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It is with pleasure that we inaugurate the reprint of the entire seven volumes of The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning. The journal began in 1990 as The Quarterly. In 1992, with volume 3, the name changed to The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning and continued until 1997. The journal contained articles on issues that were timely when they appeared and are now important for their historical relevance. For many authors, it was their first major publication. Visions of Research in Music Education will publish facsimiles of each issue as it originally appeared. Each article will be a separate pdf file. Jason D. Vodicka has accepted my invitation to serve as guest editor for the reprint project and will compose a new editorial to introduce each volume. Chad Keilman is the production manager. I express deepest thanks to Richard Colwell for granting VRME permission to re-publish The Quarterly in online format. He has graciously prepared an introduction to the reprint series.

Art in Philosophical Context

By Ralph Smith

University of Illinois

Art is a simple matter. Consider five objects all familiar at least by proxy: Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Beethoven's *Eroica*, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Michelangelo's *David*. Each of these is a work of art, if anything is; we would be more surprised if a history of the relevant art left them out than if it included them. . . . There is really no doubt about what these things *are for* . . . [T]hey are expected to provide worthwhile experiences merely in being listened to, looked at, or read. The less doubt we have that that is what a thing is for, the more confidently we take it to be a work of art. *Francis Sparshott*¹

No doubt. But it takes Sparshott 684 pages of text and notes to explain the different conceptions of the worthwhile in our experiences of art that have been propounded by thinkers from antiquity to the present. What is ostensibly simple turns out to be complicated and problematic. Yet since Sparshott's words contain a core of truth, I adopt some of his language for my purposes even if I cannot follow him in other respects. That is, I take the general objective of aesthetic education to be the development of an appreciation of art for the sake of the worthwhile experiences works of art are capable of providing merely in being contemplated. I expand this general aim to include the development of a disposition to discern and prefer quality in art. A curriculum for aesthetic education should therefore be an excellence curriculum devoted to the best that has been written, composed, painted, or sculpted.

If art is as simple as Sparshott asserts it is, then what makes our experiences of

obvious: It consists in art's capacity to move and delight, to extend human abilities, and to inform. Yet saying this is not quite enough. Theoretical problems arise when we ask about the special ways in which art performs these functions. Just how do works of art move us emotionally? What is the nature of the delight they afford? How do they enlarge human potential? How does art inform, instruct, or teach? What, moreover, are the inherent values of such states of mind, and in what ways may they affect other values we also believe to be important?

I believe that those features of art that make the experience of it worth having can be highlighted in a brief review of some of the ideas contained in four contemporary aesthetic theories. Although the discussion to follow will concentrate on a different accent in each of the four positions—on Monroe C. Beardsley's effort to define the peculiar kind of gratification art provides, on Harold Osborne's insistence on art's capacity to stimulate the powers of percipience for their own sake, on Nelson Goodman's emphasis on the character of understanding art affords, and on E. F. Kaelin's consideration of art's contribution to human freedom and

“*The experience of art is cognitive and hence, like intellectual effort generally, is motivated by a profound need and leads to deep satisfaction.*”

the efficacy of cultural institutions—it will also try to make clear that, collectively, these theories add up to as helpful an account of aesthetic experience as we are likely to get. If we assume that aesthetic experience is virtually synonymous with aesthetic appreciation and that aesthetic appreciation is the objective of

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aesthetic education, the relevance of these four theoretical perspectives to theorizing about aesthetic education should be readily apparent.

Art and Gratification: Monroe C. Beardsley

Beardsley's *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism*,² first published in 1958 and then in a 1981 second edition that contains a postscript of recent writings that bear on his topics, was the most influential work in philosophical aesthetics of the mid-twentieth century. The volume is not only a philosophical synthesis that attempts to clarify a number of aesthetic topics and to formulate a useful terminology for describing, interpreting, and evaluating works of art; it also contains an instrumental theory of aesthetic value that, in addition to influencing Beardsley's analysis of topics and decisions on matters of relevance, also reveals an underlying concern with the role of art in human life. Most of all, the volume is devoted to a systematic examination of the presuppositions of aesthetic criticism and the provision of a philosophical rationale for the kind of literary criticism known as the New Criticism. Because of Beardsley's stress on aesthetic experience, aesthetic criticism, and the role of art in human life, his work has special pertinence for aesthetic education.

The conceptual problem that preoccupied Beardsley more than any other was the question whether there is a kind of human experience that can appropriately be called aesthetic which is not only sufficiently differentiated from other types of experience but is also significant enough to warrant society's efforts to cultivate it. He was particularly intrigued by the likelihood that works of art are objects ideally suited to occasion such an experience, that they are in fact brought into existence primarily for this purpose. This is not to deny that other artifacts and even natural phenomena might possess a limited capacity to call forth aesthetic experiences. Beardsley never took it for granted that he would succeed completely in answering these questions, and he usually expressed some dissatisfaction

with his own formulations, as the considerable number of essays he wrote on this topic attest. He also realized that a degree of vagueness will always attach to theories about the characteristics of our interactions with the world and especially about what Abraham Maslow once called the farther reaches of human nature.³ Those who assess the attempts of others to isolate strands of human experiences often expect, unrealistically, greater clarity and precision than a topic permits, and even educators in the arts and humanities are sometimes animated more by *l'esprit de geometrie* than by *l'esprit de finesse*.⁴

Beardsley was aware of these pitfalls. But he also remained convinced that it makes sense to speak of aesthetic value and aesthetic experience and that these not only constitute identifiable aspects of human experience but are in fact interdefined. For, according to Beardsley, the aesthetic value of a work of art (or aesthetic object)—that is, its artistic in contrast to its moral or cognitive value—consists in its capacity to induce in a qualified observer a high degree of aesthetic experience. This is what is meant by calling Beardsley's theory of aesthetic value "instrumental": Contrary to viewpoints that insist on the intrinsic nature of aesthetic value, Beardsley considers artworks valuable to the extent that they make a positive difference in people's lives.

