

## On the Need for Arts-Based Research: A Response to Pariser

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### Abstract

In the proceedings of the 1st Conference on Arts-Based and Artistic Research, David Pariser raised a series of serious concerns. This paper is a response, not a refutation as Pariser's doubts will endure as persistent challenges that arts-based and artistic research must address.

Historically, the current university system never dealt with the issue of how art is a research activity, it simply presumed that whatever artists do must be research. Therein lies a problem that haunts us to this day. Research must demonstrate criteria and only those artistic practices that meet these criteria may be called research. Through criteria we make judgments of quality. Arts-based and artistic research do not engage will all kinds of aesthetic relationships; they focus on those that provoke desires to concentrate attention in order to attempt to grasp new possibility. The question is, *when* is aesthetic relationship research?

There needs to be a serious re-examination of how art might be research, how it is a training of mind that many students could benefit from, and effect a change in academia from the current system that tends to nurture only the talented few. Arts-based and artistic research is about changing the foundations of how we conceptualize the role of art within higher education.

Each of the fourteen chapters in John Dewey's *Art as Experience* suggest successive criteria for judging arts-based and artistic research. The establishment of criteria is important to sound research methodologies that open and explore new imaginative possibility.

### Key words

Criteria, Arts-Based Research, John Dewey.

### Introduction

In the proceedings of the 1st Conference on Arts-Based and Artistic Research (Hernández-Hernández & Fendler, 2013), David Pariser (2013) raised a series of serious concerns. These are substantial; they deserve close examination. Furthermore, I believe Pariser's paper deserves keen attention because it exposes many of the complexities surrounding arts-based research in the social sciences and artistic research as has been applied in research universities in the past. Research universities face new challenges. Do the social sciences really need arts-based research methodologies? Should these even be tolerated? How should universities align their artistic programs to the European Union's mandate of the Ph.D. in Studio Practice as the new terminal degree? Already, before the Ph.D. in Studio Practice, there were serious questions that asked if artists seriously needed advanced academic through the Masters of Fine Arts. The Ph.D. in studio practice may seemingly only throw gasoline on to that fire. Pariser provocatively questions the motives of those who advocate these new directions.

In this paper, I propose to move through Pariser's arguments in the sequence he presents them. This paper is a response, not a refutation. At the end, Pariser's doubts remain. They will not go away; they will endure. If we were to follow the argumentation of the philosopher Karl Popper (1985),

that these criticisms remain would be proof that arguments in favour of arts-based social science research or artistic research are false. However, in aesthetics—and here I think of the work of Jacques Rancière (2010)—the philosophical importance of the discipline is in challenging us to think in contradiction. Zygmunt Bauman (1992) refers to this aesthetic philosophical stance as *freischwebend*, in literal translation from the German, to hover above. Knowing requires not knowing, a state of being lost in order to find. The American educational narrative researcher Valerie Janesick (in preparation) speaks of arts-based methods as opening minds, allowing us pause in our realizations of what is not yet within our scope of comprehension, and sharpening our attention to experiences that we may encounter, but as yet still remain unknown.

## **Of Art and Research**

There was a time when the training of artists was separate from universities. For example, in the United States, an institution like the School of the Art Institute of Chicago is affiliated to a museum, not a university. In the United States, this separation broke down in the wake of the Second World War when returning soldiers were given financial support to attend university. To the amazement of authorities, large numbers of these soldiers wanted to study the fine arts, not as historians, philosophers, or aestheticians, but as practitioners. They wanted to paint, sculpt, and write poetry. If university administrators were to capture this new source of money, then new creative arts programs had to be immediately created, without the academic formalities of planning and curriculum review. In a capital driven educational system's rush to money, the thorny issue of how exactly art-making is a research activity was glossed over with the quip that whatever artists do must be research. Therein lies a problem that haunts us to this day.

One problem in artistic practice serving as a research model is the absence of peer review. While external grant funding may provide some level of oversight of museum curatorial decision-making, there is no guarantee that decision-making panels are composed of scholars. Bodies charged with funding decisions might be composed of donors and neo-liberal vested interests. Collectors buy what they like; gallery dealers tend to exhibit what they think they can sell. It is difficult to analogize this system to social science research, and yet this is what research universities do.

