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**Leading or Being Led by the Young to Later Arts Participation**

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## Leading or Being Led by the Young to Later Arts Participation

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Reporting on research conducted by the author for the Australia Council for the Arts this paper portrays later involvement in the arts from the perspective of a mutually influential relationship between artworks and their youthful participants. It documents how the social profile of young participants in the arts influences the status of the arts they go on to support, how sub-cultural attitudes of the young shape the economic viability of the arts, and how young people use the arts to satisfy different needs in their lives. It also shows how artworks and performances, in return, appeal to a range of technical, cognitive, and cultural sympathies of the young in ways that are often overlooked by educators. For example, how the arts can regiment, proselytize, satirize, propagandize, excite sexual interest, and challenge the status quo of their youthful participants.

This paper documents how the social profile of young participants influences the status of the arts they support and how the arts and recent ways in which the arts are represented, in return, capture the loyalty of young participants.

This paper represents participation in the arts as a socio-educational process of "leading and being led". The concept of leadership is contextualised within two current theoretical developments in the arts.

### *In what sense "being led"? Two frameworks of the arts in arts education*

The first framework places participation as a mutually influential relationship between its two major players - artworks and participants. It shows, for instance, how the social profile of participants influences the status of the arts they support, how the attitudes participants hold exercise economic influence over artistic performances, and how participants use the arts to satisfy different needs in their lives. It also shows how artworks and performances, in return, impose technical, cognitive, and cultural expectations on participants. For example, the arts can educate, represent nature, effect catharsis, entertain, stimulate emotions, provide spiritual experiences, simulate events, invoke aesthetic pleasure, and unify cultures. Equally they can proselytise, satirise, propagandise, excite sexual interest, and challenge the status quo. Educators often overlook many of these artistic functions in their sponsorship of participation in the arts. In this systematic sense, then, the young are seen to take hold of the arts and use them in the practice of their lives.

The second framework places participation with a context of historicist revisionism in the arts. This revisionism, begun in the visual arts more than twenty years ago with the work of Svetlana Alpers (1991) and Michael Baxandall (1996), is currently re-invigorated by advances in digitisation and by the political economics of globalisation. Revisionists see the politics of globalisation as a major site of artistic reconstruction. Under this impetus the properties and purposes of the arts are re-ascribed according to the value of the symbolic capital they trade. In its most radical interpretation the political economy steals artistic identity away from the art world 'elite' and places it in the hands of its consumer poor (Foster, 1996). Institutional consumers of the arts are diverse. They include, for instance, those in the fields of education and commerce. In education, for example, revisionists see the arts as more likely to be valued as a nursery for creativity, as a source of therapies, and

as a critical apparatus for democratisation, rather than as a special opportunity for the talented and the connoisseur. In commerce, rather than as the producers of priceless investments for the wealthy, the arts are valued as commodities for the building of consumer image and identity (Krauss 1996:91). In surrendering its identity to the political economy artistic production is left open to appropriation by practices of the popular, the vernacular and the every-day. Serving as de facto agencies of artistic production these informal institutions threaten the established identity of the art world and challenge the privileged role of artists and art historians in shaping artistic identity. Informal institutions oblige artists to compete on equal terms with artistic "ready-mades", anonymous artefacts caught by chance in the institutional sieve of politico-economic values. In this historicist revolution the intentionality of the individual artist is overthrown by a world of consumers and marketiers whose artistic role, although unselfconscious, emerges as a nonetheless patent influence in the production of artefacts. Portrayed as colluding in the production and consumption of the arts the young, in this sense, are being led unwittingly to later participation in the arts by the cultural politics of the market.

### *Art as a site of cultural resistance*

So how are the purposes of unintentional and spontaneously emergent artefacts identified? The authority to enunciate 'artistic' identity and thus ascribe motive to artefacts has been assumed by academic culture theory (Rees and Borzello 1986, p.2-11). Under the interdisciplinary domain of "visual culture", for instance, the incursion of culture theory is evident in the curricula of English literature, the visual arts, and in dramatic performance. Visual culture attributes the causal responsibility for the production of human artefacts to what Stuart Hall refers as its broad "institutional extensions" (1977 p.5-6). In as much as it **sets** this institutional agenda culture theory colonises the avant-garde in many fields of the arts at the expense of practicing artists. For this reason cultural interpolation in the arts has become more than a framework of academic critique. It has become a political imprimatur for practice. Insofar as all critical judgements about practices entertain a political voice culture theorists are aware that maintaining critical distance in the interpretation of cultural practice is an imperative. This raises a dilemma for cultural ascription in the arts. Despite its mantle of critical disinterest culture theory still retains many of its Marxist valedictories. Cultural interpolation of the arts, for instance, remains inherently a site of resistance to the hegemony of ruling elites. Cultural studies maintains a social reconstructivist stance even though the benefits of its resistance have been redirected from a Marxist proletariat to a more popular social grouping (Readings 1996). Cultural analysis is thus keen to de-politicise the critical basis on which it ascribes motives to the global economy. To counter its predilection for a leftist, hegemonic view of the political economy, cultural analysis relies upon the methodology of textual deconstruction. Its emphasis on deconstruction is based on the not altogether universally accepted agreement, that only the text has the power to objectify attributions of social causality and thereby lend scholarly neutrality to social critique (Crary 1996 p.33) On the other hand, the momentum gathered by a growing body of academic cultural analysis, however impartial, has had a powerful effect on the shape of artistic practices in the long-term. Under its tutelage the hyper-individualisms, feminisms, gender studies, and precisely framed blandishments of popular imagery, have gained orthodoxy and become correspondingly more self-conscious of their role. What 'is' has taken on the imperative of what 'ought'. Thus by re-draughting the institutional rules as to what and whom has the right to authorship of anonymous artefacts, cultural analysis indirectly sponsors the most radical social activism in the arts. Culture theory functions as a kind of contemporary Robespierre selectively agitating behind the scenes what it presents to the world, on stage, as a popular and spontaneous revolution against elitism in the arts.

