

COMPLEXITY, CONTEXT, and CONNECTEDNESS IN ELEMENTARY ART
EDUCATION: AN ELEMENTARY ART TEACHER'S PRACTICE

by

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my family for their constant academic and emotional support and guidance.

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ABSTRACT

Few studies explore and document the day to day practice of elementary art teachers and the factors that influence this practice. Through a qualitative narrative case study and portrait, this study hopes to create an authentic representation of one teacher navigating the space surrounding her practice in context at an elementary school. Three conceptual clusters have been defined encompassing qualities affecting her practice: context, complexity, and connectedness. This study is intended to serve as a starting point for new teachers and as a precursor to future research that looks into the practice of elementary art teachers.

CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION

Introduction

When I began this study two years ago, I was committed to the ideas surrounding and implications of community and collaboration in elementary art education. This sprang from both my interest in the idea of community-based education initiatives and my two years' experience as an AmeriCorps volunteer in two separate alternative educational settings (a bilingual elementary school in rural Colorado, and a shelter for homeless women and children in Tucson, Arizona). It was also fueled by my interest in postmodern and critical theories of art; these ideas constituted a large part of my undergraduate studies as a Literature and Culture major at the University of Pennsylvania. In that program, I was able to assemble a major of my own with overlapping areas of study in anthropology, archaeology, history, sociology, psychology, literature, art history, and religious studies. This experience of connectedness and relatedness continues to inform my approach to both art teaching and research, and became one of the over-arching and underpinning themes of this inquiry.

Before I joined the graduate certification and Master's program in Art Education at the University of Arizona, I had little experience beyond my own with art education in the public school setting. Those experiences included serving as a museum education intern at the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art in Boulder, Colorado, and as a teaching assistant for the art specialist at the elementary school where I taught reading and creating an after school art program at the same school. However, this exposure to art education, along with my belief that art was an essential component of education and

my own experiences with art throughout my life helped me to become an elementary art teacher.

When I reflected upon my own elementary art experience, I recalled, not unlike Rachel, a novice art teacher, in May's (1995) study the art room as a sort of "wild" place, not very organized, with an emphasis on creativity and art production with whatever materials were available. From this, my parents have an impressive archive of holiday art, as well as a string of projects displayed at my school district's art shows. I remember my art teacher, Ms. Sprague, as a sort of an outsider teacher who wore elaborate necklaces, earrings, and hand painted fabric kimonos. Even though I dearly loved her, in retrospect, she seems much like the kind of example I have felt discouraged from following. I do not think that she operated with any sort of curriculum or focus, and she seemed to favor students who were interested in art – she often created "special" projects for me to work on at a separate table at the back of the room. These projects caused disdain among my peers and were either open-ended or involved creating decorations for the school. Most of my experience as an elementary aged student (outside of school art) came from other sources. Those included my parents, who were both involved in some way with art, and a gifted enrichment program I was a part of from the third through twelfth grade. Through this program I was able to design my own projects relating to art in any way I liked – these usually included creating exhibits, visiting museums, and even talking with and interviewing local art professionals. My teacher for this program, Ms. Lily, was an artist and a member of an artists' community in the small town where I lived, and encouraged me to explore any aspect of art in which I was interested. She also

took time out of her schedule to teach me calligraphy and gave me lessons in the other art media with which she worked. She brought me along to meet with other artists and took me to museums in my area, and recorded our trips through photographs and bulletin boards in our tiny classroom. Though these experiences which were technically outside of the realm of school art as it is usually defined, this is where I made my most meaningful connections with art and these memories greatly influenced the way that I wanted to teach art at the elementary level. In many ways, I sought to emulate what Ms. Lily had done for me in my own classroom, and sought out other role models who resembled her. Throughout the course of this study and my student teaching experience, Julia became one of these models for me.

These early experiences with art education and my hope to become an elementary art specialist teacher made me curious to uncover what elementary art educators in my own area were actively doing in their classrooms – what they were teaching and *why*. I felt a dissonance between my own memories of Ms. Sprague and Ms. Lily and what I thought elementary art education could and should be; I imagined ideas in the field had changed in the decade since I had been an elementary student. This, in turn, led me to initially research several different areas that included art at an alternative open classroom school, feminist and postmodern approaches to art and their application in elementary classrooms, community and collaboration in elementary education, and finally this case study and portrait of an elementary art specialist teacher at work.

In a pilot study for this thesis project, I contacted a sample of elementary art specialist teachers in the Tucson area. This study focused on a relationship between

community, collaboration, and elementary art education. I believed that community support was both necessary for and could enhance the quality of an elementary art education program. The study was intended to be quantitative in nature, and it was undertaken during a required course on quantitative educational research. For it, I presented a twenty two question survey to eighteen teachers (the survey was divided into sections that addressed the teachers' teaching backgrounds, collaborative art-making experiences, and connections with their in-school and the local communities). Almost all of the teachers who replied (nearly seventy percent of the sample) were interested in pursuing the concepts of community and collaboration in their work, but few had been able to actually do so. Their often lengthy and candid responses hinted at themes centered upon both the external (for example, a lack of time, funding, and support) and internal (philosophical or pedagogical positions) factors that affected their daily practice (Appendix A). I had originally anticipated short, descriptive responses to this survey due to its quantitative nature – but the responses I received fit much more into a qualitative paradigm, refusing to be harnessed statistically. The teachers were eager to share their ideas and experiences, and through their words, I began to see the complexity of teaching art and the effect of context on teachers' practice. These initial findings began to point my inquiry in a different direction – perhaps instead of looking smaller, I would need to look larger at the greater space surrounding the complex and complicated, public and personal, enterprise of teaching art in the elementary school.

Throughout the course of my pilot study, I began to realize that many factors probably affected more than the teachers' desire to connect with local communities and

experiences in this realm, and that they most likely pervaded instruction within elementary art classroom in a more general and effectual sense. Even as I wrote the statistical paper synthesizing this study, I had the nagging feeling that I was not telling the whole story with numbers. Each teacher's words resonated with a different facet of their collective experiences as elementary level teachers and hinted at the larger themes I had yet to experience or name. Their words were saturated with the concepts I would see manifest in my observations of and analysis of my experience with Julia*. Now, as an elementary art specialist in my first year of teaching, I face the situations and questions shared by those pilot study participants each and every day in a very real way. Sometimes they almost override my internal philosophical beliefs about the teaching of art and my perception of my efficacy as an art teacher. I find myself in a constant, sometimes precarious, often confusing, search for meaning and balance in my practice. The interplay between these external and internal factors in my own practice helped me to see the different research questions emerging through my pilot study and subsequently through my ongoing relationship with Julia and other teachers. I discovered that I was in actuality more concerned with the complexity of factors that affect elementary art specialists' pedagogical decisions within the contexts in which they teach – the daily dance of art teaching at the elementary level.

In this paper, I hope to present a narrative case study and portrait of an elementary art specialist teacher at work and an exposition of the internal and external factors that affect her practice. Julia, the study's primary participant, also served as my cooperating

* All names of study participants, schools, and settings have been changed.

teacher during my student teaching practicum at the elementary level and now continues to serve as a professional mentor for me as I have taken on the role of an art colleague at a sister elementary school. Our own complex relationship of student/teacher/mentor and colleague has shaped my perceptions of practice and has pervaded my conception of the purposes of and function of research in art education.

As my case study of Julia developed, I began to see that it related less and less to my initial idea revolving around community in elementary art education – although these connections were certainly a factor influencing Julia’s practice. At first I found this frightening; it was a topic I had been researching for over a year, was the subject of the pilot study I was conducting at the time of my initial meeting with Julia, and was the proposal I had presented to her when asking her to become a participant in the study. But, when returning to the literature and reflecting on what I had learned (especially the conclusions I reached in my pilot study), as well as applying some of this knowledge in my own new experience as an elementary art specialist, I found more and more that what I had learned from spending time observing with, talking with, and asking questions of Julia was a more natural and organic portrait of an art specialist teacher at work and many of the contradictory, complex, and confusing factors affecting her daily practice. As such, it was necessarily emerging and complex (Hoffman Davis and Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1997). Involvement with the community was one aspect or factor of many that surrounded Julia’s life and work with art and education. This impetus itself was kindled by her personal and professional knowledge, experiences, and beliefs – those factors that affected decisions that she made daily both inside and outside of the classroom. What

resulted from my inquiry became a portrait of an art educator at work, actively engaged in the creation of living art knowledge with a goal of making art education work for a specific community of students and for herself as a working teacher and artist while balancing the personal and professional demands of teaching and art-making.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to present a narrative case study of an elementary art specialist teacher at work in a specific teaching context along with an exposition of factors affecting the teacher's daily practice. The case study was organized according to emergent and recurrent themes, and this way of structure was developed in the hope of presenting an authentic portrait of the many factors that affect an elementary art specialist teacher's practice. The study postulates Julia's case as both typical (Cary, 1998) and common (Stake, 1995) in the sense that her struggles and successes may resemble those of other elementary art specialist teachers at work in the public school system, even though specific study results cannot be generalized to the larger population.

Research questions for this study surround the practice of an elementary art educator at work within a specific context. My initial research questions stemmed from two basic questions postulated by Cole and Knowles (2000), "What do teachers know? What do teachers need to know" (p. 5)? The answer to this question is one I felt I needed to know as a beginning teacher and researcher. I expanded these questions to then ask, "How does this knowledge affect teacher's daily practice?" Over the course of time the inquiry expanded to look at the following questions:

- What factors affect Julia's practice as an elementary art teacher?
- How can these factors be defined in general terms, and in the specific terms of Julia's case?
- How do Julia's personal and professional beliefs and experiences inform her practice?

As I attempted to answer these questions in my study of Julia, I found themes that repeated themselves in my conversations with Julia, in my observations, and in the literature I was reading. I labeled these themes *complexity*, *context*, and *connectedness* and developed conceptual clusters based on the components of each construction. This reciprocal construction of and labeling of clusters provided me with a final question that my study of Julia attempts to begin to answer: How do the qualities defined by Julia's practice as complexity, context, and connectedness affect Julia's practice as an elementary art teacher?

Methodology

This study was qualitative in nature. The data was collected over a period of fifteen months, from November 2001, and then from March – June 2002, and finally through February 2003. Ten weeks were spent working with Julia on a daily basis; I spent five weeks observing her as a participant in her classroom to varying degrees from observer to full participant, and I spent five weeks serving as a student teacher under Julia's mentorship, until May of 2002. Data was gathered during this time through observations, informal interviews and conversations, digital photographs, and artifacts.

Throughout the subsequent summer months and school year, Julia served as a professional mentor and colleague to me as a novice teacher in her school system. Here, our contact was through email messaging, meetings, and informal conversations. It is really in this span of time that themes began to emerge for me as a researcher; I found ideas that recurred repeatedly that were impossible to ignore. I organized my notes and observations according to these themes and developed conceptual clusters I gleaned from a close reading of my research text. These themes were coded according to the clusters I developed. While my findings were in their initial developmental stage, I met with Julia for a final, concluding interview where these themes were clarified. I transcribed this interview, again looking for repeated themes and either reinforcement or repudiation of my hypotheses. Finally, I constructed a narrative case study and portrait as my final research project.

Organization of the Chapters

Chapter I will provide an introduction to the study and research questions, as well as a sense of the scope and sequence of the research. Chapter II will provide a review of relevant literature from fields including art education, general education, teacher education, and critical and cultural studies. Chapter II also explains how ongoing and reciprocal conversations between literature, theory, and study findings have shaped this inquiry. Chapter III will discuss research questions, methodology, the study participants and settings, data collection and analysis methods, and initial study findings. Chapter IV will present the narrative case study of Julia, and an analysis of data. Chapter IV is

divided into sections that serve to create both a portrait of Julia and address the factors that emerged as most poignant in their effect upon her practice. It is further divided into conceptual or thematic clusters (Stokrocki, 1997) that address the evolving themes of the work. Chapter V will discuss implications for further study of art educators within context.

CHAPTER II – REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter will provide an outline of literature relevant to this case study and the findings it yielded as well as implications for further study. The literature described here comes from multiple fields of inquiry including art education, general education, teacher education, and critical and cultural studies. It is discussed from the viewpoint that the factors that affect school culture also affect elementary art teachers' efficacy, and that teachers' theoretical dispositions and personal and professional experiences inform their practice. It is intended to explain the theoretical underpinnings of my inquiry and my impression of the study findings with relationship to the body of literature in the field.

Literature and theory described in this chapter affect my study in several important ways. First, the literature provided me with a source of comparison for what I found in my study of Julia. Although no studies look at specifically at the practice of elementary art teachers in a holistic way, a large variety of literature in several fields either directly or indirectly addressed the issues that arose in my study of Julia (Hafeli, 2000; Jackson, 2001; Kowalchuk, 1999; Marché, 2000; Rodgers, 2002; Stout, 1997, 1999). Second, the literature provided me with a sort of background against which the figure of my study emerged – a point of reference and refinement of my ideas. My first review of the literature served the purpose of providing a theoretical foundation for my inquiry and provided me with new lenses for the analysis of my data, and my relationship with the literature continued throughout the course of the study and during my final writing of this paper. I have found myself revising the review almost continuously as my

perspective on the study changes and as I look for clarifications of and extensions of what I have found. I have revisited many sources, and this re-connection with the literature allowed me to re-focus and re-frame my research questions as well as my analysis of the study.

This chapter is divided into conceptual clusters (Stokrocki, 1997) that address some of the over-arching and under-pinning themes that became most relevant in my analysis of the data I gathered during this project. These categorizations were chosen for their relevance to current research and theory in the above fields of inquiry and their applicability to the results of this study. For the purposes of this study, these clusters or themes have been named *context*, *connectedness*, and *complexity*.

Chapter Two also discusses some specific methodologies in qualitative educational research, with specific attention to the relationship between narrative accounts and portraiture in research and their subsequent relatedness to case study research. These approaches to research provide the theoretical frame of reference for this project. In conclusion, this chapter will discuss features regarding the nature of the student teaching experience and the transition to a first year teaching position as an elementary school art specialist teacher.

The table below illustrates in a general way in which factors outlined in the literature are related to one another in their effect on the practice of elementary art teachers. In the remainder of the chapter, these factors will be further divided into the conceptual clusters of context, connectedness, and complexity with reference to how they impact Julia's specific practice as an elementary art teacher.

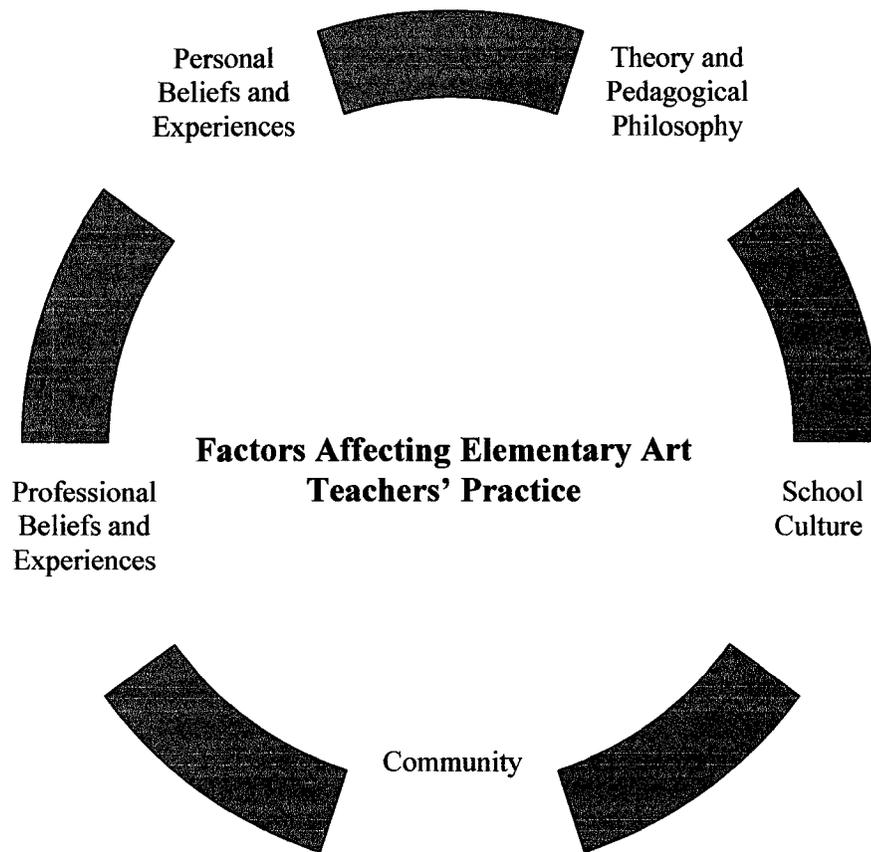


TABLE 2.1

Context

For the purposes of this study, I defined the idea of “context” in two different ways. The first definition of context included the setting in which Julia taught. This context included the school and its community members (teachers, administrators, families, and students), the school district, the local community, and Julia’s connection to the local world of activism and art. Context also refers in Julia’s case to the context in which she defines art. Her conception of art and subsequently, what she feels is essential for students to know about art, is rooted in her idea of the context of artworks. Julia sees

artworks as cultural productions, bound by the context (time, place, and circumstances) of their creation. She feels that an understanding of this context of art is essential for elementary art students. These two definitions of context describe this conceptual cluster with reference to the study.

A) Community

Definitions of Community in Art Education

Categorizations or definitions of *community* in art education include, but are not limited to, implementation of community-based programming; its rationales, goals, and outcomes; community building within schools, inside of classrooms, and between students and teachers; and problem-based learning initiatives which concern themselves with student-initiated explorations of issues ranging from local to global.

