and discussed further through my lens as researcher, (non-Waldorf) educator, and artist. Below, I have discussed and reflected on the themes in terms of how Waldorf graduates perceived past arts education experiences as well as ideals, relationships, and experiences with art post graduation. I have also synthesized concepts found in this study's literature review (see *Chapter Two)* with findings from the graduates' interview data.

The graduates' perceptions about Waldorf arts experiences informed us about atypical arts-infused pedagogy currently residing outside the American mainstream educational agenda. The results of this study provided an expanded view of the ecology of the arts within Waldorf schools, especially given that little literature was available on the subject including any views of Waldorf arts experiences specifically from the graduates' perspective. The outcomes of this study served as points of reflection for consideration of our current

education paradigms. Credible advocacy statements for arts education were provided in the Waldorf graduates' stories and attributions of meanings to their art experiences.

Discussion of the Results

Within the graduates' descriptions of Waldorf arts experience and what these experiences meant to them, I often heard echoes of the art philosophies and pedagogical ideals of Rudolf Steiner and Waldorf Education as previously review in *Chapter Two*. For the purpose of reflection, I related the literature review for this study with the graduates' meaning making stories (the interview data) and found that the Waldorf ideals documented in the literature correspond to emergent arts experience themes in the data. I interpreted Waldorf Education pedagogy as being couched in a visual learning philosophy along with holistic approaches towards the full development of body, mind, and spirit. Rudolf Steiner intended for the arts to impact Waldorf students in the way they entered the world post graduation–with integrated hands, heart, and head. The intent of the exposure to the arts-based learning in Waldorf Education, was to disposition Waldorf graduates in becoming active, fearless, thinking citizens– Steiner's goal for education in 1919 Germany as well as today's Waldorf Education goal.

Important to note, this inquiry was a descriptive study; thus, it was not intended to prove that the Waldorf arts experiences are more beneficial than other schools' practices. Though, the study offered a frame of reference to consider our art education practices. Also, it was unfounded to conclude from this study that Waldorf arts experience marks the aesthetic code of all its students. Thus, I agreed with the position graduate Patrick posed in his reflection. He said:

> I realized that I have a strong sense of art appreciation and interest, but it seems unrelated to my Waldorf art experiences. This may not be true at all.

> My personality may have been imbued with the capacity to appreciate art. Who knows? We are always told that it would be many years until we would fully understand or appreciate our Waldorf educations (personal communication, June 15, 2005).

Patrick's idea (above) affirmed my point that I cannot conclude Waldorf graduates see and believe what they do about the arts solely based on their Waldorf arts experiences (even though some graduates claimed in their interview reflections there was a direct correlation of particular art appreciation outcomes with their Waldorf schooling). From the personal dialog and reflections afforded in the interview data of 15 Waldorf graduates, I have concluded there exists a possibility that Waldorf arts experiences open students and graduates to potentialities not afforded to those outside Waldorf Education. Below in my reflection and discussion, I advocated for some of these potentialities and encouraged educators to likewise consider both the pedagogical practices and possible outcomes of such teaching strategies.

Advocating for Seamless Arts Integration

Arts-infused curriculum can "draw us out, hook us up (imaginatively, emotionally, neurally) into other circuits, other lives, other times" (Weinstein, 2003, p. xxvii). Graduate Layla confirmed this idea of the arts "hooking us up" when she reflected on Waldorf's arts-infused curriculum; she said, "Since everything seems so closely related to me I can make ties and relationships between different subjects very easily and that has proved invaluable" (personal communication, June 15, 2005). Other participating graduates stated that Waldorf arts-infused curriculum provides a worldview of connectivity and a connection to humanness. As previously stated, reoccurring comments from all the graduates spoke to the nature of the arts seamlessly integrated within Waldorf school curricula; for example, graduates spoke about arts integration as a part of everything and integrates all parts of ourselves into learning and exploring the world.

Educators should consider that there is humanness within arts-infused integration pedagogy approachable to students. Teaching in a manner that connects students to their selves and links them to other times, places, peoples and subjects makes sense. The arts can be the conduit. As an educator it is difficult for me to ignore the Waldorf graduates' unanimous suggestion to include the arts and its humanness as embedded or engrained into school curriculum. Connectivity in curriculum affords student lateral leaps of intelligence as well as meet students where they exist–as integrated beings with curiosity about the world as a whole. In order to prepare students for our complex postmodern world, opportunities of lateral thinking and problem solving across discipline lines are necessary. Seamless arts integration as modeled as in Waldorf Education and discussed by Waldorf graduates in this study, provides approaches to problems from diverse angles, personal points of view, and multiple intelligences.

There is a cost in education when we fragment everything to a point where meaning is abstractedly isolated and subsequently lost. To see (or conceive) an idea interchangeably in diverse disciplines motivates and prepares one for the multiplicity of thought and being in the convoluted postmodern world. Brain research clearly informs us that we build knowledge through connection-making (Jensen, 2001; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999; Marshall, 2005; Martindale, 1995; Preston, 2005; Ricoeur, 1981; Thornton, 2002). From a purely practical standpoint with student achievement in mind (since mainstream education views student achievement as a priority), educators should not dismiss Waldorf graduate statements about connectionism in learning such as the remark that "concepts are easier to understand because you can relate them to something else" (Lukas, personal communication, June 15, 2005). The physiological manner to which knowledge is internalized, such as through

interconnectedness, causal relationships, and transfer between domains, should not go unnoticed and underutilized. I wonder if schoolwork would be more beneficial and effective for some of our children if it corresponded to how we physiologically think–integrated modes?

As an artist, I cannot dismiss the implications for how this interconnected vision of arts curriculum has impact on some of the graduates' perceptions of art. Graduate Janna reflects, "I think art was such an integral part of the education, that it was just a part of life" (personal communication, June 4, 2005). Yes, art is a part and comment about life! As previously stated, graduate Lukas says that art was "an explanation of phenomena and of humanity" (personal communication, June 15, 2005). The graduates' narratives suggest to me that experiences with art, as perceived by many of them, are not secondary or discreet in life. As an artist and educator, I advocate for the arts to be embraced in ways that I heard Waldorf graduates perceiving them. I trust that Waldorf arts-inclusive curriculum assists graduates with this aesthetic position: "Anyone can make art; maybe we are alive and conscious only when we act in an artful way… We breathe it into those things we do with love" (Vincent, personal communication, August 18, 2005). Through student exposure to seamless arts integration, it may be possible for K-12 graduates to live more artful, alive, conscious, and certainly with an arts-inclusive worldview.

Advocating for the Art as a Way of Knowing

As documented in the literature and from the reflective stories of Waldorf graduates, Waldorf Education places thinking through the arts as legitimate necessary function of the mind or intellect (even before brain research informed educators that this is beneficial to learning). I cannot deny that using more of the whole brain by accessing greater amounts of

intelligences produces powerful cognition. Knowing in the broadest sense occurs in Waldorf schools because students can trust and access multiple ways of knowing. Thinking in, with, and through the arts opens up additional avenues for cognition and student achievement. As confirmed by participating Waldorf graduates' narratives, the arts are another point of access for cognition.

I advocate for strong arts curriculum and programs in our schools, because "thoughts occur as images" (Zaltman & Schuck, 1995, p. 5). The majority of stimuli reaching the brain are visual in nature (Cornett, 2003; Zaltman & Schuck, 1995). Thus, it is illogical that mainstream school curriculum have underutilized students' visual representations. Waldorf graduates from this study reveal their use of pictorial thinking both within Waldorf schools and post graduation. The graduates' confirm that developed skills in pictorial thinking had enhanced their learning. An example supporting graduate comment is, "It is easier to remember something if it is stored as a picture in my mind" (Anna, personal communication, July 7, 2005). Many of the graduates' scenarios of arts-infused learning support Sanders Bustle's (2004) research where an art component within the learning endeavor results in gains and internalization of the knowledge. The graduates' reflections focus on the way main lesson books support individualized learning due to experiential engagement and personal pictorial thinking.