### *The decline of virtuosity and talent*

Most directly, however, historicism challenges the material and technical role of the practicing artist. With the authority to re-appoint artistic identity to whom or what social agency it decides, without deference to accredited trades and canons, cultural studies strips artists of their pretensions and thereby challenges their necessity. For instance, culture theory polemicises the virtuosity of the artist. The elitism implicit in the skills of the virtuoso performer is seen by cultural analyses as an affront to egalitarian democracy insofar as it denies the tools of culture to the most disadvantaged. Culture theorists dismiss the virtuoso performance in the arts as little more than a futile bid for celebrity. The virtuoso is represented as mis-appropriating creative causality to themselves and thereby effecting a fraudulent escape from the deeper cultural identities reproduced in their works. From the culture theorist's point of view virtuosity leads to works that are meretricious and inauthentic. Precisely as in classical thought, where the pre-Socratic poet is transformed from a seer of the truth into an artisan made untrustworthy by their skill, culture theory perpetuates a Platonic suspicion of virtuosity in the arts. This suspicion is born of an aristocratic linking of honesty and the truth with socially inherited nobility, a grouping from which the artisan is excluded (Brown 2001). In classical Greece the artisan is degraded as a person who either uses materials in ways that betray their natural integrity, or who use them in fashioning gratuitous illusions (Detienne ). The façade of egalitarian resistance to the artworld elitism propagated by culture theory conceals a resurgent academic elitism in the arts. This elitism dis-equates the nobility of the artist with their craft in the belief, common among Anglo Saxon universities throughout the last two centuries, that the school is no place for the learning of a trade (Brown 1998).

### *The role of new media in cultural revisionism*

Coincidentally digital technology provides a new measure for redistributing the wealth of the virtuoso to the representationally poor. But the PC and the DVD redistribute virtuosity largely for commercial rather than egalitarian reasons. At the consumer level digital technology remits stylistic differences in the arts by deskilling practice and down-grading the presence of the uniquely crafted signifier. With digitisation of the sign "...the elision of the material support for the sign, whether written or pictured-has only intensified, increasingly giving cultural objects the effect of a kind of mirage-like precipitate of "nature" presented to their receivers" (Krauss 1996:84). Digitisation collapses the act of sender into receiver, of performance into production. It removes the asymmetry between the sign and the signified, the "difference" inherent in the concept of a reference. The composition of ready-made images and sounds, exemplified in the digitised pastiches of the DJ and ubiquitous in the signage of the urbanised environment, spring into virtual existence as simulacra (Baudrillard) . Without the need for a preceding original nor any possibility of any meaningful provenance, these transitory simulacra transform every artefact into fictional, quasi-artistic images and sounds. Therefore it is not recovery of the author that heralds their artistic identity. Precisely as Marcel Duchamp and later George Dickie predicted of *objet trouvé*, virtual entities are polished into artistic production by acts of cultural re-identification alone.

New media theorists such as Lev Manovich have reconsidered the transmission of digitised culture within the art of a post-media aesthetics. Manovich positions the artistic use of digital technology within the authorship of software which he nominates as a new object of cultural analysis. Authorship of software may not always be of the intentional kind identified with the agency of the traditional artist which he calls "software behaviour" (Manovich 2001:15). Authorship may be a wayward unfolding whose agency takes time to recognise. Its technical composition is not predetermined nor deterministic technically, but rather software may sit in a functional space reciprocally informed by the inputs from those other authors and recipients who subscribe to it and by the adjunct technology they employ in its application.

As will be pointed out below, however, most current software is engineered at a level or predicated on commercial ends that lies outside the grasp of new media artists and critics. Therefore a cultural critique of software itself currently languishes at the level of technical gossip or focuses on issues of commercial viability that lie beyond the horizon of artistic explanation.

### *Revisionism and arts education*

In visual arts education revisionism is late in coming and polemicised in its zeal. Revisionists call, predictably for the revolutionary displacement of psychological by socio-economic frameworks of justification in the curriculum (Duncum 1999, Freedman 2000). Their revolutionary critique sits incoherently with the poststructural agnosticism of cultural critique. The revolutionary agenda is a caricature of the cultural position sketched out above. Revisionist curriculum increasingly intellectualises or, more precisely, textualises practice in the arts as the re-ascription of cultural authorship to ready-made and vernacular "appearances". Cultural authorship of ready-mades and vernacular productions, through disclosure of their essentially hidden socio-cultural causes, stands in stark contrast to the technical and material production of conventional arts education. Using frames borrowed from critical theory, the school subjects of English, visual arts, and music are not so much rendered interdisciplinary as amalgamated into uniformity.

Cultural studies curricula situate young people within a world of artistic anxiety. The young are represented as being alienated from conventional artistic practice by a legacy of intellectualised European modernism, by the elitism of wealthy collectors and, by globalisation, from the specialised virtuosity of local handicrafts. Cultural revisionism presents young people in all societies with a bounty of artefacts whose utter contingency presupposes their meanings as hidden and their purposes as suspicious. Against this background of artefactual deceit, it is argued, the young must be readied by arts education to defend themselves using techniques of critical disclosure (Freedman 2000). In mass curriculum arts educational revisionists see the traditional making of art as an increasingly futile activity. Individually works made by children, it is suggested, will be simply swept away in an anonymous torrent of digitised hyper-imagery. In a world of digital technology, where every artefact is either originated or eventually reduced to screen based imagery, the exercise of **material** skill is considered pointless. Digital technology is intolerant of anything but simulated perfection, a perfection it guarantees at the user level. At the deeper level of software engineering, arguably the true site of artistic autonomy in the digital domain, commercial restraints constrain the freedom of the artist. While the rhetoric of creative individuality clings to practices in the arts, expressions of **actual** difference in the digital economy are either dismissed as a technical flaw, treated as commercially disloyalty or, for the hacker, outlawed as anarchic and anti-democratic. Practices at this professional level, or at the level of serious resistance, are thought to have no place in the school. Practice in schools must content itself with the re-composition and critical re-identification of digitised ready-mades, and with emancipating students from the political rhetoric of globalised hyper-imagery for, as we shall see below, for moral ends.

### *The functions of the audience*

People participate in the arts in different ways. The binary division between artist and audience, with its structural connotation of sending and receiving messages, over simplifies the nuances of purpose that motivate participation in the arts. Surprisingly the contemporary notion of the 'audience' is a philosophically unnecessary component of the arts (Zangwill 1999). Religious ritual, carnivals, festivals, connoisseur collections, indigenous crafts, and everyday cultural practices of all kinds use the arts in ways that blur the communicative metaphor of artistic participation. Nevertheless, the notion of the audience in the

contemporary Western arts has acquired an orthodoxy (Danto 1964). The orthodoxy of the audience influences artistic participation in a number of ways. Firstly, the audience commodifies participation in the arts. As the notional market for the arts the audience is both the major variable of economic management and the main indicator of economic performance. In this sense, then, the audience is more than a free market force. It is an agency used by the market for the achievement of economic goals. Secondly, the market sees participants in the arts as audiences even where participants themselves may not. For example, people can participate collectively as live members of a television comedy show self consciously aware of being in an audience. At other times people may participate unselfconsciously in the arts without perceiving of themselves in the audience role. Art gallery visitors to blockbuster exhibitions, or congregations listening to a church choir, for example, are more likely to think of themselves as private beholders or even participants. Thus what it means to be an audience in the arts can be understood on a number of levels of participation and be associated with a complex range of experiences by individuals. Thirdly, the notion of audience has helped to normalise artistic meaning in the community. As a sample of artistic opinion the audience democratises critical value. The collective audience tends to direct measures of artistic quality away from the properties of artworks and performances, towards the values of popularity and community relevance. Indeed it is a Western conviction that all works of ballet, music, and the visual arts, ought to be informally open to everyone's understanding. The patent fact that they are not gives rise to the cultural tensions and diversity of arts educational approaches elaborated within this report.