The multidimensional concept of community in art education is grounded within pedagogical theory, some aspects of postmodern theory, and critical pedagogy or critical education studies. In turn, these areas overlap with ideas explored by feminist pedagogy, multiculturalism, and current and changing research perspectives in art education. It is essential to anchor the concept of community in art education within the frameworks of theory because much of the impetus for including community in art education comes from a desire for educational and social change – a want to make art education more relevant and meaningful to students' lives and to increase students' and community members' awareness of their role in the society and community which surround them. This implies a belief that schools are cultural institutions and that education is communal

and collaborative (Marché, 2000). As Zeichner and Liston (1996) also explain, “classrooms and schools are not insulated environments. What goes on inside schools is greatly influenced by what occurs outside of schools” (p. x). Echoing this statement, Chalmers (1996) attests, “Art education takes place within cultural contexts” (p. 7). The implication is that an awareness of the contextual and communal (Marché, 2000) nature of schooling will translate to a sense of democratic responsibility in students and teachers as global citizens residing in a rapidly changing and diverse world.

For the purposes of this case study and portrait, two main ways of looking at community were utilized as defined by Marché (1998). Marché defines “community” as both “a collection of individuals, including students, teachers, administrators, and support staff, who work within school settings, directly participating in the educational process...” or “it [community] may refer to the local environment that exists outside classroom walls” (p. 7). In turn, these two definitions manifest in action she describes as “Looking Outward” and “Looking In.”

Marché identifies *acting upon*, or “Looking Outward” as looking at the community outside of school walls. When teachers “look outward,” they act upon their community – most often the local community. Looking outward can take on several roles, which Marché describes as “*Taking from*, *Learning about*, and *Acting upon* the local community and environment” (p. 7). She explains that these approaches may overlap and blend with others in their application in classrooms, but are for the most part, distinct in their aims. When *Taking from*, students “go out to collect artifacts from the immediate environment, returning with actual objects or visual examples” (p. 8). When

Looking at, students take on the roles of “detectives” who seek to answer the question, “What is this community about, and how did it come to be this way?” Here, community members may be brought into classrooms as “artists, facilitators, and curriculum developers” (p. 8). This form of community-based art educator is further characterized as seeking “Respect for a variety of lifestyles, concern for human rights, and empowerment of all participating groups” (p. 8). Finally, when *Acting upon*, students become social activists whose goals include acting upon the human and natural world around them. Here, the “community becomes the *context* for learning, as students develop a sense of place and stewardship” (p. 9). The three approaches are related, in that, in alignment with the goals of critical art pedagogy they aim to inspire students to take on active roles in their society, to instigate change or healing through art, and in their focus upon *context* in learning.

When “Looking In,” art educators and students look toward their school to “discover and build school communities” (p. 9). These school communities include teachers, parents, administrators, school staff persons such as librarians and teacher aides, as well as others (Marché, 2000). Marché insists that it is crucial that students (as well as teachers) build a sense of community in which “learners...feel personally connected in caring, supportive, stable relationships,” and are “engaged in and committed to everyone’s growth and constructive learning through a challenging curriculum of significant inquiry” (p. 10). This correlates to the idea of thinking about a classroom as a *learning community* (Arends, 2000) where learners feel safe, and valued, and can take the risks necessary to become active learners without fear of judgment or repercussion. This

atmosphere is conducive to the creating of the *living knowledge* (Cary, 1998) which affects students' and teachers' daily lives, value systems, and beliefs.

How does community affect elementary art specialist teachers' practice? How does it relate to the idea of school culture?

The decision to include community-based activities within an elementary art education program is a political and ideological one that is often made knowingly to meet the needs of both students and educators, as well as those of the school and local community. The choice to include community-based or related learning activities can also be seen as a part of a larger concern surrounding advocacy for the art program – to *show* the value of studying art in context, and to show what the *program can do*, as well as the relevance of art and art education to contemporary life. An additional affect of community programming can be seen in students' awareness of the community that surrounds them and their role in relationship to the community as artists and citizens.

Furthermore, this type of outreach, especially with reference to the in-school community, can be seen as essential for elementary art specialist teachers, who are described as among the most isolated teachers within our field (Marché, 1998). May advocates that teachers need to create caring and supportive communities where they can share their ideas and values. Additionally, the burden of isolation may affect teachers who seek to create social change through their practice, as Trend (1992) explains that activist educators “Like other cultural workers... [teachers] suffer a lack of viable structures of mutual support” (p. 91). This isolation affects teachers in their daily lives,

and thus, affects instruction and the cultural climate within schools. Lack of a support system likewise affects both veteran and novice teachers, and can decrease teacher efficacy and thus, teachers' impact upon their students (Delacruz, 2000). Isolation, coupled with the often hectic schedules of art specialist teachers and the hundreds of students they may teach each week, limits interactions collegiality and interactions ranging from the professional to personal (Champlin, 1997; Delacruz, 2000).

Building partnerships that alleviate this type of workplace stress can lead to increased teacher efficacy and motivation (Delacruz, 2000). Genuine collegiality, or solidarity (May, 1995) can also be a productive force in teacher-initiated development of curriculum.

Connectedness and Complexity:

In this study, "connectedness" describes both Julia's connection to the world of art and her community, as well as her definition of the relatedness between art and other areas of study. Julia sees the world of art in a connected way, and her belief in connectedness is at the center of her philosophy as a teacher.

Complexity refers at its center to the complexity of teaching in Julia's case and the myriad of factors which influence her approach to teaching. These factors are related to both context and connectedness, and the process of teaching art itself.

A) Postmodern Approaches to Art Teaching

Implications for elementary art education

There are many relevant approaches to art pedagogy in the elementary classroom outlined within the framework of postmodern theory. Most of these approaches advocate a break from the tenets of Modernism, which in the view of such theorists, were injurious to art education. According to postmodern theorists writing in the field of art education, the most suspect of Modernist beliefs include an emphasis on individual creativity or talent in art-making, the high value placed upon originality of the art object and subsequent progress in art, and the creative expression approach to art education (Clark, 1996; Efland, Freedman, and Stuhr, 1996; Fehr, Fehr, and Kiefer-Boyd, 2000). These beliefs were found by many to be consistent with practice in elementary art classrooms throughout the twentieth century. Positioning itself in stark contrast to these paradigms, postmodernist pedagogy and its legacies embrace pluralism and multiple ways of looking and seeing; thus validating people and objects relegated to obscurity or devalued by the Modernist emphasis on formalist aesthetics and inevitable progress in art. Artworks made within a postmodern paradigm may reject originality and the notion of progress by appropriating images from the history of art to make social statements about the cultural context of art production (Efland et al, 1996). These artworks may also reject the notion of progress in art in favor of diversity and change. Efland, Freedman, and Stuhr go on to explain that postmodernism carries serious implications for education in its

acceptance of pluralism; priority of the little narrative over the meta-narrative; practice of democracy; implementation of nondisciplinary learning and across-grade-level learning; analysis of conceptual conflict and the acceptance of multiple viewpoints, especially respect for and appreciation of diverse

sociocultural and ecological perspectives; and support of radical social change for the purpose of making life better (p. 75).

Multiculturalism

Postmodern pedagogy is also related to multiculturalism, feminism, and critical pedagogy as it may reject the Western canon as the definitive archive of art for use in schools and encourage an authentic and contextual approach to the inclusion of non-Western works within school curriculum. In including these artworks in school curriculum, postmodernists also advocate looking at works contextually as opposed to formally. As Efland, Freedman, and Stuhr explained, “one does not learn very much about the significance of Kente cloth designs from West Africa through formal analysis. One also needs to know something about the cultural context of these objects to grasp their significance” (p. 56). Their statement can be extended to all works of art, Western and Non-Western; as each artwork is created within a specific temporal and cultural context, and may be interpreted through these lenses.

In his book *Celebrating Pluralism*, Chalmers (1996) advocates a multicultural approach to art education. He explains,

Most North Americans live in dynamic, nonstatic combinations of multiple cultures and subcultures... We must help our children find a place in our pluralistic world. In doing so we must avoid stereotyping, desegregation, indoctrination, and avoiding blame. We must confront the problems of prejudice and inequality in our classrooms as well as in our society (p. 1).

Chalmers writes from a perspective that postulates art education as one of the avenues to increased cultural awareness and social change through education. Although this view could be seen as the basis for most multicultural and postmodern definitions of

art education, these meanings continue to shift and change as society moves and transform. Multiple models of art teaching may be suited to multicultural education in the arts, and in particular, Discipline Based Art Education or DBAE, the model with which Julia defines herself, has been criticized in terms of multicultural and progressive content. In contrast to these views, Chalmers also argues, that

discipline-based approaches to art education that focus on the multicultural roles and functions of art will help all students to find a place for art in their lives and to understand that members of diverse cultural groups have commonly shared needs for art (p. 1).

But, aligned with postmodernist and multiculturalist general beliefs about art education and its democratic purposes, he feels that “multicultural understanding should give art education new life and vigor, because with this understanding, students will increasingly see art as integral to cultural and social life” (p. 7).

Postmodern approaches also attest to the value of including contemporary (artworks made by currently working artists, and also aspects of the popular or visual culture, as opposed to canonical) artworks in the school curriculum, underpinned by the belief that these contemporary works contribute to a vital connection between art and life for students and de-mystify the world of art (Gaudelius and Spears, 2002).

Efland, Freedman, and Stuhr (1996) advocate postmodernism in the elementary classroom, as manifested through a focus upon “recycling images,” and discussing, “how the past is reflected in the present, the existence of multiple interpretations, and cultural differences and connections” (p. 51). Their beliefs echo Julia’s explanation of why she creates art, and the experience of creating she shares with students.

B) Critical Art Pedagogy

Here, it may be helpful to employ a definition of pedagogy, a word that is used in different ways with reference to teaching. As Gaudelius (2000) explains, “In the most meaningful sense, pedagogy includes not only everything that happens in schools but also an awareness that school events are bound within myriad institutional and cultural influences outside the schools” (p. 22).

Critical educators advocate a democratic and emancipatory view of education. (Apple, 1986, 1995, 2000; Spring 2000) They do not see education as a panacea, but as a means for social reconstruction, or change, in much the same way that postmodernist, multiculturalist, and feminist scholars in art education do. As Gaudelius (2000) describes, “Both feminist and critical pedagogy position teaching as a cultural practice...Both enable students to contribute to knowledge production” (p. 23). Cary (1998) extends this line of thinking to explain that critical art pedagogy engages students in art learning to promote their critical consciousness.

Theory and Practice

When extended into research, this view of education extends and centers more on teachers and teaching than researchers and researching (in the traditional sense), as it validates the *living knowledge* created by teachers in their classroom on a daily basis.

Critical education studies contain much currency for art educators in its attempt to both change the nature and focus of public education and to include teachers and teaching at the forefront of this change. Theorists who think along these lines also attempt to

dissolve what they see as a pernicious and perceived gap between theory and practice and to affirm teachers as philosophers and researchers. As Cary goes on to state, “teachers of art can teach art *and* philosophize about teaching art...they should do so as their professional obligation” (p. 6). In his view, teachers are at the forefront of educational change and their theories and philosophies will constitute a new body of theory in education that is rooted in practice.

In terms of critical art pedagogy and theory and its real-world application to art education, Richard Cary outlines several current models of art education and their effectiveness in relationship to the goals of critical pedagogy in art. Two models that he mentions in detail include DBAE (or Discipline Based Art Education as outlined by Clark, Day, and Greer, 1984) and the ARTS PROPEL model (as outlined by Howard Gardner as director of Project Zero). Foundation beliefs outlined by the ARTS PROPEL model include artistic production as the primary learning focus, students’ active involvement in construction of value and judgments about art, formal art instruction as a core curricular subject and art learning that is meaningful to students. The DBAE model will be used as a framework for the purposes of this study, as it is the model in which Julia teaches, and through which she defines her philosophical position as an art specialist teacher.

Cary (1998) outlines aspects of the DBAE model that align with the intent of critical pedagogy. These include “DBAE’s primary goal [of developing] a student’s ability to understand and appreciate art,” (p. 316) and Clark, Day, and Greer’s

observation that “DBAE accepts a broad definition of art that includes folk art, applied art, and non-Western art as well as masterpieces from the Western archive” (p. 319).

The Student Teaching Experience

The student teaching practicum is aptly cited as one of the most important experiences in a pre-service teacher’s professional life (Kowalchuk, 1999). This uneven process does not occur in a linear sense, in which a student becomes a teacher through the function of pre-determined and unproblematic experiences (Britzman, 1991; Jackson, 2001), but rather within “the unstable relationships between power, knowledge, and experience” (Jackson, 2001, p. 386). Here, the student teacher’s experience is not always that of the “honeymoon” or “holding pen” (Britzman, 1991). Rather, the student teacher must navigate often conflicting situations and viewpoints to establish their own identity as a teacher, under the watchfulness of a system of teachers, university supervisors, parents, administrators, students, and all those involved with public education.

When I Britzman’s *Practice Makes Practice* (1991), I identified deeply with both the “Jamie Owl Stories” and the “Jack August Stories.” I saw my experiences through their descriptions and struggles as they embarked upon the process of learning to teach. I also identified with Annie in Jackson’s (2001) article “Multiple Annies” in my navigation of two separate and incompatible experiences with differing cooperating teachers – I felt that I had a split personality – in one classroom I was expected to perform in one way – the exact opposite occurred in another – there was no consistency. Few studies other than these (both from the literature in general education) seem to look at the student teaching

experience from a personal and privileged point of view. As Kowalchuk (1999) explains, student teaching is often seen from perspectives that focus on technical development or where learning to teach is seen as acquiring a set of generic skills; the subject matter perspective where learning to teach involves making decisions based in the teachers' understanding of subject area knowledge and pedagogy; or the ecological perspective where "environmental and life experiences are recognized as contributing to teachers' decisions" (p. 73). All of these perspectives are useful and applicable to the student teaching experience, but they too, overlap and are subjective to the training and personality of the teacher. Most of the respondents in Kowalchuk's study moved through identifiable phases during their teaching experiences – beginning with concerns about classroom management and ending with burgeoning concerns about content and student learning.

It seems that learning to teach is both a solitary and social endeavor. Champlin (1997) cites May's remark that "How a teacher teaches depends not simply on who the teacher is but also on how the teacher was trained and where the teaching is teaching" (p. 188). This view seems to favor what Kowalchuk might label the "ecological perspective" on learning to teach. Indeed, the cooperating or mentor teacher as was the case with "Annie" (Jackson, 2001) has perhaps the largest influence upon a future teacher.

Because this experience is so important, Champlin, writing in the anthology *Preparing Teachers of Art* (1997), feels that every student teacher should teach with a "master" teacher (whom she defines as one that insists students come first), and that

additionally, art student teachers should see themselves as a teacher first and art teacher second.

Portraiture and Case Study

Jessica Hoffman Davis and Sarah Lawrence Lightfoot (1997) describe *portraiture* in research as a term used to describe a “method of inquiry and documentation” that combines “systematic, empirical description with aesthetic expression, blending art and science, humanistic sensibilities and scientific rigor” (p. 3). As such, research portraits are “designed to capture the richness, complexity, and dimensionality of human experience in social and cultural context, conveying the perspectives of people who are negotiating those experiences” (p. 5).

The conceptual basis for such an approach to research is rooted within the idea that a merger between art and science for inquiry in some cases may best capture the essence of a complex idea, question, or situation by overlapping layers of meaning... As Lawrence-Lightfoot explains,

both artists and scientists recognized the limits of their media, their inability to capture and present the total reality. Their purpose, then, became not complete and full representation, but rather the selection of some aspect of – or angle on – reality that would transform our vision of the whole (p. 5).

This approach to research holds currency for education, and especially for art education, in its epistemological foundations. Portraiture is developed around an analogy in the visual arts. A portrait is intended to capture the likeness of a person at a particular moment. It is not intended to be an exact representation of a person, but at the same time, it must be authentic, unlike a fictional or literary portrait. It can perhaps be seen as a

convergence between portraitist (researcher) and a subject (study participant). In this study, the term portrait is used to describe my approach to the final writing of the case study. I could not use all of the data that I gathered, but instead I chose to emphasize certain focal points that I felt best captured Julia's likeness as a teacher.

Portraiture fits into the purpose and function of research in critical art pedagogy because of its

focus on narrative, with its use of metaphor and symbol, portraiture intends to address wider, more eclectic audiences. The attempt is to move beyond the academy's inner circle, to speak in a language that is not coded or exclusive, and to develop texts that will seduce the readers into thinking more deeply about issues that concern them (p. 10).

As Cary (1998) explains, one of the underpinning goals of critical art pedagogy is to uncover the connection between theory and practice, and to encourage teachers to participate in this ongoing dialogue (which directly affects them) through a language that is approachable for teachers in the field.

The portrait, then, creates a narrative that is at once complex, provocative, and inviting, that attempts to be holistic, revealing the dynamic interaction of values, personality, structure, and history.

Summary

Chapter Two provides the theoretical basis for this inquiry. Although no studies look specifically at the practice of elementary art specialist teachers in the way that this study does, much of the theoretical and practical literature in several fields applies either directly or indirectly to the themes that emerged during my study of Julia. This literature

also provided me with a sounding board, and encouraged my looking in differing directions to clarify what I was finding and experiencing throughout the course of the study. The literature also provided and named possible explanations of the factors affecting Julia's daily practice and those influencing her teaching.

CHAPTER III – METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter will provide an overview of both the research questions surrounding this inquiry and the methodology utilized to uncover answers to these questions. The chapter is further divided into sections that address the research process, research questions, the research setting and participants, data collection, data analysis, and data presentation.