Although it is convenient here to discuss first the features and then the effects of aesthetic experience as conceived by Beardsley, it should be pointed out that the two are not strictly separable, the latter quite naturally depending on the former. Beardsley's later analyses of aesthetic experience are conveniently collected in his *The Aesthetic Point of View: Selected Essays*, edited by Michael J. Wreen and Donald M. Callen,⁵ and some further commentary is provided in his postscript to the second edition of his *Aesthetics*. I shall be referring to these sources in the following remarks.

In an essay titled "Aesthetic Experience," which was written especially for *The Aesthetic Point of View* and probably represents Beardsley's last thoughts on the concept, Beardsley describes aesthetic

experience as having at least five features (although he admitted the possibility of there being more or fewer), not all of which need to be present for an aesthetic experience to occur; indeed, only the first is absolutely essential. Thus aesthetic experience is both compound and disjunctive. It is compound in the sense that it is composed of several identifiable features; disjunctive in the sense that although these features do occur here and there in ordinary experience as well, their concentration in aesthetic experience is so pronounced as to set that experience apart from other kinds.

Condensing Beardsley's account of aesthetic experience, we may say that during the aesthetic apprehension of an outstanding work of art the percipient's attention is firmly centered on an object of notable presence whose elements, formal relations, qualities, and semantic aspects are freely entertained. One indicator of aesthetic character in an experience is the percipient's feeling that the work's components are sorting and grouping themselves in appropriate and satisfying ways. While the percipient's attention is thus fixed on the object and the coalescence of its parts into an impression of fittingness, thoughts about past, future, and personal concerns are suppressed in favor of an intense engagement with what is present to the senses. Aesthetic experience thus affords a degree of freedom from the practical worries that normally beset persons.

This temporary relief from the ordinary also helps to explain a certain sense of detached affect, or what is sometimes called disinterestedness, that accompanies aesthetic experience. Detached affect does not imply a lack of interest in the object—after all, under contemplation are some of humankind's finest accomplishments; rather, percipients subdue mundane preoccupations just enough to be able to achieve a degree of emotional distance. It is this disinterested attention that enables us to remain engrossed in works of ominous or distressing import without being emotionally overcome by such content. Lastly, successful efforts at making conflicting stimuli arrange themselves into formal patterns imbued with expressive

qualities and human meaning can be exhilarating; percipients feel as if something has been clarified, as if their experience has consisted of a discovery of new understanding.

To repeat, aesthetic experiences are noteworthy for object directedness; the perception of the fittingness of elements and free participation in making them coalesce into a unified whole; freedom from everyday concerns; detached affect or disinterestedness; and a feeling of active discovery or understanding. These features also make the duality of aesthetic experience apparent: It is both detached and participatory, free and controlled, cognitive and affective.

The feelings and emotions that supervene—and in some cases are scarcely distinguishable from—the features belonging to aesthetic experience are among the effects of that kind of experience. Beardsley suggests, for example, that the aesthetic experience of works of high artistic quality can result in feelings of personal integration and wholeness, of greater self-acceptance, and of the expansion of personality. Beardsley in fact intimates a correspondence among the degree of unified complexity possessed by an artwork; the complexity, unity, and duration of the experience during which it is appropriated; and the integrating and harmonizing effect felt by the percipient. (The same magnitude of consequence, however, cannot be attributed to works that can almost be taken in by a glance, although even in such instances of momentary awareness Beardsley thinks it possible to speak of a minimally aesthetic experience, even if not in the Deweyan sense of *an* experience.)⁶ Most importantly, however, since the feelings and emotional states that correspond to aesthetic experience are positive and desirable, the overall effect of such an experience is a feeling of *gratification*, a distinctive hedonic effect of our participation in works of fine art which Beardsley thought was a more descriptive term than either enjoyment, pleasure, or satisfaction—all terms he had previously tried and found wanting.⁷

To be sure, Beardsley increasingly came to feature more than he had done previously the cognitive aspects of the art; still

his theory is principally a hedonistic one, though not in any simple and crude sense. Aesthetic gratification is not equivalent to a generalized state of feeling well. Nor is it like the enjoyment that attends the informal congeniality of friendly conversation or the excitement of partisan cheering at sporting events. It is in fact but rarely realized in the course of ordinary events. Seldom, says Beardsley, do we enjoy stretches of time during which the elements of our experience combine in just those ways that produce aesthetic satisfaction; when they do, the state of being they constitute is one of gratified well-being. We have little reason for disagreeing. How often during a typical day do we experience the stimulation, the sense of freedom, the controlled emotional involvement, the feeling of genuine discovery, the fulfillment and expansion of the self that are marks of aesthetic experience? Yet this state of mind is a distinctive form of human well-being and therefore an important ingredient in any good and worthwhile life. It constitutes a significant realization of human value. And it is most reliably had through the experience of excellent works of art, that is, through the knowledgeable apprehension of a painting by Raphael, a piano sonata by Beethoven, a sonnet by Shakespeare. Nor does aesthetic gratification depend on a work's uplifting or cheerful nature, for it would be an unacceptable account of aesthetic experience that did not accommodate the great tragic masterpieces.

