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Examining Artistic Processes And Transfer

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Education degree in Education
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EXAMINING ARTISTIC PROCESS AND TRANSFER

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by

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ABSTRACT

This exploratory qualitative case study inquires into the relationship between artistic

processes in organizational theory and in education, examining the perception of transfer

from a lived arts experience to student leadership contexts. The literature review

considers the parallel evolution of artistic thinking strategies in organizations and in

education, using three processes as a basis for comparison: tolerance for ambiguity, a

collaborative culture of critique, and the empowerment of group members at all stages of

an initiative. Evidence of these processes was analyzed for its relevance to leadership

development using documents from single-gendered independent schools, participant

journal entries, and interviews with students in leadership positions. In general, artistic

processes are perceived and enacted in leadership situations involving authentic

empowerment, leading to greater intrinsic motivation while facilitating creativity and

innovation. The principal recommendation is for school leadership curricula to

incorporate these principles in a transparent manner.

Key Words:

artful leadership, artistic processes, culture of critique, dispositional thinking,

empowerment, near and far transfer, student leadership curriculum, studio habits of mind,

tolerance for ambiguity, transactional or transformational leadership

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Problem

In this chapter, I discuss the origins of my interest in artistic processes and their potential for application in other contexts. I outline how my curiosity about artistic thinking in the arts and artistic processes—that is to say, dispositions that both derive from and shape one's artistic practice— led to a fresh insight; namely, that both educational and organizational thinkers were simultaneously considering how these processes might be identified, and how they might contribute to performance in other domains or disciplines. Given what appears to be a parallel interest in the two domains, and a shared belief in the value of artistic processes—processes which include a tolerance for ambiguity, a sense of empowerment, and a collaborative culture of critique, I consider whether exposure to an arts curriculum or arts-related extracurricular program could be perceived by student leaders as relevant to (or even present in) their leadership practice. Finally, I outline the research initiative, which takes the form of a qualitative case study.

1.1 Background to the Study

In 2007, I became intrigued by the dispositional thinking which appeared as the independent learning approaches I had been noticing amongst students in the studio classroom where I taught. Operating as both an arts educator and professional artist, I had often experienced first-hand the connection between that adage popularized by 19th century British educator W.E. Hickson, *"If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again"* and the instinctive response, challenging as it is, to embrace open-ended outcomes in artistic production. One of the creative benefits of persistence is an unexpected change in artistic direction based on re-working a piece, or 're-envisioning' it. This is known

colloquially as a "happy accident" in the Art Room, insinuating a cheerful spin on things that don't turn out well. More importantly, implicit in the term is a tolerance for failing to achieve one's initial vision before experiencing the satisfaction of achieving something better. In effect, providing and accepting permission to fail at rendering one thing, only to see the spark of something better, albeit different, either in approach or outcome, is a form of scaffolded learning. It is almost an inversion of the perception that artists and artistic thinkers are inherently "creative" conceivers of ideas and that artistic talent is innate, not learned (and therefore unfathomable). Although this may well be the case for some, the idea that practice makes perfect is also a widely held tenet in the arts, akin to Gladwell's (2008) premise that expertise is built on the investment of '*10,000 hours*' [italics mine]. A synthesis of the two positions may be found through better understanding the fluency and relationship of artistic processes—from the initial creative impetus to the permutations evolving from sustained engagement with a concept.

During this same period of personal and professional inquiry, Ontario's Ministry of Education was formulating improved methods for assessing and evaluating student performance in the Arts. Previews of its then not-yet-released Growing Success (2010) documents became the catalyst for discussions around not just the *what*, but the *how* of thinking and learning. 'Habits of mind' signified the kind of dispositional thinking, or learning approaches that students were bringing to their academic and artistic endeavours. Ritchhart (2002) described it as "intellectual character", and in the summer of 2008, with an opportunity to investigate the topic further at Harvard's Graduate School of Education 'Project Zero' Summer Institute, I became intrigued by the notion that artists may think *differently,* not in their manner of cognition so much as in their willingness to apply

certain artistic thinking processes to virtually every challenge they experience, in or out

of the studio. Given the right conditions, that is to say, a positive studio classroom

environment where risk-taking is encouraged and collaborative problem-solving is

expected, I noticed student artists with little artistic experience boldly experimenting with

their ideas, and freely sharing their insights, their gaps in understanding, and their

knowledge gains with one another. Critical thinking skills and self-directed inquiry

offered them the authority and confidence to guide themselves and their peers past

challenging and sometimes sensitive areas that mark the creative development process.

In effect, they were taking the lead, despite the possibility that in other domains they may

be less inclined to do so.

        As an arts educator, my interest in exploring artistic thinking processes as a way

of looking at leadership skills and dispositions crystallized through these observations,

and I wondered what their potential application in student leadership curricula might be.

I was equally curious about the level of conscious, reflexive awareness that students held

concerning these processes; our classes considered the creative cycle at an abstract

level—were the students aware of how they were operating within it? For though the arts

and leadership might appear to be disparate entities, the processes involved in artmaking

foster creative and problem-solving methods which are pertinent in other contexts and

disciplines.

1.2 Leadership Development in Education and Organizations

        Through its Student Voice (2008-2012) initiative, the Ontario Ministry provides a

forum for students to discuss issues of relevance in education. One recurrent objective

expressed by student groups calls for leadership and related group dynamic training;

specifically, the Ontario Ministry of Education (2010) summarized student input into education: "[T]here should be strategies in place to help students learn life skills, such as leadership, teamwork and communication skills" ("What you told us" section, para. 3). Moreover, on an ideological level, while education is more than merely preparation for a life of 'work' in the market economy sense, the development of cognitive and affective processes that enable students to operate and co-create effectively as leaders has intrinsic value. Identifying and developing the leadership attributes most sought after by organizations can assist in determining the most suitable curriculum for this purpose. However, there are varied conceptions of leadership and leadership development: "There is a difference between being a leader and being a boss. Both are based on authority. A boss demands blind obedience; a leader earns his authority through understanding and trust" (Balkenhol, 2010, "Klaus Balkenhol Quotes" section, para.1), and "Control leads to compliance, autonomy leads to engagement" (Pink, 2010, pp. 110-111), and "A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go, but ought to be" (Carter, n.d. "Rosalynn Carter Quotes" section, para. 2).

These and other well-known aphorisms about leadership extol different virtues: some promote leading from behind, thereby inspiring and enabling followers to achieve their own and the organization's goals, while others champion the prosecution of an uncompromising, yet beneficent vision. In organizational and management theory, the former approaches are classified as "transformational" or "transformative", in that they promote collaborative, inclusive, and facilitative approaches to initiatives, whereas the latter are closer to a "transactional" model, in which a leader articulates the objectives

and subsequently directs and manages subordinate members. Educational theory is no

stranger to this trend: there is a parallel interest in the benefit that artistic processes may

have on learning in other domains. Educators hoping to find a workable and meaningful

student leadership curriculum must reconcile these apparently disparate conceptions.

One possible answer lies in deconstructing the idea of leadership into its component skills

and attributes, developing them in tandem with authentic experiences through which to

practise them. With this approach in mind, one turns to relevant metaphors as a way in—

leader as manager, director, facilitator, visionary, catalyst, *agent provocateur*, each with

its attendant image and emphasis on leadership characteristics.

Over the past decades, the terms 'artful management', 'artification', and 'artistic

processes' have become more prevalent within organizational management discourse and,

as such, are increasingly being included within leadership development discussions.

Recently, there has been interest amongst organizations in generating innovative

practices, not only in the products or services they offer, but also in their operational

approaches. This interest has led to an exploration of thinking dispositions and processes

found in the arts as a possible means of satisfying both aims.

Beyond the educational context, there has been a research interest (Adler, 2006;

Austin, 2008) in finding alternatives to hierarchical and linear models of behaviour in

organizational structures. Among these is a belief that practices found in the arts offer

organizations a more innovative, collaborative, and ethical model, one which is more

congruent to those found within 21st century global perspectives. This movement

parallels attempts to integrate cognitive and behavioural strategies such as

transdisciplinary approaches to learning (Kaufman, Moss, & Osborn, 2003) and

Universal Design for Learning (McGuire, Scott, & Shaw, 2006). If student leaders

perceive that artistic processes are fundamental to the fulfillment of their leadership roles,

there is merit in understanding how they make these connections and, by extension, how

art education can instil and develop effective metacognition of these dispositions, which

could then be applied to other disciplines. An exploration of artistic processes in both

organizational and educational contexts will offer insight into their potential application

to student leadership curricula.

　　　　Artistic Processes in Organizations. Some of the more recent research in

organizational management describes the shift away from linear, hierarchical, and

formulaic procedures, towards more open-ended attitudes, dispositions, and approaches

like those most frequently employed by individuals with an arts background. Adler

(2006) has explored the phenomenon of artist-as-consultant in organizations and, by

extension, the adoption of "artistic processes" within operational models. These

processes relate to more inclusive management structures, incorporating the value of

creative risk-taking and innovation as part of everyday practice, and promoting ethical,

meaningful organizational outcomes.

　　　　Related research conducted by the Centre for Art and Leadership at the

Copenhagen Business School has led to Austin's (2003) theory of 'Artful Making' and

'Artful Management'. Artful Making promotes the relinquishing of creative control from

management and administration to a more broadly based membership within an

organization; it fosters collaborative problem-solving, distributed leadership, and "play".

Artful Management embraces such values as "emergence, improvisation, and uncertainty"

(Rotman, 2010, p. 2). Similar values were reflected in a workshop at the World

Economic Forum (2004) entitled *If an Artist Ran Your Business.* Here, uncertainty is

seen as an advantage, collaborative work at all levels is celebrated over individual

performance, and there is tolerance for "failures, ambiguity and risk" ("Annual Meeting"

section, para. 6). Other characterizations of leadership appear to incorporate elements of

artistic processes and should be examined within a larger framework of gender identity.

Conventional hierarchical transactional approaches to leadership have been associated

with male leaders whereas women leaders tend to more transformative or

transformational strategies. "Transformational leadership" refers to a leadership

approach which incorporates "four dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational

motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration" (Bass & Avolio,

1994). Of these, inspirational motivation and individualized consideration parallel the

themes of flexibility and empowerment found in artistic processes. Kyriakidou (2012)

suggests that such an approach mitigates the potential identity conflict experienced by

women in leadership positions who are not comfortable exercising authority in a manner

consistent with traditional, prescriptive gender-based conventions of management.

Despite the semantic controversy around understandings of artful leadership, three

principal characteristics consistently emerge:

1) tolerance for ambiguity, variability, and possibility;

2) empowerment of agency within an organization to exercise individual judgment in

operational situations; and

3) comfort with a culture of collaborative problem-solving and critique.

While arts education is not alone in fostering each of these dispositions, it may offer a

valuable context in which all three may be explored and learned by student leaders.

Artistic Processes in Education. Characteristics of postmodernist arts education mirror the artistic processes of 'Artful Management ' quite closely. Gude (2007) articulates a number of "principles of possibility" in which "playing", "empowered making", "encountering difference", and "not knowing" are deemed as values essential to productive and meaningful creative work in the studio. Within their research conducted on actual studio processes, Hetland, Winner, Veenema and Sheridan (2007) identified a number of learning dispositions present in art education. In this context, "dispositions" trace to behaviours, attitudes and approaches to learning, as defined by Ritchhart (2002). Hetland et al. (2007) concluded that "teachers were teaching eight important and potentially generalizable habits of mind: the dispositions to observe, envision, express, reflect, stretch and explore, engage and persist, develop craft, and understand the art world" (cited in Hetland & Winner, 2008). In another model of the artistic process, Walker (2004) posited that an essential disposition is learning to 'delay closure', that is, the ability to patiently develop an idea further than was originally conceived, or to persist with alternate solutions when faced with significant obstacles. Furthermore, the nature of the critique process and collaboration, which is fundamental to the studio environment, engenders a culture of innovation and collective purpose by its members (Berger, 2003). The synergy of creative problem-solving in groups, therefore, is relevant: Hennessey (2003) contends that "it is only with a consideration of context, including the interpersonal context, in which people operate that we can ever hope to enrich our understanding of creative behaviour" (p. 198).

Dispositions such as intrinsic motivation, persistence, collaboration, the flexibility to approach a problem from many perspectives, and the ability to operate with uncertain

outcomes are emphasized in a unique manner within art education. These habits of mind are also beneficial in other organizational contexts involving student leaders, such as service projects or student council initiatives. If leadership is to be understood as a purposeful facilitation of a group initiative that involves creative, inclusive, ethical and open-ended approaches, how students learn to function as leaders in these roles may be informed by acquiring experience in the arts. Furthermore, if students are able to develop a useful meta-awareness of these dispositions, there is a benefit to including them as part of a student leadership curriculum.

Educational researchers (Duncum, 2002; Leidtke, 2012) have been exploring the potential for dispositions learned in the arts to be implemented across the curriculum. For example, 'visual literacy' describes the use of viewing and constructing knowledge, two of the artistic processes identified by Hetland et al. (2007), in a transdisciplinary fashion. 'Visual Thinking Strategies' (Housen, 2002), 'Artful Thinking' and Project Zero (Tishman, 2006) and 'Philosophy for Children' (Juliusdottir, 2009; Lipman, 1972) all promote, in their own way, similar observational and reflexive strategies designed to promote critical aesthetic awareness, and are germane to effective learning across disciplines.

Understandings of what constitutes credible transfer need to be examined in order to consider these initiatives in the light of artistic processes and leadership. In a description of transfer models, Perkins & Salomon (1992) distinguish between 'near' and 'far' transfer. Near transfer involves a nearly automatic transfer of processes between similar contexts. (Writing stories and writing essays involve some structural parallels and require little in the way of transfer). Far transfer implies less congruence between the

two contexts, which more closely approximates the relationship between artistic

processes and leadership. To this end, Perkins and Salomon (1992) suggest that fostering

transfer is most likely achieved through two primary strategies: "hugging" for near

transfer (through simulations) and "bridging", for far transfer. "In bridging, the

instruction encourages the making of abstractions, searches for possible connections,

mindfulness, and metacognition. . . . The instruction thus would emphasize deliberate

abstract analysis and planning" (cited in Perkins, 1992). In an ongoing study of learning

dispositions, Hetland (2008), outlines a possible research path for establishing their

transfer:

> By first focusing on what experts intend to teach in the…arts, researchers can
>
> subsequently study whether students in art classes actually learn these dispositions
>
> and whether the teaching of these dispositions is perceived by stakeholders as
>
> having an impact on students' reasoning outside of the arts. ("Continuing the
>
> Dialogue" section, para. 5)

With parallel interest in artistic processes and their influence within

organizational management theory and education, a logical meeting point of these two

theories is the student leadership experience: from school philosophy to leadership

training and eventually to the enactment by the student leaders themselves. Student

leaders with a background in the arts may overtly or tacitly have been previously exposed

to these processes and are uniquely positioned to comment on perceptions of transfer

across domains.