The Research Process

I began this study with specific questions regarding the relationship between community, collaboration, and elementary art education. It was presented to Julia in November of 2001 as a study attempting to answer the question: What kinds of community-building and collaborative art making processes did elementary art specialist teachers use in their classrooms and why? The study was presented to Julia as a case study of her extensive involvement in the school, district, and local community, and her recent completion of a large-scale community and school based collaborative project, The Heart Project, a response to the events of September 11th 2001. I presented this proposal to Julia before the results of my pilot study were complete. Julia was not a participant in the pilot study, although two other elementary art teachers (Maya and Joan) from her district were. As I began to work with Julia more closely and began the experience of learning to teach art myself, the questions surrounding my inquiry began to change, gain momentum, and expand in a different direction. At this same time, surveys from my pilot

study began to trickle in and I became mesmerized by reading the words and stories of the art teachers who had participated. Their responses discussed community and collaboration but more conveyed the complexity and context of their individual and collective experiences as elementary art teachers.

Then, the data I had collected through working with Julia each day began to reflect more than simply her involvement with the community (although this constituted a large of her efforts as an art educator), or her decision to undertake such a large-scale collaborative project. In fact, Julia spent very little time discussing the Heart Project itself. It became more of a manifestation of the complexity of her experiences and beliefs – an outward, tangible, and well-publicized symbol of what her practice embodied everyday. Julia's conversations and confessions reflected her personal and professional beliefs and experiences, her philosophy of art education, and her response through practice to the specific context in which she works as an art specialist teacher.

For me as a researcher, student, and new teacher, these themes began to materialize as the beliefs that propelled Julia to action and that characterized her practice – they were not limited by one particular interest or event – they were holistic and shared common origins. Although a commitment to the idea of community was a materialization of Julia's beliefs and an example of her commitments, her actions were rooted more deeply in her views and experiences as both a practicing artist and art educator. As my relationship with Julia and my involvement in the research setting grew, I became more and more curious about the professional decisions Julia made on a daily basis and both the external and internal factors which affected her decisions as an art

educator. When I became the sole art teacher at a sister school, I was forced each day to answer these questions for myself. Gradually, my research questions were redefined, and as I re-searched (Wilson, 1997) my data and experiences – looked more closely and with more of a seasoned perspective – I found that what emerged was an inquiry surrounding the specific contextual actions an art educator makes as an artist and educator on a daily basis.

Qualitative Methodology

Eliot Eisner, as cited by Stokrocki, defines qualitative research as a *search for qualities* (Stokrocki, 1997). Stokrocki sees qualitative inquiry as a process that invites a series of questions. Some of these questions may come from the literature and others emerge in the process of conducting qualitative research. All are underpinned by the researcher's search for qualities, for signifiers of experience made tangible by repetition and exposition on the part of the researcher and participants.

The research process itself was complex and emergent for me. It evolved as my involvement and level of comfort within the setting grew. My ideas and questions were transformed as I began to understand the larger space which surrounds art teaching and the complex nature of the role of an art teacher in an elementary school. I began this project as an art education student with large, general questions such as: What do elementary art educators do with relationship to the concepts of community and collaboration in their classrooms? I had developed this line of inquiry before I began the process of learning to teach art. Over time these questions led me to even larger and

more general questions that were suggested by a nexus between the information I had been gathering and my developing experiences as a student, researcher, and teacher. These three stages of my relationship with the research process fueled my questions. I began to see teaching not as an abstract set of skills removed from my own experience, but as a process I was navigating as well as observing.

Near the end of the study, I moved into my first year of teaching experience as an elementary art specialist at a school within the same school district as Julia. At Rillito, my school, I began to see how the connections or lack thereof between theory and practice and the necessity (as well as the difficulties) surrounding the creation of an art program relevant to the needs of my students and my school community affected my own beginning practice as an elementary art teacher. Themes emerged from both a re-searching of my data and coalesced between this and my own experience. I returned to the literature once again, and to my collected data as themes I had sought to find earlier fit less neatly in my research box, but seemed very important to what I had observed of Julia and my own experiences as a new teacher, and echoed the words I had read from teachers in my pilot study. Eventually, these themes suggested to me a portrait of an art educator at work, in a specified time, place, and context, working with a particular group of students. They suggested the convergence of complexity, context, and connectedness that I observed but had not yet named during my time with Julia.

The Research Setting

Ocotillo Elementary School is located in the Northwestern part of Tucson, Arizona. It is one of four elementary schools within the Desert View School District, one of three districts in the area that operates art programs at all schools at the elementary level. Demographic data is outlined in the *Desert View Unified School District Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*, an annual publication graced with covers created by Julia's second grade art students,

The District is primarily residential providing a high quality suburban-resort environment encompassing approximately 25 square miles. Residential developments have incorporated the natural terrain of the foothills providing a picturesque southwestern setting. The quality of the schools and rugged natural beauty of the area have resulted in the District being one of the most desirable for new residents of the Tucson area. It has been reported that the District contained the highest median value for homes in the Tucson area. Economic activity within the District is based primarily on tourism (2001, ii).

Informally, the district and its schools are considered among the most affluent in the Tucson area and in southern Arizona. Desert View schools are regarded as good schools and good places to teach. Schools' standardized test scores are among the top in the state, and the district also operates an independent foundation which generates hundreds of thousands of dollars in addition to state funding that are used for various programs in the schools, including arts programs which are considered a part of the core curriculum at the elementary level. School buildings are striking and well-maintained – several have been designed by renowned architects. Teachers are visible participants in their respective fields, well-qualified, and required to participate in a variety of professional development pursuits from their first year within the district. More than sixty percent of teachers hold a master's degree in their field. Professional development

options for teachers include the Career Ladder program, Critical Friends Group, and Peer Interaction Groups as well as the opportunity to travel to conferences and attend workshops specific to subject matter areas or grade levels taught.

Ninety percent of students who graduate from the Desert View district go on to four year universities, while the Arizona state high school graduation rate is only seventy-two percent. Eighty percent of the district's 4,997 students are White, less than one percent are English language learners, and almost thirty percent are identified as gifted. In my preliminary study, as Maya and Joan described their student populations as "upper middle class, mostly Anglo; parents are mostly professionals" and the community as "insulated." This is in stark contrast to other areas of southern Arizona where survey respondents described their student populations as "underprivileged," "Mexican American," "mainly Hispanic," and "Title 1 School." In these districts, many students live well below the poverty level, and in comparison, students in the Desert View district are separated geographically, socially, and economically from the Tucson city center, its schools, and its residents.

As the most quickly growing elementary school in the Desert View School District, Ocotillo (which opened in 1979) services approximately 520 students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Art is a required subject for all students, and instruction is anchored by a written curriculum aligned with state and national standards in art education. This curriculum was officially adopted in 2001, and was being systematically implemented in all elementary schools at the time of this study. (Desert View School District Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum, June 2001) During the 2001-2002

school year, specialists in the areas of visual and performing arts began to teach to the four standards outlined by the curriculum. Art classes at Ocotillo are attended once weekly for fifty-five minutes by first through fifth grade students and once weekly for thirty minutes by kindergarten students. This results in thirty six hours of instruction in art during the school year for first through fifth grade students, and eighteen hours of art instruction for kindergarten students.

Ocotillo School has won numerous awards including the 1990 Award of The Arizona Department of Education Literacy Site, the 1993 designation as an Arizona A+ School and the 1994 designation as a United States Department of Education Blue Ribbon School. The school has also won two art education awards: the Exemplary Fine Arts Site Award, 1991 and the National Art Education Association's Program Standards Award of Excellence, 1993

In a setting such as this, teachers undergo rigorous performance evaluations, and success in hard numbers such as grade point averages and standardized test scores is stressed, as is the visibility of *Specials* (Art, Music, and Physical Education) as programs. Families are involved in students' educations, and are vocal critics or applauders of educational policy. This involvement necessarily affects education within the arts in the Desert View School District, and hold both positive and negative outcomes for students and teachers working as specialists within the system.

Study Participants

The study participants included Julia, about whom the case study and portrait was developed, and myself, as researcher, participant, student teacher, and art specialist at Rillito Elementary School. Additional participants referred to in the study and narrative include Annette, principal of and former art specialist for Ocotillo School, Joan, former art specialist at Rillito Elementary School, and Maya, art specialist at Sabino Elementary School.

Data Collection and Analysis

In this study, I focused three primary means of collecting qualitative data in an effort to achieve triangulation (Stockrocki, 1997). Data was collected throughout a fifteen month period that ranged from November 2001 to February 2003. First, I collected data as an observer, a full participant, and a half-participant, and half-observer (Stokrocki, 1997). I took many field notes, and when I returned home each night, I wrote in a research journal where I both described and interpreted what I had seen and heard. Next, I documented my informal conversations with Julia, highlighting quotations or concepts that recurred, and conducted a final and formal closing interview. This interview, at the end of the fifteen month period, provided Julia and me with an opportunity to look at themes more closely, and for her to expand upon or clarify my findings. Finally, I collected additional and supplemental data through paper artifacts, digital photographs, and other articles. Throughout this year and a half, my role shifted and changed in the setting, as did Julia's. These shifts may be seen as three distinct

stages – I began as an observer with Julia as a participant, then I became a full participant and student teacher while Julia became a mentor and supervisor. Lastly, Julia and I became colleagues, and I became both a teacher and researcher. These changes and methods are further explained in the following passages.

Participant Observation: My Role as Researcher and Student

I began this study as an observer and partial participant in Julia's classroom. In this role, I spent five weeks observing Julia in the classroom. I took notes on her actions as a teacher, her interactions with students, and her interactions with others in the school. I helped Julia with administrative tasks and with planning, and I also helped in the classroom with students. During this time, Julia and I shared many informal conversations. Julia began to tell me about her experiences as a teacher, and her beliefs about teaching art. Julia was equally as interested in my beliefs and concerns. Julia was generous and thoughtful, as well as intelligent and analytical about her experiences during her career as a teacher and artist. Over the course of the next five weeks, I began to participate more fully in the setting, gradually taking over Julia's twenty two classes and becoming a full participant with the responsibilities of a classroom teacher. I participated in the Pueblo Pit Firing, and took over all of Julia's teaching duties and curricular planning. Julia's role transitioned from that of classroom teacher to mentor teacher. Our conversations were more carefully crafted around instructional concerns, but we also became more deeply involved in one another's lives and histories. It was during this time that I began to understand Julia as a teacher, at the same time my ideas

about my inquiry were changing. I began to write down themes that I saw repeat themselves (for example, Julia's emphasis on the task of building community within her new school or her emphasis on the construction of my lesson plans) that would later be coded and create the core this case study.

Finally, at the end of the ten week period, I took on a new role as a teacher at Rillito Elementary School, replacing Julia's colleague Joan. Throughout this experience, Julia was an advocate for me, and for my competency in the position. Her guidance continues to serve me as I finish my first year at Rillito. During the course of this fifteenth month study, I had a privileged place in the setting. Julia's role was both that of teacher and mentor teacher, and our relationship was formed around my learning to teach. I realized that what she shared with me was what she felt was important for a new teacher to know. Her repetition of certain concepts, in turn, helped me to ascertain what was relevant and important to her in terms of her own practice and her goals for mine.

Journaling and Note-Taking

For me as a researcher, journaling and note-taking after my observations provided me the frame of reference I needed to closely read and extract meaning from my observations. I chose this way of documenting what I had seen and heard instead tape recording or video recording because of my involvement with the setting and because of my instinct to garner meaning from text through close reading. Like Stokrocki (1997) advocates, I wrote each day after arriving home from the scene – this time helped me to clarify and describe what I had seen and heard – my re-description of the scene provided

an introduction to interpretation and a textual document for me to deconstruct. From the beginning, I saw the research setting and its participants in a narrative way, and through this account that I pieced together each evening, themes emerged over time.

I saw my journals and notes as a text; as a segmented narrative – a verbal representation of the daily life of the classroom in which I observed. As such, my reading of it is similar to Eisner's idea of *educational criticism* (as cited in Wilson, 1997). Wilson explains that Eisner saw classrooms as texts to be interpreted much like a painting. I share his view, and I saw my text as such – as both a representation of the classroom and as an independent document. As an undergraduate student with emphases in literature and art history, I spent most of my time close reading poems and paintings, looking for both the obvious and subtle and exploring the interplay between each – I applied this technique to my notes and my journal entries. I read each line carefully, looking for the layers of meaning that each annotation held; deconstructing the text; making notes in the margins; and circling, highlighting, or underlining ideas that begged my attention. I took note of repetition and emphasis, of context and content. As I read, re-read, and re-re-read, I gained insight into Julia's actions as a teacher, and my actions as a researcher. For example, I noted that much of my personal communication with Julia focused upon her decision to become a teacher, her definition of teacher, and the overlapping and developing space between her as a teacher and artist. As I added my own experience as a beginning teacher to this textual account, themes began to morph, to overlap one another, and to reveal their relatedness.

In-Depth Interviewing

My close reading of the text of my observations hinted at themes. These themes in turn, lead me to look at Julia's practice as complex, as affected by context, and as connected to her personal and professional experiences. Nearing the end of my study, Julia and I arranged to meet once again for a formal, closing interview. During our three hours together, Julia and I discussed her personal and professional experiences and beliefs, the effects of school culture on her agency, and the conceptual clusters I had developed in response to what I had seen and heard her do in the classroom and in her relationship with me. The interview consisted of ten open questions (Appendix D). I took notes on Julia's answers. Over the course of our relationship, I developed a sense of empathy (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1997) for Julia that was heightened when I took on the role of an elementary art specialist teacher (looking for answers to my own questions), and I brought this empathy to the setting. The interview provided me with the clarification I needed to create a supplemental text to read closely and weave into my burgeoning analysis. I began the interview with simple, background questions that yielded complex and embedded responses from Julia. For example, when I asked Julia how she became an art teacher, she replied

I always wanted to be an artist. I didn't think I was good enough to be a teacher – teachers have a special gift – to be able to have so much knowledge, and to communicate that knowledge to others. I spent a day in the classroom with a neighbor of mine who was a teacher – it was exhausting, I didn't want to do it...I entered college to become an artist, but when I graduated – everything with my first degree – had to do with education. Everyone saw me as a teacher, but I resisted it. Then, I was poor with a small child, and all of this lead me teaching.

When I questioned her about what was important or essential for elementary art students to learn, she explained, “this is the time of any beginning knowledge...people need a beginning point, a common knowledge, to soar, to feel safe with art...elementary is where we can open doors.” Before we moved into the next question, Julia punctuated her response with an anecdote.

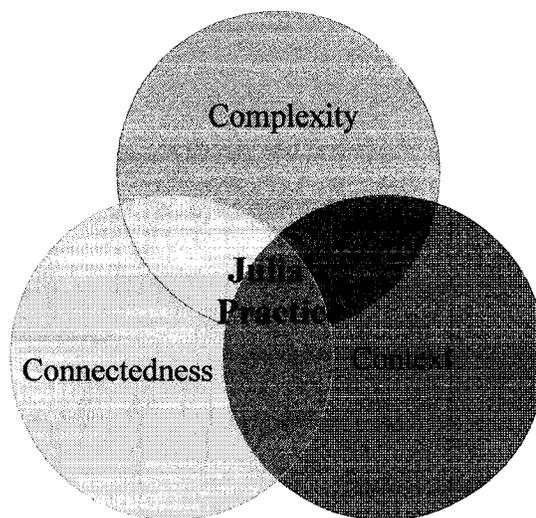
Did I tell you this before? I was at a concert, at *U of A. Presents*. During the intermission, I felt someone looking at me. Someone tapped me on the shoulder. “Are you Ms. Applebee?” I thought “Oh my goodness! Brad.” He looked just the same. He told me he was a jazz major at the University and had gone on a trip to Europe with one of his friends and went to all these museums. He said, “It finally made sense to me – I got it. I saw what you wanted us to see. I wanted to look at the art forever – I couldn’t tear myself away. My friend didn’t understand why it was so important to me.”

Julia’s complex and engaging responses to my questions provided me with an additional insight into her practice, and a place to offer my own ideas and interpretation of what I had seen and heard during the course of the study. I sensed that this was important to Julia, because even though she was a willing and supportive participant in the study, she was still somewhat concerned about how she would appear in the paper. After the interview, as Julia opened the door to her large van, she called out, “I’m glad we did it this way. This made more sense for me.”

Data Coding

Themes that were outlined in the wheel (Table 2.1) were further labeled under the conceptual headings of context, complexity, and connectedness. These categories are not

explicit, but rather overlap with and inform one another in an effort to convey the complexity of teaching art the elementary level.



Complexity	Context	Connectedness	Context	Context	Connectedness
Art Making and Teaching		Multiculturalism		Immediate Community	
Personal Experiences		Pedagogical Philosophy		School Culture	
Professional Experiences		Art and Life		Collegiality	

TABLE 3.1 – Julia’s Practice lies in the overlapping space between complexity, context, and connectedness

Data that was gathered from journaling, observation, interviewing, and note-taking was coded in its description of these categories.

For example, this passage from my closing interview with Julia was coded as connectedness and context because it refers to the way in which Julia sees art.

“Discipline-Based Art Education, multiculturalism through DBAE...not dead Western male guys...the images that everyone creates are valuable – everyone – all cultures and all people through all time – makes art – it isn’t separate – its an intrinsic, an integral part of the culture, and is valued through the culture.”

The following passage (taken from a background question I asked of Julia) was coded as complexity because it refers to Julia’s personal perception of a becoming a teacher.

...but when I graduated – everything with my first degree – had to do with education. Everyone saw me as a teacher, but I resisted it. Then, I was poor with a small child, and all of this lead me teaching.

Another passage coded as complexity was taken from an observation of Julia

One day, while I taught, Julia worked on a model for a commissioned project for the Public Zoo in the classroom. Her drawings were beautiful and educational; students were fascinated with Julia’s depictions of leopards and water and gathered around her. They entered into a dialogue about Julia’s art-making and its relatedness to her teaching. They recognized the colored pencil techniques and drawing techniques that she had taught them and was now using in her own work.