Beardsley believed that if his theory could stand its ground, it might also go some distance toward resolving a number of problems in the philosophy of art and prove useful in settling certain kinds of practical disputes. For instance, criteria for critical judgment might be derived from the definition of the work of art as an arrangement of conditions intended to lend an aesthetic character to human experience and to draw a gratified response from knowledgeable percipients.⁸ The artistic merit of artworks might then be established on the basis of the quality of experience they are capable of providing. On the other hand, our ability to distinguish the aesthetic point of view and its

peculiar value from the economic point of view might help disputants decide on the relative merits of, say, building a nuclear power plant on the shore of a scenic lake and leaving the beauty of the area undisturbed for aesthetic appreciation and recreational uses.⁹ In another exercise of suggesting some practical applications of his instrumental theory of aesthetic value, Beardsley propounded the idea of aesthetic welfare, with its adjunct concepts of aesthetic wealth, justice, and capacity, which is fertile for formulating cultural as well as educational policy.¹⁰

For present purposes, however, the most important ramifications of Beardsley's conception of aesthetic gratification and his instrumental theory of aesthetic value extend into the philosophy of education or, more precisely, the theoretical foundations of aesthetic education, where they support a humanistic and humanizing conception of art. For those who emphasize the destructive potential of art or doubt its civilizing propensities, Beardsley writes:

To adopt the aesthetic point of view is simply to seek out a source of value. And it can never be a moral error to realize value—barring conflict with other values. Some people seem to fear that a serious and persistent aesthetic interest will become an enervating hyperaestheticism, a paralysis of will like that reported in advanced cases of psychedelic dependence. But the objects of aesthetic interest—such as harmonious design, good proportion, intense expressiveness—are not drugs, but part of the breath of life. Their cumulative effect is increased sensitization, fuller awareness, a closer touch with the environment and concern for what it is and might be. It seems to me very doubtful that we could have too much of these good things, or that they have inherent defects that prevent them from being an integral part of a good life.¹¹

The significance of Beardsley's aesthetics for aesthetic education then is quite apparent; it indicates how the arts enhance human life and provide ideals of human possibility. At a time when developments in the expressive culture have awakened us to the need for restoring more elevated, civilized states of human

existence, ideas like Beardsley's should be an urgent priority of policy and deserve a place in any justification of aesthetic education.

Appreciation as Percipience: Harold Osborne

"To realize their potentialities and serve us well in their fashion"—the words are Beardsley's, but they could also have been uttered by Harold Osborne, who at the time of his death was the dean of British aestheticians and in this respect Beardsley's British counterpart. Osborne believed that works of art fulfill their pre-eminent function through their capacity to stimulate and expand direct perception, or what he called the powers of percipience. What is the meaning of percipience? In *The Art of Appreciation*¹² Osborne equates percipience with appreciation and appreciation with aesthetic experience, which he describes in the following way.

Careful introspection about our experience of art reveals it to involve the guiding of our attention over a limited sensory field in such a way that the field's properties are brought into focus according to their own inherent intensities, their similarities and contrasts, and their peculiar groupings. Perception of this kind is unusually full and complete and avoids the narrow focus on practical purposes that is characteristically maintained during our nonaesthetic pursuits. Although aesthetic perceiving, like all perception, qualifies as a cognitive activity and is dependent on knowledge and skills of relevant kinds, the mental attitude assumed during aesthetic experience is in major respects unlike that required for conceptual analysis or the historian's tracing of the causes and consequences of events. Rather, aesthetic experience calls for direct and synoptic vision. To illustrate this contrast: The activities of discussing the antecedents of Picasso's *Guernica* or assigning it a position in Picasso's oeuvre, although they focus on an artwork, are not the same as the direct apprehension of the work's fusion of subject and form; only the latter counts as an act of expressive perception. Yet it should be pointed out that by "direct perception" Osborne

does not mean unmediated perception; being cognitive, perception and percipience are not equivalent to instantaneous emotional reaction. Osborne talks about the way the viewer orders and interprets the elements of the aesthetic object being contemplated, about what directs an act of percipience and what is being omitted from it.

The kind of rapt attention typical of aesthetic interest also lends aesthetic experience a characteristic emotional color, its mood, Osborne thinks, being one of serenity even when the object under scrutiny has a dynamic character or disturbing theme. This implies that the emotional qualities of a work will not always correspond to the percipient's feeling state. Indeed, because our perception concentrates on the object, our aesthetic interest has less to do with a heightened awareness of our own feelings than with a consciousness of qualities and properties external to ourselves; it is as if we lived for the moment in the objective portion of our phenomenal field of vision. The demands of perceptual awareness and the obligation to see an object as much as possible in its full complexity also tend to discourage the percipient from indulging in idle musings, forming random associations with depicted scenes, and generating feelings that have less to do with the world of the work being contemplated and more with the percipient's personal history. Aesthetic experience, in other words, is remarkable not for its lassitude but for its rigor. Imagination is necessary in order to grasp a work's qualities, but imagination is also held in check. Osborne's emphasis on direct perception also makes it unsurprising that in his account of aesthetic experience appearance takes precedence over material existence; that is, the material base of objects is less significant than the images they project. By their special nature, such images are particularly suited to sustaining the percipient in an aesthetic mode of awareness. Whether the imagery is iconic or noniconic, absorption in it takes us out of ourselves into new worlds, but never into a trancelike state in which ego consciousness disappears completely, for this would involve

the risk of losing control over perception and missing the object's sense or import.

Osborne acknowledges that percipience—the mind's capacity for direct and complete perception—is exercised in many areas of human life, but he thinks that only works of fine art and their counterparts in nature are capable of expanding percipience to the fullest. At their best, artworks promote the development of the perceptive faculties they activate by challenging these faculties to respond with greater vivacity and a more capacious grasp. A heightened awareness of things perceived during aesthetic experience is thus central to Osborne's theory; persons are more alive, awake, and alert than usual, their mental faculties work more effectively, and they are constantly rewarded with new discoveries. Because aesthetic perception demands a focused effort and differs from ordinary seeing, conceptual analysis, and problem-solving, the skills of aesthetic awareness must be deliberately cultivated.