1.3 Focus of the Study

Therefore, this study was designed to understand the perception of transfer between artistic processes in the arts and those found in organizational management or leadership, particularly student leadership contexts. More specifically, the overarching research question was framed as follows: In what ways do student leaders perceive artistic processes to be transferable to student leadership contexts?

Part of this study, therefore, was dedicated to exploring which thinking and problem-solving dispositions related to creative processes found in arts education are identifiable and applicable within leadership contexts. In order to draw in multiple perspectives about a possible transfer between contexts, understanding of the larger question was supported by a consideration of the following issues:

- In what ways do student leaders understand their roles?

- How is this understanding linked to their interpretation of the student leadership curricula?

- Do their responses communicate an understanding of the transferability of skills developed through an arts based education?

- Does gender inform their understanding?

The structure of the research initiative lay in developing understandings of how students in leadership positions perceive the processes by which they operate, either alone or in concert with their peers. To this end, investigating reflexive thinking about their actions and practices provided at least an initial awareness of whether and how artistic processes inform a leadership experience. As this study was intended to examine single-sex independent schools in a large urban centre, the influence of gender on

perceptions of leadership behaviours was also examined, specifically where evidence of transformational or transformative leadership, an approach which reflects dispositional thinking or characteristics of artistic processes, could be identified.

As discussed in further detail in Chapter 3, the nature of the research question relates to perception. Perception accounts for participant understandings of their role as student leaders, their interpretation of student leadership curricula and the influence of their background in the arts are most effectively examined through anecdotal descriptions of their experience. Consequently, study participants tracked their experiences within the arts and leadership experiences as a means of inquiring if, and in what ways, they perceive that these processes are enacted across disciplines in a tangible and meaningful way. These descriptions could provide deep, rich, qualitative data pointing to a stronger understanding of how the arts impact student leadership.

This research initiative was configured as a bounded case study, with the potential to be applied to other, similar learning contexts. Stake (1995) suggests that case studies "emphasize episodes of nuance, the sequentiality of happenings in context" (p. xii). Furthermore, given the intention to examine possible transfer, Laws and McLeod (2004) would categorize this case study as "interpretive", to "develop conceptual theories or to illustrate, support or challenge theoretical assumptions held prior to data gathering" (p. 5). In this regard, despite the paucity of research with regard to student leadership curriculum and the limited scope of this study, pursuing Hetland's (2008) prescription for examining transfer by means of a case study offers a pathway to better understanding the research questions.

Making artistic processes visible may serve to inform future iterations of student leadership curricula. Additionally, if meta-awareness of artistic processes is perceived as particularly fruitful in developing dispositions applicable in leadership contexts, then future research initiatives may examine how best to illuminate and facilitate any transfer.

Chapter 2 traces the parallel interest in artistic thinking processes found in organizational and educational contexts. In both cases, the intent is to understand working approaches in the arts and their possible application in a more generalized way, to enable actors within those domains to operate more effectively. Those artistic processes emerging from the literature as common among both domains formed the basis for comparison to lived experience. Moreover, given the focus on potential implications for student leadership curricula within this study, relevant understandings of curriculum theory have been considered.

Chapter 3 provides a rationale for the methodology and methods employed in this research. Operating from within an interpretive paradigm, and constructed as a bounded case study, the study considers the experiences and understandings of secondary student leaders in single-gendered independent schools in the midst of their year-long leadership tenure. Using a combination of document analysis of student leadership curricula, journal entry and interview methods, perceptions of the relevance of the arts as pertinent to leadership are probed.

Chapter 4 examines the data as it emerged from the case study, beginning with an examination of stated student leadership curricula through the lens of the identified artistic processes, followed by an examination of student leader responses. Student perceptions of valuable leadership skills and attributes are considered in the context of

their background in the arts, as well as in their lived leadership experience. Similarly, perceptions of the relevance of artistic processes and gender influence on leadership identity are examined.

Chapter 5 provides an analysis of the data, outlining how leadership curricula and student leadership experience are, by nature of an underlying transformational approach to leadership values, tacitly infused with markers of artistic approaches. Recommendations regarding making these processes more explicit in future iterations of leadership curricula reflect the positive impact that the emergent awareness of these processes had on participants. Finally, a reflection of this study and implications for future research initiatives are presented.

Reflecting recent interest in artistic processes as an effective means for improving organizational and educational approaches, this study considers the potential application of these processes at the very intersection of education and leadership development: student leadership curricula. Understanding how these processes are affiliated with the arts and in what ways they may influence a student leader's practice can inform those who mentor and develop student leaders. Making these processes visible may lead to a more effective and consistent student leadership curriculum that empowers all students as potential leaders.

Chapter 2: Review of Literatures

In order to understand the evolution of interest in artistic processes as thinking

and operational strategies, and to understand what they are purported to offer,

consideration of both organizational and educational streams are examined in this chapter.

In organizational theory, there is a gradual shift from 'artistic thinking' as leadership

development to a broader application within organizations as a whole. The second part

of the chapter profiles artistic thinking dispositions as universal approaches to learning.

Consideration is also given to the nature of leadership curriculum in order to detect just

how these processes have been implicated in practice. Finally, recent research into the

understandings of both gender in education and gender in leadership are briefly examined.

2.1 Artistic Processes in Organizations.

> For all the intelligent activities of men, no matter whether expressed in science,
>
> fine arts or social relationships, have for their task the conversion of causal bonds,
>
> relations of succession, into a connection of means-consequence, into meanings.
>
> When the task is achieved, the result is art. (Dewey, Art as Experience, 1934)

The perception that artists think and work differently, and that these differences

have the potential to positively influence other domains—education, business practices,

and leadership—has resulted in significant growth in related interest and scholarship

since the late 1990's, but its roots reach back even further. Dewey (1934), who posited

that "all experience has its aesthetic quality," laid the groundwork for new

understandings of the quality of human action (pp. 217-218).   In other words, there may

be specific protocols and processes in science, business, or leadership but the 'art' of any

domain lies in its creative and judicious application by a practitioner. However, the evolution towards "artistic processes" (Adler, 2006; Perkins, 1974) or "artful leadership" (Kerr & Darsø, 2008) came as a response to the perception that traditional, instrumental models of management were insufficient to capture the emergence of the global economic environment. Adler (2006) documented several examples of the ways in which corporations were turning to artists as consultants to stimulate the operational dynamic in organizational groups. "The time is right for the cross-fertilization of the arts and leadership. Companies are including artists and artistic processes in their approaches to strategic and day-to-day management and leadership" (pp. 487-488). The arts, and by extension the processes by which artists work, were heralded as pathways to more creative and innovative practice in organizations, leading to the development of schools of management such as the Centre for Creativity and Leadership (Denmark, 1970) and the Banff Centre (Canada, 1969). Extending beyond the principles of using the arts as a vehicle for corporate retreat activities, the arts were viewed as an *agent of renewal* within organizational culture.

From Dewey (1934) to the present, questions about how artists work have led to the exploration and adoption (or adaptation) of artistic processes (the underlying perception being that artists think in ways that transcend rational problem-solving, and that these cognitive processes may be transferable to other contexts). One challenge to this inquiry lies in understanding creativity, not only in terms of defining it, but also in developing ways of stimulating it. Creativity in an organizational context may be understood as initiating processes that are at once novel and useful. Another area of inquiry particularly related to leadership involves how an artistic process, often perceived

to be an individual pursuit, is transferrable to a group context. What follows is a chronology that attempts to highlight recent understandings of the artistic process, and its eventual promotion as a mechanism for leadership renewal.

From Artistic Thinking to Artful Leadership. To deconstruct and generalize the cognitive and affective processes involved in an artist's work, Ecker (1963) abstracted the creative process as "qualitative problem-solving", a form of inquiry distinct from more rigid scientific approaches. More than simply a detached observer and recorder of experiment results, the artist, by contrast, works through a reconciliation of vision and performative outcomes by altering materials and approaches. The locus of this process is the "determination of pervasive control" in which the relationship between the emerging artwork, the materials and processes which combine to achieve it, and the purpose or concept from which it is formed and assessed, operate in an interdependent symbiosis (p. 289). There is an ongoing dialogue between the artist, the vision, and the artwork itself: a confluence of creation, critique, and reflection. When expressed in these terms, it is conceivable that these abilities could be applied to other contexts. However, it should be noted that Ecker concludes that "qualitative (aesthetic) and theoretical (scientific) intelligence… operat[es] in all areas of human experience" (p. 287) and is not dependent on the work of an artist or scientist in their respective domain. Conceptions of the artistic process, therefore, begin to diversify in their meaning to include more than a way to achieve an aesthetic product or end.

Perkins (1974) also identified the counterpoint between creative and self-critiquing elements of the artistic process: "Subjects continually alternate between close perceptual attention to their evolving product and efforts to modify that product in

response to problems they perceive. [As such] … the human organism's persistent

monitoring of its own output is exposed" (p. 49). On one level, problems encountered

may be as much technical as creative or aesthetic. Furthermore, artists place themselves

in the role of an audience or spectator to consider the emergent work as an independent

product, whether congruent or not with the original or evolved vision. The ability to

critique one's own work "demands a further measure of sophistication and technique" (p.

31), implying that there is an often simultaneous, or closely situated creative

action/operation and a metacognition of the same.

Ultimately, initial attempts to identify and qualify artistic thinking appear to focus

on processes that address qualitative problems, requiring a nearly constant or real-time

assessment of the interaction between concept, process, intervention and outcome. This

overriding executive function has been identified by brain theory researchers Ellamil,

Dobson, Beeman, and Christoff (2012), who concluded that creative and critical

functions operate independently from within distinct areas of the brain, but significant

frontal lobe activity simultaneously regulates both functions on an ongoing basis. This

dynamic is compared and contrasted to analytic or instrumental thinking, in which the

most logical path to an objective is identified and enacted. Qualitative and creative

problem solving of this nature verges on an intuitive sense of direction emerging from the

original impetus, operating, however, with greater fluidity and flexibility in finding or

discovering a solution. The journey between objective and solution is not necessarily a

linear one. This principle underlies much subsequent inquiry into artistic processes and

leadership, in which the synthesis of creative and critical thinking is replicated, but within

a group context.

A critical mass of research on artistic processes coalesced in the mid-1990's: an entire edition of the *Journal of Aesthetic Education* was devoted to an exploration of leadership and its relationship to the arts. Some contributors argue that leadership processes naturally parallel artistic processes and, by extension, are informed by this comparison (Moore, 1996). Others suggest that organizations and their managers require a cultural shift towards artistic processes in order to enhance their capacity in a 21st century global marketplace, and promote replicating the artistic process within organizational behaviour (Palus & Horth, 1996).

Howard (1996) first defined the nature of leadership as the influence one has on an organization. A leader, he argued, is successful based upon the results that they are able to achieve in relation to a stated goal. However, he cautions that while "leaders have influence, … influence does not imply leadership" (p. 22). The mandate of a leader to intervene in a group or process differs from that of the scientist in that "the great scientist does not tailor his view of, say, the atom to whatever audience he hopes to influence" (Wills, as cited in Howard, 1996, p. 22). The ability to achieve this influence is through the combination of particular attributes in any given moment, rather than as the result of a systematic, identifiable protocol. Howard (1996) is unable to distil any specific, independent characteristics of leadership, deferring to a more general definition: "…an elusive amalgam of perceptive sensitivity, judgment, persuasiveness, imagination, and timing—much like that of an actor or performing artist—exemplified in the actions, decisions, rhetoric, and public presence of acknowledged great leaders" (p. 25). While the artfulness of leadership remains in the skilled, nuanced execution of leadership traits by an individual actor, Howard (1996) illuminates the question of influence as central to

the discussion. Influence as an attribute or skill focuses the attention on the individual

leader; subsequent research begins to focus on the shared organizational processes, which,

when enacted by all community members, created a working climate where even greater

accomplishments were possible.

Moore (1996) analyzed four components of "aesthetic sensibility" which offer

qualitative problem-solving strategies: 1) "institutionalism", the understanding of a text

or problem within its underlying context; 2) "interpretivism", the deconstructing of a text

into its component parts in order to understand the whole in multiple ways; 3)

"aspectivism", the ability to examine an issue from multiple perspectives, and 4)

"instrumentalism", given that "the world of art … is especially adept at distilling

[meaning] out of the raw qualities of ordinary living (p. 14). These representations of

cognitive dexterity allow for leaders to eschew formulaic responses to problems,

approaching them in a more open-ended manner. Moreover, the focus on the mental

processes associated with an aesthetic sensibility offer clearer indicators of the operations

involved in problem-solving, and rely less on the intuitive ability of a single individual.

Moore (1996) recognizes the additional value of artistic processes as an operational

strategy for an organization: "It would be prudent for aspiring leaders in any field to

inculcate aesthetic experience in themselves as well as in those they intend to lead" (p.

15). In this context, the arts are portrayed as transformative for leaders within a culture.

Creating a Culture of Leadership. Smith (1996) extends this thinking by

approaching the problem as one of organizational structure, rather than the specific

abilities of a leader. Leadership is described as a "community of practice" driven by five

components found within individual members of an organization, as well as the

organizational entity: "background, aims, structure, limitations and values"(p. 40). The

socio-cultural environment in which leadership occurs is recognized as an opportunity to

be cultivated rather than as an added complexity.   Leadership is as much about creating a

culture as it is moving a team to a particular vision or goal. To achieve this, the ability to

structure "multiplicity in terms of emergent inspirations and personal expression"

empowers all stakeholders in the organization (p. 41). Smith (1996) identifies the

benefits of an aesthetic education to an organization—benefits which may include a

higher "metaphorical literacy", the ability to tolerate ambiguity, deeper levels of

perception, and greater adaptability in interdisciplinary situations (p. 44). Additionally,

the cognitive processes evoked by aesthetic education provide "greater potential for

achieving transfer of learning than do most other subjects" (p. 49). However, what

appears to be absent in Smith's (1996) analysis is a specific path to acquiring an aesthetic

education except through exposure to the arts, as opposed to any particular organizational

intervention. Nevertheless, the inclusion of artistic processes across an organization,

rather than centralized within leadership, is a valuable expansion on previous thinking.

The next stage in the evolution of this research story lies in the development of more

concrete approaches to leadership training that cultivate the desired attributes.