Data Presentation

I chose to present my findings in a narrative case study format, to emphasize the complexity inherent in this broad and holistic study. Stake (1995) explains that, as researches and people, we are interested in cases “for both their uniqueness and commonality. We seek to understand them. We would like to hear their stories” (p. 1). He continues, “In qualitative study, we seek greater understanding of Θ , the case. We

want to appreciate the uniqueness and complexity of Θ , its embeddedness and interaction with its contexts” (p. 16).

My narrative begins with four passages that describe and begin to interpret Julia at work in the context of the case. The passages have been carefully constructed from the large amount of data I collected during the five weeks in which I observed in Julia’s classroom. I chose the data I used in these passages according the recurring themes I found in my reading of the research text – those ideas that I had coded under the headings of complexity, connectedness, and context. I also returned to the literature I had read and the large wheel (Table 2.1) that I had created to re-evaluate what I had seen with this new perspective to see if these ideas had been noticed by others. The narrative then moves into a separate section of the study that attempts to capture a sense of the factors of complexity, connectedness, and context and their interrelationship.

Strengths and Limitations

The purpose of this study was to uncover what a teacher does daily in her classroom and the beliefs and factors which both support and influence a teacher’s professional decisions. These factors often necessitate a precariously crafted balance on the part of the teacher working within a public school system. Teachers’ practices are also affected by events in their personal lives and life histories (Cole and Knowles, 2001) that shape the experiences they bring with them into the classroom. In this case, events in Julia’s personal life as an artist and professional life as an art educator affected and altered her practice in many ways.

The theoretical premise for this study includes a view of research that requires a validation of both the knowledge that is constructed daily by students and teachers working in classrooms, and the knowledge that teachers have gained through experience. These two complementary forms of knowledge comprise a *living knowledge* (Cary, 1998) that inhabits and informs the realm of teaching. Cole and Knowles (2000) also attest to this soundness of this knowledge when they make the claim “we see teaching *as* inquiry...teaching *is* researching,” and furthermore that teaching is

a complex and personal expression of knowing and knowledge [where]...teacher development is emerging and ongoing, individual and collective, personal and professional. It encompasses the span of life of professional commitment (p. 1).

A strength of this study is that it hopes in some way to bridge a gap between theory and practice in teaching by endorsing teachers as researchers and creators of knowledge, and postulating that it is the professional responsibility of teachers to engage in reflection and research that is centered within the classroom and meaningful to elementary art teachers in context. Study findings could be beneficial for other novice art educators who, like me, must struggle in their daily practice with the larger questions that surround the space defined in teaching art and our complex identities as art educators. This is our own form of inquiry, our own research endeavor through which we strive to make our practice relevant, rewarding, and meaningful for ourselves, our communities, and our students.

The study is inevitably limited because it refers to only one teacher, in a particular place and time or context, and cannot be generalized to a larger population, except upon

the basis of *typicality* (Cary, 1998) or *commonality* (Stake, 1995). Julia was a willing participant in the study from the outset, and is, as will be made clear, very interested in many factors gaining currency in art education research. She has a great deal of research experience at different levels within the fields of art education and general education and is committed to change within them and specifically within the public educational system.

This study is also limited by my role as a researcher and student in the setting. My findings may be biased, because I was looking toward Julia as a model and mentor, and another researcher in the same context could have found different answers to the questions, or could have chosen to focus on different aspects of Julia's practice.

In addition, although a member check was performed, there was no inter-rater validity of my coding of the data. Although two readers of this work know Julia in a personal and professional sense and saw the case study as an accurate portrayal of her, more outside readers would have increased the validity of the findings.

Summary

This study was a search for the qualities that affect a specific elementary art teacher's daily practice. These qualities were initially exposed by themes that began to emerge during a pilot study exploring a related, but differing topic of concern in elementary art education.

CHAPTER IV – CASE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter will present an initial introduction to Julia as well as the finished case study and portrait developed of her during and after data was collected. The first four passages (Section One) present a description of my first meeting with and observation of Julia, a typical day in Julia's classroom, and an atypical day in Julia's classroom. These short passages are descriptive, and through them I will attempt to recreate the rhythm of Julia's classroom and hint at some of the factors affecting her practice. They are, in a sense, a *thick description* (Geertz as cited in Stokrocki, 1997) meant to acquaint the reader with Julia and her environment. Data for these passages was collected through observation and field notes.

Section Two offers a narrative of Julia's history as an artist and teacher and includes the personal and professional experiences that have contributed to her practice in the most profound ways. These include her teaching and artistic background, her interactions with colleagues and professional friends, and her experiences during her sixteen years with the Desert View School District. Section Two also contains a narrative of Julia as a mentor – its significance for this study comes from my relationship with Julia as her student teacher and colleague. Data for this section was collected through observation, informal interviews and conversations, and a formal, in-depth interview.

Finally, Chapter Four presents an analysis of the data found that was based on both initial questions of inquiry and emergent themes. Sections are divided according to

the themes, or conceptual clusters (Stokrocki, 1997) that arose from a re-examination of field notes, journaling and close reading of notes and journal entries, digital photographs, conversations, and other collected data. The chapter will conclude with an introduction to areas of further study and implications of this study that will be expanded upon in Chapter Five.

Section One: Passage One

Meeting Julia and Annette

I first met Julia after several weeks' of phone messaging. Most of the other student teachers in my program had solidified their placements, and I was beginning to worry – it was nearing the end of November, and I had placed my request in September. I was the only student teacher hoping to be placed in an elementary school, and I felt there were few cooperating teachers available for me. Julia was recommended to me by several professors, who regarded her as a strong example of an elementary art specialist.

Julia had requested that I have an interview with her and with the school's principal, Annette (who had been the art specialist before Julia was transferred there) to determine if the situation would work for us and for the school.

The interview was both serious and informal. Julia entered the school office a few minutes after I had arrived. From the start, Julia cautioned me, *don't be so nervous*. Julia, Annette, and I sat at a small table in Julia's office. Immediately, I sensed an established rapport between Julia and Annette (and later I would find out they had been friends and colleagues for over fifteen years). They worked back and forth, asking me

questions about my philosophy of art education, my teaching portfolio, my experiences in the art education program at the University of Arizona with which they were both familiar, and especially my expectations for the student teaching experience.

Julia then discussed some of the units she was currently teaching, and invited me to come to the classroom several times over the next few weeks to observe and to make sure that this placement was a *match*. I could tell there was a level of concern for her that I feel comfortable with her teaching style, which she felt was different than was expected. She described herself as both a *DBAE* (Discipline-Based Art Education) teacher and someone who created “disciplined” atmosphere in her classroom. Her comprehensive units were planned to last between eight and nine weeks, and she was concerned that I would have adequate time to both observe and teach within the University practicum timeframe.

Eventually, we determined it was a match. At this time, Julia also agreed to become a participant in my study, and we set up a time for observation.

Passage Two

My First Observation

I returned to Ocotillo one week later to observe on a Thursday in late November. The schedule for this day included three first grade classes, and was a shorter “early release” when the students were left for home an hour early. I met Julia at the art room, and she briefly explained that she had planned her schedule for this year so that classes from each grade level would be on the same day. Monday was Third Grade; Tuesday,

Fourth; Wednesday, Second; and Friday, Fifth; Kindergarten was spread throughout the week. For her, this schedule facilitated planning and reflection between class periods, allowing her to *monitor and adjust*. Julia's typical schedule consisted of three to five fifty five minute classes per day, with a twenty minute planning and lunch period. In a day, she taught approximately 75 to 150 students.

On this day, first graders were working on watercolor paintings in a unit on the non-objective art of Wassily Kandinsky. They had already drawn a series of overlapping organic and geometric shapes with pencil on watercolor paper, and were carefully painting each of their shapes, as well as the new shapes created by overlapping, with different jewel-tone colors. This was a conceptual problem for students, and they were actively choosing colors that did not touch one another, as well as painting carefully in their outlined shapes.

Julia's art room was painted a deep blue-green. Bulletin boards corresponding to the units at each grade level lined the walls. Each board was made of reproductions and words communicating the key concepts of the unit. The boards were mounted on brightly colored fadeless paper, and were neatly handmade and laminated. A timeline ran across the top of two adjoining walls, and a dry-erase board covered a carpeted area in the corner of the room, hiding a small computer workstation. Banners depicting the elements of art were equally spaced throughout the room. The room had many cupboards and drawers for artwork and supply storage, and a small shared office separated it from the classroom next door. There was a small utility closet, a kiln room, and a storage area

for art supplies. The classroom space, although not large, was clean and organized efficiently.

The class of twenty-six first graders nearly filled the entire space, with students at each of the eight rectangular wood tables, but the atmosphere of the classroom seemed calm and comfortable. Each *table team* shared a tray of paint and a plastic water container. Students had their own small paintbrushes and paper towels. Julia sat at an empty chair at one of the tables at the front of the room, and students came to her by table for suggestions and advice. She later explained that she chose to do this instead of mingling around the room, which offered each student the opportunity to have personal attention on a rotating basis, and stopped students from approaching her all at once in a clump. Students whispered while they worked, but there was no disruptive behavior. At the end of class, students lined up to deposit their artworks on a drying rack at the front of the room, paintbrushes were cleaned, water containers replenished, paper towels folded, and students dismissed.

Passage Three

Julia's Classroom: A Typical Day

After helping her nine year old son, Sean, get ready for school, Julia packs his lunch, drops him off on her way and arrives to school a few minutes before the students do, or as the students are arriving. This leaves her little time to set up the classroom, so



FIGURE 4.1 – A Typical View of Julia’s Classroom

her supplies for each table are organized in table baskets consisting of pencils, erasers, scissors, and glue sticks; and artworks for each of her twenty two classes of students are stored in drawers. Student *Supply Helpers* facilitate the distribution of materials and an educational assistant, Carrie, helps with sharpening and replacing an endless quantity of pencils, cutting paper, and folding newspaper squares.

As the class approaches, Julia moves outside to greet them and their teacher in the outdoor hallway before they enter the art room. During this greeting, Julia explains objectives for the day, and often directs students to sit at their seats or get their table baskets.

When students are settled in their assigned seats (students sit at four-person, mixed gender table groups that rotate throughout the year), Julia directs their attention to a large, dry-erase board with the words *Welcome to Art* written on it in red ink. Here, additional directions and objectives for the day are bullet-listed in alternating colors and

reviewed. Students now have the opportunity to ask clarifying questions before it is time to begin working. These opening procedures, from hallway to artwork, take less than five minutes of the students' time.

Julia distributes artwork by sitting in an empty seat at one of the tables. The artworks themselves are stored in drawers organized by grade level and teacher code (the first letter or two of a classroom teacher's last name). From this central spot, Julia gives out student paintings, paintbrushes, and paper towels to students individually, while also offering each student individualized feedback about their work in comparison with the day's objectives (for example, today, Tyler, you will need to finished outlining your bones). Julia calls students to receive their work by tables, and a line forms in front of her as the three to four students wait for their materials and feedback. Once all artwork is distributed, the feedback cycle begins again. Here, students work together, quietly talking and painting, while the "sink person" changes water in the water pots and the "table captain" reminds the table team to follow procedures. From her spot, Julia can easily monitor the classroom, give each student individual feedback, and replenish supplies.

When students have finished the first objective of the day, Julia asks them to gather around a center table to watch as she demonstrates the next objective for the day. Julia sits next to a student, and asks if she may demonstrate with the student's work. The rest of the students gather in a single-file circle around the table, shoulder to shoulder, so that they can see. Questions are left until the end of the demonstration. Julia consults the student whose work she is using, and together they determine what will be done next.

Carefully, Julia demonstrates on the student's work. Here, students interject to ask questions about the demonstration before returning to their own tables to work.

When students have finished working for the day, they form a line to place their

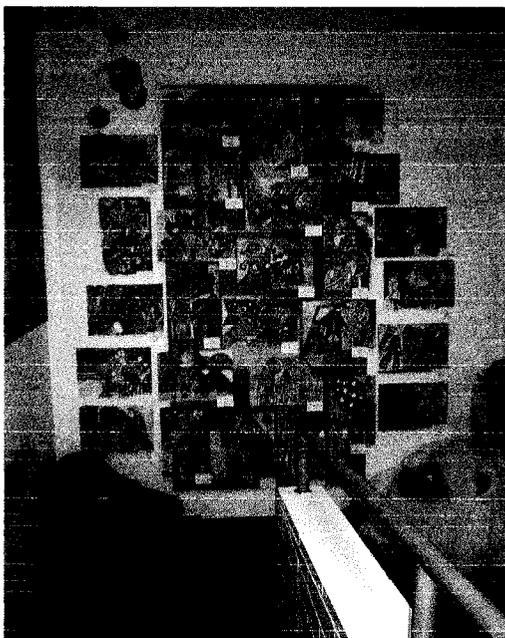


FIGURE 4.2 – Julia Displays Student Work on the Ocotillo Campus.

paintings on a drying rack. Fresh water replaces used painting water, paintbrushes are cleaned and inspected by Julia, and fresh paper towels are placed at table spots. When clean-up is finished, students wait at their seats, with hands folded to be dismissed by table to meet their teacher in the hallway.

After two classes, Julia has a short planning and lunch break. The break is hectic.

During the planning time, Julia checks her email and telephone messages. There are at least twenty email and ten telephone messages. She returns those that are most urgent. The majority of these communications concern the many art committees and public art projects she is involved with outside of school, as well as her professional relationships with colleagues and friends. Julia also takes a few minutes during this time to pen an article for the *Ocotillo Oracle*, Octollio's family newsletter. The article acknowledges the students whose work hangs in the office and library on a rotating basis throughout the school year. During the lunch time, as many as twenty students from different grade levels begin to filter into the art room to work on art

projects for which they need additional time. Julia attends to them in the same way she would a class. The last group leaves as her third class of the day arrives.

As the fourth class leaves, Julia quickly neatens up the art room, takes a few minutes to fill in students' names with calligraphy on Art Award Certificates sent to their homes, and leaves herself. Before she arrives home, she attends three meetings regarding public art and charities that she is involved with, a computer class about website design, and picks up her son from school. When she arrives home at after dark, she spends the next three hours working on artwork (either personal or commissioned) in the clay studio adjacent to her home.

Passage Four

Julia's Classroom: An Atypical Day: The Pueblo Pit Firing

The third grade Pueblo Pit Fire is an art tradition in the Desert View School District. The firing has been coordinated by teachers at three of the elementary schools for the past fifteen years, and was originally started by Julia. It also recently became a part of the third grade art curriculum that was adopted in the summer of 2001, and will be phased into all Desert View schools during the 2002-2003 school year.

The Pueblo Pit Firing I observed and participated in was the first one Julia had coordinated at Ocotillo. She had done the fire for thirteen years at another school in the district, but felt that she had not yet *built the community support* needed for the day long fire at Ocotillo.

The Pueblo Pottery unit begins with an in-depth look at the pottery made by Pueblo peoples in the American Southwest. Students study the life and work of these artists, and function of pottery making within this culture. Their study culminates in the creation and decoration of a pot in the Pueblo style. Pots are made with traditional materials (low fire clay with grog), in the coil method with a poki (or base) in one of several styles, and decorated with incised geometric and animal designs. Pots were painted with red slip, polished, and prepared for firing several weeks before the actual fire.

Four weeks before the fire date in late April, Julia began to plan. Her planning included creating a schedule for the firing day that outlined instructional activities for over 80 students split into twelve tribes with parent Tribal Leaders and four classroom teachers, creating a database of parent volunteers and their contributions (wood, cow patties, rakes, shovels, blankets, snacks, water) for the firing as well as their assigned roles during the firing (Tribal Leaders, Pit Supervisors, or Royal Helpers), establishing a network of *Contact Parents* to call and confirm families' donations, hiring a backhoe to pre-dig the pit and clear the wash and desert area of flammable brush, notifying the Fire Marshall and local fire departments, and the actual coordination of the firing (firing times, kindling, temperatures reached, and sought-after firing effects).

Two weeks prior to the firing, parent contributions were collected, tribes were assigned (7-9 students per parent, including their own student), and tribal boxes were assembled. Boxes included blankets, art materials, instructional materials, first aid supplies, sunscreen, name tags, and Native American stories and cultural materials for

Tribal Leaders. Additionally, Tribal Leaders were invited to Ocotillo for a mandatory training session in the art room run by Julia. Because few parents were familiar with Native American art and culture, and even fewer were familiar with the physical process of creating a pit kiln, Julia reviewed these ideas for them – highlighting the value of this authentic experience for students. She drew diagrams on the white board that illustrated the structure of the pit and the firing process. Julia emphasized the importance of parents' roles as Tribal Leaders and their commitment to a safe and successful firing. Julia had had experiences in the past where parents did not keep their commitments or realize the safety issues involved with the open-air firing, and this was a concern for her. Julia's priorities were safety and the authenticity of the experience for students. She expected parents to adhere to her discipline policy and to keep the students on schedule for the firing to be successful, and stressed these points. She was firm but disciplined in her expectations of parents for this day. After the presentation, parents asked a few clarifying questions such as "May a student wear a short sleeved shirt under their woven shirt?," and "Can we set up our camps in the wash area?" Julia answered all in terms of safety for the students.

A few days before the firing, Julia reminded students of the criteria for participation in the firing. This included wearing a long-sleeved woven cotton shirt (Julia showed fabric samples from a woven shirt and a T-shirt, so students would know the difference, and explained that woven shirts are less likely to catch fire), long woven pants or jeans, boots or tennis shoes, a hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, a bandana to wet and wear over their faces when near the fire, leather or other heavy gloves, and a water bottle for

drinking and cooling down. Julia also demonstrated what to do if students did catch on fire – how to get help and extinguish the fire.

The day before the firing, Julia checked and re-packed tribal boxes, checked over the area for the fire, and had fifth grade students help to spread firewood throughout the wash area so that the third grade students could find and “collect” the wood and kindling on their own. She looked over areas of the wash for signs of javelinas and rattlesnakes and for good areas for campsites. She checked the forecast and was also worried about heat exhaustion – a concern in Tucson at that time of the year.