#### *The arts as immediately accessible to all, the eye and ear of the beholder*

The most commonly shared view about the arts is that the understanding and enjoyment they afford is and ought to be, in the end, transparently accessible to simple aesthetic contemplation. It is popularly believed that no theoretical deduction or special training, other than general levels of linguistic competency, is required to satisfy the terms of ordinary artistic transactions. Although it is widely agreed that generational, ethnic, and class divisions differentiate the kind of arts that are enjoyed most by the community the basis for these artistic likes and dislikes, according to popular wisdom, comes down to explanations of aesthetic preference. It is simply accepted that different groups in the community like different things.

#### *Audience as cultural practice*

Common sense, however, is little help in understanding the reasons why distinctions exist in the degree and character of participation in the arts (Bennett 1997: 89). The common sense view leads to the false belief that market research into artistic taste alone provides a sufficient basis for capturing the reciprocal relation between the arts and their audiences. But the community's likes and dislikes are not driven exclusively by aesthetic choices. Pierre Bourdieu has demonstrated convincingly, through demographic studies and by means of powerful explanatory theories of cultural practice, that the reasons why people participate in community activities, such as being members of a particular kind of audience is shaped, like all similar social activities, by the logic of its practical use in their lives (1991, 1984, Bourdieu and Darbel 1991: 37-41). Taking their initiative from Bourdieu, Bennett and Frow (1991, 1994), and Bennett, Emmison, and Frow (1999) in Australia, and Merriman (1991) in Great Britain, reveal how participation in the arts provides a way of meeting a wide range of social requirements beyond the aesthetic orthodoxies of popular belief. Take, for example, the concept of "self exclusion". Bourdieu argues that, despite the assumptions of equal access embedded in the aesthetics of common sense the arts appeal, in actuality, to socially privileged values which the socially underprivileged, who lack a comprehension of these values, mistake as their own common failure to understand (1984: 320-372). Or consider the less conspiratorial conclusions arrived at by Bennett that privileged participation in the arts is

merely a side effect of the social capital attracted by the well informed professional classes. It follows from these examples that many of the motives for audience participation are socially implicit and therefore hidden from the intentional choices of participants (Merriman 1991: 83). Thus, it is a precept of this report that disclosing the links between young people's exposure to the arts and later arts participation requires a measure of critical interpretation. Nevertheless, these links are perceived within a broad church of relevant concepts and contributory factors in which no one explanation stands out.

### *The interaction between education and arts education*

Arts education programs provided by schools and arts institutions for children concentrate mainly on psychological objectives and the production of expressive and appreciation outcomes. The focus on spontaneous performance in most school drama programs, for instance, is only incidentally concerned with developing audiences for the theatre (Drama 1998: v). School arts programs produce the arts as a 'large scale' rather than 'restricted' form of cultural production. There is no evidence that the egalitarianism of school arts programs breaks the socially discriminate pattern of reasons why people attend the arts later on (Bennett 1997: 90). The arts in school are chosen within a closed system (Efland 1976). The social profile of participants in arts education, the reasons for choosing arts based subjects, the contextual opportunities such as teacher quality, physical space, class size cut offs, as well as the grounds for successful artistic achievement in schools, are complex and only indirectly related to the kind of social values that motivate audience participation in the world outside. Bergonzi and Smith report that even though the rate of participation in arts creation is higher in later life among those with high levels of arts education, consumption of the arts, particularly the performative arts, is lower in those with lower levels of educational achievement overall (1996: 49). Even in retrospect those with the least formal education recall that they preferred to learn about the arts in school by doing practical work, while the more highly educated say they preferred to learn through regular contact with art itself (Bennett and Frow 1991: 32). A middle class respondent by contrast with a respondent from the working class recalls that it was the lessons about art in high school that encouraged her appreciation for Australian art (Bennett 1997: 100-101).

Yet the reverse is more likely to be true. In other words is what students make of their arts educational experiences outside the school system no more than they would make of their knowledge of high school Botany in relation to a developing passion for domestic gardening? Inquiring into levels of post-school interest in other subjects in the curriculum seems quaintly inappropriate by comparison with similar inquiries in the arts. Patterns of schooling at large, rather than patterns of particular subjects chosen, are more closely related to the networks of social capital that underlie the profile of cultural participation in later life (Bennett, Emmison and Frow 1999: 267-269). Bergonzi and Smith agree that general levels of education are the most important indicator, especially for arts attendances, but they also conclude that in other than the performing arts, "Education makes more of a difference in arts consumption ... for people with more extensive arts education than it does for those with little or no arts education background" (1996: 49). Nevertheless, they insist that specific elements of personal background such as class, gender and ethnicity affect which Americans gain access to arts instruction (49 -51). For instance they point out that even though levels of arts education is the strongest predictor of arts participation it is also the case that not many socially underprivileged Americans participate in the classical arts overall. They also caution that surveys do not discriminate the depth of participation. What constitutes a rich involvement in the arts is a crucial factor in gauging the significance of arts information. But it may not be a measure that respondents are qualified to self-report on reliably.

If policy seeks to increase participation in the less 'popular' arts by using mass education to 'correct' the social profile of audiences, then policy must ask what are the purposes in making these corrections since it appears that arts education alone is unlikely to do the job. Is it for purposes of creating a more equitable redistribution of audience profile for the 'working classes' and thereby increasing audience sizes and advancing the economic independence of the less popular arts? (Bennett 1997: 108). If so this goal sits uncomfortably with the inward looking arts educational objectives currently found in most school syllabi.