　　　　Understanding Leadership. Palus and Horth (1996) summarized past

difficulties in identifying the key characteristics of leadership: "Despite the efforts of

behavioural scientists to explain leadership, much remains unexplained, suggesting that

leadership is still much of an art" (p. 57). Once again, the word 'art' recalls Dewey's

(1934) notion of aesthetic ability, but in this context still connotes an unspecified,

individualized disposition for leading others. Palus and Horth (1996) sought to further

clarify understandings of leadership in terms of "aesthetic competencies", defining those

abilities that provide great leaders the judgment or executive capacity to operate

effectively. "Aesthetic competencies make possible a striking degree of depth, diversity,

and detail in the experiencing of meaning and emotion and in the courses of action taken

by individuals and within communities" (p. 53). Some of these competencies are

described as a:

> generative imagination and a capacity for creative induction[,] . . . fluency in
>
> metaphor and symbol and the accompanying facility for holding new or opposing
>
> ideas[, as well as] sustained inquiry beyond the borders of what is known [and]
>
> leadership requires that all of these be wrapped into cohering social processes of
>
> perspective taking, exploring differences, establishing connections to larger
>
> wholes, and engaging the collective imagination. (p. 59)

This list of attributes identifies more specifically the actions of an effective leader and the

cognitive processes associated with achieving them. Moreover, the importance of

transferring ownership of problem-solving to an organization's membership is raised:

"Personalizing work is a way for people to bring more of their personal knowledge to

bear on the complexities of work" (p. 62).

Palus and Horth's (1996) most innovative contribution is found in the exploration

of activities which stimulate these attributes among leaders and organizations. Activities

and processes such as open-ended inquiry, moderated problem-solving discussions,

"serious play", "facility with metaphor", and interdisciplinary work teams become more

ubiquitous in management theory (pp. 60-64). Most importantly, we begin to see the

transfer of responsibility and problem ownership to team members through

"personalizing work", enabling "people to bring more of their personal knowledge to bear on the complexities of work" (p. 62). Palus and Horth move the exploration of artistic processes away from reliance on external exposure to the arts and reposition it towards active interventions that reframe organizational culture.

Basadur (2004) further reinforces the identified cognitive processes and their application within a problem-solving dynamic. While leaders are expected to exhibit the characteristics of artistic processes, they must also facilitate their development within working groups or teams. These basic thinking skills include the deferral of judgment, maintaining an open mind, and thinking divergently. "The attitudes, behaviours, and skills necessary for creative thinking are underdeveloped in many people, inadequacies that show up in many ways" (p. 106). Basadur (2004) supports the approach of transferring ownership of an initiative to members of an organizational team. By relinquishing control of the problem or at least components of it, the leader is better able to engage the individual expertise of each team member, a key motivational strategy. "When they are willing to share problems early, they give people the freedom to do their own fact-finding and to define the problem in their own way—the secret to transferring ownership" (p. 107). There is a greater focus in his research on the individual stages of the creative process, both for artists and leaders. Like artists, effective leaders and teams generate creative problems to solve ("generating"), experiment with possible iterations ("conceptualizing"), determine the most suitable form and content for the concept ("optimizing"), and then execute the preferred expression ("implementing") (p. 112). Interestingly, models of interdisciplinary team configurations for each stage of the process are explored: progressing through different stages, a team's composition may

metamorphose and rebalance as optimization and implementation phases of the project are engaged. The principal creative focus remains, however, at the generating and conceptualizing phases, during which "problem-finding" (not merely problem-solving), guides an organization's endeavours (p. 104). Once again the idea of systemic change to organizational process, rather than individual leadership development, is put into relief.

Adler's (2006) seminal organizational management article, entitled, *Now That We Can Do Anything, What Will We Do?* serves as an overview of the evolving amalgam of the arts and leadership. The changing realities of 21st century global markets, combined with new research and practices lead many organizations and institutions to consider and subsequently incorporate artistic processes (pp. 488-490). These processes are viewed as pathways for *innovation* over improvement, responding more flexibly to international connectivity, and challenging businesses and organizations to engage in more meaningful and ethical pursuits. The visible integration of artists into corporate frameworks, along with the emergence of business and management curricula which include courses in the arts illustrate the shift in theory and practice. While Adler's (2006) article provides greater context for reorganization than explicating the mechanics of artistic processes, her summary highlights the mainstream adoption of artistic process theory.

Subsequent research returns the focus from an external integration of artists to one of developing an 'artful' culture in any context. As an example of this, Drew (2008) underscores the importance of shared values within an organization and the development of key cognitive attributes of all of its members. The traits and characteristics of reflective, conscientious people who are comfortable with ambiguity and who are able to interact in a positive culture of innovation and improvement can be developed through

particular training (Kerr, 2006, p. 503). To accomplish these ends, he proposes

"framework strategies" which, "trade 'dependent uncritical thinking' for 'independent

critical thinking', individually and collectively" (Daft, 2002, cited in Drew 2008, p. 505).

Framework strategies—protocols for guided discussion and planning—require

engagement by all stakeholders, focusing discursive outcomes and interactions in specific

terms. By deploying a systematic means of reflecting on process, participants develop a

deeper cognition about the problem at hand, and, through reflection and critique, broader

metacognitive awareness.

       Similarly, Ibbotson, and Darsø (2008) demonstrate 'artful leadership' in action by

juxtaposing open-ended inquiry and by establishing the necessity of limitation on creative

thinking. By way of example, they profile the multiple phases of development involved

in theatrical production, examining in particular the role of director as both stimulus and

critic. They characterize the production process as a metaphor for artful leadership: the

director provides a creative concept or vision which operates as a scaffold upon which

each team (actors, set designers, lighting, costumes) is empowered to co-construct their

creative element. As an example, Wright Wexman (1980) examined improvised dialogue

which characterized motion pictures created by directors such as Altman, Scorsese and

Rivette. (p. 30). Each participant in the production has a working sense of the overall

creative concept, yet the organizational latitude to contribute their own creative expertise.

A problem that is too open-ended, however, may stall creativity, as there are not

sufficient contextual reference points with which to guide the inquiry in the desired

direction (p. 552). Therefore, the leader's role is to frame a problem in terms that impose

sufficient restriction or limitation on the creative team in order to stimulate the most

valuable lateral thinking, the response to which is then evaluated as an expression of the original concept. Within a culture of creative risk-taking, a tolerance for ambiguity, experimentation, interpretation and the potential for misdirection lead to the belief that more innovative outcomes are achievable.

But despite the enthusiasm for 'artful making' or 'artistic processes' in business and organizations, these signifiers require some precision. For Hall and Johnson (2009), it appears to relate to instances of "high variability" in which members exercise a measure of professional judgment rather than follow a specific protocol or method. Furthermore, Austin and Lee (2008) indicate that artistic processes relate to a model of distributed leadership in which decision-making is collaborative, rather than based on an organizational hierarchy. Referring to the balance between artistic and scientific approaches to business processes, Hall and Johnson (2009) conclude that "Art allows for a flexibility, creativity, and dynamism that a purely scientific approach cannot replicate" (p. 5), particularly in contexts which fall outside predictable outcomes. In this instance, "art" refers to the creative latitude exercised by employees or organizational members within a limited framework. Notwithstanding this point, Shiner (2012) adroitly challenges the notion that the artistic processes described by Adler (2006) and Austin (2003) are uniquely attributable to artists alone, and that similar processes can be found in other fields such as engineering or science.

Furthermore, Shiner (2012) also contests understandings of creativity that are ascribed to the arts, and citing Bilton (2006), concludes that "although innovation and individuality are part of creativity, genuinely creative processes also involve a context of restraints, application, and collaboration that turn "'original ideas into creative acts'" (p.

7). Despite the semantic controversy around understandings of artful leadership, the focus of the study centres around three principal characteristics that have consistently emerged: 1) a tolerance for ambiguity, variability, and possibility; 2) an empowerment of agency within an organization to exercise individual judgment in operational situations; and 3) comfort with a culture of collaborative problem-solving and critique.

From Dewey's (1934) original observation that there is an 'art' to any field of endeavour, we can trace the emergence of research devoted to artistic processes and notions of leadership practice. The desire to understand an artist's inspired approach to creative production and artistic thought in the context of management and organizations may have stemmed from perceived insufficiencies found in conventional, instrumental management models. Although inspiration in artists and in leaders has been perceived as uniquely personal and difficult to define, closer examination reveals that both agents are able to exercise simultaneous perspective on particular and general aspects of a problem, and ensure progression towards resolution. However, the transformative ability of artistic processes has also been shown to extend beyond individual leadership *per se*, to a contemporary renaissance of organizational culture as a whole. In becoming conscious and reflective of process, by approaching problems in more open-ended ways, and by engaging and empowering multi-disciplinary teams with a diversity of expertise, organizations appear to be responding to the need for artful thinking in order to remain viable.

2.2 Artistic Processes in Education

Not unlike the meandering route that led towards envisioning artistic processes in organizations, current research has its genesis in the debate about how the arts are

relevant to modern education. Initial interest in developing arts education processes

across the curriculum stems, in part, from an instrumentalist ideology. Within organized

education, the arts are seen by some as marginalized in terms of perceived importance,

scheduling, and funding when compared to "core" subjects such as mathematics, science,

and language. Instrumentalists have argued that learning in the arts improves

performance in other domains, and is therefore worth preserving within the canon of

academic disciplines. If the arts contribute to improved abilities such as literacy or

numeracy in ways that are not wholly achievable within any given discipline, then, it is

argued, arts programs are warranted. This approach is problematic in that it establishes

the value of the arts in terms of their benefit to other disciplines, and treads close to mere

advocacy versus inherent value. The essentialist camp, by contrast, has established the

importance of the arts in providing experiences that develop unique skills, abilities, and

attitudes, thereby contributing to the development of the whole individual. Whether one

begins from an instrumentalist or an essentialist starting point, research into how and to

what degree these abilities are identifiable and transferable to non-arts contexts parallels

efforts to incorporate artistic processes into organizational philosophy and procedures, as

discussed in the previous section. Some, like in Tishman's (2008) Artful Thinking

construct, use the consideration of artworks across disciplines as tools to develop a

number of cognitive and reflective processes in students. Others, such as the 'STEM to

STEAM' movement, initiated by the Rhode Island School of Design (2010), view the

inclusion of the arts as invaluable for research into the other disciplines (i.e. an

essentialist perspective, in that the arts stand on their own within an interdisciplinary

dynamic). Ultimately, the term "artistic processes" points to the h*ow* and not to the *what*

of learning. One clue as to the value of these processes lies in the personal nature of

work in the arts; within an arts curriculum the student creates, reflects, and responds with

a deeper personal connection and immediacy than through more conventional practices

found in other disciplines, where a more detached logic and objectivity are anticipated.

Indeed, the transdisciplinary value of art as a means of experiencing and responding to

the world has been examined in education as much as it has in organizational philosophy.

With its emphasis on more flexible and imaginative ways of knowing and creating, the

process of design in art education (Figure 1) fosters the types of dispositions and

approaches that resemble closely those coveted by organizations, and potentially, student

leadership.
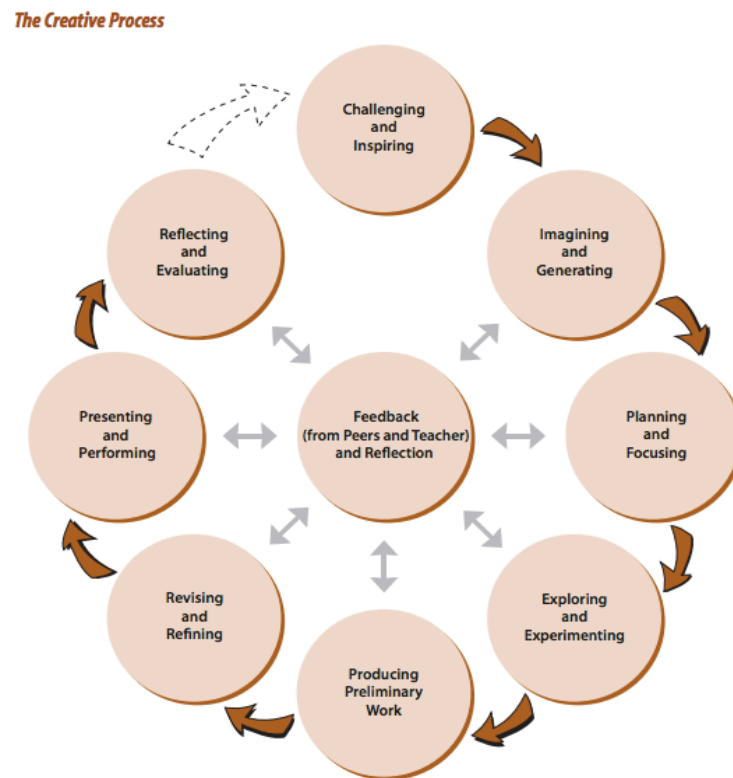
Figure 1. The Creative Process, The Arts: Grades 11 and 12, Ontario Ministry of

Education (2010).

With this awareness, schools, and particularly arts educators, are implicated in making these processes and dispositions visible for students so that they may be effectively learned and applied in a leadership context in disciplined-based (and, where applicable, interdisciplinary) and co-curricular contexts. Rather than attempting to replicate an unmitigated artistic process in other disciplines, much of the theory behind the applicability of artistic processes within other contexts focuses on evoking and shaping dispositions towards "engaging with" and "responding to" the real and imagined world.

An essential understanding regarding artistic processes is their very characterization by researchers as dispositions that are transdisciplinary in education. Past conventions regarding understandings of cognitive or affective processes—or more recently, multiple intelligences (Gardner 1983)—did not sufficiently convey the interplay between ability, motivation, and execution. Tishman (2006) claims that dispositions are behaviours "guided not only by knowledge and skills but by predilections or tendencies" (p. 7). A disposition enables the actor to process and transition from perception to action, extending beyond 'knowing' or the capacity to act on knowledge, to the detection of contexts in which this knowledge can be applied. Similarly, Ritchhart (2002) considers a disposition as operating at the nexus of ability, inclination and sensitivity. "Ability concerns the basic capacity to carry out a behavior. Inclination concerns the motivation or impulse to engage in the behavior. Sensitivity concerns the likelihood of noticing occasions to engage in the behavior" (p. 5). They have also been characterized as 'habits of mind', which focus on developing and extending the learner's array of approaches to challenges. These approaches are more frequently applied in the arts as they engage

processes for which outcomes have not been pre-determined, much like the act of creating.

It will be argued in Chapter 3 that the motivational component of dispositions will be a catalyst for process transfer across contexts; its importance cannot be understated.[1] Ritchhart (2002) links dispositional behaviour with "intellectual character", defining it as "the marriage of inclination, awareness, motivation, and ability" (p. 37). Notably, a disposition is more than simply a critical awareness, it incorporates an approach that Garoian (2001) would describe as "performative"; students begin from the context of their lived experience and engage with the presented narrative "at the conjunction of perceptual, autobiographical, cultural, interdisciplinary, and institutional content" (p. 239). It is as much engagement of the *self* as it is of the mind.