The day of the firing, Julia arrived to school early, modeling the clothing she asked students to wear. The day was perfect – 90 degrees, overcast, and still. Julia arranged the shovels and rakes around the perimeter of the pit (twenty feet which was outlined by rocks) – this would be the domain of the Pit Supervisor, a group of parents who “guard” the pit, watch the fire, and keep students at a supervised distance from the open flame. She opened bags of cow patties to dry, and began to divide the slipped and polished pots by classes. After this initial preparation, a meeting was held in Ocotillo’s multi-purpose room for all third grade students and Tribal Leaders. Here, additional schedules for the day were re-distributed on clipboards, tribes met with their leaders, and safety precautions were again rehearsed. Students were then dismissed to the pit area, and Julia assumed her position in the center of the pit – she seemed like a conductor orchestrating the complex actions of the over 100 participants in firing – she had warned me that this is when I would “see her in action.” She felt it was necessary to assume the role of a leader in order to ensure a safe and successful experience for students – this

outcome was tied directly to the schedule for the day. Tribes were divided into two groups; while six tribes established their campsites six others began to “dig” the pit (although the harder ground had been pre-dug by the backhoe) with supervision from the Pit Supervisors. Then groups switched. Next, all tribes collected firewood and kindling for the pit. During this time, Julia was stationed firmly at the pit, supervising when necessary and coordinating tribes. Because the firing needed to be complete before the end of school, tribes were on a tight schedule. Tribes again switched, and while some tribes continued to collect wood, others began to prepare pots for warming near the fire. When all of the pots were laid out, the fire was started ceremoniously by the Pit Supervisors and Julia. When the kindling began to catch, students carefully helped to lay the pots in the pit with shovels. All students watched this part of the firing. After the pots were laid in the fire, the larger pieces of wood began to catch, resulting in a fire with flames reaching almost to the top of the one-story school building.

During this “down time” Julia watched over the fire with the Pit Supervisors, Tribal Leaders and students, parents, and other classes from the school. When the fire had burned for an hour or so, it was time to add the cow manure. Again, tribes divided and were carefully supervised as they laid the large, dried pieces over the fire to create the reduction atmosphere that would result in the blackening of the pottery in the San Idelfonso style. The manure also began to smolder with the flames of the fire and cause it to burn more evenly. After the manure ceased to smoke, the fire was smothered with sand from the surrounding area – the pit was recovered. During this “down time” students rotated through several instructional activities – they watched the video *Maria*

(about Pueblo potter Maria Martinez – the video shows Maria creating a pot in the traditional including all the steps from coiling and polishing to firing) in the art room, had snacks, went to their regularly scheduled lunch and recess, and played Native American games on the soccer field with their teachers. When they finally returned to the pit, it would be time to begin to uncover the pots.

Students gathered anxiously as the Pit Supervisors began to uncover the still-hot pit. Several rang out, “That’s my pot! It’s black!” but were kept from running up to the pit. The process of uncovering the pit took about forty-five minutes, and then students were able to see their pottery. Most of the students immediately recognized their work, pointing out where the fire had licked their pots with its black tongues. Parents and the Fire Chief put out the fire with a large hose, and for students the school day was over. Their faces were bright red from the sun, and their clothes smelled of burnt manure and fire. A few tribes had missed their jobs, and one had skipped them altogether at the urging of a parent who did not want to touch cow manure. Julia returned to the art room, re-distributed blankets and supplies so that students could take them home the next day, made sure the pots were cool, and left to pick Sean up from school and take him to baseball practice. Her evening would end well past twelve again.

Section Two: Julia’s Life History as an Artist and Teacher

From Student to Saguario: Julia’s Emergence as a Teacher

Julia has had a diverse background. She has lived in several different states in both the eastern and western United States, including Arizona, where she has lived in

rural, suburban and urban areas. Her involvement with art began early in her life. As a gifted high school student, Julia was eligible for early graduation, and began to take classes at Arizona Western College, a community college in Yuma, Arizona. She had recently moved to Yuma, a rural, sparsely populated town from Scottsdale, an affluent suburban area. As a young woman at this time she saw herself as an artist. In a Yuma High School agricultural class, she also saw herself differently from her peers – they were ranchers interested in raising steer, and she was a vegetarian, interested in organic gardening and yoga. Julia, a curious learner, decided to stay in the course, winning awards for her organic garden. Julia also came of age during a time of intense social change (during the sixties and seventies) in the United States, and was an activist at the forefront of this change. Although everyone around her saw her as a teacher, she never saw herself this way:

I didn't think I was good enough to be a teacher...I thought teachers had a special gift – to be able to have so much knowledge, and to communicate that knowledge to others. I spent a day in the classroom with a neighbor of mine who was a teacher – it was exhausting, I didn't want to do it.

At this same time in her life, Julia had two incredible teachers who still bear an influence upon her today. The first was a humanities teacher at Yuma High School, and the second an art teacher at Arizona Western College. Julia grins and her posture changes as she describes both as *passionate*. These two teachers tapped into her inquisitiveness as a learner and helped to redefine her idea of a teacher. Her simultaneous experiences in their classes seem to have contributed to Julia's internal portrait of a teacher. She explains,

I had these two passionate men as teachers...My art teacher was always excited...The humanities teacher was slower, more intense...They both changed my outlook on everything. I began to see everything as connected...This was a few months after Picasso's death, and our [art] teacher took us to a retrospective of his work at the Los Angeles County Museum – it was the whole old building [she motions up and down] and it was filled with his work, all four floors.

Julia recounted this experience with excitement as she recalled her teacher's enthusiasm and the experience of seeing so much artwork in one place. She related another experience with her humanities teacher. He asked the students listen to classical music in class. Julia thought of this as very cultured. But one day, a student raised his hand and said "I think one day a hundred years from now Led Zeppelin's *Stairway to Heaven* will be a classic." Julia remembers feeling stunned, that a student would mention Led Zeppelin while they were supposed to be appreciating classical music. She was equally as surprised, and impressed, with her teacher's answer – he asked the student to state his case – to make an argument as to why this song was so important. This stuck with Julia – the teacher took a moment that she wasn't sure how she would have reacted to and created what Julia defined as a *teaching moment*. She explains, "he took advantage of that moment...he engaged that student who everyone doubted...he validated the student's experiences, ideas, and knowledge."

The next fall, Julia entered the University of Arizona as a traditional undergraduate student, and as an Anthropology major. She intended to study anthropology and art. She later changed her majors to sculpture and art history, and graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in both majors. As she began to make her way as an artist, she continued to *resist* becoming a teacher. Curiously, the language of

resistance peppered her narrative about becoming an art teacher, and about the professional and personal challenges she has faced.

For the next seven years, Julia got married and worked in a variety of positions – all of which related in some way to both art and education. As an employee for LIRC for Tucson Unified School District, she worked with teacher training, exhibits, and curriculum in one of the largest collections of multicultural artifacts owned by a school district. Here, her interests in art, anthropology, and culture began to meld together with her educational background and reinforce her belief in the connectedness of art, culture, and experience. She began to reconsider teaching. She now had a young son, and wanted to support her family. She returned to the University and began to work toward her Master of Education degree in Secondary Education along with her art certification.

Julia re-entered the University of Arizona in a time of rapid change in the field of art education. She recalls fondly the professors who influenced her there; Vincent Lanier, Harry Broudy, and Dwaine Greer, and how things began to fall into place for her. In particular, Discipline-Based Art Education (the reformation gaining currency at that time) *made sense* for Julia. It seemed to validate the *connectedness* that she felt between art and culture. She could not imagine teaching students just to create art by experimenting with media – she felt that students “don’t just emote...people don’t just emote – they have a knowledge base, they communicate their knowledge and experiences.” She felt that her experiences with a diversity of cultures had lead her to value more than only the cannon, and that even these canonical artists were tied intricately to their time and culture. Julia still describes DBAE as her philosophy of art

education, and multiculturalism through DBAE as one of her primary concerns as a teacher. Julia's degree in Secondary Education also exposed her to educational research and thinking outside of the realm of art education.

After graduating, Julia took her first teaching position at a diverse, urban high school in central Tucson. She taught grades 9 – 12 for three years, began to enjoy teaching and to see herself as a teacher. She felt that she could make a difference in her high school student's lives, and that she learned from them as well. She was committed to teaching high school students, who she saw as in flux and as in a time of great volatility in determination of their identities. During this time, Julia also became more involved with community-based educational initiatives such as PATS (Parents, Administrators, Teachers, and Students) of which she was a founding member, and began to advocate for art education and an awareness of issues in general education. She presented a chronicle of art education in the district to the school board. For this slide presentation, Julia had observed, interviewed, and photographed art teachers at work in each of the district's schools to relay what was happening in the district to school board members. Unfortunately, her high school position was cut, and Julia left the district to search for a full-time job.

Julia found a full-time position at Saguaro Elementary School in the Desert View School District, a smaller district with three elementary schools, one junior high school, and no high school. She entered the Desert View community with three professional friends; Annette, who would become the art specialist at Ocotillo, and Joan who became the art specialist at the third elementary school in the district, Rillito. Julia was still

uncertain about becoming an elementary art specialist, but felt that the position would eventually become a high school position when the Desert View High School was built. She felt that she would not have as strong of a connection with her elementary students, but felt that this transition was the best choice for her at the time. Julia's first two years at the elementary level were difficult for her, but she had strong professional relationships with Annette and Joan, and they provided support for her. Julia began to grow accustomed to her new role and began to question her initial resistance to becoming an elementary art specialist. She now began to see teaching elementary as an opportunity to reach thousands of students and to begin to make changes in the way that people respond to and live with art.

Julia would spend the next thirteen years of her career at Saguaro, working tirelessly to create a comprehensive art education program. Although the Desert View High School would open, she chose to stay at Saguaro, as she gave birth during this year to another son. She worked closely with administrators, teachers, and parents to advocate for the importance of elementary art education. She created curriculum focused upon the specific needs of her students and with great attention to multiculturalism and social awareness. She received a Fulbright Fellowship to study art and Japan and shared her experience with Saguaro students via an interactive website and curricular and art materials she brought back from Japan. She helped to design an art studio for the school that was built to her specifications with adequate storage space, sinks, a kiln room, and other amenities. She connected her curriculum with Annette's and Joan's to determine a scope and sequence across schools and elementary grade levels. Julia also stopped

making art. Then, one summer, she received a phone call: her position at Saguaro had been cut, and she would be moved to Ocotillo. Julia, in the midst of a divorce with two young sons to support, had little time before the new school year began to pack up her room and move into an entirely new environment, and for her, personally and professionally, a new phase of life.

Process and Products – from Teacher to Artist: Julia at Ocotillo

I met and worked with Julia during her second year at Ocotillo. Her first year had been a difficult transition. She was, in effect, starting from scratch. She could not transplant what she had created at Saguaro to Ocotillo, even though only a few miles separated the schools. Instead of being the veteran teacher, she was taking over someone else's position, that of her close friend Annette, a teacher with a very different style. Annette's position now shifted from that of colleague and friend to administrator. Julia inherited a different room, over 500 new students, a new staff, new administration, and new parents. She would have to rebuild relationships she had spent nearly fourteen years creating. Julia's family life was also strained during this time, and the stress affected her work. She was now a single, working mother with two boys and simultaneously in a new teaching position.

During this breach in her personal and professional life, Julia found she had two choices to make. It was for her a time to "dive in" or "build a wall" [Julia motions wall building with her hands]. Julia chose to take on the new challenges that she felt life had presented her instead of closing herself off from them. She would come, in time, to see

this period of time as one of the most profound changes in her personal and professional life, and one that deeply affected her as an artist and practitioner.

Julia returned to art-making. She began to re-define herself as an artist, and come to terms with her choice to become both an artist and teacher. Julia explains that during her time at Saguaro she would have described herself as a *teacher*, but now she consciously describes herself as an *artist who teaches*, a carefully but confidently applied label with serious implications for her practice.

While Julia began to rebuild a community within her new school, she became connected to the community of artists outside of the school. She purchased her own home in the downtown arts district, and created a clay studio in an adjacent building. She realized that she had abandoned art, and her identity as an artist. When reflecting on this transition, Julia began to realize that teaching had made her a better artist. The process of teaching had informed her art-making, and the process of art-making would inform her teaching. Julia had acquainted her prior experiences as an artist with talent. She was considered a talented sculptor and she was on her way to a career as a successful sculptor, but she left art-making because she thought did not have *talent*. Through teaching, she began to see art-making as communication – as breaking down a process into steps. This idea of art suited Julia’s analytical and conceptual connections to art and teaching – if she felt that students didn’t just “emote” or express themselves freely, why would she feel compelled to do the same? Julia explores communication, specifically visual communication, through her artwork. She considers images very carefully, not only for their purely physical or aesthetic qualities, but for the connotations and denotations they

carry, for the meaning they are imbued with through a convergence of culture and experience. She expects her students to experience the same sense of meaning revealed in their connections with art.

Practice makes Practice (Britzman, 1991): Julia as a Mentor

It would be my time taking over one of Julia's classes; a half hour kindergarten class with sixteen students, eight girls and eight boys. They would be studying the Dutch artist Piet Mondrian in a unit outlined by the Desert View School District Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum.

A few weeks before the unit was set to begin, Julia had provided me with a copy of this kindergarten art curriculum. A few days later, Julia and I met briefly during her planning period to discuss my interpretation of the curricular unit and the correlated *Performance Activities* (Desert View School District Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum, 2001) for kindergarten students (in this case, the performance activity included students creating a primary color non-objective tempera painting using geometric shapes, rhythm, and vertical and horizontal lines). At this time, Julia also showed me the visual aides she had made to accompany the concepts of the unit.

The day before I was to begin to teach, Julia and I again discussed my intentions for the unit. I showed her the notes I had made from my research on Mondrian and from what the curriculum had outlined (even though Mondrian was an artist I, in fact, liked very much, and had researched for a major paper as an undergraduate, my notes felt dry – the curriculum seemed vague and simplistic in a formalist soft of way, and I was unsure

of my ability to communicate what I felt and thought about his artwork to such young students – everything I thought of seemed awkward, either too complex or reductive; I did not express this fear to Julia). Instead, Julia listened thoughtfully and looked over my notes, and then began to explain how she had taught the unit in the past. It was one she had worked with for fifteen years.

She began with setting the scene, describing Holland in vivid detail – the landscape, the weather, the flowers, and the surrounding ocean. She conjured images of windmills and seas of tulips. She continued, explaining that Mondrian grew up in this dark and cold yet beautiful place. She described Mondrian’s love of dancing and of jazz music – “he was quite a good dancer.” She talked about his move to New York City after World War II, and his infatuation with the “fast moving, full of life” jazz music (a large reproduction of *Broadway Boogie Woogie* was my main visual reference for the students). Julia suggested that I provide jazz for the students to listen to – to dance to as I introduced the lesson and as we looked at *Broadway Boogie Woogie*. She outlined how I could do this – play a selection for the students, ask them to stand and to “become an instrument...a saxophone, a drum...to feel the music inside of you – to look – can you see the shapes in the painting moving?” As I expressed my concern over the management of the class (what my previous cooperating teacher had expressed the most concern about in my nine weeks with her) during this musical interlude, Julia described how to do this in a “controlled” way – using a clap or hand signal to communicate that it would be time to return to focus, and “return your eyes to me.” She explained that “breaks” in this way serve to both manage the class and enhance the content of the lesson

– good classroom management was written into the design, the text, of the lesson and not a separate element of teaching. According to Julia, this type of construction would necessarily “diminish off-task behavior,” while enhancing the lesson for young students and for all types of learners.

In our continuing conversation, Julia offered me more suggestions: making large, laminated examples of both geometric and organic shapes to help students identify the difference, asking students to both stand up straight and lay down to “kinesthetically” experience the feeling of vertical and horizontal lines, asking students to pronounce “Piet” along with me – explaining that it is a variation of the name “Peter,” and using color mixing paddles with a neighbor to illustrate how the primary colors relate to one another. All of this could be done on the carpeted area of the room in front of the space Julia provided me with to hang my visual aides.

Julia then shifted her focus from the introductory portion of the lesson to the studio art activity. She showed me past examples of students’ 12 x 12” paintings. Each painting had four horizontal lines, and three vertical lines. She showed me how students could work in pairs, each pair sharing a 12” ruler and a pencil. She demonstrated how the students could line up the end of the ruler with the paper to make sure the line is straight, holding the ruler steady with both hands. They would draw four lines, turn their paper, and draw another three. The resulting grid created the geometric shapes of squares and rectangles. She also demonstrated how to distribute paint and aprons (one color of paint first for each table – to give students time to think where to put their squares and not just be overwhelmed by all of the paint and to lesson the chance of accidental color

mixing), how to hold a paintbrush for the most control, and how to decide the placement of squares strategically and rhythmically. Again, Julia's construction of the lesson emphasized cooperation among pairs; management and engagement by design. I felt re-energized, and approached my lessons with a new awareness of their content and context. The next day, I would introduce the lesson.

I spent the night at home making visual aides – I created words to match the concepts of the unit using large letters as Julia suggested the students would be new to reading. I made large cut outs of geometric shapes from primary colored construction paper. I looked for pictures of Mondrian in his studio, surrounding by walls and tables covered by squares, rectangles, and lines. I listened intently to identify instrumental voices in several CDs of jazz music. I tried to imagine the rigid looking Piet with the small spectacles dancing. When I arrived at school, I tacked my supplies to the wall and arranged the carpet for students to sit comfortably. I was still nervous, and also not quite sure of my ability to make the lesson meaningful for students and to monitor the classroom. When the tiny class arrived, Julia greeted them in the hallway, where they hung their backpacks on hooks for the bus ride home. She explained that Ms. Macleod would be teaching their class for the rest of the year. I glanced anxiously at the over and over again – what if the music doesn't work? What if I run out of time? What if I have too much time left? I greeted the students and asked them to sit on the carpet – I saw a few trying to catch a glimpse of Julia; wanting to ask her a question – not entirely trusting me as their teacher. Julia deferred their inquires to me as I frantically rehearsed their names in my head – April, Janny, Derek, Kylie. She slipped stealthily into the small

shared office where she could watch through a window and listen through the slightly ajar door.