Is this an essentialist flaw in how we conceptualize the role of arts in academia? Is placing the art in the context of research universities just wrong headed, leaving the arts in a position of little respect? Thus, are the efforts to revitalize the claims to artistic research, or arts based research, just another of a continuing series of the arts attempting to shroud themselves in academic clothing in order to maintain a convenient cash stream?

I think not. Here, and throughout this critique, I maintain that forms of artistic practice and forms of arts-informed inquiry may rise to the level of research, but not all artistic practice and forms of arts-informed inquiry, on an *essentialist* level, are research. There are infinite ways to make art; however, research must demonstrate criteria and only those practices that meet criteria may be called research. Through criteria we make judgments of quality.

## **Judgment and Values as Research**

Here I want to pause and to remember the work of Elliot Eisner, who as Pariser rightly notes, first

promoted the concept that something called arts-based research could apply to the social sciences. Eisner's original contribution to this endeavour was a methodology called *educational criticism* that employed the skill of connoisseurship for making judgments of quality (Eisner, 1998).

Judgments of quality was an intriguing idea in the field of research, for it was no longer the job of the researcher to find how much or how many, or what quantity of X resulted in what amount of Y. Rather, a critical task of an evaluator was to render a judgment, based on an aesthetic sense of a whole, if something were worth doing. A favourite saying of Eisner's was that if it is not worth teaching, it is not worth teaching well (personal communication). In short, if Y is worthless, what interest do we have in knowing that X can produce a lot of it?

This brings us to questions not simply of scientific effect, but of values. Values spring forth out of ethics, a limb that the tree of philosophy tell us belongs to the branch of ontology. The other great limb on the branch of ontology, next to ethics, is aesthetics. I, and others like the philosophers John Dewey (1934/1989) and Richard Rorty (1989) would argue that our ethics spring from our aesthetics—our ability to hold the aesthetic imagination, stand as strong poets, and conceptualize the possibilities of worlds that are more inclusive and just, but are not yet.

The arts are not sainted disciplines where all activity is inherently good. Not all arts activity is inherently rewarding. Dewey stated that the one common substance of authentic art is sincerity. However, in a world where arts activity may quickly garner fame, incredible wealth, privilege along with ego inflating flattery, there is no guarantee that sincerity has anything to do with it. Therefore Dewey's criteria of sincerity refers to a kind of art making, a subset. It does not presuppose that all the things we may wish to call art or visual culture demonstrate sincerity.

Second, Pariser cites that "vast intellectual empires have been built on the study, interpretation, assessment and emulation of works of art." These disciplines have methodologies and accepted practices. Why do we need arts-based research? There are two problems. One relates to artistic research, the second relates to arts-based research in the social sciences, yet in both cases the problem relates exactly to the vast array of methods of "interpretation, assessment and emulation of works of art."

First, regarding artistic research, these methods deal with finished objects; they do not deal with making the object. However, artistic research regards the method of production as research, and thus opens up new territory that these other methods do not recognize.

Second, regarding arts-based research in the social science, the "object" under consideration was fluid. Eisner's educational criticism is deeply influenced by academic literary criticism, but the object of analysis was not a fixed novel, or painting, or a scripted dramatic performance, it was directed at analysing classrooms with the assumptions that teachers strove to create an aesthetic moments, and maybe even aesthetic wholes in their daily practice. Similarly, Sarah Lawrence Lightfoot (1997) eschewed the tough scientific stance of "telling it like it is" warts and all, and instead advocated a method of program evaluation call *portraiture* in which the evaluator attempted to speak to the goodness that lay within a program, for—as any good teacher knows—if you cannot bracket your criticism inside encouraging words of what the student has done right, then it is highly unlikely that the student will listen or attempt to learn from the criticism. Lightfoot's research is a highly aesthetic practice, for the researcher to shape a whole, that will allow others to see a path to

new possibilities of action.

Both Eisner's and Lightfoot's methodologies, as with other arts-based methodologies like Saldaña's *ethnodrama*, or *a/r/tography*, conceptualize emotional centeredness as at the heart of forms of human communication. Emotional centeredness may also be called aesthetic relationship. The arts traffic in felt experience. To understand human interaction scientifically, one must come to grips with the role of felt experience in and between research participants.