Arts Advocacy: Instrumentalism and Essentialism. Past research in arts education has often had an underlying (or overt) purposefulness: arts advocacy. Instrumentalists like Courtney (1989) and Pitman (1998) presented a series of compelling arguments as to why an arts education is not only beneficial in and of itself, but beneficial also for the improvement of student performance across disciplines. Arguing from a pedagogical standpoint, Goldberg (1997) contends that the arts create opportunities for interacting with situations that provide deeper learning in students. Past attempts at advocacy through research, however, did not always translate into a greater profile or funding for arts programs, or worse, failed to counter prevalent reductions in funding and scheduling for the arts. Despite numerous studies and persistent lobbying, education as a whole appears to acknowledge the *importance* of the arts, but does little to change its

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[1] It might also be argued that the willingness to transfer knowledge or processes into unfamiliar contexts, is, in itself, a disposition.

perceived tertiary status within the overall curriculum. Pitman (1998) described the somewhat ironic disparity between the arts-friendly slogan of a Royal Commission [on Education] in Ontario and the scarcity of arts-related recommendations in its final report (p. 68). While extenuating factors could account for the gap between intention and outcome, arts education research had not yet identified effective models or forums to influence educational policy as a whole. Overall, an advocacy agenda has proven to be a hindrance to quality and to credible arts education research.

Lampert's (2006) research on the relationship between learning in the arts and critical thinking offers some hope for instrumentalists and essentialists alike. The findings "represent empirical support for the theory that arts curriculum and instruction enhance the disposition to think critically" (pp. 226-227). Engaging in the creative process, with its concomitant response to visual culture, supports learning through a multiplicity of perspectives. This outcome foretells the future research path for arts educators: rather than attempting to make a causal link or correlation between the arts and academic performance in other subjects, by discovering what the arts contribute developmentally to learning dispositions, they will avoid the pitfalls of an instrumentalist path to advocacy.

To this end, Hetland et al. (2007) conducted a meta-analysis of instrumental studies in order to examine previous claims about the "actual" impact of arts education on overall academic performance. A group of art educators, working under the aegis of Project Zero's *Reviewing Education and the Arts Project* were interested in pursuing a different research protocol, one which would establish a framework and vocabulary for further study in arts education. Some of the findings they encountered from the previous

research included claims that were quite optimistic and specific, such as: "Verbal and quantitative SAT scores are higher for high school students who take arts courses than for those who take none". Other claims were more general: "Learners can attain higher levels of achievement through their engagement with the arts" (Fiske, 1999, cited in Hetland et al., 2007, p. 2). With respect to the ability of arts courses to measurably improve overall academic performance, they found that while there was some correlative data, there was no demonstrable "causal" relationship between learning in the arts and improved performance in other disciplines (p. 2). They concluded that there is "no evidence that studying the arts, either as separate disciplines or infused into the academic curriculum, raises grades in academic subjects and improves performance on standardized verbal and mathematics tests" (Winner & Cooper, 2000, cited in Hetland et al., 2007, p. 2). In terms of process, the study also revealed that past research methodology was problematic, as researchers "did not carefully report what and how teachers were teaching in the arts compared with control classrooms or programs, nor did they assess what students learned" (p. 4). However, looking more deeply into the disparities between study results and methodology, the research initiatives critiqued by Hetland et al. (2007) had intended to establish that arts education has a direct and measurable effect on unrelated skills, while relying on standardized testing for measurement. A perception that quantitative data appears to be more credible to educators may account for this approach. By contrast, more recent art education research tends to focus on the overall learning skills or habits of mind which are fostered in the arts, and their potential to positively influence learners, a perspective which might be better supported with a qualitative, rather than a quantitative methodology.

If, as Hetland et al. (2007) maintain, the arts have a negligible influence on standardized test performance in other disciplines, a related question surfaces: What skills or learning experiences do the arts foster that can be transferred to other subjects? To answer the question, it would first be necessary to isolate the specific skill or disposition, then to demonstrate how that has been transferred to another discipline. In fact, the skill or disposition may have been learned elsewhere, yet demonstrated in only a contextual manner within the arts. Critical thinking, for example, applies to scientific, historical, mathematical, or artistic problems. Hetland et al. (2007) contend that while transfer might occur, the current research is insufficient to establish the connection of artistic dispositions to other disciplines with any certainty. "Arts learning may or may not transfer, depending on what is taught and how" (Salomon & Perkins, 1989, cited in Hetland et al., 2007, p. 3). The *what* of teaching is quantitatively measurable, but the *how* moves the question once again into the qualitative domain.

Having demonstrated that previous instrumentalist initiatives were, at best, inconclusive, Hetland et al. (2007) began with an intensive examination of art education in isolation, carefully observing and identifying the actual thinking processes present in the studio. The resulting 'dispositions' that they catalogued serve as a vocabulary for further research within a larger universal learning skills framework, such as those articulated by Gardner (1983), or those outlined within the Ontario Ministry of Education's *Growing Success* document (2010). For example, Hetland et al. (2007) identify dispositions such as 'observation', 'reflection', 'stretch[ing] and exploring', and 'persistence'—habits of mind which are applicable across the curriculum. Many of these thinking processes are interactive or dialogic, requiring communication and analysis in

order for the process to be demonstrated—a quality which is not necessarily measurable in a quantitative manner. In response, Hetland et al. (2007) elected to use a combination of classroom observation and interviews with the teachers in their study. Their approach has effectively deconstructed and identified thinking processes in the arts. Armed with a clearer picture of arts education, further research can now be conducted to detect dispositions which have been applied in other contexts. What was once intuitively believed about transfer, may be closer to being convincingly established.

Concurrent with dispositional research, some educators attempted to insert artistic content and art education techniques directly into other disciplines. Learning *with* the arts (using arts as material to be studied), and learning *through* the arts (using arts as a means of studying) are not instrumental in the same manner as the 'transfer' line of reasoning. However, the unique learning 'forms' found in music, drama and the visual arts may achieve for the learner a greater depth of experience, one which touches on the social-emotional or affective domains, providing an accessible "...language for expression [that] gives rise to many voices in the classroom and opens many avenues for all students to work with knowledge" (Goldberg, 1997, p. 21). Between Hetland et al.'s (2007) identification of key learning dispositions which are visible in the arts, the incorporation of cross-disciplinary arts activities for depth and variety in learning, and a qualitative research methodology to describe their influence, arts education research is now better equipped to more meaningfully explore its place in (and for) the overall curriculum. What follows, then, are examples of dispositions enacted in an arts education and their potential as engagement processes in other disciplines.

The young participants in Juliusdottir's (2009) study who 'did' philosophy by examining and documenting their responses to artworks both during and after gallery visits clearly demonstrate that, through practice, the inherent curiosity of children can be engaged to make deep connections with the things they encounter. Ritchhart (2007) describes the cognitive and affective processes that students employ: "Specifically, they must look closely; wonder and question, make interpretations and form hypotheses based on evidence; make connections to things they already know; consider different perspectives and viewpoints; delve below the surface to uncover complexity and form conclusions" (p. 139). Meaningful engagement with the world, including the world of museums and galleries, is a fundamental educational aim. However, while some contextualization is useful, preparing students for excursions does not necessarily translate directly into the simple transmission of knowledge. Instead, the aim is to replicate the inquiry-based approaches demonstrated intuitively by very young children. This complete level of engagement, expression, and reflection approximates the ideal of the "reflecting, responding and analysing" relationship described within the *Ontario Curriculum: The Arts* (OME, 2010). Sustaining and refining these approaches as students become more proficient is a goal of any effective arts curriculum. Purposefully preparing students to experience artefacts in this way inculcates habits of inquiry and a reflective awareness of themselves.

Postmodernist Influences. Postmodernist arts education has grappled with the challenge of framing meaningful, personal student responses to images drawn from a variety of cultures and eras. Although terminology varies from researcher to researcher, the characteristics of dispositional thinking and responding are apparent in a number of

models. The migration from objective, impersonal viewership to interpretations attached

to a personal narrative engages differing perspectives on the interplay of cognitive and

affective processes of viewing and responding. At the more cognitive end of the

spectrum, the *Artful Thinking Project* defined by Tishman and Palmer (2006) describes

artistic thinking processes as "questioning and investigating, observing and describing,

reasoning, exploring viewpoints, comparing and connecting, and finding complexity" (p.

9). That said, the authors intend a more dispositional understanding of thinking, one that

is "guided not only by knowledge and skills, but by predilections" (p. 7). A predilection,

in this sense, is a motivating force that moves a situational response to one of initiative

and engagement. There is an implied understanding that an artwork is not passively

absorbed, but that it is the subject of an active inquiry. It is the basis of the inquiry,

however, that draws upon the affective domain. Clark (1994) reminds us that the larger

purpose in viewing and experiencing artworks is "[t]he discovery of self and its positive

integration within the social milieu" (p. 69). Students are aware of the relationship

between values, feelings, and the perception of the artworks that they experience,

appreciating that "the aesthetic elements embedded within the artefact are modified by

what the percipient brings to the experience" (p. 73). Understanding the dialectic

between cognitive and affective domains and the synthesis of perception that emerges

provides a lucid framework from which students can begin to engage with an artwork.

Recognizing the importance of equilibrium between self-awareness and inquiry strategies,

it follows that these two particular dispositions are essential to the process, especially

when working with unfamiliar images in a museum or gallery environment.

Gude (2007), a post-post-modernist arts educator, refers to these as "principles of possibility" (rather than dispositions), as values that reduce the stress associated with unfamiliarity. The first is the principle of "not knowing", in which students "learn that they do not know things that they once thought were certain, . . .[and] learn new strategies of making meaning through which they can interrogate perceived notions of the 'real'" (p. 14). Developing comfort with open-ended problems and with ambiguity encourages risk-taking and imaginative narrative construction. It does not follow, however, that interpretation is only subjective and personal. The second principle of "empowered experiencing" addresses this concern. Students are encouraged to make "thoughtful, evidence-based investigations of meanings generated by visual images" with the understanding that the aim is not a "single unified interpretation" (p. 11). Equipped with these principles, students are able to construct what Garoian (2007) describes as a "map that contains academic disciplines, the artefacts of museum culture and viewers' memories and cultural histories, . . . provid[ing] multiple points of access to multiple points of visitation" (p.12). In exchange, museums and galleries must prepare to accommodate this engaged, inquisitive and empowered group of learners.

Outreach departments of public art institutions have adopted educational strategies that encourage the use of familiar dispositions like those which have been enculturated in schools. In part, this has been the result of collaborative efforts between gallery education departments and schools. The resulting shift in museum and gallery pedagogy reflects a more inquiry-based experience, rather than the mere transmission of information. Ritchhart (2007) discusses "forces", or controllable variables, which may be manipulated by museums and galleries to encourage a dispositional approach to a group

visit. Among these strategies, educators are to set clear learning expectations through the use of a focus statement, or questions such as "*How does art connect us to the artist? To ourselves? To one another? To the world?"* and *"How can we find meaning in a work of art?"* (p. 141). Further, limiting the number of works to be considered during the museum or gallery visit serves two purposes: first, it allows for contextualization of a particular theme to be considered, and second, it allows students more time to interact deeply with an individual artwork.

Ritchhart (2007) notes, somewhat ironically, that it is often educators who are uncomfortable with "the long silence that is necessary for sustained looking" (p. 144). The adoption of his "Visual Thinking Strategies" can prompt students to generate observations and interpretations themselves "without the addition of information from the tour guide" (p. 147).[2] Conscious consideration of the museum environment, especially in terms of documenting the students' experiences during the visit, makes the learning more portable. It seems only logical that visiting educators become more proactive in facilitating this aspect of a visit. Notwithstanding the merits of these approaches, the most critical strategy for encouraging mindful and meaningful viewing is the interest shown to students regarding their ideas. "When interest is shown by following up on responses and probing them for clarification, students begin to give more elaborate and thoughtful responses" (p. 150). While these strategies are commonplace to art educators, their application in a museum or gallery context transforms the encounter into "a unique, if transitory, microculture within which they not only become enculturated to the museum itself, but also to ways of thinking within museums" (p. 137).

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[2] Visual Thinking Strategies follows a progression from close observation of an artwork, requiring learners to support their aesthetic or affective interpretations.

Regardless of the nomenclature, whether critical inquiry or dispositional thinking, a component of this process must begin with the students' own narrative, incorporating memory, values, and feelings. Arts education poses an interesting challenge because subjective aesthetic judgment, the meeting point of heart and mind, is implicated in a student's consideration of an artwork. It is insufficient to reference the lived experience of a learner without facilitating his or her personal response. For this reason, inculcating or enculturating Gude's (2007) 'principles of possibility' results in a model of learning that more accurately celebrates a student's developing relationship with themselves and the world. Out of these principles, and in pursuit of making some meaning of one's own narrative within the shared culture, a more profound and collaborative standard of student encounters with museums, galleries, and the extended realm of visual culture is attainable. Although meaningful individual response to stimuli is a target for educators across all disciplines, the identification within arts education of metacognitive processes applied to aesthetic values promotes deep student engagement and provides a rich verbal and visual vocabulary, relevant to many contexts beyond education.

Visual Culture and Interactivity. The shift in education, and particularly arts education, towards the incorporation of a visual culture which has expanded well beyond traditional forms of art to include advertising, film, television, and internet-based multimedia and social media content, raises questions related to viewing, interpreting, and critical awareness across the curriculum. For educators and students, the vast availability of visual imagery and other sensory communications necessitates the ability to critically sift through content and identify connections across temporal, geographic, and cultural demarcations.

The heightened importance of interactivity reaches far beyond the standard television remote or personal computer. Web 2.0, social media, and crowdsourcing all combine with innovative technology interfaces to redefine person-to-person, person-to-content, and content-to-person dynamics. In particular, social media has universally facilitated connection, communication, and online participation. Through massive subscription and use, it has established itself as a powerful cultural presence in our society, making interaction and interface immediate and wide-ranging. Creative content and commentary can be transmitted to the public domain, acted upon, and responded to in real time, by real viewers. The nature of this interaction is also changing the nature of participation in the arts. The distinctions between creator and viewer became blurred; collaboration and co-constructed realities occur on many levels, while artworks undergo a form of transubstantiation; evolving through their contact with multiple viewers.

Despite the staggering volume of content accessible online, human networks use social media to link the personal creative desire with the universal in new ways. A report produced by Johnson, Levine, Smith, & Smythe (2009) predicted the future trends of technology use within education, calibrated to one-, two-, and five-year intervals. The gradual incorporation of social media into the classroom is one prediction which has been realized. However, the premises upon which these predictions are constructed relate to 21st century learning skills, particularly global education: "the value placed on collaboration is increasing in the workplace as professionals are expected to work across geographic and cultural boundaries more and more frequently" (Johnson et al., 2009, p. 5).

A second essential point involves the development of literacy with visual media, a key element of visual culture studies: "Students and teachers both are finding it necessary to be technologically adept, and to understand content and media design" (Johnson et al., 2009, p. 7). The conventional pre-haptic viewer is no longer a sufficient reference point for student artists. Expanding a definition of social media within the arts to include the collaborative interface between artefact and participant (as opposed to viewer) opens many possibilities for further research into the creative process and art appreciation. By way of an example, the continued expansion and development of "smart objects" (i.e., those which contain both identification data and communication technology to enable interaction) reflects the ongoing shift towards greater 'content-to-viewer' interactivity. Awareness of the self and its relationship to these objects and environments addresses Gude's (2007) principles of "attentive living" and "deconstructing culture" (pp. 10, 13). It is the role of art educators to provide opportunities for students to develop critical thinking and media literacy skills that make mindful and meaningful connections to visual culture. If indeed interface is to have a prominent role in defining culture in the 21st century, embracing the potential for social media in all of its forms will provide a personal and resonant starting point for future visual culture investigations. According to Graham (2007), "Art asks us to resist habits of conventional thinking and to consider what we live for. Art education seeks divergent responses to important personal, environmental, and social problems that require creative, imaginative solutions" (p. 391).