What Osborne's aesthetics could mean for aesthetic education, and even for education as a whole, should not be difficult to infer. Although teaching the skills of aesthetic appreciation would aim at strengthening the powers of perception for their own sakes, it would also enhance a mental capacity—percipience—that has more general applications and thus serves individuals in other ways. This, however, is not the main thrust of an Osbornian approach to the question of educational justification. To understand what that approach might be, we need to consider Osborne's discussion of the evolution of civilization toward ever-greater opportunities for self-realization.¹³

Osborne's argument is not novel, but it bears repeating from time to time, as it amounts to an appeal for the significant use of leisure. Osborne reminds us that at one stage of evolution, human faculties were harnessed almost exclusively to the struggle for survival. This left little time for the sort of detached involvement with objects that we associate with the aesthetic contemplation of works of art. To be sure, the burdens of ensuring mere survival still weigh heavily on much of the world's population, but the long

process of liberation from material bondage is producing a state of affairs in technologically advanced societies that, if properly utilized, could usher in a new era of cultural efflorescence. In other words, it is not too soon to ponder the uses and abuses (to retain Barzun's distinction) of leisure time and what they may portend for human life today and in the future.

It is important to realize that the problem of leisure is not one of finding things to do in our spare time, nor even solely of finding something "better" and more refined to occupy ourselves with. For, according to Osborne, the self-cultivation that is possible only with sufficient leisure and that involves the development and expansion of human potentialities for their own sakes has usually supplied the motive and the opportunities for the expression of spiritual needs and aspirations. Whatever ideology might determine a people's outlook, the liberation from life's material constraints for the purpose of realizing more fully and more freely their humanity has been a near-universal yearning and guiding ideal. Kenneth Clark believed that even the members of a predominantly secular society still hunger for moments of nonmaterial satisfaction. This kind of satisfaction is, of course, also available outside the arts, for other capacities—reason, for example—may certainly be cultivated more for their intrinsic worth than for practical application. But the nonmaterial rewards of reason characteristically accrue in the avocational pursuit of philosophy, logic, mathematics, and the theoretical sciences. The exercise of aesthetic percipience in the domain of art has the advantage of being more ostensibly human and responsive to individual needs and purposes; as Beardsley remarked, art makes us feel more at home in the world. For the majority of persons, then, the arts have far greater appeal as leisure-time activities, all the more so because they are dramatic.

Dramatic interest is what the fine arts share with their aesthetically diminished relatives, the amusement arts (to use Osborne's term). Others have observed the pervasive role dramatic form plays in modern communication and entertainment

media, and it is obvious that there is more than enough drama within each person's reach to fill any number of vacant hours. Nor is it the case that amusement values are unimportant and always pernicious. Still, they must be cautioned against, for the baser coin tends to drive out the more precious. Immersion in amusements tends to diminish a person's capacity for the sort of self-awareness that can be obtained through serious art. While the latter energizes the mind, amusement art encourages it to loaf, which is to say that amusement art lacks the qualities Lionel Trilling attributed to literature: variousness, possibility, complexity, and difficulty.¹⁴ The pursuit of the trivial, in other words, represents the abandonment of seriousness by a leisure society. Or to put it yet another way, amusement art provides neither the intensity of aesthetic gratification, the stimulation of intrinsic perception, nor genuine understanding. A society saturated with amusement values will do little to refine to any significant extent the native aesthetic capacities with which all individuals are endowed. In Osborne's account of aesthetic percipience, aesthetic education thus acquires a preventive as well as an enabling mission. To counter the emphasis society places on amusement values, Osborne recommends an extensive education in the skills of percipience.

Finally, it seems only natural that Osborne's concern with the role of percipience in human life and art should have prompted him to define art in respect to this capacity. "Despite all the difficulties of exact definition," he writes, "we regard any artifact as a work of art which is eminently suitable to exercise, extend and amplify our powers of percipience, irrespective of whatever other values it may have."¹⁵

Art and Understanding: Nelson Goodman

There is no doubting the enormous influence Nelson Goodman's work has had on contemporary aesthetics, where his theory has generated a large volume of comment and debate. Sparshott, for example, likened the appearance of Goodman's *Languages of Art*¹⁶ to the shadow cast by

a giant rock upon a dreary field, while Howard Gardner opined that overnight Goodman transformed aesthetics into a rigorous and serious domain of study. The rigor and analytic brilliance of Goodman's writings also explain in part the impact his thought has had on art and aesthetic education. His ideas have informed many of the investigations into the problems of teaching and learning in the arts that have been carried forward by educators and psychologists for over 20 years at Harvard Project Zero, of which Goodman was the founder.

Goodman is not concerned with aesthetics exclusively and approaches art via epistemology, which he defines "as the philosophy of the understanding and thus as embracing the philosophy of science and the philosophy of art."¹⁷ This epistemological slant is reflected in his insistence on the cognitive aspects of art, an emphasis that must be clearly understood in terms of what it includes as well as what it does not preclude. Goodman acknowledges, for example, that emotions and feelings are not to be ruled out in our experiences of art and are in fact required for aesthetic experience. But, he continues, "they are not separable from or in addition to the cognitive aspect of that experience. They are among the primary means of making the discriminations and the connections that enter into an understanding of art."¹⁸ Furthermore, "cognition is not limited to language or verbal thought but employs imagination, sensation, perception, emotion, in the complex process of aesthetic understanding."¹⁹ Cognition is thus broadly conceived, but as exercised in art it is not all-embracing. "In contending that aesthetic experience is cognitive," says Goodman, "I am emphatically not identifying it with the conceptual, the discursive, the linguistic."²⁰ This should help to allay the doubts of those, especially among educators, who shun cognitive accounts of art for fear of just such an identification.