The lesson seemed as if it was over before it began. The students delighted in the music; as Alana confidently exclaimed, “it sounds like old-fashioned movies.” They practiced “becoming” vertical and horizontal lines; they eagerly identified shapes and colors. There were no management problems. I was relieved. I walked them to the door, realizing what I learned from Julia about teaching – imagining the alternative: lecturing kindergarteners on Mondrian’s theory of pure plastic art! Julia returned from her office and exclaimed, “that was wonderful,” but later admitted that “at first I was nervous for you.” She had intuitively grasped the source of my uncertainty, but also censored her own impulse to jump and save me when things went wrong. She wanted me to learn by doing, but with a strong foundational understanding of what the students would need. Julia and I met again to analyze the lesson in a more specific way – she offered suggestions for asking students to sit (she encouraged me to model, and to “be specific”), and for checking their understanding (turn to your neighbor and tell them what you think; touch your nose when you know). She encouraged reflection, giving me color coded sheets for each lesson I would teach (Appendix E). They asked me “What was successful about today’s lesson? If you were to teach this lesson again, what would you change? How will your above response impact your planning for next week?” They became another level of conversation between us. In realizing my relationship with Julia as a mentor, I began to gain a sense of the complexity of teaching – of the intuitive and hidden practices of pedagogy and the relationship between content and context.

Data Analysis

Throughout my relationship with Julia, I found that themes began to emerge surrounding her beliefs, practice, and experiences as an elementary art specialist teacher. These themes were at once complex, but linked to Julia's concrete experiences as a woman, artist, and teacher; connected to her personal and professional experiences; and affected by the context in which Julia teaches.

These generalizations: complexity, context, and connectedness, are used to define the thematic and conceptual clusters around which Julia's practice and praxis revolve and have evolved. They attempt to answer the research questions posed in Chapter One by identified and defining the factors that affect Julia's practice.

Complexity: Julia's Personal and Professional Beliefs and Experiences

A Foundation: High School and University Experiences

Julia's story of her experiences as a young woman begins with her personal definition of the concept of *teacher*. Julia saw teaching as somehow magical, and teachers as persons with an exceptional talent, but she also felt that this magic and talent had to be rooted in an extensive base of knowledge – she saw a teacher as an expert. Julia focused on the communicative nature of teaching in her definition – the ability to transmit knowledge to students – not in a top-down type of way but in a way that inspired students. Julia held teachers in high esteem. She posited herself against this definition when she explained, *I didn't think I was good enough to be a teacher*, and that *I resisted teaching*. Even when those around her saw Julia as a teacher, she did not see her self as

one, and the language of resistance would define her choices as a teacher and artist. Eventually, Julia would re-define herself as a teacher when life circumstances led her to this new role, and through teaching she would find the confidence to reify herself as an artist. But, when she graduated from high school, Julia defined herself as an *artist*, as someone who wanted to make art, and she entered the University with these expectations for herself. Throughout her life, Julia has defined teacher and artist separately, although they do inform one another in her practice.

Julia also entered the University with a set of experiences that shaped her epistemological beliefs and her attitudes toward art knowledge in particular. The teachers who *changed her outlook* tapped into her awakening feelings about the *connectedness* she saw between art and other ways of knowing and disciplines. Julia did not see art as *expression*, but as *communication*, as inseparable from *society* and *culture*, and as *inherent* to human experience. Her art and humanities classes had informed one another, and Julia's introduction to thinking about art critically and conceptually was within this overlapping realm. However, at this point in her life Julia's thinking about art teaching still resided in a realm that separated studio art and art-making from art education.

When Julia returned to the University for her Master of Education degree in the mid-1980s, she joined the University of Arizona art education department at the time when DBAE was gaining currency. This approached *made sense to her* because it clarified her own approach to art – one that was both holistic and depended upon connectedness and knowledge, not talent or expression. While other students in the

program challenged DBAE, Julia felt that art as a cultural product was tied to both history and culture, and that a working knowledge of what was then defined as the four disciplines of art would give students the foundation in art knowledge that she sought to communicate in her teaching. With this background, she entered the field of art teaching at a large, urban, and economically and racially diverse high school.

A Transition: Julia's Career with the Desert View School District

Julia became the art specialist at Saguaro Elementary school after again, *resisting*, the position. Her joining the district with two friends who would take the positions at the other two schools seems to have made her move easier. Julia's views about elementary art education began to shift at this time. After having had experience teaching at both the high school and college levels, Julia began to observe that her older students (ages 14-55) had incomplete art educations – that their confidence in art was low, and that their skills were at the level of what she thought to be about third grade. Several developmental sources in art education indicate similar findings, where students' art skills seem to level off in early adolescence (Rush, 1997), although Julia came to this conclusion independently and hypothesized her own solution to what she saw as an art educational problem. Julia postulated that without early exposure to and awareness of art as well as a solid foundation in skills, students would never feel *safe* with art. This feeling of safety with art, for Julia, would translate into a confidence in the students' relationships with art and would propel them to a lifelong interest in the art. It would also allow them access to

museums and galleries and artwork in other public spheres that may have been previously restricted to them.

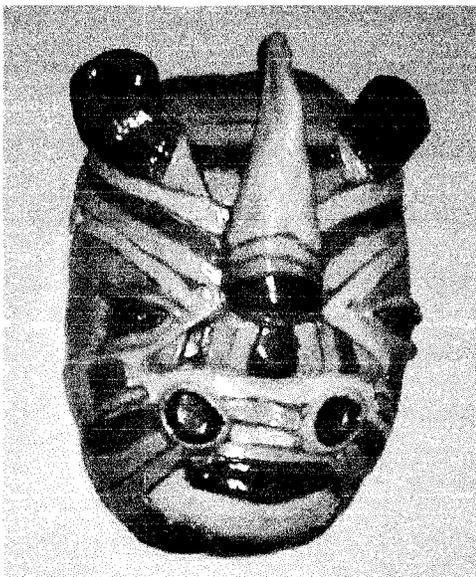
Julia saw elementary school as the foundation of knowledge, as the place where learning begins. She also saw elementary art in a conceptual way, as more than self-expression, but as a way of communicating with art that she hoped would lead to a lifetime appreciation of art. Julia hoped that her students would feel engaged with art, and that they would not be put off by museums and galleries – that they could join in a dialogue about art. Julia’s awareness of lack of a place for art in people’s lives and the relationship between socio-economic and educational status and relationship with art spurred her to work to empower the literal “thousands” of students she was teaching to have access to art.

During her time at Saguaro, Julia worked to create a curriculum where there was none. Using all of the resources to which she had access as well as her extensive knowledge about and conceptual understanding of the role of art in culture, Julia created lessons that were relevant to the students’ needs and the needs of the school. When Julia left Saguaro, she took this bank of knowledge with her, and continues to transform it in her position at Ocotillo.

Julia’s transition to Ocotillo is characteristic of her as a learner, teacher, and person. Instead of closing herself off from possibilities (*building a wall*) or allowing a bitterness to enter her practice, she continued to ask questions of herself and of those around her and to re-address and re-work the issues that affected her practice at both schools.

Currencies

Julia now defines herself as an *artist who teaches*. As she gained confidence in her own ability both to teach and make art, she began to share her art-making with students. One day, while I taught, Julia worked on a model for a commissioned project for the Public Zoo in the classroom. Her drawings were beautiful and educational; students were fascinated with Julia's depictions of leopards and water and gathered around her. They entered into a dialogue about Julia's art-making and its relatedness to her teaching.



FIGURES 4.3 & 4.4 – Julia's Work as a Clay Sculptor Influences her Teaching – 5th Grade Students' Clay Masks on display at the City-Wide Art Show that Julia Organizes, 2003

Julia's repositioning of herself as an artist allowed her, like Jennifer Paziienza, to rethink "the relationship between [her] artmaking and teaching" (p. 41). In the article "Of Painting and Pedagogy," Paziienza poses the question of whether "public schooling should include the private lives of students and teachers" (p. 41). She answers herself, explaining that "when we bring into relationship our lives as artists and teachers, we do

just that” (p. 41) Paziienza continues to question the pedagogical value of this juxtaposition and offers her own experiences as a painter and teacher. She compares the act of deciding what to teach to making decisions when painting, explaining that

We need to be open to the exchange that grows out of mutual respect between ourselves and our students. Rather than forcing the fit I think we need to learn how to adapt. It isn't easy. It's about trust. It's about trusting even when you may not know exactly where things are going....As teachers, we have the responsibility to choose and negotiate with our students what we will include in the curriculum. Making decisions about what to teach in our classrooms is as difficult as deciding what to paint (p. 42).

Julia's openness to the exchange between herself and her students has altered her approach to both art-making and teaching. Julia's case is also similar to the case of New York artist and educator Tim Rollins, who Suzi Gablik (1991) discusses in her book *The Reenchantment of Art*. Gablik explains that Rollins, like “most art teachers... had been teaching and making art at the same time. But, dissatisfied with the limitations of that, he decided to fuse the two practices and began making art with the kids” (p. 106). As Julia has developed as an artist, her interests have begun to fuse with her teaching. Her goal is similar to Rollins' as he hopes to reach “kids and helping them realize their potential” (p. 108). Through sharing herself and her art with students, Julia inspires them with her own enthusiasm, especially for clay art. Like Julia, “Rollins operates on many fronts at once, doing interviews and community work as well as big public shows” (p. 108).

Julia's Heart Project is a good example of the way that Julia has fused her art-making with teaching and carried her sense of community responsibility into her classroom. In response to September 11th 2001, Julia and her students created over 5,000 clay hearts that were sent to the families of those who passed away that day. Julia and

the students labored for six weeks to sculpt, fire, and glaze the hearts. A parent volunteer flew the hearts to New York City, where they were distributed to the families. A torrent of responses from the families flooded the Ocotillo School mail. Julia's feelings about the Heart Project echo Rollins, we he says, "We don't want to just paint ourselves and our communities. We want to find out something about the world. It makes the kids feel that they can do something – that they can make things happen."

With the Heart Project, Julia saw herself as an "active agents, choosing and implementing projects that give people an experience of community" (Gablik, 1991). In this way, Julia's blending of art-making and teaching carries the sense of a wider scope and contributes to her goal of empowering students' with art. The Heart Project also defines another facet of Julia's complexity, as it shows her flexibility and sensitivity to her setting and students. For the Heart Project, Julia abandoned six weeks' worth of the written curriculum that she had helped to create – this rejection of prescribed content – even a curriculum that Julia helped herself to create – illustrates Julia's sense of her own agency as an artist and teacher and her response to the students whom she teaches and the community in which she worked. This is an intricate tie to the context in which she teaches.

Context: Community, School Culture, and Julia's Practice

Desert View: A Sense of Balance

The Desert View School District can be a difficult place to teach. During my interview process for the position at Rillito, Julia explained several times, *if you can teach here [in Desert View], you can teach anywhere*. Expectations are high, and the

atmosphere is public. Isolation can be extreme, but the sense that one's classroom is a public domain pervades this isolation and often posits the teacher on the defensive. Parent involvement can literally "make or break" a teacher or program, and some teachers believe that the district supports a "top-down" ethic of teacher knowledge, control, and agency. As Maya explained, *the parents run the school*, and in this view, parental pressure can affect the allocation of funds to programs and the supposed importance of programs in the district. Because of the district's affluence, there is a visible gap between its students and parents and those of other schools in the Tucson area. In addition, many of the teachers in the Desert View School District come from backgrounds that differ from those of their students and there is some resentment from teachers toward the affluence of students and their families and the affect teachers perceive this affluence to have on families' attitudes toward education.

To the contrary, the Desert View setting affords some teachers opportunities they may not have elsewhere. This may be especially true for elementary art specialist teachers in the district who are furnished with their own classrooms, given an adequate if meager budget for supplies, and supplied with a written curriculum and resource materials. In this view, support of parents and community members must still be "earned" but family and community pressure can provide an ally for teachers working to secure a place in the school for art. Julia's position lies balanced somewhere in the middle of this spectrum. She has had disputes with parents and with administrators, but she has stood her ground, making collaborators of her most loyal supporters and through them offering her students immense opportunities to connect with art. She sees advocacy

for art education as part of her professional responsibility. Julia does not fit the classic definition of an activist; her sense of advocacy is rooted in what she does in the classroom with students – it is part of her design, much like her management is an integral part of her lessons.

In this way, Julia works within the system or context in which she teaches. Her teaching is in some ways defined by this context, but she does not seem to feel a dissonance between what she would like to do and what she is able to do. Rather, I sensed that Julia would resist working within a system that did not allow her the freedom and agency to pursue her goals for the students. As a teacher, she is at heart, student-centered. Her beliefs and opinions are strong, and she approaches her practice accordingly. Although Julia has been criticized by parents, she does not seek confrontation. She responds through the artwork and through her teaching. Many of the complaints she has received have centered upon her “strictness” as a teacher and the difficulty of her lessons. When parents see the quality of the artwork, many of their concerns seem to subside. It seems that their questioning has less to do with Julia as a teacher, and more to do with their lack of awareness about art. Many parents and classrooms teachers in the district seemed to view art at the elementary level as creative self-expression, not as a discipline to be studied sequentially (which Julia believes). In this way too, Julia’s advocacy is tied to her curriculum, to her lessons, and to her practice in the classroom. This, in turn, is rooted in Julia’s stringent conviction that each student is capable of greatness in art and that this greatness comes not simply through talent or predisposition but through study, conceptual understanding, and work. Upon

observation, this route seems to be the same one that Julia has taken to become an artist and the one that she encouraged me to take as I became a teacher.

Collegiality: Julia's Support System

Julia's practice in context was also affected by her personal and professional support system. She entered her position at Saguario fifteen years ago with two friends, Joan and Annette. Maya was already at work in the district, and would also become Julia's collaborator and friend. Like the music teachers May (1995) observed, Julia, Annette, Maya, and Joan had true collegiality, or solidarity. Their relationship was natural, not contrived (May 1995). Now, fifteen years later, the three remain working in some capacity with the district and although their relationship is now somewhat strained by time and distance, it still exists. Joan has become a high school art teacher; Annette, Julia's administrator; and Maya, art specialist at the district's newest elementary school. The curriculum that was adopted in the district for elementary art teachers largely shows their influence and their collective philosophy of pedagogy at the elementary level. It is essentially comprised of lessons and units that they developed both separately and collectively throughout their years with the district.

Annette's new role as Julia's administrator also provides Julia with support. When Julia received the call that her position at Saguario had been cut, the move to Ocotillo would mean that she would be working under Annette, her close friend. Although her principal at Saguario was supportive of Julia, it seems that Annette's knowledge of art education and her personal relationship with Julia have increased her

agency as a teacher. With Annette, Julia knows she has a foundation of support. They understand one another on both a personal and professional level and their rapport is genuine.

Community: Julia's Connection to the Art World

Julia is a practicing artist. The studio adjacent to her home is open to the public during the Studio Tour. She has a wide circle of friends and acquaintances in the Tucson art world. She works with a number of different artists on various committees and public art projects. Some of these artists are educators, others are not. One of the main focal points of her work with community and public art is an increase in art awareness. Again, her role as an artist in the community can be tied to her position as an art and education advocate. Many of the public art projects she takes on are educational in nature, and are designed for children as well as adults. Julia sells her art privately, but also donates pieces to charities. In this way, Julia is a cultural worker (Trend, 1992) and her actions as such are tied to her experiences teaching.

One of the most visible organizations in which Julia participates is OASIS, and she serves as the chairperson for their annual city-wide school art show. OASIS, an organization for retired persons, provides its members opportunities to volunteer within the cultural and educational framework of Southern Arizona. Julia invites art educators from all schools (public, private, and parochial) in the county to participate in the show. The student artists attend an opening reception with their families that also gives families the opportunity to see art works from a variety of schools. The show's opening is an

occasion for art teachers to mingle with one another – a rare opportunity even among those working in the same district. A strong relationship with OASIS serves another purpose for Julia. It allows her to advocate directly to who she sees as the majority of the voting population in Arizona, retired persons. Often, the members of OASIS have little contact with the schools, but great power in terms of educational policy. Through her partnership with OASIS, Julia is able to show the value of art education directly to an instrumental audience and to indirectly influence local and state government opinions on art. The partnership has been a success so far – this year, the works were held an additional two weeks’ over to appear in a press conference at OASIS with the mayor’s wife that was broadcast on a local television station.

Connectedness

Multiculturalism: An Over-Arching Philosophy

Julia is, in many ways, committed to social change through learning in art. She is not an instrumentalist (Greer, 1991), as she sees art as a subject of study on its own and for its own right – she does not condone interdisciplinary approaches to art teaching that use art to enhance other areas of the curriculum. Rather, she sees art and its history as an unfolding and rich narrative – one that details human experience and a common denominator among peoples living in all times and cultures. Julia is careful not to provide this definition as “universal” but as to say that the study of art is the study of humanity. Here she sees a connectedness centered upon art but encompassing literature, history, social and physical science, religion and politics, and at its crux, human

experience and calculated and studied, purposeful, expression of this experience. For Julia, the idea defined as multiculturalism is inherent to the study of art, not something that is added to a curriculum, but rather, the conceptual focus of her interpretation of curriculum itself.