An integrated approach to education begins with organic connections between disciplines and an equal awareness of the interconnectedness of learning processes. Furthermore, as post-modernist art educators recognize, to respond to 21st century

thinking about art education, consideration is given to purposeful and meaningful

learning, the two cornerstones of postmodernist thinking. If artmaking is connected to

the lived experiences of the artist, to the environment, and/or to social issues, then

students and educators require more than a superficial interaction with the discipline. As

these topics become integrated across the curriculum, the traditional borders between

academic disciplines are opened; arts educators are reconsidering the implications of

postmodernist approaches to education. How art might fit into such an integrated

curriculum raises the issue of its role. Clark (2011) cautions us against succumbing to

"siren calls that make art education the handmaiden of more 'important' educational

endeavours" (Personal Collection of Dr. Roger Clark, Western University, 2012). On its

own, art education offers a unique combination of cognitive, affective, and psycho-motor

skills and attitudes in the formation of the whole student. As much as a curriculum

addresses the need for the inclusion of postmodernist principles, one could argue that it is

within the artistic "process" that the greatest contribution to integrated learning and

growth can be made.

       'STEM' to 'STEAM'. Scrutinized more closely, it is the desire for greater

creativity and innovation, as much as for technical training and cognitive processes,

which lies at the heart of any vision for education. One attempt at partial integration

comes in the form of a growing emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and

mathematics, or 'STEM', originating from perceptions about deficiencies in these subject

areas, particularly in American schools. The misconception that more funding in these

disciplines will produce more effective future citizens has been a point of contention for

the American media.

Corporate researchers Lichtenberg, Woock, and Wright (2008) looked at the desired characteristics of future employees and compared the perceptions of superintendents of education with those of corporate representatives, concluding that innovation and critical problem-solving obtained the highest rating. In an attempt to reconcile these two educational objectives, they placed an emphasis on 'STEM' education, and on the development of innovative thinkers. Another educational commentator, Piro (2010) posited: "If creativity, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking—all touted as hallmark skills for 21st-century success—are to be cultivated, we need to ensure that STEM subjects are drawn closer to the arts" (n.d., para. 4). Similarly, The Rhode Island School of Design (2010) initiated a project to research the links between these domains. The result was a study examining the addition of the artistic processes to STEM processes, appending an "A" to the acronym, to coin the term "STEAM". The project investigates how these processes would be combined to effectively interact with a 21st century postmodern curriculum and considers the implications for art education.

Some initial discussions and research around STEAM reveal two trends: a) the use of images as both art and scientific documentation, and b) the creative use of visual technology to illustrate patterns and issues. A 2011 conference on STEAM featured illustrator Michael Benson who presented solar system photography, and Jonathan Harris who "uses art and design in the form of information visualization to reveal the secrets and human empathy hidden in datasets" (n.d., para. 2). Embedded within their examples is the sense that art is seamlessly incorporated into scientific study and expression, providing a unique process for purposeful consideration of the world and a forum for

meaningful, innovative interactions. It could be argued that artistic processes enhance

STEM processes, through a shared emphasis on inquiry, comfort with non-traditional

media, and development of critical and creative thinking. Moreover, artistic processes

invite a deeper personal connection and purpose to disciplines whose strength has resided

in more objective approaches.

Art educator Graham's (2007) "critical place-based pedagogy" illustrates the

melding of artistic processes with postmodernist practice and STEM through 'eco-art'.

He suggests that the "work of eco-artists demonstrates practices that are attentive to local

environmental issues in ways that are restorative, service-oriented and interdisciplinary"

(p. 380). He goes on to provide examples of artists who operate in "an interdisciplinary,

collaborative practice that connects science, technology, and visual art to make ecological

relationships visible" (p. 380). Beginning with these naturally occurring relationships

between postmodernist art education and STEM, he views the science of ecology and the

'meaning making' of art as a powerful educational process; a process by which students

develop a greater awareness and appreciation of the natural world and become "critically

aware of the forces that influence the places they inhabit" (p. 384). It is the power of

images documenting issues and provoking affective responses which adds dimension,

purpose, and meaning to both creative investigation and reflection.

Transdisciplinary Thinking Strategies. Just as humanist artists like

Brunelleschi, Alberti, or daVinci—archetypal Renaissance men—operated effortlessly

between art, architecture and design, technology, science and philosophy, so too will

curricular and pedagogical research need to respond to a renascent interest in the

relationship between scientific and artistic processes. One model is found in the Middle

Years Program of the International Baccalaureate. Within its "Areas of Interaction", a framework for interdisciplinary study characterized by the term *homo faber*, or "human ingenuity", which effectively recognizes and articulates these connections. Conversely, science educator Margaret Honey (2011) suggests that transforming STEM to STEAM requires more than "adding on arts education", and promotes an overall reworking of integrated learning "to incorporate the experimentation and exploration that is at the heart of effective education" (n.d., para. 5). Although critics may decry catchy acronyms and the perceptual trendiness associated with visions of integrated learning, they tend to value process-based learning across disciplines and the creation of meaningful and purposeful work, all with a view towards addressing the ecological and socio-political issues of postmodernism. Yoerger (2013) argues that "[m]ulti-modal learning improves education and student development, by and large encouraging the next generation of creative thinkers and innovators skilled in media, visual thinking, and polymathy" (p. 6). This ability to move seamlessly among disciplines, integrating and transforming information of all types into new learning is aligned with the processes learned in the arts.

The instrumentalist/essentialist debate in arts education has been transcended, at least in part, by the emergence of greater communications technology. As a consequence, visual literacy occupies a more central position in the development of curricula across disciplines. The emphasis on the motivational component of dispositions that are engaged within arts education both satisfy the artistic process within each of the arts and, at the same time, provide an additional lens into perception and response strategies that may be enacted in non-traditional domains.

Finally, STEM to STEAM initiatives reveal that integration of the arts add a valuable dimension and process to research and innovation. In rediscovering and celebrating the connection points between and across disciplines, learning has the potential to be more resonant, meaningful, and holistic. While arts education has a leading role to play in developing the transdisciplinary thinking and collaborative skills necessary for students to be successful in 21st century contexts, it may also develop abilities that are essential to effective student leadership curricula.

2.3 Curricular Contexts Related to Leadership Development

With limited scholarship regarding the development of a student leadership curriculum at the secondary school level, the Ontario Ministry of Education *Guidance and Career Education* (2006) and *The Arts* (2010) curriculum were examined with a view to current practice in leadership instruction (in the former) and artistic processes (in the latter). On a philosophical level, a transformational or transformative approach to leadership and the identified artistic processes align with Kelly's (2009) "development" ideology in terms of education as a whole: "[T]o become as fully autonomous as possible as a human being…one needs the capability to look critically at the world, and one needs to develop the ability to make up one's own mind about the many aspects of the world" (p. 99). The promotion of autonomy leads to empowerment, whereas critical thinking and decision-making are endemic to a culture of critique. Further, Kelly argues, student participation in co-constructing their learning reflects the value of a collaborative approach (p 107). While these values were intended by Kelly to form the underpinnings of a democratic curriculum, they are clearly reflected within artistic processes.

The Ontario Ministry's *Leadership and Peer Support* course (2006) translates these values into learning outcomes, aiming to "develop skills in communication, interpersonal relations, teamwork, and conflict management…appl[ied] in leadership…roles" by examining "group dynamics" and "learn[ing] the value of diversity within groups…" (p. 34). The concept of teamwork relates to the artistic process of collaboration and critique, although the connection between diversity and understandings of empowerment is less tangible. This curriculum is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4, as it forms the basis for comparison of the leadership curricula examined in this study.

Not surprisingly, markers of artistic processes appear in the theoretical explanation of the Ontario Ministry's *The Arts* curriculum (2010). Relating to empowerment and a tolerance for ambiguity, the Ministry aspires to help students "deepen their appreciation of diverse perspectives and develop the ability to approach others with openness and flexibility" (p. 4), among other aims. This is achieved through a number of approaches including: "using the critical analysis process", "using the creative process"(previously outlined in Figure 1), "using problem-solving skills" and "taking an innovative approach to a challenge" (p. 5). It is noteworthy that transfer appears explicitly in the curriculum: students are "making connections between the arts and other disciplines (e.g., transferring knowledge, skills, and understanding to other disciplines)" (p.5). To this end, making the creative and critical analysis processes explicit facilitates the occurrence of transfer.

Although few in number, there are educators who have explored leadership development for elementary as well as secondary level students. One such example, Bowman (2013, 2014), highlights the importance of transformational leadership skills as

early as middle school through a reflective approach to dialogue, trust-building, and service to others. Understandings of leadership are embedded within the overall curriculum, rather than taught discretely for the purposes of student leadership action. At the secondary level, when the opportunity to demonstrate more complex leadership tasks surfaces, the leadership curriculum is more explicit, intending to stem from an individualized, value-driven approach. Rather than focus on developing leadership skills, Bowman's primary interest lies in helping students refine their understanding of what leadership is: "the greatest challenge for students as developing leaders is not understanding the practice of leadership, it is practicing [sic] their understanding of leadership in the everydayness of campus life" (p. 63). Authentic empowerment of student leaders is viewed as critical to enabling a more meaningful growth experience, a theme that will be revisited in Chapter 4. Making the dispositional strategies found in artistic processes more visible for developing leaders may enhance the tenets of this approach to a leadership curriculum.

2.4 Gender, Education, and Leadership

By examining student leaders in separate, single-gendered educational contexts, the opportunity to consider gender perceptions and leadership is presented, albeit in a limited way, in this study. To contextualize the findings, some understanding of current research into gender and education as well as gender and leadership is warranted. Perceptions of gender-based attributed have been explored in both educational and organizational contexts. Understandings of or dispositions towards existing social constructs (including school culture) reflect how gender groups behave and respond in homogeneous and heterogeneous situations.

In educational contexts, the preponderance of recent research has examined student performance in single-gendered learning environments in order to understand how these learning environments may differ from co-educational schools. In a summary of a meta-analysis of research into single-sex education, Hayes, Pahlke & Bigler (2011) challenge the assertion that improved performance among its students is attributable to gender isolation: "Instead, it appears that the performance of single-sex schools is sometimes inflated by selection biases on the part of both students and schools." (p. 702). Similarly, the quality of the peer group was regarded as another characteristic contributing to the success of students (p. 702). In single-gendered environments, gender alone was not deemed to be meaningful at all in terms of understanding improved performance. However, the research did indicate a favourable disposition towards a school culture that was related to academic success, particularly for girls:

> Girls whose attitudes and achievement were a close fit to the mission of this particular single-sex school (focus on math, science, and leadership) felt the most strongly connected to the school. This finding is consistent with research indicating that a sense of belongingness is a significant predictor of academic success (Bigler & Signorella, 2011, p. 666).

It is noteworthy that a focus on leadership development is included within the researched school's mission and that academic achievement may be only part of the rationale for selecting a single-gendered environment.

Research understandings related to academic performance admittedly do not entirely explain the influence such institutions may have on overall student growth. In addition to selection and peer quality characteristics, connection with the institution is an

important consideration regarding the benefits of a single-gendered environment. This affective component may relate more closely to a student's intrinsic motivation than to interventions organized by the school. The research examined here recognizes the "focus on leadership" that such environments place on their 'curriculum' (defined here in the broadest sense as any school-sanctioned learning activity). While current research recognizes the need for further exploration, perceptions of leadership characteristics are more likely to be recognizable within these environments.

In organizational contexts, the relationship between gender and a predisposition towards a transactional versus a transformative/transformational approach to leadership is also of interest for this study, as the latter approach is more closely aligned with artistic processes. The underlying assumption is that male leaders are associated with a more transactional approach to leadership whereas female leaders tend towards the transformative end of the spectrum. Despite these presumptions, the adoption of a leadership style does not appear to be gender specific: "Lastly, evaluation both by leaders and subordinates shows that male and female leaders adopt a typical behavior of the transformational and transactional leadership styles with similar frequency" (Cuadrado, Navas, Ferrer, Molero, & Morales, 2012, p. 3102). The adoption of more traditional forms of leadership by women leaders is related to the type of organization in which they work, or lead. A leader satisfies the expectations of the organization first, allowing their own personal style to influence their practice. In other words, women leaders will naturally tend towards more transformative approaches where the context enables it (p. 3106).   Other contextual aspects have a role to play in determining perception of a leader's effectiveness, both for the leaders and their subordinates. In a study of age,

gender and educational background and understandings of leadership ability, Barbuto Jr., Fritz, Matkin, and Marx (2007) assert that "gender alone did not affect transactional and transformational leadership [tendencies]" (p. 81), and that the other areas of investigation, age and educational background could also shape perceptions of both leaders and subordinates.

The apparent absence of gender difference in leadership style may reflect how understandings of leadership have been shaped by women's more transformational approach. Shakeshaft (2010) describes the tendency towards 'collective leadership' models in educational leadership in which "the concept of distributed leadership considers the importance of collaboration and interdependence among organizational members" (p. 45). She argues that these approaches are no longer described in gender-specific terms (i.e., the way *women* lead); they have shifted the discourse about best practice for leadership as a whole: "Now women are changing the ideas about appropriate leadership models just by being themselves. And men are 'leading like women'. Current ideas of leadership are incorporating woman-initiated approaches" (p. 95). In truly transformational organizations, leadership practice transcends gender.

Gender does appear, however, to relate to group decision-making approaches. Hannagan & Larimer (2010) suggest that "Human preferences are sensitive to the gender composition of groups, and the strategies used to make decisions differ by group gender composition" (p. 63). In their study, groups with more women tended to take more inclusive approaches, seeking a positive outcome for all, whereas male-dominated groups operated more frequently with a win/lose mentality to problem-solving. Hannagan & Larimer conclude that "increasing gender equity within decision-making bodies is likely

to result in more democratic decision-making processes and produce outcomes closer to universal median preferences" (p. 63). Coincident with their findings, within this study, democratic approaches and their connection to artistic processes of empowerment and collaboration were considered in the participant responses section of Chapter 4.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 The Research Problem

Stemming from an understanding of artistic processes and their relevance to leadership contexts, the potential benefit of incorporating these processes into student leadership training curricula emerges as an area of inquiry. The research problem, therefore, has been articulated as an overarching question: In what ways do student leaders perceive artistic processes to be transferable to leadership contexts?