Most importantly, aesthetic experience is necessarily cognitive because it is an interaction with an object or event when the latter is functioning as a symbol. Goodman's main contribution to the elucidation of art rests on his encompassing

the arts within a theory of symbolic systems. (In any mention of such systems, one hears echoes of Cassirer's symbolic forms of human culture, but there is a significant difference between Cassirer's scheme and Goodman's, as an informative article by Howard Gardner, David Perkins, and Vernon Howard points out.)²¹

Having located the arts within a general theory of symbols permits Goodman to show what art has in common with other human endeavors. Yet Goodman, as will be realized shortly, also allows for the distinctiveness of art, for the thing that art does better than anything else does. Indeed, Goodman is less interested in what art *is*—for example, a symbol with stable identifiable qualities of some kind—than in what art *does*.²²

And what art does is to function as a symbol in distinctive ways. More precisely something is a work of art only when it symbolizes in just those ways. This means that “at certain times and under certain circumstances and not at others . . . an object may be a work of art. . . . Indeed just by virtue of functioning as a symbol in a certain way does an object become, while so functioning, a work of art.” Hence, “things function as works of art only when their symbolic functioning has certain characteristics.”²³ What are these characteristics? Thus far, Goodman has distinguished five, and he calls them *symptoms* of the aesthetic. The brief synopsis that follows claims only to convey the glimmer of understanding. A more adequate treatment would depend on explaining the specialized terms used in Goodman's theory of symbolization—concepts like reference, along with complex reference and chains of reference; symbol systems; labels; notation, notationality and notational systems; denotation and nondenotational reference; and many more—but such an effort would exceed the scope of this article.

1. *Syntactic density*, as a symptom of the aesthetic, marks a condition in which the finest difference in certain respects constitutes a difference between symbols. By way of example, Goodman mentions the ungraduated mercury thermometer, where the smallest difference in the height of the mercury column sig-

nifies a different temperature, and he contrasts it with a digital read-out instrument that flashes its measurements in sharply separated units.

2. When semantic density prevails, symbols are provided for things distinguished by the finest differences in certain respects. Here again the ungraduated thermometer is an example, but so is ordinary English. For although English is not syntactically dense—after all, words are put together into phrases, clauses, and sentences according to definite rules of grammar—it is semantically dense because of the many shadings of meaning and connotation that can be achieved. Pictorial denotation is an instance of a syntactically as well as semantically dense symbol system, “a system such that its concrete symbol-occurrences do not sort into discriminably different characters but merge into one another, and so also for what is denoted.”²⁴ Goodman warns against taking either or both kinds of density as reliable indicators of the aesthetic. We are not to suppose that the aesthetic is more often than not syntactically dense or that the nonaesthetic more often than not lacks semantic density. “Rather the thought is that the syntactically and semantically dense symbols and systems we encounter and use are more often than not aesthetic; that within the aesthetic more often than elsewhere we find the dense.”²⁵

3. In *relative repleteness*, comparably many aspects of a symbol are significant. Goodman asks us to compare a one-line drawing of a mountain by Hokusai with a perhaps identical wavy line on a chart representing stock market averages. The only important feature of the chart is the height of the line above the base; variations in the thickness or shading of the line do not matter, “while in the drawing every variation in every aspect of the line does matter. The premium in a work of art seems to be on repleteness; in a diagram on attenuation.”²⁶ Repleteness, then refers to the fullness of the symbol, to the relatively large number of its features that participate in symbolization.

4. When multiple and complex reference occurs, a symbol performs several integrated and interacting referential functions, some direct, some mediated through other symbols and through and across denotational strata or along chains of reference made up of simple links. “A picture of a bald eagle,” for instance, “denotes a bird that may exemplify a label such as ‘bold and free’ that in turn

denotes and is exemplified by a given country.”²⁷ Chains of reference of this sort may be among the stronger symptoms of the aesthetic since they are often so unwelcome in other contexts. “Scientific and practical discourse,” says Goodman, “verbal or pictorial, normally aims at singularity and directness, avoiding ambiguity and complicated routes of reference. But in the arts, multiple and complex reference of all sorts . . . is common and is often a powerful instrument.”²⁸

5. The presence of *exemplification* is frequently the most striking difference between the aesthetic and the nonaesthetic. It distinguishes literary from non-literary texts and serviceable illustrations from works of art;²⁹ it is also a very difficult symptom to explain.

First of all, exemplification is selective; it involves some but not all of a symbol’s features. Goodman mentions the tailor’s swatch which, in its normal use, will maintain this relationship of exemplification to a few of its properties—color, weave, thickness—but not to others, size and shape, for example. (Although in another context the same piece of cloth might exemplify a small square or zigzag edges.) Properties exemplified are properties that count. In a painting they would be “those that the picture makes manifest, selects, focuses upon, exhibits, heightens in our consciousness—those that it shows forth—in short, those properties that it does not merely possess but *exemplifies*, stands as a sample of.”³⁰ It is important to keep “standing as a sample of” in mind, for it is one of the characteristics that make exemplification a special case of symbolic functioning.

The second characteristic is reference, more specifically, reference that runs counter to the usual path of denotation, which is from the denoter to the denoted. Goodman asserts that reference is what differentiates exemplification from the mere possession of properties; in exemplification, those features that a symbol or artwork exhibits and shows forth it also refers to. Some writers, Beardsley among them, have thought that the possession and display of properties should be enough and that reference adds an unneeded complication. But the case for it becomes plausible once we grant that when some feature is exemplified, that is, functions as a sample, it does call to mind and hence refers to a “label” that applies to it and that would therefore denote it. When a painting exemplifies a color of a certain hue, brightness, and

intensity, then in being a sample of just that color it also calls our attention to a label—a word, an entry on the color chart, an object that has the same shade—that could stand for or denote that color. Notice, however, that the property exemplified by the symbol or artwork (the denoted) is primary, while the label that applies to it (the denoter) is secondary. This is what Goodman seems to mean when he says that “exemplification is thus a certain subrelation of the converse of denotation, distinguished through a return reference to denoter by denoted” and that reference thus “runs in the opposite direction, not from label to what the label applies to but from something a label applies to back to the label (or the feature associated with that label).”³¹