### **When is Research?**

However, as aesthetics is a fluid term, what may pass as aesthetics relationships can also be about promoting self-satisfaction, diversion, and complacency<sup>1</sup>. So art's based and artistic research do not engage will all kinds of aesthetic relationships, they focus on those that provoke desires to concentrate attention in order to attempt to grasp new possibility. Just like Nelson Goodman (1978) asked, *when* is art, the question is, *When* is aesthetic relationship research?

Because art has enjoyed within academia the unquestioned position for the last half century that anything that is done in art is research, no doubt the thought that artistic research is a subset of artistic activity causes alarm with people who want to defend vested privilege. The individuals who are attempting to define artistic-based research and arts-based research are not the ones who are contributing to the draining the word of meaning. That slippage occurred when Pariser's Trojan Horse was brought inside the walls of the academy sixty years ago. Arts-based and artistic research is an attempt to restore meaning.

There is another conceptual changed to higher education that brings the issue of arts-based research to the fore. That is in the changing concept of the university itself. Until quite recently, universities were unquestioned meritocracies, where talent was identified and the best and the brightest groomed for elite positions within our cultures. These positions generally conveyed wealth and social status. There was little, if any concern for those who fell off along the way. These individuals were the accepted collateral damage necessary in the pursuit of the blood sport of excellence.

Today our universities are not assessed so much as to whether in recent memory an individual arose who secured a Nobel Prize or a MacArthur Genius Award Fellowship. Instead, the governmental bodies that support education ten to ask what have *all* students learned on graduation. This is a profound shift in focus, for now the collateral damage, those left in the ditches at the side of the road of academia—and the wreckage produced in arts schools in particular—can no longer be swept aside and accepted as the necessary price of culture. All disciplines now must answer this question of inclusion and the value of learning that all students receive. Some disciplines that have an unquestioned neo-liberal value, such as medicine or engineering, are immune to these concerns, but other disciplines run the risk of being marginalized or removed altogether from academia. Witness the status of Latin in American universities. What students learn through making art is a serious question. That students learn to make cool stuff does not strike me as enough of an answer. Along these same lines, in the current climate, it is unlikely that external program evaluators will be impressed with the identification of the one graduate in the last ten years who had an exhibition in a New York City.

Therefore, there is a need to seriously re-examine how art might be research, how it is a training of mind that many students could benefit from, and more than simply the nurturing of the talented few. Arts-based and artistic research is about changing the foundations of how we conceptualize the role of art within the academy. This is not expediency, this is about asking hard questions that have been glossed over in the post-war climate that equated capital exchange with learning, as well as unexamined ideas about meritocracy, now challenged by unprecedented attempts to open education to a broad socio-economic spectrum.

It is now well established that our neo-liberal art markets can sustain a lively cultural spectacle without any input from academia. At best, university programs solely devoted to cultural production bare a striking similarity to business programs. Tuition fast tracks you into the business (the MFA as MBA)—and as Adorno foresaw the culture industry is best served with marketing analyses and marketing plans to deliver objects that the neo-liberal market wants. Students get hip to winning formulas and insider trades. At worse, studio programs may be variations on Ponzi schemes, that seemingly engage the student in a world of the arts as long as they pay tuition, only to reveal that whole operation has been a bit of sham and fairy tale once the student graduates—but new suckers come in to keep the whole thing going. Regrettably, the business model and the Ponzi scheme are two operations that academia has promoted for the last half century—and these models have vested interest.

There are good reasons to think again, and consider artistic practice as a form of pure research that is about learning to think. In short, we need to look for new pathways. Eisner's question when he introduced educational criticism is still pertinent, might the arts inform the conduct of social science research in meaningful ways? He did not declare the answer; he asked the question. To attempt to carve out a new understanding through research does not strike me as an "unnecessary incursion" but rather a necessary intervention to rescue a dysfunctional operating system.

International higher education is in crisis. We are in the midst of a profound shift of what Western Industrial countries consider to be the goals of education. Arts-based research and artistic research are not academic power grabs; they are works of salvage to protect the best traditions of aesthetic philosophy.