In pursuit of this exploration, the study explores creative problem-solving dispositions found in the arts and their application to the development of student leadership abilities. Dispositions such as intrinsic motivation, persistence, collaboration, flexible approaches to problems from many perspectives, and the ability to operate with uncertain outcomes is emphasized in a unique manner within arts education (Hetland et al., 2007; Ritchhart 2002). These habits of mind or dispositions are also beneficial in other organizational contexts involving student leaders, such as service projects or student council initiatives. If leadership is to be understood as a purposeful facilitation of a group initiative that involves creative, inclusive, ethical, and open-ended approaches, how students learn to function as leaders in these roles may be informed by their experience in the arts.

3.2 Methodology

This exploratory study has aimed to examine perceptions of a phenomenon across divergent organizational contexts. Given the involvement of student participants, the research is structured using an instrumental case study approach (Stake, 1995) which is

aligned with an interpretive paradigm. An instrumental case study approach "is used to accomplish something other than understanding a particular situation. It provides insight into an issue or helps to refine a theory" (Baxter & Jack, 2008, Creswell, 2006). Examining perceptions of student leaders provides further understanding about the role that artistic processes may play in leadership development. Furthermore, according to Yin (2003), a case study approach "allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events, such as . . . organizational and managerial processes" (p. 2) in their context. As student leaders reflect on their lived experiences, one has the opportunity to better understand their perceptions of skills and dispositions which are relevant to their arts background. A case study can illustrate the ways in which transfer is perceived, in a substantive way: "The advantage of a case study is that it can "close in" on real life situations…directly in relation to phenomena as they unfold in practice" (Flyvbjerg 2006, p. 235). While acknowledging that individual school cultures will emphasize the arts or leadership (or both) to varying degrees, similar leadership structures (student councils, service committees) that offer a sufficiently common contextual framework for students were selected. Moreover, narrowing the scope of the research to student leaders with an arts background in single-gendered independent schools provides the opportunity to acquire rich data on the research questions, as those school cultures place a high value on leadership development and, by their structure, believe that gender specificity offers educational benefits to its students. To address understandable concerns regarding the participant group and setting of this study, Flyvbjerg (2006) offers a compelling argument regarding atypical case contexts: "Atypical or extreme cases often reveal more information because they activate more

actors and more basic mechanisms in the situation studied" (p. 229). Assuming a

sufficient commonality across participating student groups, there is potential for

applications of a similar studies in conventional public schools.

3.3 Methods

In this section I will present the particulars of the study itself, including data

collection through a survey, journal entries, semi-structured interviews and document

analysis methods. In line with Sogunro (1997), I combined "questionnaires, document

analyses, [and interviews] on leadership development" (cited in Bowen, 2009, p. 28). In

order to ensure accuracy and trustworthiness, formal member checking was conducted

progressively during the study, particularly "at the completion of interviewing by

summarising the data and allowing respondents to immediately correct errors of fact or

challenge interpretations" (Thomas, 2003, p. 7). Researcher reflexivity also contributed

to trustworthiness by maintaining an awareness of my own bias and by presenting data

that authentically reflects the variability of participant responses.

Document Analysis. The leadership curricula and responsibility descriptions

were analyzed in comparison with the existing Ministry of Education *Leadership and*

Peer Support curriculum (2006) and with participant descriptions of their experience.

Donaghue (2007) allows that documents' "independence from the research agenda can

also be considered an advantage because they are thereby non-reactive. As such, they are

a product of a given context and are grounded in the 'real world'" (p. 167). Additionally,

analyzing written descriptions of responsibility can offer an entry point into the

discussion of leadership approaches, as they may inform a student's self-perception of

identity in that position. Finally, signifiers in all documents relating to the three

identified characteristics of artistic processes were sought. These are:

(1) a tolerance for ambiguity, variability, and possibility;

2) an empowerment of agency within an organization to exercise individual judgment in

operational situations; and

3) comfort with a culture of collaborative problem-solving and critique.

      Participant Data Collection. Determining the degree to which artistic processes

affect influence in leadership situations is shaped by the participants' perception of their

role, their mandate and the actions of the group that they lead. In support of this, data

collection included: reading of leadership curriculum documents, a screening survey,

participant journal entries, participant interviews, and observational notes. Developing

understandings of inter-subjective meaning as they relate to artistic processes and

leadership required interpretation (or 'translation') from educational and organizational

contexts on the part of both participants and researcher (Dallmayr & McCarthy, 1977).

Data analysis incorporated hermeneutic-reconstructive strategies such as case

reconstruction to negotiate the "dialectics of the particularity and generality [within] the

case structure as one possible structural option amongst others" (Lorenz, 2008, section

2.3, para. 2). This approach meets the criteria for a qualitative case study methodology

which considers "the meaning of typical acts in much the same way that the actors

themselves do, but to reconstruct or make explicit the cultural themes drawn upon in the

construction of routines" (Carspecken, 2001, p. 12). However, given the added context

of a defined leadership role for participants, one must recognize that "[r]oles are holistic

modes of action recognized as singularities by members of the culture in which they exist"

(Carspecken, 2001, p. 17).   Named roles cultivated by a school reflect that school's

particular philosophy and culture, influencing participants' identities as members of the

student body, and shaping their sense of what is expected of them as leaders.

Setting. The research took place in two (2) leading independent, single-sex

schools in a large urban area: an all boys' school and an all girls' school. Independent

schools provide an articulated framework for leadership development as part of their

overall curricular aim and, as such, offer a more specific context for analyzing participant

action and interaction. Understanding that access to independent schools can be

challenging for external researchers owing to the schools' stated missions for that school

year and ongoing engagement in multiple internal and external research initiatives, I

approached seven single-sex and co-ed independent schools. I had hoped to conduct a

broader study across a range of three to five schools, anticipating that several would

consent to participate in the study. Despite initial interest, securing permission from

some independent schools was not possible. While five of the schools responded

positively (two provided no response), reading the fine print of the study proposal

clarified their role and helped to define 'participation' in the undertaking; with full

disclosure of the Research Ethics process and protocols came demurrals. By way of

explanation, some schools were already undergoing sufficient external research and

declined to participate in further research for that year, while others expressed concern

regarding the proposed time demands placed upon busy student participants. One might

speculate also whether the timing of the study could have been a consideration, given that

initial contact with schools occurred in early December, long after senior level student

calendars had been filled with co-curricular commitments and important preparatory

work for university applications was underway.

The single-gender configuration of the participating schools presented a unique

opportunity to analyze patterns of responses emerging from both school leadership

curricula and student descriptions of their personal leadership experiences and actions.

Whether differences in leadership development and action are apparent between boy and

girl student leaders and how greater homogeneity of student gender influences leadership

perceptions is discussed further in Chapters 4 and 5.

Participants. The students in this study attended highly regarded, independent,

single-gendered schools—one for boys and one for girls. It is relevant to this study that

these schools include student leadership development as part of their overall mission and

offer significant, well-funded curricular and co-curricular opportunities in the arts.

Twenty-six (26) screening surveys were distributed to 15-18 year old students,

with defined student leadership roles (i.e., Prefect or committee chair). A list of existing

student leadership roles was requested through liaison with each participating school's

student leadership advisor (a member of faculty or administration) in order to better

understand the school's leadership culture (along with the verbiage specific to each

school). Student participants gained access to the survey via their email address, which

was requested on the introductory permission form. Additionally, respondents

documented their experience in arts education in the initial online survey by listing

secondary school credits earned, or by reporting involvement in one or more significant

arts initiatives (e.g., a school orchestra, theatrical or dance production, or an arts

exhibition). The survey was constructed with open, fill-in-the-blank questions to account

for possible differences in student descriptions of courses and co-curricular arts initiatives. Altogether, fourteen (14) responses were received from six (6) boys and eight (8) girls.

As part of the screening survey, some familiarity with the arts was established as an inclusion boundary, ensuring cognition of problem solving in an artistic context. A second inclusion boundary required participants to hold an identified leadership position during the current school year. A total of ten (10) student leaders were selected to continue with the journal and interview phases based on their exposure to curricular and/or co-curricular arts programming and their willingness to continue to the next phase. Six (6) girls and four (4) boys held comparable positions of responsibility at their respective single-sex independent schools, offering two advantages: 1) commonalities and differences in the enactment of leadership were more accessible, as the frameworks within which participants operated were relatively congruent; and 2) any distinguishing trends in responses that were potentially attributable to gender could be contrasted. During the initial briefing, students were made aware of the nature and objectives of the study regarding the influence of the arts on student leadership, although they were not informed of specific dispositions, or of any characteristics of artistic processes under consideration. Although metacognitive awareness was noted by Perkins (1989) as useful in promoting transfer, my intention was to have students communicate their thoughts and reflections, making comparisons between the arts without any pre-established markers or signifiers so as to garner a more authentic understanding of their perceptions.

Participants continuing with the second phase of data gathering prepared online journal entries in response to written prompts, which the researcher constructed within a secure website and via email communication. The questions were intended to provide

students with sufficient latitude to outline the mechanisms of their leadership experience.

For example, students were asked: *Describe the process by which you and your*

committee members arrived at a recent decision related to your mission. Describe your

role in the process. It was hoped that their anecdotal responses would provide rich data

in terms of the content that was included and the language used to record it.

Rationale and Explanation of the Interview. Following the survey process,

individual semi-structured interviews were scheduled with six (6) participants who had

agreed to continue with the final phase of the data collection. At this point in the study,

student leaders had nearly completed their term of office and were reflecting in a more

general way across the entire academic and co-curricular school year. The questioning

pattern of the interview shifted towards engaging a more focused metacognitive

awareness of artistic processes (e.g., *Did you notice any parallels between situations in*

your leadership role and thoughts related to creative work that you do (or have done) in

the arts?). Other conversation topics probed understandings of student leadership related

to school culture, and the leadership curriculum they experienced.

Data Analysis. By analyzing school-generated descriptions (e.g., responsibility

and school leadership curricula) alongside the related literature, student journal entries,

and interview responses, triangulation was achieved. It is important to consider the

viewpoint of stakeholders in the analysis of leadership actions and approaches. Written

descriptions of responsibility and leadership curricula provided a contextual

understanding of leadership within the culture of a particular school. Hermeneutic-

reconstructive strategies were employed to "understand the meaning of typical acts in

much the same way that the actors themselves do but to reconstruct or make explicit the

cultural themes drawn upon in the construction of routines" (Carspecken, 2001, p. 12).

However, given the added context of a defined leadership role for participants, the study

also acknowledges that "[r]oles are holistic modes of action recognized as singularities by

members of the culture in which they exist" (Carspecken, 2001, p. 17). Determining the

degree to which artistic processes are perceived as applicable to leadership situations is

informed by the participants' perception of their role, their mandate and the actions of the

group that they lead.

The language within the documents contained tacit references or allusions to

characteristics of artistic processes. Student journal entries, however, offered a lived

experience—personal reflections on leadership situations and the processes by which

decisions were made or shared and problems solved. The interview data, a critical third

source, were analyzed to achieve a more generalized understanding of student

perspectives on the presence of artistic processes enacted throughout the research

period. Data sets were examined both independently and interdependently in order to

provide a comprehensive portrayal of the student leadership experience within and across

school cultures from the perspective of the students themselves, achieving consistency

with a qualitative case study approach.

Data Analysis of Student Journals and Interview Responses. Data acquired

from journals and interview transcripts have been coded using *NVivo 10* software to

assess any consistently shared themes that exist between understandings of artistic

processes and their appearance in the students' leadership tenure. Descriptive (what is

occurring in the description) and analytic (why it may be occurring in the description)

coding strategies were applied, using the constant comparative method (Strauss & Corbin,

1990). "The constant comparative method expedites constructing a strong fit between data and codes." (Thornburg & Charmaz, 2011, p. 46). The open coding phase allowed for recurrent phrasings and themes to emerge organically from the data before being analyzed against the research questions.

In the second phase of "focused" coding, (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2011, p. 49), particular attention was given to leadership skills and attributes, the perceived influence of an arts background on participant leadership experience, and references to situations in which any of the three identified characteristics of artistic processes were approximated or enacted. While the characteristics served as a reference point for data analysis related to the second research question, categories or themes that surfaced as a result of the coding stood on their own. Data were initially coded across gender groups in order to develop a general understanding of perception among student leaders, and then within gender groups, to identify possible differences in approach.

Once the data were coded, they were analyzed to determine which leadership situations appear to elicit references to artistic processes. To better understand perceived transfer, modifiers indicating degrees of certainty and ambiguity were noted. Moreover, consideration was given to similarities or differences in emphasis emerging from male and female responses in order to detect any perceptual distinctions by gender, as it relates to single-sex school leadership and artistic processes.

Acknowledging and Mitigating Researcher Bias: Reflexivity. I acknowledge my own bias in the design, data gathering and data analysis stages of this study, having conducted the interviews, and having composed the survey and journal questions. I have also been associated with independent schools as a former student, a parent and as a

teacher. All interactions with students as study participants received formal approval by

Western University's Research Ethics Board. Finally, and in no small measure, a review

of the processes and outcomes of data analysis was undertaken by my thesis advisory

team, who provided critical advice during the development of this study.

    Other Potential Challenges to this Study. *An assumption that the underlying*

motivation for this research is merely arts advocacy. Hetland & Winner (2008)

contends that "while it is of scientific interest to understand transfer from the arts,

findings of transfer should not be the principal justification for arts education" (p. 2). It is

reasonable, however, to explore the possibility of the transfer relationship given the

ongoing interest and research into non-traditional approaches to leadership that exist in

organizations. If perceptions of transfer could be demonstrated, it would be equally

important to identify whether these approaches could be learned through arts education

alone, or through other disciplinary contexts as well. A related concern for a study of this

nature may be that the intention is to demonstrate a causal relationship or correlation

between artistic processes and leadership skills. During their initial research on transfer

of artistic processes, Hetland et al. (2007) discovered that, among the many studies of

transfer they meta-analyzed, only one showed any correlation, and none actually

demonstrated a causal relationship (p. 2), although the resultant inferences were directed

towards justifying or promoting arts education.

    Assumptions regarding understandings of organizational behaviour. It is

acknowledged in the background research that artistic processes or artful leadership are

applicable to many, but not all situations. Participants may have attempted to describe

the presence of artistic processes in contexts where no such description was warranted. Critical analysis of journal entries and interview data defended against that possibility.

      The particular scope of the case study. This case study occurred in an atypical educational environment (many independent schools have clearly articulated protocols for leadership development, providing more sufficient data for effective document analysis), and further, they were both single-sex learning environments. The document analysis has included, therefore, the Ontario Ministry's (2006) Grade 11 *Leadership and Peer Support* curriculum for purposes of comparison. The consistent application of methods across participating schools offset the possible influence of an individual school or community's culture.

3.4 Predicted Outcomes.

      My focus of interest lay first in exploring the relationship between artistic processes as understood in education (curriculum theory) to those within organizational theory, examining further the potential for transfer to student leadership. As mentioned in Chapter 2, a meta-analysis conducted by Hetland et al. (2007) indicated that previous studies attempting to make a correlation between dispositions learned through the arts and transfer to other disciplines were inconclusive. Informed by this, I sought to identify existing perceptions of transfer from a student perspective; that is, accounts by the student leaders themselves of the relationship to student leadership contexts. Where metacognition of artistic processes in leadership already exists or is easily achieved through examination, the student narratives would point to how transfer may have occurred. Entry points into revised leadership curricula may be targeted, facilitating further transfer of identified artistic processes.