Symbols, artworks included, can possess properties *metaphorically* as well as literally. How metaphor arises in Goodman’s theory need not detain us here (the process requires the transfer of schema of labels for sorting in a given realm to the sorting of another realm).³² Such metaphorical properties are the ones other aestheticians call human or expressive or emotional qualities. A symphony may convey feelings of tragic loss although it does not literally have these feelings, nor are they the composer’s; they are simply feelings the work has metaphorically. Yet by possessing them the symphony can also exemplify or express them. Expression is simply another term for metaphorical exemplification. As Sparshott has put it, “if a sad tune expresses sadness, it is metaphorically sad in such a way that the metaphorical sadness is part of its meaning, i.e., our attention is called to the fact that a word like ‘sad’ could be applied to the work.”³³

A few additional remarks seem indicated about the five symptoms of the aesthetic. First, they are not, as Goodman is emphatic to point out, disjunctively necessary or conjunctively sufficient (as a syndrome).³⁴ “None is always present in the aesthetic or always absent from the nonaesthetic; and even presence or absence of all gives no guarantee either way. . . . All we have here are the hesitant results of groping toward a more adequate characterization of the aesthetic,”³⁵ which is probably understating the matter somewhat.

Second, the terms in which these symptoms have been discussed are not necessarily, and need not become, part of the

critic's or teacher's vocabulary. Since, as will be suggested later, art teachers operate somewhat in the manner of the art critic, or at least would do well to take the critic as a model, it follows that teachers need not talk about syntactic density, repleteness, exemplification, and the like. As Goodman states, "'Exemplify' belongs . . . to a theoretic vocabulary that may be used in describing and analyzing the critic's practice. Whether or not the critic uses the terms 'denotes,' 'depicts,' 'exemplifies,' 'expresses,' etc., he concentrates on what a work symbolizes or refers to in one or more of these ways.'"³⁶ And so for teachers. What has been said about symbols is not necessarily what gets taught explicitly to students; rather it is part of the teachers' pedagogical knowledge, what they teach with.

Third, the five symptoms are "symptoms of the aesthetic function, not of aesthetic merit; symptoms of art, not of good as against bad art."³⁷ In truth, one does not discover in Goodman's writing much interest in artistic excellence as such. While the discussions of Beardsley and Osborne were intended to intimate that works of great aesthetic worth would be more likely than works of indifferent value to produce aesthetic gratification or exercise the full powers of percipience, it would probably be a misrepresentation of Goodman's thought if one were to seek a similar correlation between aesthetic merit and such benefits. What good, then, is art as understood by Goodman?

The experience of art is cognitive and hence, like intellectual effort generally, is motivated by a profound need and leads to deep satisfaction. "Neither art nor science," he writes, "could flourish if it did not give satisfaction, or if satisfaction were the only aim."³⁸ A form of gratification (recalling Beardsley) is therefore among the effects of our interaction with art. Furthermore, symbols—the functioning of which is characterized by symptoms of the aesthetic—"tend to require concentration upon the symbol to determine what it is and what it refers to. Where exemplification occurs, we have to inhibit our habit of passing at once from symbol to what is denoted. Repleteness requires attention to comparatively many

features of the symbol. Dense systems, where every difference in a feature makes a difference, call for an endless search to find what symbol we have and what it symbolizes."³⁹ Concentration, attention, endless search—would it be too much to propose that these (recalling Osborne) also tend to enlarge the powers of percipience?

In Goodman's view, the most important benefit to be derived from art, however, is understanding, more precisely, understanding of the world (as distinguished from, for example, self-knowledge or psychological insight). "How an object or event functions as a work explains how, through certain modes of reference, what so functions may contribute to a vision of—and to the making of—a world."⁴⁰ And again, less abstractly: "After a couple of hours at an exhibition we often step out into a visual world quite different from the one we left. We see what we did not see before, and see in a new way. We have *learned*."⁴¹

There is no question, then, that for Goodman art makes available a good of the highest order which we should make every effort to cultivate. Moreover, since according to Goodman the process leading to the discovery of what a work of art has to offer not only takes time but presupposes training, we may take it that formal schooling is called for. Goodman's account has thus fully answered the requirements for the justification of aesthetic education by indicating both the benefit to the individual and the need for educational intervention.

Art and Institutions: E. F. Kaelin

Kaelin, in contrast to Beardsley, Osborne, and Goodman, acquired the accents of his writing from continental existential-phenomenological points of view. The major influences on his thought are Jean-Paul Sartre, Edmund Husserl, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Martin Heidegger.⁴² Existential phenomenology concentrates on the givens of experience that reside in a person's objective field of phenomenal awareness and in this respect at least can be said to resemble approaches like the ones discussed earlier in this article. This overlap of viewpoints has led to some

attempts to find common ground between linguistic analysis and phenomenology. Both Beardsley and Osborne, for example, have indicated how phenomenology and existentialism can contribute to analyses of aesthetic experience and how the experience of art in turn offers insight into existential-phenomenological problems.

What is more, although Kaelin's thought is constructed on foundations greatly dissimilar from those supporting the philosophies of Beardsley, Osborne, and Goodman, the effects he attributes to aesthetic experience bear a resemblance to the ones they posit. Indeed a discovery one makes in comparing and contrasting aesthetic theorists is that the ontological and epistemological differences—that is, the contrasts in their beliefs about an artwork's status, mode of being, and meaning—do not necessarily preclude consonances in the general kinds of benefits they ascribe to art. For instance, Kaelin thinks that works of art are good for the aesthetic experiences they afford, whose worth in turn inheres in the manner in which they intensify and clarify human awareness, a function of what he calls aesthetic communication. Since Kaelin also notes that satisfaction accrues to the percipient who successfully fuses the system of counters ("counters" being surface and depth features) of a work of art, one is reminded of Beardsley on aesthetic gratification. Moreover, Kaelin's view about the capacity of art to intensify and clarify experience might easily subsume Osborne's belief that the preeminent mission of art is to stimulate the powers of percipience. Finally, Kaelin's account of the aesthetic seems equally hospitable to Goodman's stress on the understandings of the world that can be had through aesthetic experience.