In her treatment of multiculturalism in art, Julia demands authenticity. She shares the viewpoints of Efland, Freedman, and Stuhr (1996) when they discuss Kente cloth weavings. Through her Fulbright fellowship and other research grants, Julia has had an opportunity to study art in context in other cultures – including those of Japan and Hawai'i. Julia's approach to multiculturalism differs from others writing on the idea of postmodernism and multiculturalism, as her interpretation is global, rather than local, in nature. The Desert View School district does not share the same type as other districts in the area. Its diversity, perhaps due to its connection with the University, is more global. There are few Mexican American students (who generally make up the largest minority in other areas), but students from Asia, Africa, Australia, Eastern Europe, and other areas of the world. Although a global approach to multiculturalism is criticized by some it seems to fit Julia's sense of her student population and community. In a way, for her, the global becomes the local.

Art and Life: A Necessary Partnership

Julia views study in art as a subject in its own right. But, through the study of art, Julia sees connections not only to all other areas of learning, but to all other areas of living. Julia defines herself as an artist – she is explicit that this is her primary vocation.

As an artist, she sees her role as not only one of making “aesthetically pleasing” things but as making meaning. For Julia, this meaning lies in the connectedness between art making and living.

This analytical and conceptual approach to art making for Julia (and subsequently her approach to teaching) implies reflection in its nature. Julia takes little at face value, but instead looks for layers of meaning. Julia’s intensity in her belief in the connectedness of art and life informs each decision that she makes in her own career as an artist and in the classroom. It is one of the reasons that the DBAE approach appealed to her over the creative expression approach common when she began to teach. DBAE reinforced Julia’s idea in these connections – it gave her a venue beyond the creative to explore students’ and her own relationship with art. As Julia describes her teaching as informing her art-making, her art-making is born of her experiences and reciprocally informs her teaching.

Summary

Julia’s story resonates with the complexity of teaching, and the complexity of teaching art. Her life experiences, her beliefs, and the context in which she teaching affect her practice on a daily basis. Julia is keenly aware of these conditions and works to achieve balance between the personal and professional, public and private nature of her career as an art teacher.

Through her teaching, Julia advocates what she feels is most important to learn through art to her students, colleagues, and the community. These beliefs include a

commitment to multiculturalism, to community, and to authentic learning in art. Julia's beliefs also influence her style as a mentor/cooperating teacher, as a member of the Ocotillo staff, and as a member of an artists' and activists' community.

Throughout her twenty years in the field, Julia's practice has been affected by changes both in her professional and private life. These changes have profoundly affected her practice itself and her definition of practice; likewise, her practice will continue to evolve as she adds her current experiences to a growing body of work.

CHAPTER V – DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

Julia's example is an important one for teachers and students of art education, teacher education, and general education. In many ways, Julia is extraordinary, but her experiences may also be shared by many teachers working today in art education and in very different fields. Many of the situations that she faced were echoed by the participants in my pilot study. Julia's story is complex, and is rooted in context. She views education, and thus, art education and art, in a connected way. This connectedness is at the root of her identity as a teacher and artist.

When I began this study, I was unsure of what I would find. My questions were abstract, and although I felt that they were important, I was unsure of what I would actually observe in the classroom and learn from Julia. I had a unique place in the research setting because I was assigned to be Julia's student teacher at the same time that I undertook this project. This was a circumstance of the graduate certification program I was a part of, and provided me with intimate access to the setting and its participants. I was a part of Julia's everyday life and the everyday life of the classroom. Julia's main concern was not her participation in this study, but her responsibility to her students, of whom I was one.

Like many beginning teachers, when I met Julia, I had a sense of what I thought was important – a sense of the way that I hoped to teach, but not a sense of the complexity of teaching and the practicality of making pedagogical decisions each day. I did not have an accurate sense of the balance a teacher must undertake to be successful in

his or her field, and the extent to which a teacher's philosophy of education and personal and professional beliefs and experiences influence her practice.

Summary of Findings

This study was a search for qualities. The qualities of context, complexity, and connectedness overlap to inform Julia's practice. Context encompasses the setting in which Julia teaches and her relationship to her students and the community. Complexity refers to Julia's evolutionary practice as a teacher with a career spanning over two decades. Connectedness describes Julia's definitions of art and education, and the function she sees for the study of art. These large thematic or conceptual clusters describe her as a person, an artist, a teacher, a mentor, and a colleague. They illustrate that as a teacher Julia theorizes and reflects upon her practice and is actively engaged in the creation of living and relevant knowledge in her classroom and through her involvement with the community and local art world. As an artist, Julia's tendency to break things down into their most digestible parts has affected her artwork conceptually and is mirrored in her approach to teaching. She does not see herself as a maker of beautiful things, but as a maker of meaningful things – her art both communicates and informs her experience. It represents the text of her life as a teacher and art-maker. As a person, Julia is very complex. She takes nothing at face value, and she works to alleviate any dissonance that arises between her beliefs and her practice. She continually strives for a balance between the overlapping contexts of her personal and professional lives, but not to exclude the public from the private. Her most personal beliefs and convictions are

evident in her choice to remain a teacher and in her practice in the classroom. She shares her beliefs with her students through her comprehensive and systematic approach to teaching art.

Implications

Julia's story is especially important for beginning teachers of art. When I entered the field, I was not sure of what art teaching would actually look like. I did have a strong theoretical foundation that was provided by my master's program (an advantage over more traditional undergraduate students), but I was also looking for a model – for a practical picture of the profession to which I would dedicate most of my life. When I entered the student teaching experience, I was placed in two drastically different settings and with two teachers that practices fundamentally differing approaches to teaching. I was unsure of how to proceed. Working with Julia during the past year and a half helped me to clarify my own sets of complexity, context, and connectedness and develop an approach to teaching that worked for both myself and my students.

Julia's story is also important because it sets a precedent for practical inquiry in the field of elementary art education. As a student teacher, I did have a privileged role in the setting, but my note-taking, journaling, and reflection upon what I observed helped me to become a better teacher. When I entered Julia's classroom after an experience that focused solely on classroom management and acquiring the skill set of teaching, Julia's focus on reflection forced me to look past these superficial concerns and more deeply in the context of my teaching.

From my review of the literature and my experience teaching art, I did notice a gap between theory and practice. Julia's case helps to bridge that gap by illustrating what actually goes on in the classrooms and lives of art teachers, and how theory and the constraints of life in the classroom affect their practice. These findings are important for the elementary art classroom, a place in need of more attention in our literature, and a place where many of our K-12 students receive their only exposure to art education. They are also important for art teacher education programs in their preparation of pre-service elementary art teachers.

More studies could focus on elementary art teachers' teaching, in context, and in the complex, unpredictable, and public sphere of the classroom. In my pilot study, I found that elementary art teachers are isolated, and that their agency is limited by school culture. Through further research, an increased awareness of the multitude of factors that affect elementary art specialist teachers' practice could provide novice, pre-service, and in-service teachers with a forum to discuss the issues that most affect their practice and a starting place for educational change.

APPENDIX A – PILOT STUDY SURVEY AND SELECTED RESPONSES

Questions	Sample Elementary Art Teacher Responses
1. How long have you been teaching art?	Range from 5 months to 23 years
2. What school(s) do you teach in? How long have you been teaching at these schools?	A variety of K-5 and K-8 Schools in the area; all respondents teach at 1 or 2 schools, and have been there from 5 months to over 20 years; average time at the schools: 6 years
3. How long have you been teaching in this district?	Average 8 years
4. Please describe your student population.	80 % Hispanic, 15 % White, 15 % Black; Title I School; mainly Hispanic with a population of over 500; Mexican American; Upper middle class, mostly Anglo, parents are mostly professionals; various backgrounds, primarily Anglo; over 500 students
5. Do you feel your school community is supportive of art education?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some do, some don't. Most view it as their "break" or planning time. I make a point of displaying students' artwork with explanations of concepts to educate the staff as well as the students. ▪ Moderately so. I go to grocery stores and places for donations for art supplies. Most managers are helpful in this area, but some art not. A few parents will call on the telephone to tell me how great a job I am doing or how much their kid enjoys my class. So there is some support, but I would like much more.
6. Do you feel that the local community is supportive of art education?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes, for the most part. My program seems to be valued in the minds of most community members; in most cases it offers the only visual art experiences for children in the...area. If visual art did not exist at this school many kids would be artistically illiterate. The most ostensible support happens when the public sees the work students are doing – via art displays, public art projects etc. These are physical manifestations of art learning which demonstrate the enormous value of art education. Exposure brings awareness and support. ▪ It's not an "anti-art" community, but learning basic skills (reading, writing, etc.) is such a big struggle, that Art is viewed as an extra. ▪ The district yes... the community, no. ▪ Iffy...I'm still getting a feel for the community... ▪ Some parents are, some art not
7. Do your students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Occasionally, murals. Hot-air balloons, etc.

work together to create artworks or on projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Only occasionally do I have them work collaboratively. Usually they work alone on a project. ▪ Sometimes ▪ Rarely ▪ No, I have not done that yet.
8. What are some examples of these artworks or projects?	<p>Collages; Window paintings (Christmas), murals, hot air balloons; group sculptures, collaged murals, mosaic benches for school garden; Pictures for the community food bank calendar; Well, this year I have 4 [classes of each grade level]. I try to use as many different mediums as I can to give them lots of exposure. I want the kids to experience everything from clay to paper, paint, marker, chalk, crayon, cutting and gluing, building, etc. We also study many concepts from kindergarten with shapes to perspectives with the older kids, value, symmetry, color, etc. They also learn some art history and aesthetics; Murals, tile installations; A cartonnage (mummy case)</p>
9. What do you feel are the benefits or drawbacks of this type of project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I think there is definitely a place for collaboration in art, it can empower children in many ways, and can teach the importance of art beyond personal expression. However, it needs to be balanced with individual pieces...otherwise the "leaders" of a given group have the main artistic voice in the school and the education of the quieter voices gets lost in the noise. ▪ Provides opportunity for cooperative learning and teaming, there is sometime jealousy over who gets to keep it. ▪ Dialogue, communication – time limitations ▪ Benefits: learn cooperation, community, acceptance, working together, tolerance, diversity, power of putting minds together for a common goal. Drawbacks: less individual creativity, more compromise, less personal achievement, dependent on others (who often screw up), no individual artistic "vision," takes more energy on part of teacher, extremely time consuming, cannot please everyone with final results – inevitably. ▪ Benefits: encouraging students to accept differences and appreciate everyone's strengths. I address this. Drawbacks: The strong get stronger and the weak, get weaker. I've noticed that often the girls are submissive to boys in their groups. ▪ The benefits are that the students know they are helping the food bank by drawing pictures for their calendar which is then given to the people that donate food or

	<p>money. The drawback is that only 12 students get chosen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There are no drawbacks.
10. Do you feel that these projects are highly successful, moderately successful, or not successful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most kids are highly motivated and love to come to art. ▪ Moderately successful. ▪ I would say highly successful. They have a lot of pride in their artwork. ▪ Usually highly successful, but at a price. Very time consuming and mentally and physically exhausting. ▪ Highly successful although I use it far and few between. ▪ Highly successful. ▪ Highly successful, because they are rare and as a result, novel/special... and because the projects are usually kid-generated with lots of peer and cross grade level teaching.
11. Have you collaborated with other teachers in your school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drama Club, making sets ▪ I have a distinct curriculum, that occasionally supports what the classroom teacher does, and vice versa, but I am committed to keeping art an individual course of study for it's own sake, not just as an extension of other academic areas. ▪ At this school, it may only be by theme. At a school I taught at, it was a whole curriculum (this was a restructured school with this a priority).
12. How did this collaboration come about?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An everyday recess conversation. ▪ Team-time was built into my schedule. ▪ Teachers approach me with ideas. ▪ Initially through a primitive pit firing. ▪ Through seeing connections in our various curriculum. ▪ We have committees that we belong to and we have to meet and help each other out ▪ When they're studying a particular subject, they use me to enhance a lesson.
13. What type(s) of projects did you participate in with this collaboration?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is hard to find time to do the extras. ▪ One good example is a project in Surrealism at the 5th grade level...my students did a photo montage in art class and wrote poems or prose as an extension in their regular classroom and these were displayed together. ▪ Art activities that parallel classroom learning. ▪ A quilt representing creatures that live in the river (classroom curriculum).
14. Were the results of this collaboration highly successful, moderately successful, or not	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The teachers for whom [this was a strength] supported it and those students did a great job...one teacher didn't support it at all, and those [works] were only successful if the student was a good writer already. The artwork stood

successful?	on its own visually, anyway, but the writings had the benefit of making surrealism “user friendly” for the viewer.
15. Have you collaborated with teachers outside of your school?	63 % yes, 27 % no
16. How did this collaboration come about?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working on curriculum...workshops (NAEA, AAEA) ▪ We meet as a district team and share ideas for lessons/technical information and for curriculum development...however, I have not participated in any school to school student collaborative projects.
17. What type(s) of projects did you participate in?	No responses
18. Would you want to collaborate with other teachers again?	25 % yes, 75 % no response
19. Have you collaborated with artist(s) in the community?	50 % yes
20. Does your class visit museums or galleries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unfortunately, our school is extremely far from the arts district so we “import” artists to come in. The field trip time and buses for them are usually encumbered by the elementary classroom teachers right away during the year, and those funds are limited. When I taught middle school, however (many years ago) we would take trips to the U of A art department, the Tucson Museum of Art, and the Zoo (for life drawing) ▪ There is no money in my district anymore for field trips. I have done them in the past a few times, but they were not on school time. ▪ No, we don’t have the money. ▪ Virtually
21. Given adequate time and resources, what types of collaborative projects would you like to do? Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I would like to do some school to school collaboration with schools outside of our district. I could see an art postcard exchange, not unlike penpals (or the artists of the Blue Rider). I feel that our students are at a disadvantage culturally because this community is so insulated (many would consider that a benefit...all blessings are mixed). ▪ It would be interesting to meet with more classroom teachers to pull comparative curriculum together so we could do more hands-on projects with areas of study that

	<p>don't usually use visual or tactile aides...i.e. meld more areas of study together to make them more powerful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anything that would enrich students' learning. ▪ This job doesn't allow much time for collaboration. Along with teaching art I also am responsible for tutoring and I am assigned a grade level to teach reading, writing, and math at the end of the day. If I could I would like to be able to put more of the normal curriculum into Art and this is what the state wants us to start doing. We have to have math, reading, and writing standards that do along with our Art projects. ▪ A collaborative art project with students from a border town or in Mexico. ▪ ...intergenerational collaboration...I think that the two populations have a lot to offer in terms of history and experience and purpose. ▪ Work with other professional artists. They have lots of knowledge to share. ▪ A mural project would involve the students, family, teachers, artists and community. This allows the students the opportunity to see the realistic potential for art and its value in the community.
<p>22. Given adequate time and resources, what types of community projects would you like to do? Why?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Again, more "real life" exchange between schools...many of my students do not ever go south of [to South Tucson] with their parents...and don't understand there is a way of life that is every bit as viable as their own. A difficulty would definitely be that fact that art specialists do not work in many of the Tucson area schools at the elementary level, as many [schools in Tucson] do not have art programs. ▪ I have done some community-based projects. One was a mural on a water station down the road from Craycroft that has been full of graffiti. A few years ago my 5th graders designed and painted a mural on the front wall. The community loved it and the graffiti never came back. My students have also had their artwork shown off many times around the community...at shows at McDonald's, El Con Mall, VF Factory Mall, Pima Community College, restaurants, banks, etc. ▪ Youth Art Month activities, Tucson Arts Odyssey ▪ I like the idea of a tile project and also I would like for my students to be able to visit museums. ▪ Quilting is a natural way to go because it's transportable and can focus on so many different themes. A public

	<p>mural would be very cool too because of its impact on the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A mural/mosaic with the students from the Family Literacy and the community on the school exterior walls.▪ Public art, sculpture. Not much of it out there. Would impact the community/environment on a powerful visual level (not to mention other levels as well).▪ Create a mural...The student participation would give the students ownership of the school.
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APPENDIX B – SAMPLE OBSERVATION NOTES

November 15th 2001

Julia has done one large community project for September 11th – it was actually quite amazing. She and her students made over 5000 glazed and hand-painted hearts for each family of someone who passed away that day. They are being flown to New York and will be given to each person's family. It was quite a monumental project which took six weeks. It was very beautiful, only 1 heart broke and it is hanging right here on the wall [of Julia's classroom]. Those are what the letters I saw in the office were for – with pictures of firemen and policemen and others with their families.

Today, 26 students, first grade. Fill the whole space of the room, 3 or 4 each at 8 wooden tables. Mixed two boy, two girl or one girl, two boy, one boy, two girl groups. Students already painting when I entered. They're sharing one tray of 22 paints (can only use bright colors), water container, individual paintbrushes. Some students are having a difficult time choosing new colors for overlapping areas of their shapes, have used too many colors. Their paintings are small, but really neat. Julia advised to help them look at colors again, more closely. Julia is both circulating and students come to her when she sits down. They are not really noticing me too much, some want to ask me questions, have me come over to their table. The room is really very very quiet – they aren't like my first graders from Wildcat. There are a lot of procedures, I think.

The room is cold, and somewhat dim. All of the blinds are closed, the windows are small. The room is a dark turquoise (sort of) color. It's pretty small, a lot smaller than the one at DV middle but newer – three sinks, small space at the front with carpet, iMac, white board with directions on it, says "welcome to art." On this side of the room large counter, drawers for artworks, large bulletin board. On the back wall two small metal bookshelves with "how to draw" books, manipulatives, toys, a life-size skeleton, storage closets. On the next side are the sinks, they are pretty low for kids. The office is connected to the room next door, Julia has a lot of art books in it. In the front are more metal bookshelves, and two drying racks.

Julia stops to do a demo. She invites me to join. She explains how to hold the brush (on the metal part), how to put paint on, not squish to make "brushes cry" and ruin them, how to outline the shape, how to choose the next color. She demonstrates on Joe's work – he picks the color. Her line is really bold and stands out, not "scratchy" as she says, "you need more water if it's scratchy, but not so much that's it's really light." Students stand in a circle around the center table, hands at sides, no touching or leaning on table.