I wonder if Waldorf graduates with such pictorial thinking skills have an advantage in our heavily visual mediated postmodern world. As complex as our postmodern world has become with a multitude of sign systems, there is a place for arts integration such as main lesson book learning activity that emphasizes pictorial thinking, metaphorical thinking, transformational thinking (Root-Berstein, 1989), and transmediation. Central to cognition is

metaphorical thinking (Zaltman & Schuck, 1995). Expressing through the arts practices metaphorical thinking as it affords transmediation between sign systems in order to create the resulting image or expression. As discussed in the *Chapter Two,* "Transmediation occurs when meanings formed in one communication system are recast in the context and expression planes of a new sign system (for example, we take something we know verbally and recast it in art)" (Leland & Harste, 1994, p. 340). As an educator, I now consider how thinking in, with, and through the arts is absolutely critical for our students to learn how to navigate through our complex layered world of symbols systems–our visual culture.

Affording exploration between diverse sign systems provides democratized learning where the individual student voices are heard–their personalized way of knowing. "As long as schools operate on an essentially linguistic modality that gives place of privilege to a kind of literal, logical, or mathematical form of intelligence, schools limit what youngsters can learn" (Eisner, 1990, p. 37). In this study, Waldorf graduates share how they view knowledge from many perspectives (including through the arts). And in doing so, graduates consider themselves well-rounded–flexible thinkers. As an educator, I consider whether or not we are preparing children with enough experience in all ways of knowing necessary to face our world. Are we, as educators, providing the fullest dimension of knowing and being in the world?

Before leaving my discussion about art making as meaning making and a way of knowing, I need to stress (especially for educators) that several participating graduates commented on how their tactile and visual learning styles were served appropriately at their Waldorf schools. For example, graduate Layla believes, "I could have easily been one of the students that fell through the cracks in a system without such a focus on the arts" (personal

communication, June 15, 2005). As previously stated, other graduates likewise discuss their needs and interests being respected through the arts integration, especially how art channels interests towards other disciplines. In our present educational climate with the initiative *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001,* we should consider the arts as a safe haven for those who are not finding their primary ways of thinking and knowing being actualized and validated.

Advocating for Teaching as an Art

Art is a welcomed form of meaning making in the Waldorf classroom. As presented in the both the literature on Waldorf Education and within the collected data on Waldorf graduates' arts experiences, Waldorf teachers enter their classroom as artists with the premise that anyone has the potential of creating and living in, with, and through the arts. Certified Waldorf teachers (not just specialized teachers in the arts or practical arts) are trained in art-based pedagogy and Rudolf Steiner's philosophies of teaching as an art. "Herbert Read called this *Education as an Art,* an expression also used by Waldorf schools. The arts are not frills but rather the great, largely untapped fountain of educational renewal" (Auer, 2003, p. 7). In maintaining this position as artist teacher, the Waldorf educator sustains an enduring quest much like an artist for garnering, reflecting on, and disseminating stimuli. From this study, I conclude that many Waldorf teachers, like their students, are forever becoming, endlessly expanding the ways to which their pedagogy can engage students. (This is not to say that there are not ineffective teachers in Waldorf schools as possible in any educational institution). This relationship to pedagogy counters the uniformed mannerism of teachers teaching towards a standardized test.

Waldorf pedagogy itself is a creative endeavor where the Waldorf teacher is challenged to design curriculum that inculcates a sense of wonder much like the anticipatory

set an artist imposes on the viewer. In other words, much like how the artist is in the business of enticing and provoking thought by compelling messages, techniques, and creative decisions, the Waldorf teacher strives similarly to awaken a passion for thinking and learning in students. Praises about Waldorf educators' creativity and artistic teaching approaches that in turn motivated their student discovery are offered in this study. I perceive that past Waldorf teachers, as performers in the classroom, are still valued by participants in study. As some participating graduates suggest, their Waldorf teachers engaged in and with art in a serious but captivating manner, thus they, as students, automatically had followed this lead and relationship with art.

"Waldorf teachers avoid textbooks, considering their digested information a poor substitute for original material" (Oppenheimer, 1999, p. 71). Given that learning is not driven by textbooks in Waldorf schools, Waldorf teachers are called to think innovatively when presenting lessons and "never assume that there is no more to explore and discover" (Coulder & Rawson, 1998, p. 116). Participating graduates' remarks support the power of Waldorf teachers' lavishly prepared and intricate blackboard illustrations upon student motivation and ability to expand perception: "The drawings encouraged a different kind of attention to the content" (Vincent, personal communication, July 11, 2005) and "What a better way to capture a child's interest than to walk into a room that has a 4 foot tall illustration of Christopher Columbus embarking on a ship on the board? I was always excited to learn about the fantastic stories behind the pictures" (Aniquiel, personal communication, June 17, 2005). I wonder how our classrooms would change if all teachers explored and expressed knowledge with the passion of an artist?

Advocating for Hands-on (Arts) Learning

As previously stated in *Chapter Two,* "the whole human body, and not the brain alone, is the vehicle of consciousness" (Harwood, 1958, p. 20). The inclusion of hands-on work in the fine and practical arts within Waldorf curriculum ensures building mind and making meaning through hand exploration. Participating graduates' reflections include descriptions of their hands-on problem solving. When interpret participants' meaning making about hands-on learning in the Waldorf fine and practical arts, I understand how Waldorf graduates can be intrinsically driven and summons to synthesize, reshape, and perceive from a deep personal alcove. The graduates' comments in terms of hands-on learning in the arts are a mixture of description about enthralling problem solving and conversely description about frustrating struggles. As an educator, I think about these tales of open-ended discovery that lead students into the unknown. Aren't we, as educators, in the business of expanding the boundaries of our students?

As previously stated, some of the participating graduates' descriptions include statements about how their arts thinking required more of them, deeper level thinking, than learning strictly through math, reading, etc. The creative thinking processes can include long-term exploratory struggles that ultimately lead to resolution with an expressive solution. In considering the graduates' reflections, Geztels and Csikszentmihalyi's (1976) investigations in *The Creative Vision: A Longitudinal Study of Problem Finding in Art* applies:

> The ability to formulate problems seems to be a faculty of a different order. It entails a process far more in touch with the deeper layers of being than reason alone usually is; it is far more holistic in that it encompasses the person's total experiential state…It seeks out similarities between external objects and internal states; it uses symbolic means to express formless feelings, thereby disclosing that which otherwise would go unperceived, articulating what

> otherwise would remain unarticulated. Problem finding may well be at the origin of the creative vision (p. 250).

I interpret the participating Waldorf graduates' past daily exposures in art, including any struggles, spaces to perceive from their inside out through artful articulation of personal, individual perceptions. Art making affords self-initiated problem finding and solving.

A significant benefit from Waldorf arts experience is "to imagine things different from what they are" (Aniquiel, personal communication, April 4, 2005). To see what is not seen has great weight for our future. Waldorf arts curriculum seeks to drive students to this place of one's deepest layers where sense informs reason so that personal, original perception is formulated. If we expose our students to this undefined place of enough, could they enter the world with a greater capacity for creative vision and for what could be?

Every art problem affords unique acts of figuring things out with its own point of entry and ways of creating its own reality. Some graduates have suggested that there was relationship between their exposure to vast amounts of hands-on arts experiences and their abilities as confident, flexible, risk-taking problem solvers. As graduate Aniquiel says, "No conundrum is too complicated" (personal communication, June 2, 2005). My favorite example of this *I can do it* attitude is graduate Maryanne's scenario (previously mentioned above):

> If something breaks like a toaster or bookshelf, I will work at it until it is fixed. I am not afraid to just do it, whereas others might toss the object and get a new one or have someone else look at it (personal communication, June 17, 2005).