### **Pragmatic Research**

Dewey (1934/1989), in his book *Art as Experience*, claimed that art was all around us, in our daily lives and visual experience. Indeed, research and inquiry are not highly specialized activities conducted by people in white lab coats at universities. Research and inquiry are ubiquitous and necessary to creating profound aesthetic experiences that reshape our daily decisions of how we seek to be in the world. In an example from Dewey, dining may do more than satisfy hunger, but a particular moment, a particular meal, in the right context, may in fact reorient one's own philosophies and belief about food. In American Pragmatic philosophy, knowledge is not only something that one has and can possess, but it is also something to quest for. In Pragmatic philosophy, a function of inquiry is not only to confirm what is and secure it, but there is also a function of opening a door to what may be. Dewey called this a metaphysical outcome, a shaping of future action. Even with the philosophy of science, maintaining only a narrow deductive conception of research is problematic, as the ability to reframe problems, to imagine new possibilities may be lost.

Pariser's cites Denis Phillips's critique of Eisner's claim that research should advance human understanding (Phillips, 1995). Phillips criticizes this position as opening the door to charlatans and destructive practices. Phillips evokes academics like Timothy Leary who advocated dangerous drug use as advancing understanding. However, I would respond that Leary fails the Pragmatic test as to whether the outcomes of action encourage growth that creates a more inclusive society. Here, the outcomes were medically dangerous and sometimes resulted in death or permanent impairment. Leary's claims to advanced understanding needs to be held up to Pragmatic critique. They don't pass the test.

Phillips also evokes the "mindless" activity of Jackson Pollock, an artist who we now recognize through fractal analysis was meticulously researching the world around him. Our analysis of Pollock's work causes us to see the world anew, to reconsider the power of perception, and what we might see. Pollock's work meets the criteria of Pragmatic research.

Thus in Phillips' examples we can see one instance of somatic practice —alteration of the body through ingestion of drugs—that is questionable in its claim to advance human understanding, and another instance of somatic practice, the drip paintings of Jackson Pollock, that enlarges our understanding of the possible.

### **Critique and Criticism**

Pariser questions if there are criteria for arts-based research that would allow us to render judgments as to its quality in advancing human understanding. Dewey provides several, and I will discuss these in detail at the close of the paper. Here, it is important to note that Dewey's foremost criterion is whether the work reconfigures our sense of space and time. Therefore a pleasing photograph of flowers, or a picture of the beach, while perhaps pleasant to look at, providing a nice sense of colour in the living room, and otherwise amusing, would not be a piece of research, for it simply reinforces what we already know. Art disrupts, ruptures, and provokes. These result in breakings, which in turn demand synthesis. Breakings and synthesis would be a second criterion. Eisner follows Dewey, but this is not a demand for all arts-based research to be based on Dewey. But all arts-based research is required to establish criteria for what constitutes understanding.

In his criticism of Eisner, Phillips claimed that arts-based research was not open to "skeptical scrutiny and criticism." Certainly with Eisner's brand of arts-based research this is not the case. For Eisner, a personal feeling of joy, satisfaction, or what Dewey would call an experience, was cause for celebration, but in itself this was not research. Testimonies about how the art cause personal transformation were not enough. Arts-based research had to change the perception of the reader. It had to open the mind of the reader to new possibilities; it could not simply be a personal testimonial about how the arts provoked change.

To address these issues, Eisner (1998) advocated three criteria to question and critique works of arts based: 1) structural corroboration, a term appropriated from the philosopher Stephen Pepper, which relates to whether the researcher provides enough empirical evidence so that we can see the case that is being made for consideration. We don't want to be left having to take the researcher's testimony at face value. 2) referential adequacy refers to whether enough specifics have been provided so that a reader may identify a place in her or his own life were this research is applicable. As emotionally moving as a story may be, it only becomes research when we can see what we will

do with this. 3) consensual validation, whether this research, when tested by others demonstrates its ability to create communities of practice that are more responsible, more inclusive, and more ethical. What is the magnitude of the impact? Eisner maintained, and I agree, that arts-based research must open the minds and hearts of the readers of research for the improvement of classroom practice. I believe this is critical for a practice that wishes to claim the title of research.