There is also the yet unanswered question of whether preferences for the mediated and popular arts by the young are taken on into later life, the so called "cohort effect", or whether the structure of early generational preferences for the media evolves with maturity into the classics. The Australian playwright Stephen Sewell says the reason he stopped writing for the theatre and writes screenplays is "It was once the case that theatre was relevant and film wasn't. It's now the case that theatre isn't relevant and some film is. Film is an international medium" (Holgate 1999: 22). The contemporary relevance of film which Sewell speaks about is due, perhaps, to its ability to speak to the young who are its overwhelming supporters. The increasing relevance of film might be leading its young adherents into a new artistic elitism. If this is so it may be unwise to use educational policy to "correct" the social imbalances in theatre attendances when the social relevance of the theatre itself is under legitimate challenge through evolutionary change (Bennett, Emmison and Frow 1999: 102).

Nevertheless, there are strong relationships between the educational profile of audiences and the nature of their participation in the arts.

#### *The significance of education as a factor in the demography of audience participation*

Evidence associating the participation rates for audiences in the arts with educational background bear out the views sketched above. (McDonnell 1992, Bennett 1995, 1997, Australia Council 1996, Bennett and Frow 1991). There is more than sufficient evidence that levels of general education are higher amongst regular audiences in the arts (Robinson 1998:47). However, Bennett and Frow qualify the strong link between educational levels and cultural participation warning that tertiary qualifications mask the possible effects of concomitantly high professional status and income levels (1991: 28).

Women predominate in audiences for the arts, but women also predominate in educational participation in the arts as evidenced by the HSC evaluation reports for Dance, Music, Drama, and Visual Arts (NSW HSC Subject Evaluation Reports, BOS 1998). In tertiary arts education, especially in the fine arts, art history and theory enrolments favour women. Women teachers predominate in all domains of the arts.

Under twenty fives, irrespective of their educational level, display significantly lower levels of attendances in the opera, theatre and musical concerts, and significantly higher levels of consumption of cinema, radio and television (Bennett 1997: 102). Young people generally listen to music radio more than adults, but they are more likely to listen to programs dedicated to their interests. They are a third more likely to attend the cinema. Nevertheless, young people prefer a similar mix of television programs to that watched by the general population (Bennett, Emmison and Frow 1999 : 79-86).

There is a strong relation between public attitudes to the arts and levels of education. Those who attend art galleries have higher levels of educational qualifications than the population average. McDonnell reports that the more educated the public the less boring they find the arts, the more they feel a sense of pride in the achievement of artists and performers, the more they feel a sense of loss if the arts were removed, the more they believe the arts need

to be subsidised and enrich the quality of life (1992). Although most people believe children to be out of place in art galleries, Bennett and Frow report that gallery visitors have a younger age profile than those attending other cultural activities (1991: 18). Even so there is a positive correlation between regular gallery attendance, patterns of regular attendance in the other arts, and high levels of education.

Using 1992 survey data drawn from across the visual and performing arts in the United States, Bergonzi and Smith found that arts education was the strongest predictor of all types of arts participation either as consumption or creation (1996). However, they also report that the higher the socioeconomic status of respondents the more arts education that was received and, significantly, received through community rather than public school based educational agencies. This is evidenced in Australia by a marked increase in what the *Australia Council* refers to as spending on "cultural lessons" over the past twenty years (1996:17). They also report that while men have similar exposure to the arts in school, this similarity is not maintained within post-school community based programs in the arts. White respondents reported far higher levels of arts education than did Asians, African-Americans, or Hispanics. Apart from tertiary arts students, arts practitioners, and those attending in the performing arts, there is little evidence of strong links existing between formative arts educational experiences and degrees of arts participation, unless these experiences are accompanied by high levels of educational achievement overall. The compounded association between educational levels and other socio-economic registers, such as level of income and opportunity for leisure reinforces the view that education is simply one function in a complex exchange of symbolic capital represented by audience participation.

Nevertheless, the effects of prior arts experiences upon various audiences remains a fertile area of research, with a small number of studies fielding significant results (Orend and Keegan 1996, Robinson 1985).

#### *Leisure as a function of youthful participation in the arts*

The notion of leisure dominates governmental categorisation of the arts in Australia (Arts Education [Senate] 1995). Leisure is acknowledged as a major motivation in the consumption of the arts (Merriman 1991:83). Most of the systematic studies into the causes of audience participation in the arts, including their pursuit as leisure, have been conducted into museums and art galleries. By comparison with other arts institutions museums and galleries provide their visitors with a minimum of pre-planning, normal visiting hours, accessibility, opportunity for family involvement, flexibility of engagement, and quantifiable educational content that adapts them to the casual informality expected of a leisure pursuit. These features also make art gallery audiences a relatively 'capturable' object of psychological investigation. Unfortunately, for many of these same reasons, the attitudes of gallery and museum audiences are not as representative of audiences in the performing arts. In the performing arts the 'live' performance is aesthetically structured into a linear sequence governed by restrictive institutional codes of behaviour. Marilyn Hood observes that young people "accustomed to half-hour television programmes and grazing over leisure activities that offer quick rewards" will be less likely to want to attend lengthy exhibitions that require more active participation. The same can be said for the performing arts (21). Hood's comments highlight the active-passive distinction implied between participation and entertainment that represents the two sides of the leisure coin in the arts. Bennett and Frow state "Once again, however, we also see that those with higher educational attainments seem to be more active all-round 'doers'" (1991: 30, Merriman 1991:73). Those who report their only attendances being for casual or "passive" reasons, such as visiting cultural venues while on holidays, tend to be those with the lowest educational levels (Prince reported in Merriman 1991: 77). Nonetheless, Falk reports that learning outcomes measured in a group of museum visitors were as high for those who sought educational benefits from their

museum experience, as for those who sought entertainment. Importantly he reports, as does Friedman (1997) and others, that although education and entertainment are not significantly dependent upon each other, neither are they polarised (1997: 115). The concept of the audience as active participant is taken up in this report further below.

The arts have become an inordinately expensive leisure pursuit, even for the middle classes (Falk 1998: 41). For children and young adults the expense of casual attendance at art gallery special exhibitions can be prohibitive. Time is precious and it has become increasingly rare to gather the whole family at home at the one time. When the family does gather the opportunities provided by mediated home, as opposed to live entertainment, represent an increasingly efficient and undemanding leisure opportunity (Hood 1994: 22). The school has taken over from the home as the provider of many of the major 'leisure' events in children's' calendar. Perhaps this is because of the cost benefits provided by school visits in overcoming impediments of distance and time. The National Gallery of Australia, for example, reports seventy two thousand visitors originating as school tours. Yet surprisingly, those who report spending more time at work spend also spend more time attending cultural events, even after taking into consideration factors such as age, education and status (Robinson 1998: 47).