For Kaelin, aesthetic experience progresses from origination through unfolding to closure.⁴³ The first thing he would encourage the percipient of an artwork to do is bracket out (that is, dismiss from mind) a range of irrelevant considerations. This effort of will is necessary to create contexts of significance whose intrinsic values provide the materials of immediate aesthetic experience. Attention to the phenomenally given, to the presenta-

tional immediacy of qualities, involves perception of what is variously termed matter and form, subject and treatment, and local and regional qualities, all aspects of surface and depth relations. Aesthetic experience is thus animated and controlled by the imperatives of bracketed contexts of significance. The percipient's successful fusion of a work's system of counters results in an act of expressive response that constitutes the consummatory value of the aesthetic experience and signals its closure. Kaelin's term "felt expressiveness" implies a sense of fittingness or appropriateness between surface and depth counters (recalling, incidentally, one of the features of aesthetic experience as described by Beardsley). An example is Kaelin's description of Picasso's *Guernica*. After pointing out and interpreting the work's semantic and formal features, Kaelin writes: "So interpreted, our experience of *Guernica* deepens and comes to closure in a single act of expressive response in which we perceive the fittingness of this surface—all broken planes and jagged edges in the stark contrast of black and white—to represent this depth, the equally stark contrast of the living and the dead. . . ." ⁴⁴ What Kaelin terms a single act of expression is, I believe, the same as what Osborne calls an instance of synoptic or integrative vision.

For Kaelin, the point of art is the worthwhile aesthetic experience it provides. Worthwhileness consists both in a work's quality of aesthetic communication and in the exercise of aesthetic perceptual skills and judgment, all of which occur in a context of significance governed by the intrinsic values of a system of counters. It is as if Kaelin, like Beardsley, Osborne, and Goodman, offers his own version of Panofsky's belief that a work of art, whatever other functions it may perform, is essentially a man-made object that demands to be experienced aesthetically. As Kaelin writes, works of art "come to exist only in the experience of persons who have opened themselves to the expressiveness of a sensuous surface and allowed their understandings and imaginations to be guided by controlled responses set up thereon."⁴⁵

Kaelin, along with the other writers discussed here, sees the worth of encounters with artworks in terms of personal benefit to the individual. But he does not rest content with such a formulation and extends his purview to include desirable consequences for society at large. In this he is not alone. Beardsley had pondered the possibility of aesthetic welfare, and Osborne suggested the aesthetic appreciation of excellent works as an antidote to the amusement arts and hence as a means of elevating society's level of culture. Kaelin, however, seems to be saying that a democratic society stands to gain through the aptitudes art can foster and the attitudes it can instill in individuals. Furthermore, such results would be attributable to the special requirements set up by the phenomenological method of experiencing works of art.

When practicing the method of phenomenological analysis, a percipient take his cue from the immediate givens of the artwork and submits willingly to the guidance of the work's context and significance. The percipient approaches the work open-mindedly and tries not to superimpose interpretive or ideological frameworks on it. Aesthetic experience thus demands as well as promotes tolerance or, to use Kaelin's term, a "defanatized" frame of mind. Aesthetic experience might therefore be considered propaedeutic to some of the virtues needed to sustain a democratic social order.

Yet freedom is also prerequisite for and exercised during aesthetic experience. When an individual relinquishes personal and ideological biases and refrains from forming preconceptions about what an artwork might have to say concerning his relation to self, others, and the world, he allows the perceptually given to communicate freely. This same freedom from prior restraints, however, is enjoyed by the percipient as well. Aesthetic experience as free communication may thus be taken as a paradigmatic instance of freedom, of how persons can in effect choose their futures—an important existential premise—by creating new worlds of aesthetic value and by opening themselves to new possibilities of experience. Art thus serves Being by helping to actualize human

powers and potentialities—the values of tolerance and freedom—that benefit both the individual and society.

A justification for aesthetic education responsive to Kaelin's way of thinking might rest on two claims: that aesthetic appreciation (1) enriches the individual by giving satisfaction, sharpening perception, and freely communicating a felt expressiveness and, coincidentally, (2) may help develop in persons attitudes and inclinations deemed desirable by society. Kaelin, however, strengthens the educational case when he interposes the aesthetic institution between (1) and (2).

Kaelin addresses this additional element in an essay titled "Why Teach Art in the Schools?"⁴⁶ which presupposes the conceptions of art and aesthetic experience just described and concentrates on the institutional question. Institutions give scope to as well as channel human activities. But to keep them functioning effectively and benevolently, it is necessary to order "the relations between an individual's impulse to action (of a certain type) and the set of institutions within our society that give form to this impulse."⁴⁷ And so for the impulse to art and the institutions that give it form. Institutional theories of art are no longer novelties; the most well known of them are associated with the work of George Dickie and Arthur Danto, whose writings, however, exhibit no interest in education or aesthetic policy. This leaves room for an institutional definition of art framed for educational purposes and provides an opportunity to reap more of the benefits of an institutional account of art than Kaelin believes has been done so far. After briefly reviewing various philosophers' attempts to define art—from Aristotelian essentialism to Wittgensteinian family resemblances to Dickie-Danto contextualism—Kaelin offers his own definition of "artworld" and "aesthetic institution": It is an institution that endeavors "both to permit and to regulate the behavioral patterns constituting the formal practices of producing, criticizing, exhibiting, and appreciating works of art."⁴⁸ The basic purpose of the aesthetic institution is to maximize aesthetic value in society. This can happen only when artists produce works of art

that are significantly communicative, when critics with a strong historical sense take the measure of these works, and when persons undergoing aesthetic experiences allow themselves to be controlled by the vehicle of perception and are rewarded with aesthetic satisfaction. The importance of such an aesthetic institution is as great as the value society places—or should place—on the arts. For Kaelin that value is high indeed and makes the aesthetic nearly coequal with the scientific institution and similar to it in some respects. Like scientific institutions, cultural institutions are both permissive and regulatory; they encourage maximal pursuit of novel significance and they affect the way new creations come to be appreciated through informed criticism. As in other major institutions, criticism in the aesthetic institution is an effort to exert control over the quality of human thought and action.