Stories such as this scenario from Maryanne crystallize for me the Waldorf Education concept of will-developed intelligence. Within the Waldorf Education framework, hands-on learning and knowing specifically through practical arts and handwork curriculum is aimed at

an inner drive–the power within us that allows us, through our deeds, to passionately, ingeniously, insightfully, confidently, faithfully, and effectively interact with the world. I suggest to the reader that will-developed intelligence, as developed through the Waldorf arts experiences, is a source to mark our world in new and better ways and to also prepare students to face daily challenges beyond our classroom walls. Within the struggle to solve an arts-based problem, the artist discovers boundaries, tendencies, and most importantly possibilities. Teaching toward students' will-development through art posed problems has implications for the potentiality of society–graduates who can see potentiality in the future.

Balaisis (1997) suggests art education holds out hope for generating in our future the independent voices and expanding boundaries and awareness that in turn bestow a "seeing anew" (p. 94)–seeing in ways that release us from limitations. After reflecting on the interview data related to hands-on arts experiences, I wonder if students who partake in long term supportive exposure of trying out new ideas and creative problem solving through the arts would feel less vulnerable to freely wonder and sense. It seems as if this freedom to wonder may be occurring within Waldorf students. (Seven of the graduates that I interviewed describe their expanded sense discovery as beyond what they see in others around them and outside Waldorf Education). Given what the participating graduates shared in narratives, there may also be a resulting sense of agency and adaptive attitude that emerges from the long-term arts exposure where one has developed an independent point of view because s/he regularly brings it into being.

We are partly a sum of all our experiences, so Waldorf graduates can never know the true impact of their arts experiences. As previously stated, several graduates seem to specifically credit the depth and types of the arts exposure in their Waldorf schools as

influential on their current aesthetic code such as a heightened awareness or appreciation of things around them. Others were of the opinion they have an appreciation of the handmade, a greater aptitude of imagination, capacity for details or greater observational ability, along with a specific need for the arts or creative outlets in their lives. For example, one comment supporting this notion is as follows: "so many of my friends have no aesthetic inclination whatsoever and certainly no attention to detail in that sense" (Lukas, personal communication, April 26, 2005). Another is as follows: "things done by hand have far, far greater value than machine-produced things" (Patrick, personal communication, June 15, 2005).

In advocating hands-on arts learning, I am likewise supporting student opportunities in aesthetic experience that "in part takes us out of ourselves into new worlds" (Smith, 1995, p. 62). It is in this new world that Rudolf Steiner desired our youth to discover; it is where art and aesthetic experience intensifies and clarifies human experience. I could only hope that through such experiences we, as educators, engender greater percipience and encourage satisfaction of deeper levels than experiences with conventional consumer goods.

Advocating for Imagination, Play, and Flow

As I heard in six graduates' stories, a spirit for inquiry begins early in Waldorf schools where initial creations emerge from play. Creations from Waldorf child play emerge because the child wants something to exist. Creating, including art making, starts naturally as the child makes meaning about the world. Upon these self-initiated *doing and willing* concepts Waldorf Education facilitates many years of creative problem solving, an evolution from fantasy to reality. As previously stated, graduates in this study reveal their passionate opinions about access to fantasy for K-8th grade child development. For example, graduate

Emily not only greatly appreciated her opportunities of artful play in fantasy, but she now poignantly reflected on fantasy by saying, "How can we progress if we cannot imagine anything, but the reality that we know" (personal communication, April 28, 2005)?

In considering Emily's proposal I recall Rudolf Steiner's goals for social change within the Waldorf arts-infused curriculum: artful play and discovery seek to reach realms of possibility. "The arts provide a platform for seeing things in ways other than they are normally seen" (Eisner, 2002, p. 83). Both creative play and imagination aim to transport students into novel settings where expanded perception can facilitate future perceptive direction and redirection throughout life. Some graduates' reflections from this study demonstrate an understanding of how *anew seeing* feeds society's potentiality. Graduate Anna supports Steiner's (and Waldorf Education's) intentions for social change: "I think that art is tremendously important for the K-12 classroom… it allows the student to… imagine how things could be otherwise (i.e. new thinking, inventions, transformation, resolution)" (personal communication, July 7, 2005).

As I reflect on the participating graduates' meaning making, it occurs to me that there are two sides of the Waldorf arts-infused intentions related to instilling imagination. One education goal (or intention) is outline above. First, Waldorf educators' school vision includes the ideal that perceptive students who have been thinking in, with, and through the arts can invent a better future, a better society. In other words, the Waldorf vision sounds much like the Fowler's, (1931-1995) eminent American arts advocate, educator, writer, and philosopher, position in *Strong Arts, Strong Schools* (1994) where he proposes that we are not in need of more and better arts education to develop more and better artists, rather we need quality arts education to produce better educated beings.

Secondly, the other Waldorf arts education goal emerging from the graduates' narratives is as follows: the arts aim to expand a consciousness for life solely for the individual's aesthetic sake. I can best elaborate on this idea with a quote from the extraordinary musician Wynton Marsalis (as cited in Oddleifson, 1996); he says, "The arts allow you to live in a greater percentage of the world" (para. 23). Thus, there is an educational intention of expanding each individual's aesthetic code or capacity so as to sense fuller and to personally mediate through more of the world offerings.

Imagination will remain dormant and undeveloped unless it is honored and nourished (Preston, 2005). With this in mind, Waldorf educators encourage daily soulful artistic activity, aesthetic play, and opportunities of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975; 1990) with aims to place the act of imagining central to human ways. Creative thinking is not an accessory in Waldorf schools. During opportunities of flow, there occurs an intrinsic and intimate state of humanness. Graduate Maryanne describes flow best when she reflects on Waldorf art making as "being able to be totally in the present moment for hours" (personal communication, June 17, 2005). Flow can be thought of as being intrinsically driven through mind, soul, and body (head, heart, hand). Flow within the act of art making is a critical period within the process of possibility where becoming and transforming entails shifts and alterations in perspectives, attitudes, knowledge, and psychological nature.

As previously proposed, the concept of play has connotations for educators if they seek to engage students in self-transcendental inquiry with possibilities of intellectual, physical, emotional, and even spiritual metamorphosis. Graduate Manx articulates the value of this transcendental place of inquiry when he describes Waldorf arts experiences as: "It was time travel. It was a waste of time. It was just what I needed" (personal communication,

April 4, 2005). To place this statement into context for the reader, Manx was adamant about self-initiated play and discovery being afforded to children in school. He (like some other graduates) recognizes the affects of our current school climate with its emphasis on a thinking that is directed towards standardize tests. Graduate Paul describes this current educational climate found within mainstream schools as "warehouse schooling" (Paul, personal communication, March 28, 2005)– one-directional, stagnant, and limiting. Some graduates' remarks suggest to me that children enter into school with a wealth of curiosity, yet just as many somehow get lost in dead knowledge and Waldorf literature supports this notion. Educators could consider how not standing in a proverbial straight line may better serve our students and society.

Advocating Arts for Emotional Intelligence

In 1919, Rudolf Steiner with his new education paradigm (influenced by Friedrich Schiller) argued for educators to distinguish sense as a powerful force in thinking, as opposed to just reason. Yet, it is only recently that we have come to accept in the field of education that brain research in the area of emotions and senses is valuable. "Daniel Goleman suggests that emotional intelligence is a master intelligence, or 'meta-ability', governing how well or poorly people are able to use their other mental capabilities" (Oddleifson, 1997, p. 53). In other words, emotional intelligence is at the core of the cognitive system (Goleman, 1995).

Waldorf educators consider emotion and logic inseparable. In reflecting upon the graduates' art making and integrated lesson scenarios I hear them speaking about their feelings of connection to self, identity, and emotion. Some graduates express gratitude for the way in which Waldorf Education has helped them to recognize expression in the arts as a tool for coping and emotionally adapting–making sense of one's emotional place. Waldorf

graduates' reflections from this study also describe an awakening of their sense of wonder and intrinsic motivation through the emotive properties of the arts-infused curriculum.

Affording emotional intelligence in our curriculum may assist educators with swaying kids to plug into themselves as a means to plug into learning. Personal content becomes embedded in arts expression so that one's self (thought and soul) is recognized, affirmed, and possibly altered. "Therefore the potential for accomplishment reaches to more intense levels of reality" (Balaisis, 1997, p. 91). If student achievement, at its highest, centers our current educational paradigm, then pedagogy formulas should necessitate arts-infusion.