Nevertheless, the arts retain a competitive share of public leisure time. In the United States a recent *National Endowment for the Arts* survey into public participation in the arts reports forty six percent attending cultural events, broadly defined, as opposed to forty one percent who attended a sporting event (1997: 46). In the metropolitan areas the per capita attendance at arts related events out rated attendance at sports events by a ratio of 1 to 1.2. In New York, Boston and San Francisco, where cultural infrastructure is high, the ratios were commensurably higher at levels of 1.48, 1.35, and 1.56 respectively (46). The Detroit Office of Cultural Affairs, lamenting the disparity between over five hundred million dollars spent by the city council on a new sports stadium and only twenty million on their Symphony Orchestra Hall, have good grounds for their complaint (47).

#### *The limitation of leisure as a motive in arts participation*

Just because most audiences seek the arts outside the envelope of their working lives doesn't mean that participation in the arts is necessarily transacted as leisure and entertainment in the minds of participants. Simon Frith (1998) argues that the role of the popular arts in the social practices of young people is much more urgent than is supposed and that questions of what is aesthetically good or bad about pop music play a serious rather than a casual role in the sociability of their lives. Young people, he argues, are able to differentiate on grounds of sociability how their interest in popular music ought to be adjusted to the different social contexts they inhabit. There is considerable support for Frith's point of view.

Young people are not a homogeneous social entity. They are tribal (Strickland 1999). The youthful 'audience' is honeycombed with niche markets and sub-cultures. It is a media savvy group that ridicules clumsy appropriation of its interests by educationists and marketers. The identity of each sub-group is closely coupled with artistic forms or styles of expression. Each sub-group entertains a distinctive style which is usually fragile and not necessarily 'understood' by others (Gelder and Thornton 1997: 373). Style allows a group to recognise itself and be recognised. Thus style is always relational, "measuring itself...against much wider contexts" (373). Style is political insofar as it has an enabling function in relation to the sub-culture it signifies. The outward character of a style is vulnerable to misappropriation. There are those who subvert the sub-cultural purposes of a style by elevating it into a fetish, and those who exploit style as a fashionable commodity. Because group membership hinges on a respect for stylistic details the threat of misappropriation requires an aesthetic policy for

guarding against the corruption of stylistic authenticity and for differentiating good style from bad. The application and amendment of these aesthetic policies engage young people in earnest debate and demarcation disputes. For example, the classical rigour of J. S. Bach has been reworked by heavy metal and its audiences into the unifying musical signifier of "metal's" sub-cultural identity (Walser 1997: 466). While the virtuoso music of Bach has become the "sombre music of America's aristocracy", classical Bach has also been reworked by virtuoso guitarists from "metal" groups such as *Judas Priest*. Heavy metal, in other words, is a largely musical sub-group that is held together in no small part by the technical rigour and purity of its guitar riffs. Its audiences are alert to any lack of accomplishment or impurities of classical form in heavy metal performances. These they interpret as signs of decadence that pose a challenge to the political integrity of the culture.

Sub-cultural participation in the 'popular' arts rehearses many of the characteristics of elite participation in the 'restricted' arts. The capacity of young people to represent the function of the arts differently in the stratified contexts of their lives, albeit unselfconsciously, has profound significance for the way in which institutions effect the process of educational enhancement in the arts (Orend and Keegan 1996). Young people may well use aesthetic judgements to socialise their identity with peers yet, in educational settings, seek understanding rather than identity or entertainment from their music. In the design of educational programs, therefore, it is important to differentiate between the plethora of projects that make instrumental use of the arts to effect goals of personality correction in youth, from those programmes that make careful use of the social reasoning behind young people's own record of participation (Rothestein 1996). This point is worth expanding a little.

#### *Young people's concept of audience*

The mental and social development of children is characterised by marked advances in reasoning up until maturity (Freeman 1997). Interspersed with episodes of regression, these advances progress steadily up until early adulthood. The explanation of mental development has changed decidedly during the latter part of this century. Current explanations of cognitive development favour a representational account of reasoning (Perner 1991). Representational accounts characterise the development of reasoning as advances in the ability of children and adolescents to make causal inferences about - the properties belonging to objects, about the rules which predict the way objects and artifacts behave, as well as predictions about the motives and practices of other people. It is important, therefore, to emphasise that youth audiences are differentiated by their developmental potential to fully occupy the roles that being an audience variously asks of them. A ten year old may very well be able to enjoy a performance of popular music as a member of an audience. Yet, unlike a fourteen year old, she may not possess the mental resources to represent the range of 'hidden' possibilities in audience participation, such as using - 'the audience as a means of cementing social relationships', or as 'a way of realising the aesthetic point of view of others in her group,' and so forth.

Falk and Dierking (1997) investigated the significance of school field trips to museums as they were reported in the memories of elementary school children, secondary school children and adults. All the groups were able to recall educationally significant details. A key element in the study, however, is the way associated experiences of feelings, friends, the ambience of the physical setting, and the journey itself are integrated into the respondent's ability to recall the details on display. The authors suggest that the educational significance of institutional experiences for young children lies in their differentiated sense of occasion. The social field of young people does not present the designers of audience development programs with a common level of receptivity. What young people are able to import into their concept of participation in the arts, therefore, is a compound of practical imperatives constrained by social reasoning. Cognitive development in the arts is not confined to

contextually isolated knowledge and experience about the arts, therefore, but is qualified by developmental variations in the global way young people understand their notion of an artistic event.

### *The relation between the cognitive complexity of artworks and audiences*

However, the functional use of the arts as a factor in later arts participation can be over-emphasised. Of those who attend art galleries and museums there is an inverse relation between their levels of educational attainment and the aesthetic intelligibility of the kinds of art works they prefer (Bennett 1994:33). Marilyn Hood warns that as museums reach out to new audiences they "will have to be prepared to help novice audiences cope with the 'museum code' of objects" (1994: 21). Freeman quotes George Eastman, founder of the Eastman School of Music in Rochester New York, who, reflecting on the best ways of securing the future for musical performances, remarked "...what was needed was a body of trained listeners... . It is fairly easy to employ skilful musicians. It is impossible to buy an appreciation of music" (1996: 2). Merriman says, arguing that audience participation is so determined by contextual factors that the content in a particular play, exhibition or performance is irrelevant, is absurd (1991:132). "...What must be accepted, though, is that visitors will not necessarily interpret the [particular work or performance] in the way intended by [its presenters, curators and so on] (132). Presuppositions about the difficulty of the arts and the manner in which different audiences and learners are thought to engage with them, shapes the way performances are presented. The cognitive complexity of the arts raises three concerns.