Many arts-based researchers disagree with what they describe as Eisner's formalist ends. These theorists insist that the arts must play a role of permanent disruption and resistance, for places of synthesis are simply new arenas of neo-liberal economic and social control. These include including Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (2012) theory of aesthetic ab-use, Jan Jagodzinski's call for aesthetic sabotage (2013), and even a/r/tography's insistence on rupture and dissonance (Springgay, Irwin, Leggo & Gouzouasis, 2008).

Disruption is not alien to Dewey. He claimed that the role of art's qualitative reasoning was that it was a form of thinking distinct from and subversive to semiotics. Qualitative reasoning undermined meaning, confounded, made one aware that one had experiences beyond what words could say. This was not to be triumphant moment to celebrate the inadequacy of language, but rather a prompt to a quest to reconfigure language more fully to felt reality. Eisner, never left things in aesthetic disarray, but—like Dewey—saw the provocation to imbalance as an impulsion to integrate the provocation in a way that one regained balance, from which provocation began again. There is an endless process of rupture and synthesis. Perception is critical to both. The outcome is growth.

To my mind, these debates show how the critiques of arts-based research add to our knowledge. In particular, as I have written elsewhere, the methodology of a/r/tography and the theories of Spivak, allow us to see the writings of Dewey with new eyes and new understandings (Siegesmund, 2012; Siegesmund, 2013). Heidegger (1971a) speaks of how the past comes to us from the future. These new methods do not necessarily build on the past as if we were constructing a wall, stone carefully laid on stone. Instead, arts-based methods may draw attention to a new wall, previously not seen in the field, and which is suddenly in plain view. How we may make sense of Dewey, and see a work like *Art as Experience* in a new light is an example.

### **What is Research?**

Pariser's final appeal to Phillips is in making the claim that research is a quest for truth, and art can make no truth claims. In an analytic philosophical sense, art does not traffic in truth. Instead, art traffics in what it is possible to consider. Pariser says, "Artists do not 'disprove' each other's work." This is true; artists make worlds (Goodman, 1978; Heidegger, 1936/1971b). These worlds do not disprove each other, they are new imaginative possibilities, and how these imaginative possibilities allow viewers to construct their own worlds is a criterion for research.

Here in the paper, Pariser pauses to wonder if the debate is one of semantics: the arts engage in inquiry and sciences engage in research. That research can only be a predefined set of operations to address a defined problem seems overly narrow. Every teacher knows that following the lesson plan is the garden path to hell. There would seem to be a need for research that seeks to find the conditions that define a problem. It would not be unreasonable that such a search could begin in exploring relationships of qualities. That we need to parse one as research and the other as inquiry seems unnecessary and unhelpful to both.

Pariser speaks of two areas where artistic practice and research have forms of engagement that overlap. He cites pattern finding and play. Here what we want to call research comes down to how broad a scope of definition one is willing to employ. As Dewey observes, scientific research pattern finding narrows a problem by eliminating distractions, in arts-based research pattern finding often widens the problem by including within the pattern forms not previously recognized. I believe that including both methods in our definition of research does not dilute the term but rather renders it more robust. Indeed, if our definition of research cannot embrace the imaginative expansion of a problem, then scientific research is at risk of ossification (Holton, 1996).

Pariser's own example of Richard Feynman shows the role of play in furthering the scientific imagination. Dewey might add, that Feynman's ability to see the world anew—and reorder space and time—was not just a scientific achievement but was also an aesthetic one. The statistician Edward Tufte (1990) claims that quantitative information has become so complex that the only way for it to be readily understood within our civic discourse is through aesthetic arts-based representations. In his view, the arts-based presentation of empirical information is the only way that we can have informed and open public debate around empirical issues. He sees the use of statistics and quantitative information, as now employed in debate, as clubs to silence the opposition, not as tools for opening discussions.

Dewey would agree with Tufte, in that what the arts do is trouble the too-easy translation of experience and empirical relations into numeric quantities and linguistic symbols. The arts show the slippage of meaning. The arts do this, according to Dewey, by drawing forth new meanings formed in the distinctive visual relationships of qualities that are unique to each visual medium. They do this not for our aesthetic enjoyment, but to challenge us to craft in symbolic thought fine-grained and more nuanced meanings that better correspond to the empirical realities in which we engage.