Advocating for the Whole Being

I find myself wanting to advocate for the school that Graduate Vincent describes in his vision for education (previously presented at the close of *Chapter Four*). It's a place where magic exists and children's souls are moved daily as they love what they are producing. A place where each child senses someone is investing in his/her whole being for the long run–a personalized future. Most importantly, this place (that Vincent imagines) offers the arts as a valid way to communicate a part of self that is meaningful for living to one's wholeness. Personal, meaningful dialog through art happens daily in this place– a school where the nurturing of individual spirit exists.

Thinking in, with, and through the arts in Waldorf Education is a spiritual and intuitive way of knowing. "The capacity to consciously notice, pay attention, and reflect on one's own thinking, feeling, and willing, Steiner calls spiritual activity" (Easton, 1995, p. 95). Art curriculum in Waldorf Education has a power to edify– "to build up the soul" (Osguthorpe, 1997, p. 121). Creative acts through the arts require wonder, perception, and

realization of intentions–all prerequisites to edification; I interpret arts experiences within Waldorf Education as "edifying pedagogy" (Osguthorpe, 1997, p. 127).

Osguthorpe (1997) describes the process of edification during arts experience as follows:

> It involves the observer in complete wholeness. Thought and feeling merge as the conversation develops; they are inseparable not only because they occur simultaneously but because they are mutually dependent. I have called this whole-souled learning, 'the education of the heart', and education that begins when one is captured by a question, searches for an answer, and experiences the indirect fruits of learning, such as edification (p. 123).

Thinking in, with, and through the arts facilitates a living conversation while in full presence of one's thoughts, feelings, and will in order "to inform and illuminate what is there to be realized" (Greene, 1995, p. 138).

Similar to Osguthorpe's (1997) whole-souled learning, I now understand from the Waldorf graduates' storied experiences how Waldorf Education intends to birth graduates who can pursue living in an integrated, holistic manner through their head, heart, hands. From this study's data, clearly some Waldorf graduates' recognize the need to balance their sense and reason being and some even (at first) struggled to do so when they were without the arts-infused opportunities from Waldorf Education. Some graduates in this study speak about an empowerment in balancing reason with sense perception. This begs of educators to consider what it would mean to have citizens who seek understanding from intuition, insights, feelings, and emotions as opposed to primarily relying on reason–seeing with both eyes (Palmer, 1993). The arts look for the truths just as sciences, yet accomplish this in a different way. Both modes of inquiry, through the arts or sciences, afford rectifying of problems and reflective thought. Yet, art exploration allows equal validity for intuition and personal perception for meaning making and solutions.

As I interpreted the results of this study, I find myself advocating for the spiritual self to find its place in mainstream education. Needed is a new educational paradigm (and maybe Waldorf Education is the model) for holistic discovery processes. Much of our lives exist in the space beyond reason (Chopra, 1991). Have those outside of Waldorf Education primarily ignored developing a necessary inherent capacity in our students–their aesthetic spirit?

Recommendations

As a result of the findings of this study, possible alternatives and considerations could enable us, as educators, to more appropriately teach to the whole child as well as redeem the arts from their marginalized school status (as seen in the majority of today's schools). In a climate where the arts are at risk of being deemphasized within mainstream curriculum designs, the findings of this study provide an alternative paradigm supportive of arts integration. In *Discussion of the Results* (above) I advocate for educators to consider the benefits of the arts related to several pedagogical topics: seamless arts integration, arts as meaning making, teaching as art, hands-on (arts) learning, imagination and flow experience, emotional intelligence, and the whole (sense and reason) being. Viewing the outcomes of Waldorf aims and practices can inspire educational reformists to rethink current educational paradigms and brainstorm about how educators can respond more creatively to individual, holistic needs of children.

John Dewey (1934) acknowledges, "attitudes and meanings derive from prior experience" (p. 71). In *Art as Experience* Dewey states that occurrences and events pass, "but something of their meaning and value is retained as an integral part of the self" (p. 109). From this study, I consider how Waldorf graduates' have been influenced by their arts experiences. "Perception appears to be automatic, but in fact it is a learned phenomena"

(Chopra, 1993, p. 40). From this study, I acknowledge the art experiences graduates have at our educational institutions have a bearing on how they perceive the world.

This study demonstrates how seeing in, with, and through the arts has benefits to our youth embarking on the postmodern world. In the shift away from a modernism paradigm, postmodernism refuses to privilege one perspective (Bradburd, 1997), so it behooves us to move our educational vision towards one that utilizes knowledge from many perspectives and in many contexts, including arts as ways of knowing. If we can enter a space that allows educators and students to think in ways beyond just reason and rather through the interconnected ways of a creative person mediating the postmodern world, then we can shape life differently. "Through balance, not only will we be able to address the world more steadily, we will change it" (Oddleifson, 1997, p. 60).

Appendix G offers an overview of my discussion of findings. Below I highlight a few considerations specific to educators:

1. Connectionism in learning is enhanced through quality seamless arts integration curriculum.
2. Seamless arts integration is a step towards fully activating the cognitive potential of the learner through its support of arts as another way of knowing.
3. Internalization of knowledge is enhanced through personal arts-based ways of knowing (such as the arts meaning making components of main lesson books).
4. Internalization of knowledge is enhanced through transmediation between sign or symbol systems (such as in main lesson book activity).

5. Hands-on learning within quality arts curriculum can provide for will-developed intelligence, aesthetic development, and the optimal experience of flow.
6. Imagination and play, not as addendums or accessories within schools, encourage seeing with the mind's eye post graduation as well as support a necessary human attribute.
7. The arts provide emotive motivation as well as opportunities for development of emotional intelligence and identity awareness.
8. Curriculum supporting balanced thinking, sense perception and reason together, supports whole being learning.
9. Students can recognize passion and artistry in pedagogy and are subsequently motivated when educators teach as an art.
10. Sustained educational experience in the arts (problem solving in the arts) has a transformative quality upon students and in turn, as adults, they see, act, and live in creative, artful ways.

Before leaving *Recommendations*, I offer a word of caution to educators. Some art educators resist or oppose arts-infusion in fear the arts will become a handmaiden to other disciplines. For consideration, Oddleifson (1997) offers from *Horace,* a Coalition of Essential Schools newsletter:

> Controversy within arts disciplines themselves often inhibits the infusion of arts into the teaching of sciences and humanities. Many arts educators fear that aesthetics, criticism, creation [arts production], and art history will be watered down by such means–that the 'art component' of an integrated curriculum will be mere gesture made of toothpicks and Elmer's glue, without depth, context, and meaning (para. 42).

As educators consider the benefits of the arts as found in Waldorf schools, I recommend they likewise contemplate the value that the arts possess as both tools of interconnected thought with other subjects and as credible stand-alone subjects. The art strands within integrated curriculum need to be carefully considered to avoid ineffective, watered down, and piecemeal approaches to the arts as a way of knowing. There is justification for having students perceiving the arts as both an entity interconnected to life and other disciplines and an entity not existing as handmaiden to other subjects and disciplines. Our experience in the world is related to how we view it (Allen, 1989); this warrants viewing the arts from both arenas.

Implications for Future Study

In noting the qualities of a told story, "the story is never 'told' finally, exhaustively, completely" (Elbaz, 1987, p.13). This study can only be a foundation of information and a beginning for gathering the story and view of arts curriculum within the Waldorf Education. There has been a limited view about the ecology of art experiences within Waldorf schools as well as the outcomes of such experience through the eyes of Waldorf graduates, those who intimately experienced the phenomena. The findings of this study provide a baseline for further investigation of the phenomena of arts experiences within both Waldorf Education and other arts-infused school initiatives. Further studies could explore beyond the interview narratives of these participating Waldorf graduates. For example, a beneficial study would be to obtain narrow and in-depth data from one or a few school cases through a triangulation of current teacher, current student, and graduate interviews as well as observational data from the particular Waldorf school ecology.