At the end, they clean brushes, give to Julia for inspection, she stores them bristle up in a cup. Students line up to put work on drying rack, throw away towels, return to their table hands folded and quiet. When all are quiet, she dismisses them – makes those that don't quiet down leave last.

Themes/Ideas

- Julia describes herself as DBAE, as disciplined – many procedures in place in the classroom
- Kandinsky lesson (not multi-culti – wonder how introduced to students)
- Many visuals in the art room
- September 11th display in the office, heart in art room w/several newspaper articles
- The space, school, campus feel itself, Julia and Annette
- Julia's schedule – she designed for "monitoring and adjusting", very different than Annette's last year, Annette has a much different style (according to Julia) likes it mixed-up Julia prefers structure
- Julia's public art (meetings after school) and classes (web site design)
- Julia not totally comfortable with Ocotillo yet – mentions Saguaro often
- She was uncertain of how I would respond to her teaching style

APPENDIX C – SAMPLE RESEARCH JOURNAL ENTRY

April 26th 2002 –

Oh my! Today was exhausting. I will have to throw my clothes away – they smell terrible – cow patties and fire. I am sunburned all around my face!

Today was our pit firing. Julia was right, I did see her in action. She was directing all day, like a conductor, there was none of our usual *down-time* for talking. I could tell she was concerned this morning. Our meeting with the parents went ok, but I don't know if she is totally confident in them and I don't know if they realize how much work this is... we have been planning forever. Julia broke into my weaving lessons this week to talk with the kids for ½ hour about what to wear, fire safety, etc. If they don't wear it, they won't get to participate, also stricter discipline, one warning, removed. I am worried about D & Z with other kids.

We tried to divide up tribes – not too many challenging kids in one although put some with the most responsible parents. We assembled so many boxes! They have everything in them. The parents mostly arrived early, some late. We met in the MPR, I think some kids were disappointed with their tribes, some happy. They are all boy/all girl. The kids were really excited! It was so loud in there, when Julia did the clap they all got quiet and she re-explained everything and the schedule – saying it is really very important to keep the schedule or it won't work – tribal leaders it is their responsibility to keep the schedule of jobs (packets, stories, camp stuff in downtime).

At the pit, pit supervisors were in a circle around. All dads (7), one mom (Charles'). Erica's dad is the fire chief. Julia was in the center of the pit – she demoed how to dig the soft dirt (that the backhoe dug) how to hold the shovel etc. Kids did this with help of PSs. Half of them get to dig, half get to undig. The fire went pretty well during this, except for Laci's dad's tribe. They wouldn't do their jobs – he didn't want to touch the manure. He didn't follow any of the schedule and told girls that they didn't have to either, Julia and I decided he was scary – not a good tribal leader. I was standing right there when he said they weren't going to do it and they just stood there. I thought I should have spoken up, but I didn't. I think they missed out, but they seemed to do whatever he wanted. Also, they took off their protective gear too, just really didn't do anything.

I helped out a lot with snack – it was a little disorganized, the art room door is still broken, so we got locked out twice – I had to get Carrie, Julia was busy at the pit. I taught the kinders – we got a sub for the 5th grades since Friday is 5th, but Julia wanted me to do the kinders because they were painting. The sub is good, but doesn't always follow exactly what Julia wants – the 5th graders know what they are doing. The kinders were so good, but I was so hot and tired. And we were in the empty pod, it is really mildewy and has no tables, but they did a really good job. This was the 1st time I taught without Julia there, so it was really different – I was more relaxed (maybe just tired) but I knew I couldn't ask her for help since she was at the pit. Their teacher came to pick them up 10 minutes late again, so we had to stand in the hall and play "Simon Says" to stall. They didn't really notice, I guess it was different, I wanted to do the art game but didn't have the stuff in this room.

After kinders, it was time to dig out the pots. Everyone wanted to do it, but only half got too. It would have been too many to do it at once. The parents were really good though and everyone watched. A few tribes were late again, some didn't do any of the stuff in the packets – I don't know what they did instead. Some of the parents just didn't seem to know what was going on or care too much. I don't think I want to do one at Rillito next year – some of the parents were already asking about it, because they know I'll be there I guess they all talk a lot – everyone knows Joan was cut, its really awkward. Julia was really strict when they uncovered the pit, strict not to let anyone touch anything. We didn't even separate the pots, just laid them out but lots of kids recognized theirs, they came out really well! Erica's dad put out the fire with the hose until we were sure, it was so dry in the wash but thankfully, not hot today and cloudy. The kids all look so tired! They saw a rattlesnake on the field, Charles was so excited. We have so many animals now from the construction.

Julia thought it went really well – not perfect, but well and some of the parents were so helpful and supportive and really did, donated so much. Some of the families did almost everything, I think they were really pleased. On Monday, we'll wash the pots with kids instead of the weaving lesson again – its not going that well anyway, I'll have to figure it out, there just isn't enough time since only 3 more weeks. Julia had to leave right after school, Sean has a baseball game, but we divided everything up really quickly so we can give it back on Monday and cleaned up the art room and the sub room. I was surprised that the teachers didn't really come to the pit, kinders came, but the third grade teachers

didn't really come – they did go to the field and lunch and recess but I thought they would be at the pit more. It was really successful I think, I had no idea what to expect – Julia was so different today, much more intense than usual, especially with the parents – probably since so many of them have been demanding this all year.

APPENDIX D – CLOSING INTERVIEW WITH JULIA AND SELECTED RESPONSES

Questions	Julia's Responses
1. Describe your educational background (please include degrees, majors, dates, and awards).	<i>BFA</i> , University of Arizona, Sculpture and Art History major; <i>MED</i> , University of Arizona, Secondary Education; worked with artists and professors from Northern Arizona University, Arizona Western College, and Pima Community College; Fulbright Research Fellowship – studied art in Japan; also research and studied art in Hawaii
2. Describe your teaching experiences (please include grades taught, schools/districts/and dates). Were there any lapses in your professional experience?	18 years teaching in the public schools in Tucson, Arizona; has taught K – 6 th grade (Desert View Unified School District), 9 – 12 th grade (Amphitheater School District), and university students (Pima Community College); was a classified (non-certified) employee for Tucson Unified School District working with teacher training, exhibits, and curriculum for visual arts in TUSD
3. Please describe your other work experiences that have been related to art (i.e. working in any kind of alternative art environment, community, professional development, etc.).	All of her professional experiences after her first degree related in some way to art and education – these lead her to teaching. She continues to be involved with community art and in artists' workshops.
4. What is your philosophy of or approach to art education?	Disciplined-Based Art Education, Multiculturalism, social change through art education – each culture, “everyone” makes art – art is intrinsic to human experience, an integral part – all artistic production is tied to the culture in which it was created and has value.
5. How did you become an art teacher?	Julia always wanted to become an artist. She didn't think that she was good enough to be a teacher – she thought that teachers had a special gift – when she was in high school, she spent time in a neighbor's (who was a teacher) classroom, and came home exhausted because it was so difficult. Then, after she earned her BFA, everything she did had to do with education. She was also poor and with a small child, so returned to graduate school to be certified. Here, DBAE made sense to her, and clarified what she had

	<p>experienced with two teachers who had influenced her ideas about art. She started teaching in a diverse, urban high school; a time where she feels young people are in the midst of great and volatile change in the search for identity. She saw herself continuing to teach at this level.</p>
<p>6. What do you feel it is important for elementary students to learn about art? What aspects of their art education do you see as most crucial?</p>	<p>Elementary is the time of beginning to acquire any knowledge. When she was a high school teacher, a university teacher, and an elementary teacher, she asked each group of students to draw two things (a house and a person). All of the drawings were exactly the same. She saw that somewhere art education had stopped, and she felt that her older students had developed phobias about drawing and concurrently about art and their relationship to art. She felt we were not empowering people to know that they are safe with art; encouraging them to make a place for art in their lives; scaring them away from museums and galleries. She resisted becoming an elementary teacher for a long time, but realized she could make an impact here – her goal is to provide students with the basic knowledge in art that will make them “soar” and create a life-long involvement with art.</p>
<p>7. Please describe yourself as an artist.</p>	<p>Works primarily with clay, drawing, and mixed media. Has a studio adjacent to her home. Is involved with community art and a community of artists, and is involved with public art. Creates large scale clay pieces, commissioned pieces, and furniture. Her work is focused on the <i>image</i> and its communicate and symbolic connotations.</p>
<p>8. Do you consider yourself a teacher, an artist, or both? Does a distinction between teacher and artist have any meaning for you?</p>	<p>She considers herself an artist who teaches. She consciously puts “artist” before teacher. This has changed for her in the past four years – before, she would have described herself as a teacher.</p>
<p>9. Describe your involvement with community and social organizations. Do they affect or inform your practice as an art educator?</p>	<p>Began early in her career at Amphitheater High School, where she was a founder of PATS (Parents, Administrators, Teachers, and Students), and her students participated in the Anytown program and a human relations camp. She feels that creating a strong community is very</p>

	<p>important – to see each member of a community as vital, valuable and participating. This informs her multicultural outreach programs, and creating a school community (by holding presentations for parents, the newsletter, presenting to the school board on behalf of K-12 art education, her work with OASIS, and displaying student artwork). She sees this as a roundabout form of advocacy – an advocacy tied to her role as a professional and also tied to her involvement with the National Art Education Association and Arizona Art Education Association.</p>
<p>10. How have your experiences with public art informed your practice, and your practice affected your experiences with public art?</p>	<p>Teaching has made me a better artist – it has shown me how to break down a process – how to communicate this to other. The public art pieces she creates are primarily educational or serve some other social purpose</p>

APPENDIX E – REFLECTIVE ASSESSMENTS FROM JULIA

Sample Form:

Date:

Grade:

- 1) What was successful about today's lesson?
- 2) If you were to teach the lesson again, what would you change?
- 3) How will your responses impact your planning for next week?

Completed and Coded Forms:

Italic = my input

Bold = Julia's input

Date: 5/11/02

Grade: K

- 1) What was successful about today's lesson?
 - *students remembered how to hold a paintbrush and apply paint from their First Dog necklaces*
 - *students followed all directions successfully except Janny*
 - **have students get their own supply baskets – start teaching them how to do their art jobs, the procedures**
 - **ask Janny to do it again, ask her to show you that she understands**

- 2) If you were to teach the lesson again, what would you change?
 - *have all students ready to paint on one day – have extension activity instead of having some students paint while others draw lines*
 - **move paint not kids**
 - **have it on the chalkboard too – use the chalkboard to reinforce what you are teaching**
 - **always move on at the end when students finish**
 - **separate the paint at tables, move the paints, not the painters**

- 3) How will your above responses impact your planning for next week?
 - *same as above, thankfully all lines are drawn; reiterate directions for some students*
 - **have them come to you for feedback, so they are always working not waiting for you**
 - **ask them to go table to table; this movement is easier**

Date: 5/1/02

Grade: 2 – Mrs. Townsend, difficult class

- 1) What was successful about today's lesson?
 - *improvement in the masks when I demonstrate at each step of the lesson – more specific demonstrations*

- 2) If you were to teach the lesson again, what would you change?
 - *stronger on classroom management*
 - *ask Staci to stand next to me during demonstration*
 - *make sure all students are ready before demonstrations begin*
 - **Staci can also stand directly across from you so you can look her in the eye – it isn't as obvious as right by you**
 - **remove disruptive kids from demos – they can return to their spots**
 - **ask kids to 'stay at your spot' one spot during demo**
 - **demo again when 6 or 7 kids are finished; they can teach others**
 - **let them move on when they are done = less talking and distracting others**

- 3) How will your above responses impact your planning for next week?
 - *change demos to make them better*
 - **have all kids working on the same animal sit together – they can learn from one another (ex. all crocodile kids sit together)**
 - **make a decision together on which visual to use**
 - **management in elementary is problem solving in the design of the lesson – solve every step of the way – think it through...repeat things again**
 - **coloring – have a "polished wood" look (masks are made of polished wood)**
 - **outline and then color shapes in for more control for kids**
 - **go both directions in coloring so it's not scribbling, not scribble-scrabble – demo this, kids are unhappy with their coloring, show them how to do it**
 - **tomorrow, get all drawings done**

APPENDIX F – SAMPLE OCOTILLO ORACLE ARTICLE

Art News

I would like to welcome Maria Macleod to Ocotillo. Ms. Macleod is a graduate student in art education at the U of A and will be doing her student teaching with us for the rest of the school year. Welcome, Ms. Macleod!

We have lots of work on display!

Congratulations to the following students who will have their art on display at the District Art Exhibit at the High School. The opening will be Tuesday, March 26th from 5:30 – 7:00 pm in the lobby of the theater.

Katie Lilly	Arthur Sanchez
Sami Smith	Steven Lipmann
Cade Nelson	Stacy McDonald
Abby Figeroa	Janny Lilly
Geoff Brass	River Veritas
Jeff Hwang	Isabella Belina
Doreen Terry-Gentile	Gabriel Degas
Alexa Davenaugh	Katarina McManus
Misty LaMantia	Chase Choate
Irina Kindi	Kaitlyn Dubinoff
Bethany Robinson	Peter Madden
Joseph Jackson	Derick Taylon
Marty Terry-Gentile	Kendra Williams
Aurora Martinez	

Congratulations go out to the following students who will have their art displayed at Oasis at Robinsons-May in El Con Mall. The opening reception for the artists and their families will be on Saturday, April 6th from 1 – 3 pm.

Denny Piaget	Larian Greer
Colin Pearson	Heather Hill
Anita Vincenzo	Mike Puneet

Third grade parents, please look for a letter arriving home soon describing the upcoming Pit Firing. Please be sure to complete the attached form and return!

Thank you for your continued support of the art program at Ocotillo!

Julia Applebee

APPENDIX G – SAMPLES OF JULIA’S LETTERS TO OCOTILLO FAMILIES

Dear Families,

Kindergarten students have just completed a unit of study looking at and creating art work in the style of Piet Mondrian. Each child created their own non-objective work using geometric shapes, black lines and limited colors. The art work is stunning; we hope that you enjoy it!

Here are some of the things the children learned; ask them to explain these things to you!

- 1) How did Piet Mondrian get his ideas to make paintings? (Jazz Music)
- 2) What does non-objective mean in art? (No objects – just shapes!)
- 3) What is a geometric shape? (Shape with points)
- 4) What geometric shapes did you use in your art work? (Squares and rectangles)
- 5) Show me a vertical line. (A line that is standing up!)
- 6) Show me a horizontal line. (A line that is lying down!)
- 7) What do you like about your artwork?

Thank you for your support of the art program at Ocotillo!

With regards,

Julia Applebee
Visual Art Specialist
Ocotillo

March 29, 2002

Dear Families,

The official notice! The third grade students have finished creating their very own clay pots, inspired by the Pueblo peoples of New Mexico! Once the pots are completed and dried, we will be firing them in what is called a “PIT” (versus a “KILN”). This “PIT” will be dug outside of the Art Room, and our official **Pueblo Pit Firing** will be held on **FRIDAY, APRIL 26th, 2002**. The reason we will be firing in a PIT instead of a KILN is to provide your child with the opportunity to experience a traditional Pueblo Pit Firing.

The firing experience will take place **ALL DAY** on **FRIDAY, APRIL 26th, 2002**. However, in order for this event to take place, we need parent volunteers! If you are interested in helping us out, these are jobs we need help with:

- 1) being a **TRIBAL LEADER** – supervising 7 – 9 children for the day – there will be a short training session several days prior to the Pit Firing Day. ***I NEED 12 TRIBAL LEADERS – THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT JOB!!;***
- 2) being a **PIT SUPERVISOR** – you would be helping to dig the pit, build the fire, maintain safety, and close up afterward;
- 3) being a **CONTACT PERSON** – this would involve calling families to confirm supplies, etc.; or
- 4) being a **ROYAL HELPER** – a general “go-for” for the day of the firing.

Your day would start at 7:45 and conclude by 2:45. This event will be very exciting – one you will not want to miss! If you are interested in helping, please fill out the form on the back page and return to me! I will be contacting volunteers at the beginning of April. You will receive a confirmation form and/or a telephone call.

We also need help obtaining the materials listed below! If you cannot volunteer your time **we do need** help gathering all of these important objects! The more families that help out, the less burden it becomes on a few!

SNACK: We need families to send in snacks! Two dozen cookies or the equivalent of something else (no drinks, please).

ODDS AND ENDS:

- 1) **Rakes and shovels** – will be returned!
- 2) **Old blankets and sleeping bags** (these are for sitting on in your child’s “wash” village) – will be returned!
- 3) **Fuel for the fire!** Wood (large pieces), kindling, leaves and grasses, pine cones, sawdust – we need lots!
- 4) **Dried cow manure!!!!!!** UofA Farm is a great source!!!

Please fill out the last page and return the top section to me, completed! Someone will then be contacting you with more information. Keep the bottom section (put in a handy spot, maybe on your refrigerator) to remember what you have volunteered for!

Thanks so much for your time and encouragement with this special event! We’re very excited about our Pit Firing! The third graders are going to have a wonderful experience with all of our help!

With regards,

Julia Applebee
Visual Arts Specialist

Ocotillo

Please return this form if you can help with **any** of the things listed in the above letter. I would appreciate your response by **Monday, April 8th** (or sooner)!

Yes, I can help! Everyone's help makes our day a great success!

NAME (YOUR NAME AND YOUR CHILD'S)

TELEPHONE NUMBER

CHILD'S CLASSROOM TEACHER

WHAT I CAN HELP WITH

I will be in touch with all parent volunteers in mid April.

**Tear off this bottom section and keep for your records.
Post on your refrigerator!**

**We will be donating the following items for the PIT
FIRING:**

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Ms. Applebee will let us know the date to bring them in!

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