Artistic practice has traditionally left these acts of interpreting and reflecting on the implications of slippage in the arts to scholars. The artist has often removed him or herself from this task. In Pariser's example of Richard Feynman, Feynman's scientific breakthrough is possible because Feynman takes reflective responsibility for identifying the implications of the slippages he has encountered in his acts of play. Arts-based and artistic forms of research—particularly the stage of artistic practice that leads to the Ph.D.—demand that the artist assume the same responsibility that Feynman exhibited: to be reflective on the implications of one's own practice and not to assume the curator, gallery dealer, critic, or academic will perform this work for you. The Ph.D. in Studio Practice is not a condition for making good art, but it seems reasonable to me that it is a precondition for academic practice in the university where one would be expected to engage, through language, students in reflecting on artistic process.

### **Criteria in Arts-Based Research**

Pariser ends by citing Howard Gardner's concern for the lack of criterion in judging works of arts-based research. It should be noted that Gardner voiced these concerns almost 20 years ago. Since that time, many proposals for criteria in arts-based and artistic research have come forward. The institution that Gardner has led and continues to be affiliated with, Harvard Project Zero, has even proposed sets of criteria. Multiple projects at Project Zero have attempted to answer the quest for meaningful functional qualities (with Gardner's wife Ellen Winner as a principal investigator)

including the on-going research with the pre-schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy (Seidel, 2002), the study *The Qualities of Quality* (Seidel, Tishman, Winner, Hetland & Palmer, 2009), and research in Studio Thinking (Hetland, Winner, Veenema & Sheridan, 2007).

Eisner proposed criterion for assessing doctoral work related to his methodology of Educational Criticism. Other methodologies like a/r/tography have done the same. However here, I want to return to John Dewey and *Art as Experience*. Here I would suggest that one could see each of the fourteen chapters as successive criteria for judging arts-based and artistic research. I summarize them as follows:

*Chapter 1: The Live Creature*

Art stems from our direct experience of the world and desire for experience to be communally shared. Does the research break through these dysfunctional elements to authentic forms of living interaction that allows one to build broader understanding of one's environment?

*Chapter 2: Ethereal Things*

Does the research imaginatively transform perception and experience into new realities that the reader can personally re-enter and thereby see, feel, and sense? This is not a world distanced or disinterested.

*Chapter 3: Having an Experience*

Does the research combine *qualitative reasoning*—recognition of felt sensory somatic meaning rendered through the relationship perceptual qualities—with the manipulation of symbols, linguistic, mathematical, auditory, or visual?

*Chapter 4: The Act of Expression*

Does the research allow medium to find a language. Does *qualitative reasoning* provide a road to language?

*Chapter 5: The Expressive Object*

Does the research pull outward from the medium, an inscription of mind, or does the researcher only impose something to "say" on the medium?

*Chapter 6: Substance and Form*

How does the qualitative reasoning in the research expand, mutate, and corrupt our existing semiotic code?

*Chapter 7: The Natural History of Form*

How does the form of the research recognize a variety of tensions? How does the research struggle to see, rather than state, these tensions?

*Chapter 8: The Organization of Energies*

Great research breaks balance. It moves us somatically. In so doing, new movement, shaped in time and space, appears. Does the research reconfigure our sense of time and space in way that allows us to place ourselves into different futures?

*Chapter 9: The Common Substance of the Arts*

Does the work exemplify sincerity by reflecting on how we intervene into a context within a specific space and time?

*Chapter 10: The Varied Substance of the Arts*

Does the work demonstrate how language falls short for what needs to be said, and demonstrates how language allows us to wrestle through inscribed media to new possibility?

*Chapter 11. The Human Contribution*

There is no inherent separation between sense and reason, desire and perception. These are all aspects of mind. Do the tensions captured in the research allow each of these dimensions to inform the other?

*Chapter 12: The Challenge of Philosophy*

Does the research, by rooting itself in the here and now, evoke the possibility of a future and renders more intelligible the potential of our life?

*Chapter 13: Criticism and Perception*

Through the reconstruction of the experience of space and time, is there a synthesis for newly realized unity of the world that fosters more inclusive growth, or does it instill complacency?

*Chapter 14: Art and Civilization*

Does the research help us to distinguish been art that generates mindful engagement, and art that promotes neo-liberal commodification?