The narratives (the data) of this study should not be generalized among all Waldorf graduates, Waldorf educator, and Waldorf schools. Nevertheless, the carefully constructed member stories with meaning making about arts education should still resonate for many readers within and outside Waldorf Education. Within the interview data, Waldorf graduate Arjelia acknowledges the problem of making generalizations about Waldorf Education; she says, "It's important to remember that Waldorf schools bring different approaches and even within a single school, students have a wide range of experiences" (personal communication, July 4, 2005). Likewise, Manx says, "A school is a collection of people. I've had some exceptional people" (personal communication, May 4, 2005). Although school experiences are based on the pedagogical visions of those within the school ecology and these in turn impact the products of schools–their graduates, it is important to note that most of these participating graduates did not strictly credit Waldorf Education for any artistic needs, interests, and career choices. Researchers should wonder if there could be more diversity in experiences and meaning making among Waldorf graduates, as this study was limited to only fifteen perspectives about Waldorf arts experience. Future studies could explore a broader base of Waldorf school arts environments and the graduates of such phenomena.

Although (above) I suggest further research from a broader view of Waldorf arts experiences and the meaning graduates attribute to such experience, this study also implies benefits could be gleaned from narrowing future research to focus on particular, singular arts experiences such as the pedagogical practice of main lessons and the making of main lesson books. Graduates' comments overwhelmingly include discussion of main lesson books practices, outcomes, and values. The teaching strategy is powerful given that the graduates to this day cherish the experiences and products of the main lesson book learning activity.

Given Sanders-Bustle's (2003; 2004) research in verbal/visual internalization of knowledge along with the comments participating graduates offer about retention of information through main lesson book practices, future studies could explore adaptations of the main lesson book practice within other school settings. A variety of future studies could explore (with more breath and depth) the perceptions and outcomes of main lesson phenomena as found in Waldorf schools or in experimental settings outside Waldorf Education.

Likewise, any one of the many themes beyond main lesson books that emerged from this qualitative study could be closely investigated in future studies. Some such categories related to the themes in this study would be as follows: models and outcomes of seamless integration, curriculum affects on students' aesthetic code, emotive teaching strategies, methods and benefits of teaching the whole child, curriculum models inclusive of the optimal experience of flow, and the relationship of art making with sense of identity. From the baseline data of this study the list seems endless.

Follow-up research studies could narrow to focus on any one component of the lengthy interview protocol. For example, I asked participating graduates to define art. My intention was to use the definitions as contextual information to better interpret how the graduates were valuing their art experiences. An intriguing follow-up study could set out to analyze the art definitions of many Waldorf graduates in order to discover themes on how graduates from arts-infused curriculum could be perceiving art–their art attitudes. A comparative study could be made with non-Waldorf graduates' art attitudes and definitions.

During this study I was able to reflect upon data previously gathered in a pilot study about the visions of Waldorf school founders and in doing so I was able to better interpret the participating graduates' reflections. In other words, I was able to analyze the graduates'

narratives from this study with Waldorf teachers' curriculum intentions in mind. Researchers should wonder more about the art attitudes, visions, and abilities of Waldorf teachers who work from a place that views education as art. Future studies could explore the specific arts education training of certified Waldorf teachers. Researchers should wonder if effective arts-integration practices within Waldorf schools are connected to specifics in Waldorf teacher certification and training. Knowing the arts-based input on Waldorf teachers helps us to better understand the arts-based input provided to their students. Future research could facilitate a better understanding of the concept *teaching as an art*.

Educational researchers should wonder if graduates from other arts-infused school models have common values and meanings attributed to their schooled arts experiences to that of the Waldorf graduates. Such studies may help us to understand whether the participating Waldorf graduates' reflections and values are etic (observable outcomes that could be applied anywhere) or emic (only in the minds of the culture's members) in nature? Future studies could explore other arts-infused initiatives such as arts-integration charter schools, Multiple Intelligence schools, and/or Keys Schools. From my perspective, no single educational model is perfect, so educators can benefit from viewing paradigms outside mainstream. Case studies could further explore diverse arts-infused schools and their respective graduates' perceptions. Studies on lesser-known "private schools [such as Waldorf schools] can provide a view of what school can be" (Henry, 1993, p. 11).

This study demonstrated how Waldorf graduates remarkably recalled past art experiences as if the past art experiences are mnemonic devices for memory and current attitude toward art. Peer reviewers and I remain amazed at the ability graduates could recollect art occurrences dating back to the graduates' kindergarten experience. Future

studies could explore art attitude and quality of memories. Comparisons could be made to the art attitudes and memories recalled by mainstream graduates.

Given that life is fluid and ever changing, no qualitative analysis of lived experience is ever complete (Hatch, 2002). Waldorf communities, as with any school initiative, evolves and thus affords researchers ongoing opportunities for data collection and consideration. There are many more questions we could be asking of alternative school models such as Waldorf Education in order to further consider our personal educational paradigms.

I am excited about the concept that I leave this study with new questions to be answered. This study spurs additional research questions such as the following:

1. What is the nature of Waldorf teachers' creative endeavors and arts activities (i.e. Teacher College studies at their school, Waldorf teacher certification arts training, childhood background and arts education experiences…)?
2. What are the art attitudes, visions, perceptions, and abilities of Waldorf teachers?
3. What are the specifics of the arts education training for Waldorf teacher certification? And how do Waldorf educators learn 'Teaching as an Art'?
4. What are the relationships between the Waldorf graduate's arts experience and their Waldorf educators' arts experience?
5. Are the parents of children in Waldorf schools drawn to the arts-laden curriculum and experiences? And what are the Waldorf Education parents' reflections and perceptions of arts education?

6. Do Waldorf graduates' have a different aesthetic code (perceptions of art) than graduates from schools without arts-infusion?
7. What is the nature of values and meanings attributed to arts experiences by graduates from other arts-infused schools (i.e. Keys Schools, Multiple Intelligence Schools, arts-based Charter Schools…)? And how would these attributed meanings compare to Waldorf graduates perceptions?
8. What is the nature of other school models for arts integration (i.e. Keys Schools, Multiple Intelligence Schools, arts-based Charter Schools…)?
9. If the Waldorf Education main lesson book teaching strategy was implemented in experimental groups outside the Waldorf community, what outcomes would occur? And could students' visual/verbal connections and literacy improve with initiation of main lesson book pedagogy?
10. What is the nature of the K-12 main lesson books' content and visual aesthetic?
11. How many graduates of Waldorf Education and other arts-infused schools pursue arts coursework and/or arts-based careers beyond K-12 graduation?
12. Do Waldorf graduates with keen pictorial thinking skills have an advantage in our heavily visual mediated world?

The most relevant implication for this study is the impulse for others to seek beyond this baseline of knowledge in order to expand our communication of findings about the benefits of the arts within diverse educational settings and curriculum structures. Each of the many strands that emerged in the findings should be individually analyzed with further depth

and breath. Although I will spend more time analyzing these themes in the future, I trust that others will likewise hear voices of arts education advocacy within the participating Waldorf graduates' narratives. Arts infused into our learning and living provides personal humanness, aspiration, perception, energy, and spirit into the process of acquiring knowledge. In interpreting the findings of this study, I perceive Waldorf students are learning to learn and perceive. The arts play a pivotal role in perception and insight, including the sensibility and curiosity to see and solve problems. I agree with Rudolf Steiner's (1921/1986a) thoughts: "The aim is not so much that the pupils should accumulate a great deal of knowledge, but that [educators] prepare the ground for them to acquire the right feeling for the world" (p. 178).

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Appendix A

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR WALDORF GRADUATES' REFLECTIONS AND MEANING MAKING ON THEIR ARTS EXPERIENCE

Interview Model: *Three-interview Series* (Schuman & Dolbeare, 1982)

Phase #1 Goal: interviewee provides an overview of his/her Waldorf arts experience and context for these arts experience.

Warm-up Questions and Introduction

- What should I know about you? Tell me about yourself.

- What Waldorf schools have you attended? What year did you graduate from a Waldorf high school?