The aesthetic institution will operate smoothly and maximize aesthetic value when persons perform their various institutional roles freely and effectively. Efficient performance depends on adequate skills, hence on education. But since all members of society are potentially members of or participants in the aesthetic institution—by attending cultural events, visiting museums, purchasing art objects, and seeking out aesthetic experiences in other ways—they must possess aesthetic skills and the proper mindset to play their parts well; aesthetic education should therefore be available to all. In short, aesthetic education is needed to ensure the efficacy of the aesthetic institution. Thus according to Kaelin the ultimate social product of the art world and the aesthetic institution is not works of art so much as “the type of person capable of appreciating works of art with the appropriate critical attitude.”⁴⁹ Kaelin’s writings have thus afforded a new slant on the discussion in this chapter by providing a picture of the individual functioning in society, to be specific, in one of society’s major institutions, the aesthetic. □

Notes

1. Francis Sparshott, *The Theory of the Arts* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), p. 3.
2. Monroe C. Beardsley, *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism* (1958) 2nd ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1981). Contains a Postscript 1980.
3. Abraham H. Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* (New York: Viking Press, 1972).
4. The distinction, which contrasts the differences between the intuitive and scientific orientations of the mind, is a central theme of the writings of Jacques Barzun. Acknowledging his debt to Blaise Pascal, who gave an account of the orientations in his *Pensees*, Barzun provides a compressed paraphrase of the distinction in his *Clio and the Doctors: Psycho-History, Quanto-History, and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), pp. 91-92.
5. Monroe C. Beardsley, *The Aesthetic Point of View: Selected Essays*, ed. Michael J. Wreen and Donald M. Callen (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), pp. 285-97.
6. Beardsley, “Postscript,” in *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism*, p. lxi.
7. The term “gratification” is featured in Beardsley’s “The Aesthetic Point of View,” in his *The Aesthetic Point of View*, p. 22. For a tracing of Beardsley’s efforts to characterize the hedonic character of aesthetic experience, see R. A. Smith, “The Aesthetics of Monroe C. Beardsley: Recent Work,” *Studies in Art Education* 25, no. 3 (Spring 1984), 142-45.
8. See, for example, Beardsley’s “An Aesthetic Definition of Art,” in Hugh Curtler, ed., *What Is Art?* (New York: Haven, 1983), pp. 13-29. The volume is dedicated to Beardsley.
9. Beardsley, “The Aesthetic Point of View,” in *The Aesthetic Point of View*, pp. 15-16.
10. Beardsley, “Aesthetic Welfare, Aesthetic Justice, and Educational Policy,” *ibid.*, pp. 111-24.
11. Beardsley, “The Aesthetic Point of View,” *ibid.*, p. 34.
12. Harold Osborne, *The Art of Appreciation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), chap. 2.
13. Osborne, “The Twofold Significance of ‘Aesthetic Value,’” *Philosophica* 36, no. 2 (1985), 5-24; and “Education in an Affluent State,” *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 20, no. 4 (Winter 1986), 103-7.
14. Lionel Trilling, *The Liberal Imagination* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. xiii.
15. Osborne, “The Twofold Significance of ‘Aesthetic View,’” *Philosophica*, 22.
16. Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art*, 2nd ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1976).
17. Goodman, *Of Mind and Other Matters* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), p. 1.
18. Goodman, *ibid.*, pp. 7-8.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 84.
21. Howard Gardner, David Perkins, and Vernon Howard, “Symbol Systems: A Philosophical, Psychological, and Educational Investigation,” in David R. Olson, ed., *Media and Symbols: The Forms of Expression, Communication, and Education* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), pp. 27-55.

22. Goodman, *Ways of Worldmaking* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1978), chap. 4.
23. Ibid., p. 67.
24. Goodman, *Of Mind and Other Matters*, p. 57.
25. Ibid., p. 136.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid., p. 62.
28. Ibid., pp. 136-37.
29. Ibid., pp. 135-36.
30. Goodman, *Ways of Worldmaking*, p. 65.
31. Goodman, *Of Mind and Other Matters*, p. 59.
32. Ibid., pp. 60-61.
33. Francis Sparshott, *The Theory of the Arts* (Princeton, University Press, 1982), p. 597.
34. Goodman, *Ways of Worldmaking*, pp. 68-69.
35. Goodman, *Of Mind and Other Matters*, p. 137.
36. Ibid., pp. 82-83.
37. Ibid., p. 138.
38. Ibid., p. 5.
39. Ibid., p. 137.
40. Goodman, *Ways of Worldmaking*, p. 70.
41. Goodman, *Of Mind and Other Matters*, p. 85.
42. See, for example, E. F. Kaelin, *An Existentialist Aesthetic: The Theories of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1962); *An Existential-Phenomenological Account of Aesthetic Education* (Department of Art Education: The Pennsylvania State University, ca. 1969); *Art and Existence* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1970); and "Aesthetic Education: A Role for Aesthetics Proper," in R. A. Smith, ed., *Aesthetics and Problems of Education* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971), pp. 144-61.
43. Kaelin, "Aesthetic Education: A Role for Aesthetics Proper," in R. A. Smith, ed., *Aesthetics and Problems of Education*, pp. 151-55.
44. Ibid., p. 154.
45. Ibid., p. 155.
46. Kaelin, "Why Teach Art in the Schools?" *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 26, no. 4 (Winter 1986), 64-71.
47. Ibid., p. 66.
48. Ibid., p. 68.
49. Ibid., pp. 69-70.