3.5 Communication of Results.

       Results of this study will be shared with Western University, student participants, their parent(s)/guardian(s), and with the supervisory and research administration of participating schools through the written thesis report and any subsequent publications.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter begins with a review of the participating schools' leadership documentation; that is to say, it summarizes the leadership curriculum of the participating schools and is followed by a deeper examination of student leader participant responses to journal prompts. In part, the document summary allows for some comparison between the stated curriculum and the 'lived' experience of student leaders. Additionally, it provides insight into the philosophy of leadership development at each school with respect to transactional versus transformative approaches, the latter being more amenable to understandings of artistic processes. Following the document analysis, the student leader participant data is presented. Their responses coalesced around five themes, revealing student perceptions of leadership, of gender, and the potential for how an arts background cultivates awareness of artistic processes that inform student leadership curricula.

4.1 Document Analysis: **Leadership Documentation at Boys' and Girls' Schools**

The available documentation on leadership development was much more detailed at the girls' school and included: an outline of school leadership philosophy in a PowerPoint slide presentation, an article in a school publication featuring leadership development for junior-aged students, and a leadership "manual" which includes detailed descriptions of responsibilities for each position and the process for application. For available positions at the girls' school, each description is approximately one page in length and, interestingly, was written in collaboration with the student leader who had previously held that position. Additionally, a leadership *Myths and Realities* document

explains in greater detail the factors most likely to influence leadership selection. For

example, the assumption that only one type of personality is suitable for leadership is

dispelled with the affirmation that a variety of leadership styles make for a more effective

team. By contrast, documentation pertaining to the boys' school included a one-page

explanation of the school's leadership philosophy and only brief descriptions (25-50

words) of the Prefect and Head Boy responsibilities. The Head Boy chairs a committee

of Prefects who are the principal student life leaders, charged with leading sub-

committees with their own portfolios. (See Figure 2)

Student Leadership Structure – Girls' School

Student Leadership Structure – Boys' School
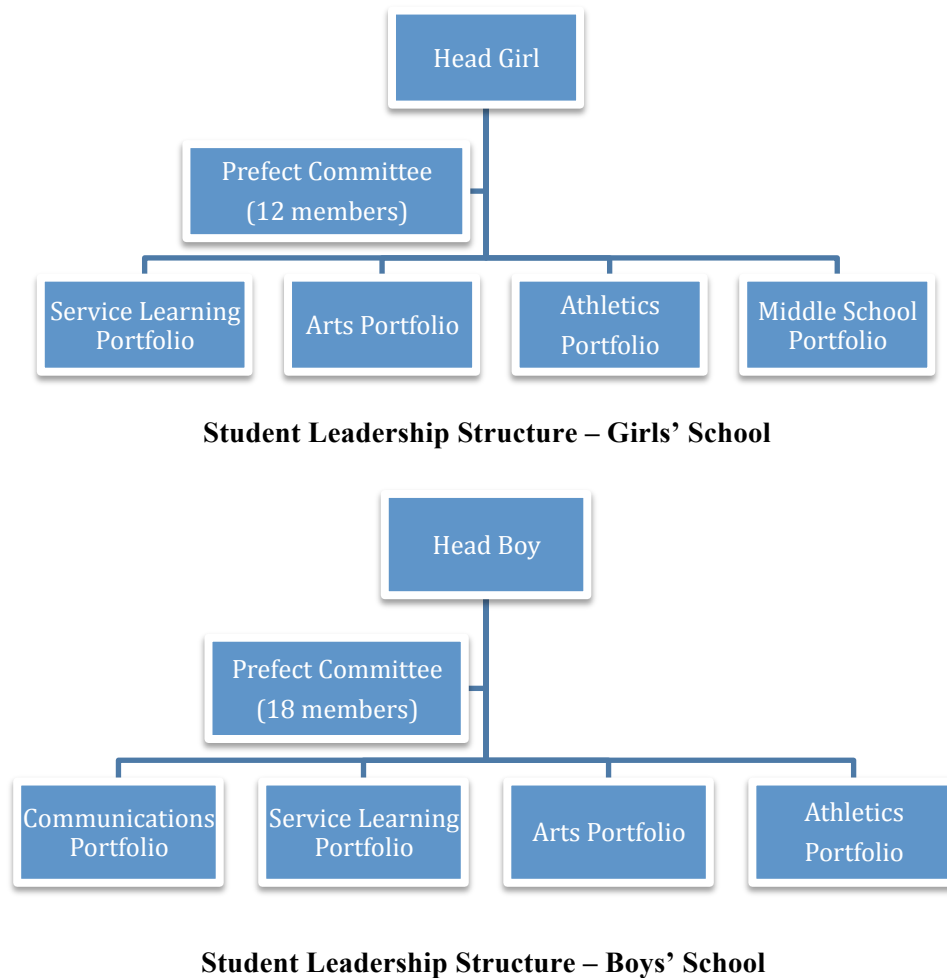
Figure 2. Student Leadership Structure in Participating Schools (a limited number of

sample portfolios are represented here)

Both schools express their intention that every student is capable of being a leader regardless of whether they hold a defined role. This philosophy is evident in the overarching language in the boys' school leadership documentation: "leadership is a function of character, and… every boy can lead" (Leadership description, n.d., p.1) although it is more defined at the girls' school:

 "students can demonstrate leadership with or without a formal position, and all leaders are valuable and accountable to the community" (Leadership Handbook, p.3).

Identifying Characteristics. Student leadership is cultivated early in the student's overall experience and consistently within the schools overall curriculum. At the boys' school, an emphasis is placed on character development in the early grades, transitioning to small-scale leadership opportunities in the middle years (called 'team leaders') and then conventional 'student council' or Prefect council committee work at the senior level. The foundation of this process parallels the Ministry of Education (2006) *Civics and Careers* curriculum, in that "the Civics component provides practical experience in the ways in which a civil, democratic society organizes itself…[whereas] the Careers component provides an introduction to leadership opportunities: [leaders] are…selected in response to…commitment and demonstrated ability" (p.1). The school endeavours to provide a leadership opportunity for any senior student "who wishes to make the commitment" (p.1). This commitment reflects the self-development encouraged right from the early grades: "We support each boy to discover his best self and then to find the courage to offer it in service to the community" (p.1). The word 'courage' is noteworthy, as it appears with frequency in participant descriptions of leadership attributes. As an educational institution, the school intends to bridge the

personal development of each boy, helping them to build a conscious, meaningful

relationship with his community and the larger world.

At the girls' school, the first documented evidence about leadership training

appears with Grade 6 students who engage in conversations facilitated by senior school

Prefects about what it means to be a leader. From that point onward, the progression of

leadership formation is similar to the boys' school. A number of intermediate leadership

opportunities associated with the 'house' system exist at both schools, and extend into

leadership in sports, the arts, and community service committees, and culminate at the

Prefect level in the senior year.[3] Like the boys' school, girls' leadership is an extension or

by product of self-development and self-knowledge: "but first [aspiring leaders] have to

truly understand who they are, what they stand for, and what they can do. That is the

essence of leadership" (sourced from Student Leadership PowerPoint Presentation, 2014).

From this understanding of self, the definition of leadership reflects engagement in one's

environment to enact meaningful change: "A leader is a person who is aware of the world

around her, perceives a need for change and acting upon it herself, inspires others"

(Student Leadership PowerPoint Presentation, 2014). This definition reflects a

philosophy of leadership that transcends any pre-defined leadership role.

In the description of characteristics suited to a Prefect level of leadership, the boys'

school used relatively generic phrasing: candidates are selected based on "excellent

leadership potential". At the girls' school, the *Leadership Handbook* indicates that "those

in formal leadership roles should be selected based on their talents, skills, experience, and

the support of the school community" (p. 3). Despite the stated emphasis on leadership,

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[3] The 'house' system at both schools is a vertically-integrated division of students, usually intended for the coordination of student life and the promotion of school spirit.

little in the way of specifics is provided in the handbook, attributable perhaps, to an

assumed understanding of traits and abilities. The supplementary *Myths and Realities*

about the Leadership Process document (n.d.), published by the girls' school, offers one

possible explanation for the vague wording: "Obviously we expect that student leaders

are and will be good role models but there is not one "type" of student that will make a

better leader than another". The remainder of the handbook, however, is more explicit: it

suggests that "demonstrating initiative is a key component of leadership", which may be

interpreted as relatable to the definition of 'courage' at the boys' school.[4] Additionally,

within the handbook, a series of self-assessment questions for prospective student leaders

point to other skills and attributes that are considered important. These can be

summarized as: organization, accountability, inclusiveness of others, listening to and

accepting feedback.

4.2 Participant Response Data

All participants at the interview stage were in their final year at independent

schools and held student leadership "Prefect" positions. (See Figure 2). A 'Prefect'

manages a student life portfolio such as Athletics, Community Service, the Arts, Middle

School Liaison, etc., and coordinates related activities for all students throughout the

school year. These student leaders also sit on a Prefect committee, chaired by the Head

Prefect (known as Head Boy or Head Girl at the participating schools), and together they

collaboratively determine the overall student life program. While all participants were

screened in terms of their arts background, the boys indicated significantly more

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[4] The difference in terminology may be relatable to gender socialization, with connotations of *courage*
being seen as more resonant in boy culture, but at their heart, the choice to engage in leadership service
underlies both terms and are interpreted as such for this study.

participation in music courses and co-curricular orchestras, whereas the girls seemed to have a more diverse experience drawing from music, dance, drama and the visual arts.

To protect their identities, pseudonyms have been created for each of the participants. At the time of the study, Grace, Karen, Ana and Emmy were aged sixteen or seventeen years, and attended Grade 12 at the girls' school. Trevor and Jeff were seventeen and eighteen respectively, and attended Grade 12 at the boys' school. Each participant's role was defined by the specific responsibilities and portfolio they were charged with. For example, while Trevor was Communications Prefect he was also editor of the school newspaper, interacting with several teams of students. Both Jack and Grace held the broadest portfolios of responsibility in their roles as Head Boy and Head Girl of their respective schools. In their capacity as Head of Prefects, they were accountable for a number of additional portfolios and events and regularly liaised with the school administration.

Based on the types of questions asked in journal and interview components, response data was clustered around 5 main themes:

- perceptions of the student leadership curriculum;

- leadership skills and attributes;

- the perceived influence of the arts on leadership practice;

- artistic processes enacted in leadership contexts;

- gender influences on leadership practice.

Perceptions of School Leadership Philosophy. Student perceptions are best summarized in the statements generated by each schools' Head Prefect: "Our school's

philosophy of student leadership is students leading students and that it is about having

the strongest team possible" (Jeff), and

"The year is your canvas and you can paint it however you want to" (Grace).

Authenticity and Autonomy. The concept of authentic empowerment within

defined limitations has been established as a central component of artful leadership

within organizations and artistic processes in education. Just as the leadership curriculum

of each school seeks to empower its student leaders within their roles, so too, as seen later

in this chapter, will the idea of empowerment be apparent through the actions of the

student leaders themselves, in relation to their constituent groups. The continuity of the

empowerment ethic is transmitted from school to student leader and, in turn, to the

student body itself: "I have the ability to oversee almost all student activity at our school

and one thing seems to always be the same—they are all student-run. It is amazing to see

how much the students really do" (Grace).

The lived leadership curriculum, ultimately, is what the students perceive as

immediate and relevant throughout their experience. Among the participating institutions,

faculty and administration express the collective intention to support and facilitate

student initiatives, but, in effect, they aspire to allow the student leadership structure to

function in an autonomous and authentic manner. Student leaders are encouraged to take

meaningful responsibility for the school year program as it pertains to student life. From

the participants' perspective, this degree of responsibility and accountability was

unanticipated in terms of their defined role: "I imagined that the teachers would…be

assisting me and telling me…giving me a timeline of what needed to be done by what

time, and I was really surprised to learn how student-run this school is, or at least in terms

of leadership" (Grace).

From within their leadership experience, exposure to a variety of constituent

groups illustrated to participants the scope of freedom and empowerment they were

afforded as student leaders to help shape their school culture. Authentic empowerment

seems to have increased the intrinsic motivation of each actor, resulting in greater

commitment to the success of any endeavour. From a leadership development

perspective, this approach was often cited and clearly resonated with the participants:

"The students who are chosen as leaders are given significant freedom to shape things in

their vision, and this helps us flourish in our roles and develop as leaders" (Trevor), and

"It seems as though everything outside of the classroom stems from the interests and

ideas of the students. Unless you have experienced this in a leadership position, you may

not assume it" (Grace).

This ethic creates a sense of ownership that translates into a level of

accountability and purpose that motivates student leaders to strive for excellence, by

making a difference to go beyond just fulfilling their responsibilities. Making a

difference also means challenging the *status quo* for one leader: " [We have]

independence in the sense that you can't be afraid to go with your own gut and…take

things on by yourself when nobody else wants to support you" (Grace). There is a

palpable feeling among respondents that the school community entrusts them with a

significant and meaningful role: "Numerous decisions that impact students are also made

through us—I'm impressed and proud that we have as much leeway as we do" (Trevor).

Moreover, the ability to have substantial influence on the school culture raises the stakes

for the work that they do. Not only are these student leaders aware of the effect that they may have, even within the limits of one school year—but they also realize that their transformative work authors a new chapter in the school's collective narrative: "The message about leading other students that is emphasized the most is that we have the opportunity to make a big impact on other students, and it's an opportunity that can make a big difference in the school at large" (Jeff). It is within this theoretical framework that students are able to consider leadership at their school and, indeed, leadership as a whole. Transferring this theory into action is reflected in their understandings of what their responsibilities entail.

Understandings of Responsibility: Faithfulness to Experience. Granted, student leadership is but one facet of school life – those who are elected or appointed are students first, and leaders second. Balancing the expectations of their leadership roles in the larger context of the school year (in many cases their graduating year) is a challenge. However, participants generally reported that the extra demands of leadership were offset by the intrinsic rewards of the position as well as by the personalized effort they brought to their role, strengthening their own sense of identity. When considering the scope and scale of their responsibilities, participants embraced the breadth and variety of functions that they were required to perform, and felt encouraged to put their own stamp on the role: "There are many things that need to be done, but there is also a lot of room to make it your own" (Grace). Another female participant underscored the importance of independent accountability: "At my school, leadership is very much student-run. It is staff facilitated, but once the student is given the position, they have to own it and really hit the ground running" (Ana). Although some participants underestimated the degree of freedom and

latitude afforded to student leaders, the overall demands of the position surprised few. In most cases, the burden of responsibility did not appear to deviate from what had been expected: "I've had to do what my role entails, and, within it, not much more. I wouldn't say that I've had to adapt my thinking at all; I just need to know that I'm part of a team of 18 guys that have big jobs to do" (Trevor). Similarly, another participant felt that the time demands were overstated by Teacher-Advisors[5]: "You have the freedom to do what you want, but the extent to which they emphasize the time it may take didn't seem to be as accurate [as it really was]" (Grace). Whether elected or appointed, participants demonstrated the interest, motivation and capacity to fulfill the responsibilities of their position, due in part to the latitude that was extended to them as leaders.