- Describe (tell me about) your past and current relationship and engagement with Waldorf Education and Waldorf communities (i.e. family's connection, post-graduation relationship, employment in Waldorf Education,…).

- Why did you agree or desire to participate in this study?

Art Experiences within the Waldorf School

- Please describe a brief overview of a typical day from your Waldorf Lower School experience (K-8 classes).

- Please describe the aesthetics of your Waldorf Lower School and classroom(s) environment (i.e. artifacts, images, colors, textures, sounds, gardens,…).

- Describe (tell me about) your involvement with the arts during your Lower Waldorf schooling, if any.

    - Reflecting about this time in Lower School, how do you value that Lower Waldorf schooling arts experience (How did this experience make you feel)?

- Please describe a brief overview of a typical day from your Waldorf Upper School experience (9-12 classes).

- Please describe the aesthetics of your Waldorf Upper School and classroom(s) environment (i.e. artifacts, images, colors, textures, sounds, gardens,…).

- Describe (tell me about) your involvement with the arts during your Upper Waldorf schooling, if any.

- Reflecting about this time in Upper School, how do you value that Lower Waldorf schooling arts experience (How did this experience make you feel)?

Phase #2 Goal: interviewee details art experience and establishes relationship to art-related epiphanies.

Art Epiphanies within the Waldorf School Experience

• Describe one experience in the arts during your Waldorf schooling that really stands out in your mind. The experience may be a positive or negative turning point or key event.

- What is most striking about this event?
- What was your reaction and feelings directly following this above art experience?
- How does this experience relate to you now?
- Are you surprised that you can remember this event? Why or why not?

• Within your Waldorf school experience, was there any particular work of that stands out to you art (i.e. music, visual, drama, creative movement, object/artifact, architecture, other).

- What was your first impression/reaction to the above work of art?
- Why do your remember this experience?

• Describe (tell me about) any artifacts from your Waldorf schooling that you have maintained.

- Why is it important for you to maintain these artifacts?
- What to these mean to you now?

Phase #3 Goal: interviewee attributes and expands meaning to his/her lived Waldorf arts experience.

Meaning Making about Arts Experience

• Some have said that our personal history effects the way in which we experience and what we acknowledge as experience. How do you think your specific Waldorf arts experiences may have impacted your post-graduation ways and experience?

• Reflecting back over all your Waldorf arts experience, what was really significant to you? Why?

• What do you perceive as the art attitudes, views, and/or beliefs that are supported within the Waldorf school environment?

- How do you define ‘art’? Summarize your definition of art.

- In thinking about what you have acknowledged as ‘art’, what does your unique past Waldorf arts experience mean to you now?

- With your definition of art and personal arts experience in mind, describe what role, if any, should art play in K-12 schools?

- From your perspective, state the ‘bottom line’ that describes the outcomes of your particular Waldorf arts experience. (This could be explained in a visual or verbal metaphor, sentence, phrase, single word, story…).

Additional Comments

- If you desire, please share any self-revelations or illuminations during this reflective process.

- If you choose to share, what additional comments do you want to provide to this study?

Appendix B

Participant demographics

Pseudonym	Gender	HS Grad. Date	Years in Waldorf	Grades	# Waldorf Schools	School's U.S. Region
1. Patrick	M	1993	4	HS only	1	NE
2. Michelle	F	1979	4	HS only	1	NE
3. Paul	M	1967	4	HS only	1	NE
4. Manx	M	1979	7	2-6, 10-12	2	Midwest, NW
5. Aniquiel	F	1996	8	K-4, 6-8	2	West, SW
6. Havela	F	2003	9	K-8	1	Midwest
7. Lukas	M	1999	9	K-8	1	West
8. Jonathan	M	2001	8	4-12	1	NE
9. Anna	F	1998	10	1-4, 7-12	1	West
10. Layla	F	1997	11	K-10	3	NE
11. Maryanne	F	2000	13	K-12	2	West
12. Arjelia	F	2003	13	K-12	3	West, NE
13. Janna	F	1997	13	K-12	1	West
14. Emily	F	2001	14	PK-12	1	Midwest
15. Vincent	M	1993	14	PK-12	5	West, NE

Appendix C

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF PARTICIPANTS

Graduate #1

Patrick (1993 Waldorf graduate) experienced only his high school years in a single Waldorf school. Patrick's parents were born from Hungary and Germany. Patrick, as first generation American, transitioned into a Waldorf high school after attending in a type of one-room-school house school ecology. His graduating 8th grade class from such school consisted of two children. Although Patrick was satisfied with the crafts and music curriculum at his Waldorf high school, he struggled and disliked drawing and sculpting especially given that he had no prior K-8th grade knowledge or school experience in these art forms.

Patrick describes himself as a professional student since 1979 (currently is graduating with a Doctor of Philosophy in Geology). He now is considering a career in investment banking, management consulting, or working for a research organization. He is obsessed with alpinism; thus, he only works because he has to, so he says. To this day, Patrick sees his fellow high school Waldorf graduates weekly.

Graduate #2

Michelle (1979 Waldorf graduate) experienced only her high school years in a single Waldorf school. She arrived at her Waldorf school because it was the only private high school in the area. (She had no family background or connection with Waldorf Education). She attended K-8th grade public schooling with thorough exposure to the arts except for arts integration curriculum. Michelle described herself as a creative visual arts person during her childhood. When she transferred into her Waldorf high school, she felt disappointed when discovering not enough formal visual arts instruction time as well as access to art media was afforded to her.

Currently Michelle is employed as a mid-west university administrator. Similar to some of her Waldorf school experiences, Michelle utilizes the art of storytelling to inspire her Sunday school students.

Graduate #3

Paul (1967 Waldorf graduate) experienced only his high school years in a single Waldorf school. Paul's parents attended prestigious preparatory schools. With frustration and confusion about what to do with someone as artistic as their child, Paul's parents sent him to a Waldorf high school. Upon arrival at his Waldorf school, Paul was able to build a photography laboratory and prolifically make art.

Paul is currently a practicing artist in photography with major exhibitions. Paul says that he knew from the age of 8 that he wanted to create art, yet he spent most of his life in

random meaningless occupations. While often putting creativity on hold, Paul has raised a family and returned to college at age forty. Recently, Paul has returned to his first love–full time photography.

Graduate #4

Manx (1979 Waldorf graduate) experienced his 10th-12th grades and 2nd-6th grades in Waldorf schools. Manx entered Waldorf schools after struggling both at inner city public schools and a Catholic high school. His parents, one a children's librarian and the other an English professor, were led into Waldorf Education from their studies of Anthroposophy. Manx was surrounded by artists and poets growing up and had many childhood opportunities for aesthetic involvement. After Waldorf Education, Manx graduated from an art college.

Currently Manx is employed as a multimedia designer and video editor. He describes himself as a father, husband, artist, designer, moviemaker, editor, sound designer, musician, poet, mechanic, engineer, natural philosopher, and amateur exotic physicist. He is married to a fellow Waldorf high school graduate and continually ensures imaginative play within his little girl's life.

Graduate #5

Aniquiel (1996 Waldorf graduate) experienced her Kindergarten-4th grades and 6th-8th grades in Waldorf schools. Although she was born in France she only lived there until she was 3 years old. She entered American Waldorf schooling with a language barrier where arts-inclusive teaching strategies became imperative meaning making tools or devices to bridge communication gaps. Her ESL (English as a Second Language) status was foundational for developing a predisposition to drawing.

Aniquiel attended a higher education art school for two years until an injury differed her degree goal. Currently, she works as a massage therapist and claims her main hobby is art in any media.

Graduate #6

Havela (2003 Waldorf graduate) experienced her Kindergarten-8th grades in a single Waldorf school. Although her parents were not educated in Waldorf their interests grew including Havela's mother becoming a Eurythmy teacher. Havela volunteered within her mother's Waldorf classroom. Havela has loved and valued her Waldorf Education.

Currently, Havela attends a liberal arts college majoring in art with a special interest in photography. She describes herself as well rounded with interests and activities in sports, band, choir, theater, languages, environmental issues, and travel. She loves to travel (17 countries to date).