#### *1. The cognitive revolution in the arts*

The cognitive 'revolution' in the arts has transformed the way the arts are learned (Diblasio 1997). Artistic understanding has been turned from an experiential into a representational kind of knowing (Langer 1952, Goodman 1968, Gardner 1973, 1983; Best 1995, Perkins 1994, Lakoff 1988, Baudrillard 1996). Aesthetic immediacy, a concept that has served in the educational defense of the arts since the eighteenth century, has been discredited. It is no longer believed that art works are delivered to their audiences, as Margolis says, in a form already prepared for interpretation (even if it is believed they were in the past). Audiences are required, instead, to secure the key that "cracks the cultural code" giving them access to the meaning of works (McLean 1996).

Cognitive theory proposes, counter-intuitively, that the arts are not easy but difficult to understand. The reasons are obvious when they are pointed out (Freeman 1995, Freeman and Brown 1998, Zaitchek 1990). Works of art are first and foremost representational artefacts. For this reason they have what Richard Wollheim refers to in pictures as a "twofold" relation to the things they represent (1987). Unlike other representational forms of knowledge artworks provide their audiences with both the object represented and the form of representation. Geographers may be required to make geographical representations of the habits and regions occupied by the Maasai, but the Maasai themselves are not required to be fictional representations. Juliet in Baz Lurhmann's *Romeo and Juliet*, on the other hand, is a representational artifact. We can only know Juliet through her relationships within Lurhmann's movie or through her presence in other performances or readings of Shakespeare's play. In other words, the arts provide no appeal to a reality beyond their 'frame' of view as a systematic way of checking up on the truth of their representational meanings. As a corollary the critical ascriptions given to artworks depend upon well founded imputations. The credibility of these imputations is validated by the causal links provided by the historically fragile theories within which they are framed. These frameworks range in their samples from tacit eighteenth century aesthetic immediacy, and its recent manifestation

in the somatics of the body, to explicit forms of cultural determination and postmodern rhizomatics (Kristeva 1982, Dowling 1993, Zimmerman 1993, Deleuze 1995, Elkins 1999).

The arts function at one level for purposes of aesthetic enjoyment and on another level for purpose of understanding. Problems invariably arise as the former become dependent upon the latter. This happens partly because the most challenging works artfully conceal their meanings and partly because practical explanations in the arts are localised to particular works and dispensable. Cognitive theory in the arts implies the use of more stable relational and referential frameworks, or functional keys, which can be used to unlock the enjoyment of artworks. Dennie Wolf says we must "look 'internally', examining the interactions between the several stances which an individual often takes to visual experience: that of producer, the perceiver and the reflective critic" (1989: 36). She calls these interactions "conversations between the stances" which she suggests are each important to achieving success in the other, and equally important within all the arts. It is now seen as critically significant for the development of contemporary and traditional art forms that institutions take responsibility for building the "literacy" of their audiences (Boston 1996, Hillman-Chartrand 1986).

With the advent of cognitive theory analysis of the learning strategies used by visitors and audiences in arts institutions has changed correspondingly. In a study into the way visitors plan their museum experience Falk and his colleagues use Relativist-Constructivist approaches to analyse of the strategic reasoning used by their respondents (Falk, Moussouri and Coulson 1998). They say

Specifically, this means it is assumed that each individual brings varied prior experiences and knowledge into a learning situation and that these shape how that individual perceives and processes what he or she experiences. Given the varied starting and ending point of each individual learner, traditional methods of assessment, which rely upon everyone starting at the same place (e.g., "no knowledge") and ending up at a similar place (e.g., "the correct answer") have serious flaws (109).

These investigators measured results across four parameters, the *extent* of knowledge vocabulary, the *breadth* or range of conceptual understanding, the *depth* of conceptual and categorical understanding, and *mastery* - the quality of expertise in describing to others what they had learnt. Cognitive analyses of this kind provide valuable tools for the realistic evaluation of the educational interaction between incidental experience and interventionist programs in arts institutions.

## 2. *The educational advantages of cognitive theory in the arts*

Many advantages flow to arts educators from the use of cognitive theory in the arts. A semio/cultural framework of interpretation releases critical appreciation from the unsatisfying self evidency of aesthetic descriptions. It frees the teacher from the tyranny of "contextualism" the dependence upon first hand or 'authentic' aesthetic experiences of lessons held in proximity to the work. It allows for the preparation of background materials which unpack the cultural references of works including those, for example, of gender, race, ethnicity, and social status. It releases exchanges between teachers and students from the solipsistic sway of personal opinions, banal judgements and gratuitous interpretations. Arts education thus takes on an instructional complexion more commonly shared with other educational domains and 'theory', anathema to arts education in the middle of the twentieth century, assumes a leading role in shaping the direction of artistic knowledge. In short, the cognitive revolution has added the resources of language to domain specific modalities in

the visual and performing arts. However, the addition of language goes beyond the application of linguistic metaphors to conventional practices in the arts. Music, for example, already possesses a notational system (Goodman 1974). Nevertheless, concepts such as the "language of music" or "visual literacy", for instance, misrepresent the impact of cognitive theory (Brown 1989). While fostering the semiotic "literacy" of an audience through a language of vision may appear politically attractive to arts educators (Boston 1996, Hillman-Chartrand 1986), the bid to convert visual and musical modalities of representation into a universal linguistic archetype misses the point of the cognitive revolution and commits a domain mistake (Adi-Japha and Freeman 2000).

### *3. Cognition, institutional sovereignty, and participation in the arts*

The current institutional boundaries of the arts are subject to challenge from a number of directions. Firstly, technical innovation is gradually eroding the distinction between the "high" and "low" arts. Indeed, as Walter Benjamin observed, technology has not merely effected the patterns of artistic consumption, it has changed the nature of the arts being consumed. For example, at first digital technology had little impact upon the entrenched conception that drawing originates as an innate talent. Software designers tried initially to capture the expressive intuition of drawing by designing touch sensitive electronic pads and pens. Talented artists and children, it was thought, could use the computer as a tool for drawing expressively only if it could be sensitively adapted as an extension of the hand. Much later in the century, however, digital artists have dispensed with touch sensitive pads. The keyboard and mouse have become just as appropriate to the process of digital drawing as they are for word processing. As a result there are an increasing number of successful auteur/designer/engineer artists who have never drawn conventionally. This is evidenced in the profile of students enrolled in tertiary design programs. Digitised production of high quality images have made positions in music, cinema and the graphic arts accessible to young people who possess only vernacular levels of technical skill in the disciplines lending these fields their name. Digital technology popularises artistic competency. Interactivity via the internet lends symmetry to the relation between the artist and audience in the electronic media, a division in which asymmetry has been the benchmark of communication up until now. Nevertheless, technical innovation as an issue in both the high and popular arts is not new. From the beginning of the century technological change in the recording of parlour music, in the cinema, radio plays, and illustrated magazines, has altered the patterns of participation and popular access in the arts. Technical change alone, therefore, cannot account for the continuing relevance of the low/high art debate in the fields of arts education.