These criteria are Dewey's. They are not exhaustive. However, it is important to realize that Dewey laid these criteria out in 1934. He built on specific German intellectual traditions tracing back to the eighteenth century. Thus, we can see that arts-based methods are building on foundations, just as Dewey was building on a foundation. Arts-based research can critique and expand existing knowledge.

### **Who Needs Arts-Based Research?**

Pariser notes Gardner's concern that arts-based methods are ultimately unfair to doctoral students. The existing demands of a dissertation are hard enough without tossing in artistic and aesthetic considerations as well. Again, Gardner raised these objects almost twenty years ago—before the publication of Pauline Sameshima's *Seeing Red* (2007), or Douglas Gosse's *Jackytar* (2005). At that time, Johnny Saldaña's ethnodramas were first emerging (2005). It was made before the emergence to two scholars who as graduate students were closely linked to both Gardner and Eisner: Elizabeth Soep of Youth Radio in Berkeley, California and Kimberly Powell, at the Pennsylvania State University, both of whom are making substantial contributions to what we know about the creation of mind through artistic practice (Chavez & Soep, 2005; Powell, 2010; Powell, 2012; Soep, 2006).

Eisner established a dissertation award in his name at the National Art Education Association. The award is presented annually to the outstanding dissertation that arises from the field of art education. There is no stipulation on methodology. Eisner's own dissertation was statistical, and while at Stanford, he would at times be called on as an external reviewer for dissertations on educational measurement. So there is no prejudice in what kind of dissertation will win, it is simply expected to be the one that holds the greatest impact for the future development of the field. Two of the past three winners have been arts-based research.

Similarly, the American Educational Research Association, Arts and Learning Special Interest Group presents an annual dissertation award. There are no restrictions on methodology. In recent years, quantitative studies have won. Yet here too, arts-based methodologies are competitive and have produced award winners.

If we open our training to arts-based research, if we challenge ourselves to accept that Gardner and Pariser's concerns must be addressed, young scholars will emerge who can meet these demands. Furthermore, both of the two young scholars who won the Elliot Eisner Dissertation Award using arts-based methodology freely admit, that only through the permission to explore their research through the arts, where they able to reach resonance in their analysis. Limiting their methods would have diminished their work. Here art-based research does not dilute the contributions to what we

might know, it enhances these outcomes.

Arts-based methods are perhaps useful in the problem of secondary ignorance. In primary ignorance, a person knows what it is that they do not know. Such a person is ready to learn. However, secondary ignorance is not knowing what it is you do not know. Such individuals are complacent, for they do not see a need for growth. Their worlds are conceptually complete; nothing more is needed. Even when told the limitations of their views, these criticisms are likely to be rejected as foreign or frivolous. Furthermore, secondary ignorance is not limited to any particular socio-economic background or culture. For example, an argument could be made that mundane training in quantitative scientific research methods promotes the development of secondary ignorance by limiting researchers to asking a narrow range of questions.

Only through an individual aesthetic experience—one that as Dewey claims reshapes space and time—would someone who is in secondary ignorance move to primary ignorance and thus be motivated to growth. Do all aesthetic experiences provide these moments? No, they do not. What we currently call aesthetic experience, can simply reinforce the complacency of secondary ignorance, and give comfort with the familiar: it's pretty and I like it. Therefore, parsing what kinds of aesthetic experience promote movement between secondary and primary ignorance, and which do not, is an appropriate task of research.

Yet we have not made this distinction in the past. As Pariser rightly points out, we have thrown a broad and loose net claiming that anything that we might call art can also be called research. Here I agree with him. These are dangerous waters that open the door to sloppy thinking at best and charlatanism at worse.

Pariser asks, "Who needs arts-based research"? Social science needs arts-based research if it needs to have methodologies and methods that open and explore new imaginative possibility. The fine arts, to the degree that they wish to think of culture as widening inclusiveness, needs arts-based research. However, he is right to ask for caution, in this time of change and a shifting academic power structure.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Richard Shusterman (2006), in his essay *The Aesthetic* provides an excellent overview of the different ways the aesthetics can be conceptualized and identifies the Western intellectual tradition for conceptualizing aesthetics as a form of research.

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