Graduate #7

Lukas (1999 Waldorf graduate) experienced his Kindergarten-8th grades in a single Waldorf school. Lukas was sent to Waldorf schools due to the widespread use of natural elements and arts-inclusion in the curriculum. His parents supported the fusion of academics and the arts. Since a Waldorf high school was not available to Lukas at the end of his K-8th grade schooling, he had to attend a non-Waldorf high. Lukas stated that he likes to maintain some closeness to the Waldorf and Anthroposophical community. Once, he even substitute taught at a Waldorf high school for a year.

Lukas describes himself as a politically aware academic. He believes that there exists misconceptions about Waldorf and this idea drew him to participating in this study. He wants to have a chance to dispel the misreading of Waldorf Education.

Graduate #8

Jonathan (2001Waldorf graduate) experienced his 4th-12th grades in a single Waldorf school. Although he was born in Switzerland he only lived there until she was 3 years old. He was raised in an upper middle class suburbia family and in an exceedingly European household. Jonathan was led to Waldorf Education due to the inadequate public school education system in his hometown; Jonathan expressed that his public schooling was poor.

Jonathan was drawn to participating in this study due to how his skepticism about the manner Waldorf Education prepares students for the standardized test format of the public school system was challenged in a recent community psychology course. He stated that the course rekindled a positive interest in Waldorf. Jonathan utilized this study to reflect on his past Waldorf experiences. Jonathan graduated with Bachelors of Arts degree in Psychology and planned on attending graduate school with emphasis in Human Factors.

Graduate #9

Anna (1998 Waldorf graduate) experienced her 1st-4th grades and 7th-12th grades in a single Waldorf school. Anna's mother has been an early childhood educator who uses Waldorf principles in her curricular practices. Anna's family was connected with a Waldorf community throughout her childhood. Anna was active in the Youth Section of the Anthroposophical Society including planning some of their International Youth Conferences.

Anna states that she is dedicated to equity, social justice, and school reform. Although she has a degree in Psychology she is currently a Masters student in Education with multiple subject certification. She works within non-profit, arts-based Waldorf Education programs that nurture children's relationships to the world through music, story, arts, and the earth.

Graduate #10

Layla (1997 Waldorf graduate) experienced her Kindergarten-10th grades in Waldorf schools. Her father attended Waldorf schooling in Switzerland. Layla's mother and father shared Rudolf Steiner ideals while working with special needs, differently-abled students. The family moved to the United States when Layla was 3 years old. Although Layla did not maintain an intimate relationship with the Waldorf community (she stated that the Waldorf community can be a little dogmatic), she has continued to incorporate some Waldorf ideals in her daily life.

Layla attended an art school preparing her for current employment as a conservation technician with responsibilities in the maintenance and treatment of works of art in paper, books, and photography. Currently, she is preparing for a graduate program in art conservation. She enjoys art, sciences, history, ballet, surfing, traveling, meeting people, and learning more about almost anything.

Graduate #11

Maryanne (2000 Waldorf graduate) experienced her entire Kindergarten-12th grade schooling in Waldorf schools. Although she was born in England, Maryanne only lived there until she was 2 years old. Maryanne's parents met at an Anthroposophical college and consider themselves Anthroposophists. Maryanne was raised within the Waldorf community her entire childhood. She has worked a summer job for the Rudolf Steiner College.

Maryanne has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Biology and Psychology. In attending a mainstream university Maryanne was disappointed because she was not given opportunities to directly use her artistic abilities. She expressed that she is fortunate in being able to express herself using art and to appreciate surrounding beauty.

Currently, she is pursuing a Masters degree in Public Health. When she graduates she is interested in joining the Peace Corps in hopes to support HIV and AIDs preventive education in West Africa.

Graduate #12

Arjelia (2003 Waldorf graduate) experienced her entire Kindergarten-12th grade schooling in three different Waldorf schools. Arjelia reported that her mother was very involved in her Waldorf schools and the Waldorf lifestyle such as Anthroposophical medicine and biodynamic agriculture. Her father was a board member at her sister's Waldorf school. Arjelia worked with special needs children in several Waldorf school settings. She has enjoyed networking and meeting more Waldorf graduates.

After spending a year volunteering in Americorps, Arjelia is now a college student. Currently, she is trying to choose a major among several social sciences. Arjelia is interested environmental education and tries to spend time in Nature. She reports that she sees herself

as a creative person who loves art-based activities even though she chooses not to make art or an art career the center of her life.

Graduate #13

Janna (1997 Waldorf graduate) experienced her entire Kindergarten-12th grade schooling in a single Waldorf school. Janna entered into Waldorf schooling after her parents fell in love with Waldorf Education. Her parents even became trained as Waldorf teachers. Janna worked as a substitute Waldorf teacher during her college schooling.

Janna reports that she is excited to be in law school and loves to learn and explore. In particular she enjoys nature, art, reading, gardening, life, and people. She is proud of her education and family background inclusive of Waldorf and intends to help others during her lifetime.

Graduate #14

Emily (2001 Waldorf graduate) experienced her entire PreKindergarten-12th grade schooling in a single Waldorf school. She entered Waldorf schooling after her parents bumped into a Waldorf Education display at a holiday fair. Her mother has had some training as a Waldorf teacher, yet pursued a music therapy career. Emily's father is an Anthroposophical doctor. Both parents are classical musicians.

Emily is currently graduating from a college in premed and plans to be a doctor. Playing cello as her love sustained her throughout college studies. Immediately after graduation Emily plans to work with disabled individuals in educational settings. She reports that she wants her children to attend Waldorf schools.

Graduate #15

Vincent (1993 Waldorf graduate) experienced his entire PreKindergarten-12th grade schooling in Waldorf schools. He attended five different schools due to his family's relocations. His parents had strong connections to Waldorf Education including his mother's teaching position within a Waldorf high school. Vincent shared that his current attitude toward Waldorf Education and Anthroposophical communities was ambivalent and felt he was oversaturated with Waldorf during his childhood.

Currently Vincent is employed as an electrician. He describes himself as an eclectic thinker who is currently working on living his life according to aesthetic sensibility rather than by just the rational. He utilizes hand drumming for balance in his life.

Appendix D

College of Education
University of Missouri-Columbia

Learning, Teaching, and Curriculum
Carrie Nordlund
303 Townsend Hall
Columbia, MO 65211-2400
(573) 882-2214
FAX (573) 884-2917

February 10, 2005

Dear ,

As a Waldorf graduate, you have been selected to participate in an educational research study. The study is being conducted as part of my doctoral thesis in the Department of Learning, Teaching, and Curriculum at the University of Missouri-Columbia. The study seeks to describe the kinds of art experiences, both positive and negative, that you and other Waldorf graduates have had Lower and Upper School. The study will also examine the relationship between these past art experiences and current attitudes toward art. Since there is a limited view about the art experiences and attitudes of Waldorf graduates, this study will be pioneering. The most significant benefit of this study is the opportunity for you and other Waldorf graduates to gain insight from your reflection process.

My study is a narrative study where data is gained from Waldorf graduates' through one-on-one email interviews with me. I will provide you, and other Waldorf graduates some interviews prompts that will promote reflection about experiences with art. The questions that I will pose are open-ended with no single answer; thus any thought or opinion you have will be valid and appreciated. The data or stories gained in this process will be co-constructed between the participants and myself; I will provide you the opportunity to confirm the narratives and reflections.

The results of this study will be included in my doctoral dissertation. All information that you provide will be kept confidential. Neither your name, nor that of your school(s), will be published in the study. The data collected will not be used for evaluative purposes. Please note that participation is voluntary. Choosing not to participate has no imposed consequences or prejudices and you may discontinue participation at anytime.

Participation in this study will require you to share your personal experiences in three to five email responses. The time commitment for the totality of your responses should be approximately one hour. I anticipate the study being conducted during the months of March and May. To begin and consent to participation, please submit an email reply to me at cij @mindspring.com. Please state in your reply, 'Yes, I consent to participating your study.' Thank you for your consideration of participation.