Secondly, the "popularity" of the arts is not only decided by their level of complexity, singularity, and pedigree. It is decided by the way in which their images and performances are understood. Once defined by their aesthetic quality the boundaries between the arts are drawn up under cognitive theory according to differences in their symbolic domains (Goodman 1976, Winner 1982). Cognitive approaches to the arts concentrate on the semantic properties of performances, that is, on what the arts mean and how their meaning is framed. To perceive the arts as a symbolic domain is to abstract their meaning. It allows the defining features of arts objects and performances to be detached from their specialised material and technical constraints, and from their specialised presentation in museums, galleries, theatres and other centres of institutional guardianship (Marcel Duchamp's "Ready-mades", Dickie 1974). Abstract notions of the arts are easily transportable from art form to art form. Significantly the abstract portability of the arts under cognitive theory also allows the popular and folk arts, even images of the everyday, to be apprehended as art (Baudrillard 1996).

### *Cultural Studies, arts education and values*

Under traditional assumptions of aesthetic immediacy in the arts (eg. Pepperian contextualism) subject content is validated by the quality of the artworks to which students are exposed – that is – "art determined" (Broudy 1973). Under cultural theory content is validated by the quality and value of the information that arises from culturo-telic reasoning about artefacts – that is - cultural meaning. This has led to a 'democratisation' of the visual artefacts eligible for critical analysis, insofar as the quality of the art no longer determines the value of the content in arts educational curriculum. Ironically, then, the cognitive revolution has encouraged the somewhat opportunistic but increasingly influential opinions of some arts educationists to advocate that art is really about "life" (Freedman 1998, Duncum 1999, Willis 1998). Paul Duncum, for example, argues that education in the arts ought to draw its curriculum from the study of everyday media, a source of "artistic" content he believes to be more relevant to contemporary youth. He bases his support on clear evidence of the inverse correlation between the cultural interests of the young and the old (Bennett, Emmison and Frow 1999: 99). Nevertheless, the popular arts have always had a presence in Western and most other cultures and interest in them has always been driven by the young. Thus it is not so much the popular leanings of youth towards the mass media but cognitive theory, formalised into the discipline of Cultural Studies, that has given to popular imagery and performances of the everyday, the necessary rigour to be entertained as a serious field of 'artistic' investigation (Inglis 1993). Paradoxically, then, advocacy of the popular arts in arts education has been attendant upon their theoretical elevation, under the banner of Cultural Studies, to a state of "seriousness" commensurable with the high arts (190).

For this reason issues of quality are just as much a concern within popular culture as in high culture. Citing John Ellis on public broadcasting, Peter Goodall says

...the debate seems divided between, on the one hand, the most unconstructed paternalism of the concept of Public Service Broadcasting with its fear of 'ordinary people and their values' and, on the other hand, the abdication of concerns with quality in favour of a notion of diversity (Ellis 1990: 34). While this sounds all right it offers no mechanisms by which plans can be laid or priorities listed beyond the, very laudable, principle that 'everyone should have a chance to see their particular interests... presented on their TV screens (1995: 173).

Cultural Studies treats the ethics of artistic production as a 'politics of rights' (Inglis: 175-9). Under the politics of rights, high, traditional or classical art is explained as a contingency of cultural exclusion and of elites. A political emphasis on human rights is reluctant to do two things. One, it is hesitant about differentiating between good and bad art on the grounds of anti-elitism. For instance, when teachers alert their students to the way in which their naïve palettes are commercially exploited by the food served at *McDonalds*, teachers are not merely warning students against the abuses of a global corporation. They are also being critical of their student's childish tastes. While on the one hand, under the auspices of visual culture, teachers may claim the food served by *McDonalds* ought to be respected through the democracy of popular choice, they simultaneously imply, on the other hand, that the food at *McDonalds* ought to be condemned for pandering 'irresponsibly' to the values which underlie that choice. Elitism can creep into art educational discourse as easily through the back door of cultural critique and disapproval as through the front door of high canonic art. Elitism is thus not only confined to the differentiation of values it also depends upon the way in which those value differences are presented. Two, Cultural Studies reduces the value of art and its performances to a knowledge of their causes, that is, to their 'cognitive' value. In

other words, the politics of rights 'theorises' cultural production in the arts. It converts the arts from the dictates of what ought to be to the explanation of what is. It naturalises the ethics of artistic production by stripping away the distinguishing virtuosity of the maker and by mounting a democratic attacks upon the tyranny of talent. It favours cultural explanations of the images produced, over explanations based on the technical and other practices of production. "Beethoven couldn't have helped but produce his romances for piano given the period in which he lived, his personality, his social class, and his level of opportunity. His achievement is attributed to his context rather than to his technical brilliance and the properties of his music."

This approach to artistic value contrasts with the 'politics of policy and action'. The politics of government policy and action is far less squeamish about laying down the differences between good and bad in the arts. Under the politics of policy and action, the high arts are differentiated by their technical and aesthetic superiority. Peter Goodall concludes that the demonisation of high arts as "elite" is a false conclusion of Cultural Studies insofar as artistic distinction is conflated with the culturally stratified terms on which the objects of the arts are consumed. Predictably, Cultural Studies has tended to side with the popular and to remonstrate with capital C culture (1995: 173). Sarah Thornton argues that young people appreciate this fact if not the aesthetic of high culture. Young people, she argues, are misrepresented as victims who are driven by the unconscious social forces of their context. The dominance of human rights politics within Culture Theory, she says, fails to take into account the way in which youth sub-cultures impose clearly differentiated aesthetic conditions of their own on their adherents (1997: 5). Youth sub-cultures are tolerant in their membership, she says, only if the membership pay sufficient respect to the collective stylistic agenda. As Bennett, Emmison and Frow concede

...precisely because of their diversity and heterogeneity, regimes of value are not reflections of preexisting social orders of class or gender or age, but are, on the contrary, formative of them (1999: 104).

#### *The relation between general levels of education and autonomy of artistic choice*

The quality of cultural choice exercised by many people at the highest educational levels, appears strikingly liberal in its tastes. Peterson and Simkus found, for example, that many people in the high band of educational achievement were what they describe as "omnivorous" in their musical preferences (1992: 169). Omnivores have a taste for all kinds of music, even if a special preference for some. Despite their liberality omnivores are highly discriminating of the best in each kind. In addition, omnivores are active participants in all genres. Nevertheless, omnivores are not exclusively confined to the educational elite. There are "lowbrow" omnivores as well. Lowbrow omnivores exercise autonomy within one musical preference but are restricted in the range of musical genres they prefer. Young people are the least autonomous omnivores, demonstrating a preference for musical genres that fall into the restricted "lowbrow" commercial range. Importantly there is a trend towards more pluralistic development in taste amongst those youthful omnivores who go on to occupy a place among the educational elites. However, Bennett, Emmison and Frow report that the tolerance for cross musical genres at the highest levels of mature autonomy is exercised at the level of knowledge rather than at the level of genuine preference (1999: 195-200). Professionals report, in other words, a high level of knowledge about music but a narrow preference for classical forms.

*Art serving cognition or cognition serving art:*

Omnivores place knowledge and status on an equal footing. Knowledge enables them to import elite aesthetics into the popular arts. The antinomy to "high" art in Cultural Studies represents a misuse of cognitive theory when it mistakenly confuses 'theory' with the application of value to works and performances in the arts. It is a value confusion that elite omnivores, who apply both concepts of knowledge and preference, are careful not to make. Antinomy to differentiation of the high arts on the grounds of value reduces works and performances in the arts to the servitude of validating theory. The generalisations of theory tell us little about the individual works themselves, offer very little practical advice to creative participants, and mask the powerful social agency that genuine aesthetic preferences exert. Poststructuralists sternly condemn theoretical naturalisation of cultural practices of this kind (Bourdieu 1998, Foucault 1973, Goodall 1995:173). In the *Theory of Practice* Bourdieu demonstrates how cognitive analyses are always in danger of imposing their own rationalist agenda onto the explanation of cultural practices (1990: 112). Bourdieu shows how the indeterminate nature of the arts is always at risk of being 'exposed' as false belief by structural analyses. O'Toole's adaptation of Michael Halliday's functional grammar, for example, applies a universally applicable system of linguistic functioning to the explanation of art. His object is to bring clarity to the meaning of works in the visual arts by representing them according to a range of descriptive purposes (1994: 12-40). But Halliday's reformulations throw a blanket of structural 'clarity' over artworks that conceals their historical complexity. Although artworks often appear confused and unclear by standards of retrospective analysis they are, nevertheless, usually 'confused' for very good, if idiosyncratic, contextual reasons. It is not the role of cultural analysis to 'clear up' the confusion, but to show us what the confusion means (Tyler 1986).

Let us be clear, explanatory theory is a valuable educational tool in the arts. It makes new information presented by the arts intelligible by formulating its uses and meanings. The possession of theory democratises knowledge and can further the intellectual autonomy of those possessing it. Theoretical generalisation is attractive to poorly trained teachers in the arts who can see the efficiencies in a common system of explanation across different artistic domains. Cognitive theory is welcomed by many competent arts educators dissatisfied with the way in which traditional aesthetic theory has been unable to make sense of the avant guard; nor introduce new audiences to the aesthetic demands of the classical arts. But theoretical generalisations miss the critical point of value in the arts and value, it appears, is a major social **driver** rather than a passenger of participation in the arts.

The lack of an easy and reliable method for generating critical commentary through education (irrespective of culture theory) remains an obstacle to fostering a widespread audience in the arts. Baxandall points out that pictures, for example, are described using three principal indirect moods of the language - "cause" words, "comparison" words, and "effect" words (1985). Cause words are used to make inferences about the way pictures are made. Comparison words refer to the properties of the picture, and effect words describe the effects that pictures have upon the beholder (1-11). The high levels of linguistic competency demanded by Baxandall's three descriptive moods, ensures that critical understanding in the arts stays in the hands of the educational elites, the very group who need it least. It would be helpful if educational textbooks could deliver an efficient scheme that audiences could take away and use in coming to terms with particular artistic detail. But arts theory founders on the sheer lack of system underlying the arts as a cognitive field of study.

If this is a weakness of the cognitive revolution for audience development in the arts what, in summary, are its advantages?

- Thinking of the arts as a kind of knowing rather than a cause of experience extends the role of the arts beyond that of a leisure activity. Youth seek understanding from educational programs about the arts. Thus audience development programs for young people are miss-guided in the belief that programs providing increased levels of entertainment will enhance audience loyalty.
- It explains how the arts are integrated into the system of young people's social reasoning in complex ways. These integrated social networks extend far beyond the institutional contexts in which the arts are presented. This insight has profound ramifications for the design of youth programs in the arts insofar as it focuses upon the use of 'arts participation' in young people's lives.
- It gives access to knowledge about children's' development. It can provide audience enhancement programs with practical guidelines on the social reasoning that underlies children's maturing ability to participate as an audience.
- It provides young people with frameworks of reference for the critical interpretation of the arts, even if these conceptual frameworks play into the hands of the linguistically privileged.
- Thus audiences can be developed "as audiences" without necessarily resorting to expressive and other creative models of participatory learning in the arts. Nevertheless, it is in the discretion of programmers to be aware that many cognitive insights into the arts can only be approached by pathways of creative participation. Remembering, also, that the cognitive significance of practical creation in the arts outweighs its "immersion and entertainment" value.
- It renders presuppositions about the division between high culture and vernacular culture in the arts irrelevant insofar as, culturally speaking, the level of explanation demanded of the latter can be as complex as that for the former, at least for purposes of educational understanding.

It is because young people are effectively interned within the popular media, partly for the reason that the media is so inexpensive and accessible, that they have learned how to participate as audiences within it so effectively. To be an audience in the arts is to know how to do something, namely how to integrate the arts, as Wittgenstein says, into a way of life. Above all this takes time. Educational significance for the arts depends upon the notion of audience acquired as a form of know-how. Young people need to learn how to apply the arts within their emotional, social and cognitive lives in order to become effective audiences for them. The root metaphor of communication in the arts is misleading insofar as it portrays the role of the audience as a passive receiver and of the arts as a mono-functional medium for the transmission of information. The idea that the relation between the arts and media and their youthful audiences is cynical and exploitative is equally misleading. It denies the interactive way in which the arts lend shape to the projects of people's lives and the way in which the media mirror youth interests. It also denies the way in which young people ascribe complex functions to the arts that penetrate deeply into the values of their lives. There is not enough time outside the home and in school for this to happen. Nevertheless, the evidence of success in this regard is found in the passionate significance that art, music, dance and drama have for those students who have the opportunity to participate.

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