Any questions that you may have will be answered by contacting, Carrie Nordlund, at (573) 642-0815 or cij@mindspring.com. You may contact my dissertation supervisor, Dr. Kathy Unrath, at (573) 884-8935, or UnrathK@missouri.edu. You may also contact the Campus IRB Compliance Office, Office of Research, at (573) 882-9585 or umresearchcirb@missouri.edu.

I look forward to learning about art experiences that occur in Waldorf Schools, hearing Waldorf graduates' opinions, and providing additional views of art curriculum to the larger educational community.

Warmly,

Carrie Nordlund
Doctoral Candidate

Dr. Kathy Unrath
Dissertation Supervisor

Appendix E

EXAMPLES OF DATA ANALYSIS

Memo Analysis

Portion of an Interview Transcript	*Memos*
Prompt: Describe the aesthetics of your Waldorf Lower School(s), classroom(s), environment(s).	
Participant Response: The architecture of some schools featured non-rectangular windows and doors, while others were more traditional. Class teachers often blurred lines between playtime and classroom/study time. A recess might go double length and include free-spirited observation of a pinecone, collection of different sized pinecones, and a mini lesson about how the pollen from needles would fertilize seeds protected deep inside.	Organic architecture What was the impact of this kind of play? What did this feel like? Theme(?) Imaginative Play Aesthetic vs. practical/rational What does play mean to you now? Nature investigations-impact on aesthetic code? Such detailed and descriptive words for an elementary school day recollection.
Soothing bells or flutes were used to mark coming and going, or other time critical events. Blackboard lessons were lavishly prepared with colored title headings and illustrations–sitting at my desk early and trying to guess what stories might go with the illustration one the lessons started was something I still remember. The main lesson books in middle school and after were as much about being beautiful artifacts as about containing a particular verbal content.	Theme (?) Arts as motivation to learn– "sitting at my desk early" Others concur Theme (?) Art as meaning making Steiner Blackboard- image a tool Pictures/ images for retention of information Theme (?) Seamless arts integration Aesthetic code revealed Does he consider main lesson books as art forms? Did he keep these artifacts? If so, why? As a child, did he consider main lesson work artmaking? Or was it just normal schoolwork?

Cross Case Analysis

Portion of an Interview Transcript	*Comparisons*
Prompt: Describe the aesthetics of your Waldorf Lower School(s), classroom(s), environment(s).	
Participant Response: The architecture of some schools featured non-rectangular windows and doors, while others were more traditional. Class teachers often blurred lines between playtime and classroom/study time. A recess might go double length and include free-spirited observation of a pinecone, collection of different sized pinecones, and a mini lesson about how the pollen from needles would fertilize seeds protected deep inside.	Organic architecture Corresponds to Graduates #82, #70 (Eurythmy room), # 40 (aesthetic dilemma), #90, #89, #72 (aesthetic epiphany) Imaginative Play Corresponds to Graduates #70, #31, #72, #89, #36 Nature investigations Corresponds to #82, #31 (gardens, dams, structural pools, lean-tos), #82
Soothing bells or flutes were used to mark coming and going, or other time critical events. Blackboard lessons were lavishly prepared with colored title headings and illustrations–sitting at my desk early and trying to guess what stories might go with the illustration one the lessons started was something I still remember. The main lesson books in middle school and after were as much about being beautiful artifacts as about containing a particular verbal content.	Arts as motivation to learn Corresponds to Graduates #47, #40, #36, #31, #55 Art as meaning making Corresponds to Graduate #69, #52, #40, #4, #55, #47, #20, #82 Seamless arts integration Corresponds to Graduate #4, #59, #52, #70, #20, #47, #40, #31, #55, #89, #90, #82, #36

Coding Analysis

Theme	*Raw Data Support*
Seamless Arts Integration: Arts in Everything	Looking back, one of the most significant things I gained from my Waldorf Education is the idea that art, song, and movement do not have to be separate classes in a specified room but can be incorporated some in every class you take (Layla, personal communication, April 25, 2005) It is difficult to reflect specifically on my involvement on the arts because it was not something separate from the academic curriculum itself. The arts were integrated into everything not something separate to be assessed independently (Anna, personal communication, July 5, 2005). I think art was such an integral part of the education, that it was just a part of life. I didn't think of art as something separate from me or from learning in general. It was in everything I did. I didn't realize how important art was for me until I graduated from high school and no longer got to do it every day (Janna, personal communication, June 4, 2005). Arts were so integrated into my education that it took me a long time to think of them as something one might have a talent in rather than something everyone did. Arts were not entirely separate from other subjects (Arjelia, personal communication, April 11, 2005

Appendix F

Summary of Techniques for Establishing Trustworthiness

Criterion Area	Technique
Credibility	Prolong engagement and building relationships Member checks Peer debriefing (review) Researcher reflexive journal Prolong engagement–*Three-interview Series* Triangulation– *Three-interview Series*
Transferability	Thick description– *Three-interview Series* Researcher reflexive journal
Dependability	Researcher reflexive journal Peer debriefing (review) Redundancy
Confirmbility	Researcher reflexive journal Multiple source contextualization Peer debriefing (review) Negative cases

Appendix G

Discussion of Findings

Theoretical Implications	Curriculum Recommendations	Implications for Future Research
Development of the whole child/person	Eliminate distinction between cognition and emotion (balance sense and reason)	Do students accomplish or achieve more through curriculum inclusive of emotional intelligence components?
	Afford art making experiences for emotional intelligence awareness	
	Design connectivity in learning objectives and standards	What meanings do K-12 students attribute to their arts-infused or integrated experiences?
	Utilize seamless arts integration	
	Honor the idiosyncratic student expressions/voices	What are the characteristics/ outcomes of imaginative play? (emotional, social, cognitive,…)
	Include imaginative play and fantasy in curriculum	
		Does exclusions of child fantasy and play effect learning?
Preparation of citizens for a postmodern world	Utilize transmediation inclusive of visual arts	Do students with pictorial thinking experiences have advantages navigating in our visual culture?
	Utilize seamless arts integration	
	Afford metaphorical, analog, and pictorial thinking	
	Design connectivity in learning objectives and standards	
	Provide art making experiences for self-regulation and emotional intelligence awareness	
	Deliver hands-on learning for rectification of open-ended problems and flexibility	Does long-term exposure in art problem solving enhance confidence?

Appendix G

Discussion of Findings

Theoretical Implications	Curriculum Recommendations	Implications for Future Research
Preparation of citizens For a postmodern world	Provide fine and practical arts curriculum for will-developed intelligence Include aesthetic investigations	How do Waldorf graduates and non-Waldorf graduates define art?
Counteraction to *No Child Left Behind* (closing the achievement gap)	Utilize art a way of knowing (another point of access) Include Main Lesson books teaching strategies(retention/ internalization of knowledge) Afford metaphorical, analog, and pictorial thinking Design connectivity in learning objectives and standards Teach as an art	Does inclusion of visual representations enhance student achievement? What is the relationship between arts-infused teaching methods and students' aesthetic disposition? Would Waldorf arts-infused strategies benefit mainstream schools and students? What are the perceptions and outcomes of main lesson book phenomena? What is the nature of Waldorf teachers' art backgrounds, training, and attitudes?

VITA

Carrie Yvonne Nordlund was born November 16, 1965 in Kankakee, Illinois. After attending public schools in Michigan, Illinois, New Jersey, and Connecticut, she received the following degrees: B.F.A. in Design/Fiber from Kansas City Art Institute, Kansas City, Missouri (1988); K-12 Teaching Certification in Art from Central Missouri State University, Warrensburg, Missouri (1992); M.A. in Art Education from Central Missouri State University, Warrensburg, Missouri (1996); and Ph.D. in Art Education from University of Missouri–Columbia (2006). She is married to musician Ike Sheldon of Phillipsburg, Missouri. From 1990 until 1999 she taught in museum education at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. From 1993 until 2003 she taught art in the Independence, Missouri public schools. From 2000 until 2003 she taught at Park University, Parkville, Missouri and the Missouri Fine Arts Academy of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.