Interestingly, not all student leaders agreed that their experience reflected the creative freedom or the time for new initiatives suggested by the stated leadership curriculum description: in one case the student leader expressed disappointment when her anticipated level of freedom to make changes in the student life programming did not materialize: "I think that one thing I anticipated, though, that I have not experienced, is feeling a great deal of freedom to try something extremely innovative and new" (Karen). This could be explained, to some degree anyway, by the nature of her role which dealt principally with middle school students for whom the program was more pre-defined by the teaching staff. She was able, however, to express her creativity and show initiative through her membership on the overall leadership committee, particularly in her proposals for changes to the leadership committee structure: "the Senior School Prefect no longer sits on the events committee and so they don't really have a committee to

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[5] A Teacher-Advisor is a teacher assigned to student leadership as part of their co-curricular responsibilities. They guide student leaders throughout their experience, offering mentorship, leadership training and support.

oversee, so that could be interesting to bring the idea of Grade Reps into the school, and have them sit on a council with the Senior School Prefect so that they could run initiatives" (Karen). Given the preponderance of comments relating to a genuine sense of empowerment in the training they received, and, more importantly, the enacted leadership experience, participants were able to validate the leadership philosophy of their individual schools. While not strictly stated as 'artful leadership', or characterized as 'artistic processes', meaningful leadership opportunities and authentic empowerment inspired these student leaders to reach beyond their stated roles and initiate significant changes to school culture. Although empowerment shapes the context, in order to achieve greater understanding of how students lead, the characteristics of effective leadership must also be examined.

Leadership Skills and Attributes. In order to further probe perceptions of the presence and value of artistic processes within student leadership, it was necessary to consolidate understandings about which skills and attributes student leaders perceived as most relevant to their position. For the purposes of this study, a leadership skill is an ability that is demonstrable through an action—usually related to an interaction with others, whereas an attribute is more of an affective disposition or cognitive approach that the student leader brings to his or her work. Such descriptions reveal developmental understandings of leadership in adolescents acquired through experience, and they reflect the school's agency through their lived leadership curriculum. Similarly, these skills and attributes were present in the data, as respondents drew parallels between their enactment in both arts and leadership contexts—the result of direct questioning in the journal and interview stages. Determining which accounts could qualify as potential reflections of

artistic processes in leadership fell to the researcher, as participants were not briefed on

the background theory to any significant extent.[6] The question of gender and its

influence on leadership was related mainly to single-sex environments, although

participants speculated on mixed-gender scenarios. Conversely, much greater clarity was

evidenced in terms of understandings of an individual school's leadership philosophy. In

the case of both schools, the intention to communicate more expansive and inclusive

definitions of leadership and the desire to promote independence and empowerment

among student leaders was apparent.

Emerging from journal and interview data, thirteen generalized skills were

identified by respondents. Of these, 'being connected to organization members' (19

references among 9 sources), 'organization and time management' (21 references among

7 sources), 'influence' (18 references in 7 sources), 'accountability' (12 references in 7

sources) and 'showing initiative' (11 references in 7 sources) were most frequently cited.

The ability to 'delegate', 'build consensus' and 'facilitate action' were mentioned by at

least one-half of the respondents, whereas skills related to 'mentoring', 'problem-solving',

'role-modelling', 'improvisation', and 'representing a group' were referenced by fewer

than one-half of the respondents. While only three respondents referenced 'public

speaking', it is notable that the specific responsibilities associated with their leadership

position required them to speak in front of a variety of audiences much more frequently,

thereby heightening the importance and value of this specialized skill in that particular

role.[7]

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[6] See paragraph 1 in Appendix 'B' for the study details communicated to participants.

[7] Public speaking as performance is discussed in the 'Artistic Processes in Action' section of this chapter.

By contrast, responses related to attributes or dispositions were less varied and more focused, with only six identifiable attributes. Student leaders valued the qualities of 'adaptability' or 'flexibility' (13 references in 9 sources), 'courage' (13 references in 5 sources) and 'passion' or 'enthusiasm' (8 references in 4 sources). Other attributes that were mentioned with much less frequency were 'persistence', 'confidence' and 'decisiveness'. The latter attribute received but one mention as the vast majority of respondents regarded decision-making activities as a product of collaborative processes (43 references in 13 sources). An analysis of these skills and attributes as enacted by participants will further develop particular understandings of leadership.

Naturally, leadership skills that are perceived as important by student leaders based on their experience inform understandings of their preferred leadership approach. These actionable skills serve as indicators of the processes behind them: in some cases, a relationship can be drawn between the skill and an 'artful' approach to leading, whereas other skills seem more generic, relating to basic executive function. For example, a leader's ability to connect with his/her constituent group was the most frequently cited skill. 'Connection' appears to be a relationship-building skill, central to acquiring the information/feedback a leader needs, as well as establishing a basis of trust to facilitate an exchange of ideas, or from which to exercise influence. One student leader summarized the more functional role of connection:

> You have to connect with people, to get your goals across, to get their input
> …both those that you're working with and those that you're leading and it goes
> both ways. There are channels of information that they need to get to you and you
> need to get to them. (Trevor)

The contextual distinction between participating on a committee (lateral or more democratic structures) and leading a team (connoting a more hierarchical structure) underscores the value placed on a collaborative working environment over and above any expressions of authority. Furthermore, within the committee construct, modifying the physical orientation of the meeting space helped to connect players, and it was perceived as a simple, but significant gesture: "it was easier to talk with each other with us all facing each other, everyone facing the same way, so…it was kind of a little thing, but it seemed to really help us all be part of the team" (Jeff). An understanding of connection as a leadership attribute, therefore, also heightens the value of building an affiliation or group-oriented identity.

One student leader felt that being connected to a wide variety of constituent groups at her school facilitated her leadership skill development: "I like to be able to check in with a whole bunch of different groups at the school. I think the more connected you are, the more …people you know and skills you have" (Grace). Given that her role as Head Girl was more comprehensive, Grace endeavoured to make connections with the student population as a whole, responding to the experience and needs of other students rather than operating from the more linear position of an authority figure.   Another respondent expressed the importance of a leader being "able to relate to the situation …so the student or even their committee can feel connected and feel like they belong with the crowd" (Emmy). These two examples illustrate the value placed on inclusion, whereby constituents are able to identify with the community. Part of a leader's role, it would appear, lies in ensuring that the relationship is actively and consistently fostered, functioning as a service action.

Significantly, the affective and altruistic component of the connection attribute is juxtaposed with that of the more individualized, functional qualities of organization and time management—attributes that also received frequent mention in the data. For some participants, these abilities were viewed as axiomatic within a leadership context; when asked about important leadership qualities one student replied, "I'd say the obvious ones: be responsible, time management, be organized" (Emmy). Despite these initial understandings, leadership positions provided further learning opportunities around organization and time management, given the responsibility of planning and running events while concurrently managing their studies and other co-curricular activities: "time management and being organized has been a big thing for me this year because I was really busy with [leadership] and doing sports at the school and then having work on top of that and university applications" (Jeff).   Unanticipated changes to responsibility also contributed to greater demands on their organizational abilities: "I was told that my leadership role required a lot of organization and planning of the meetings and of major events at school. However this year, a lot more responsibility was required from my position because of the change of major events" (Emmy).[8] For others, the experience was less burdensome, as they possessed the self-knowledge to manage their portfolio more comfortably: "I feel that I'm…fairly well organized in terms of time management. I know how much I can do and not to overcommit so I won't be able to do anything" (Trevor).

Mindful of the strategies of artful management, it is noteworthy that one respondent experienced what she felt were the limitations of traditional organizational

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[8] Part of Emmy's role involved welcoming new or prospective students to the school; the change refers to a new initiative she coordinated, focusing on a comprehensive, interactive orientation for new students.

strategies and that mere task completion neglected potential meaningful connections to be made within the work: "I have adapted my thinking. Before, I was a very straightforward and organized thinker and used checklists a lot, perhaps too much. I no longer look at a checklist and [am] satisfied when I meet all of the requirements mentioned. I push myself to imagine what lies beyond this checklist" (Grace). This approach to organization is reminiscent of what Walker (2004) described as 'delaying closure' within the artistic process, as it demonstrates a willingness to extend beyond the prescribed or the obvious, seeking out other possibilities within a framework.

      Meaningful Influence: Transformative Leadership. Conceptions of leadership that refer to power and authority were noticeably absent in participant responses. One can surmise that these terms connote a more transactional or traditional leadership mindset. In their place, student leaders are more likely to refer to influence and responsibility: "The execution of leadership is difficult, as one has to manage people in a way that pushes them towards the objective, but simultaneously making them happy and buying in" (Trevor). To balance these needs, participants noted that, when challenged by constituent groups, explaining and defending initiatives or decisions taken by student leaders was a necessary skill: "sometimes I would have to explain why…the Prefect team did certain things, but in the end if you explain it, they understand" (Jeff). However, student leaders realized that their role was more than advocacy or encouragement; while influence is arguably an exercise of some power, the predominant attribute of participants was one of using leadership positions to affect positive change within the school culture. Coincidently, the study was conducted during a period of shifting awareness around LGBTQ issues. As such, it provided student leaders in both participating schools with an

opportunity to launch initiatives in support of other, more marginalized student groups.

Raised awareness of 'otherness'[9] extended to school-wide discussion (at least at middle

and senior school levels) of homosexuality and bisexuality through leadership training,

dedicated assemblies, and hosting Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) meetings. Within single-

gendered school environments, the challenge for student leaders to navigate and

implement these changes was both daunting and exhilarating, as they signalled a

refocusing of conventional discourse among the student bodies at the respective schools.

In consideration of this context, the student leadership teams were required to find

pathways to present the topic. At the boys' school, one leader recounted: "We thought

that having a GSA would be an extremely valuable thing at our school, especially after

some of the discussions we had…with the grads. We had to creatively position the GSA

so people understood what it truly was about" (Jeff). The importance of communicating

for understanding, in order to build enough trust to allow an initiative to be realized can

be seen in this comment, a clear example of 'meaningful influence'. Trust-building

appeared to be more of an imperative in the single-gendered male environment, as one

participant related: "I mean for a while some people were [asking] 'Why are you doing

this?' and when they saw the effects of it, it was…pretty powerful. We had a GSA

meeting here and…a ton of people were there" (Jeff).[10] The meeting was one component

of an overall strategy to address homophobia at the school. Student leaders, along with

the graduating class, enacted a strategy to influence the student body:

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[9] For the purposes of this example, 'otherness' relates to the perceptions of difference as affecting self-
behaviour or behaviour towards others. By raising the subject at these schools, it was hoped that the
overall culture would become more aware of LGBTQ issues and therefore, more actively inclusive of all
members.

[10] This was the first GSA meeting hosted by this school. Students from other independent schools were
also invited to participate, given that each CAIS school will have the opportunity to host at some point.

> We found that there was too much negative chirping and homophobic language at
> the school. It's obviously not an easy thing to do, but the whole grade 12 class
> bought in, and through …announcements at assemblies and peer-led discussions,
> we've been able to make great headway (Trevor).

Influence in this context involved the building of a 'critical mass' of discourse within the
student body, as well as empowering others to participate as leaders in the initiative, an
outcome similar to what was experienced at the single-gendered female school. There, a
school-wide assembly dedicated to the subject of homosexuality and LGBT concerns was
suggested by a member of the student leadership group—a departure from conventional
practice. A student leader recounted the genesis of this initiative: "[One Prefect
proposed] 'Let's have an assembly that isn't just everyone hollering for…school pride.
Let's have an assembly that focuses on an issue that's…been *ignored*'" (Grace)
(emphasis mine). Student leaders were repurposing a conventional forum surrounding
student life to promote a change from within, particularly a change to the discourse on the
issue within their culture. While the assembly brought the issue forward, its form
communicated a heightened sense of importance. Moreover, student leaders chose the
message that would be delivered, reflecting their desire to use influence with a
meaningful and transformative purpose. In both schools, the next step lay in building the
interest and the will to affect change among the other student leaders, although there was
greater initial buy-in among Prefects: "Everyone was extremely eager to get on board.
Who wouldn't want to be part of…a movement that pushed a good change?" (Grace).
Following the assembly, this same student leader reflected on the purpose and role of
leadership, and the responsibility attached to that influence: "leaders aren't just

responsible for conveying a message. They're responsible for figuring out what message has to be conveyed" (Grace).

The GSA meeting and related activities at one school and the assembly at the other each illustrate that influence and confluence were directly attached to unity within the leadership groups, both in terms of messaging and purpose. Conversely, individual influence appeared to be predicated on initiative and idea generation among participants, and was aimed at building impetus and consensus.

Participants also connected initiative as a leadership skill with understandings of responsibility; as much a function of project management as it was project generation, not unlike the 'problem-finding' mindset espoused by Basadur (2004). In some cases, initiative was viewed as the need to take ownership of coordinating ongoing or annual scheduled events; as one girl suggested: "if you don't make a move, it won't happen. And that was a really big lesson for me to learn this year, and the past [student leader] warned me: 'if you don't start the planning of Spirit Week, it won't happen.' That was so true. If you don't start it, who [will]?" (Grace). Initiative is more than self-starting, it extends beyond what is expected, (as in taking ownership of events); it can be expressed in multiple ways: noticing and being aware; coming up with new ideas; and as seen in the GSA example, provoking change within the culture. Perhaps this skill is closely aligned with the 'art' of leadership – appearing as intuitive, but better described as attuned and open to opportunities to make a positive difference. One student leader responded to an apparent gap in the school's approach to its boarding community culture: "[it] hasn't been given the attention that it needs, so I have made regular visits there this year. Nowhere in my transition guide did it express this need or tell me that…this was required"

(Grace). Initiative in this regard entails *awareness* of and *responsiveness* to the environment.

Not only was this spirit of initiative in evidence by their lived experience—within student portfolios, it exists in the broader sense, in that the actual student leadership constructs were even examined and challenged. From their experience within leadership teams, participants in both schools saw opportunities for innovation, proposing structural changes to the organization of student leadership itself, resulting in new approaches and refinements to existing practices. This interest in reviewing the leadership structure extended to areas that fell outside the purview of a student leader's mandate. One participant described this interaction within a Prefect committee meeting: "Hey, here's an idea I have for some sort of initiative, it's not about my portfolio, but maybe let's change this about this program we're running". (Emmy). Another student described a significant refinement to protocols surrounding the current student leadership practices: "A suggestion was made to alter the way the house leaders were elected and chang[e] the number of positions" (Trevor). The various proposals and suggestions, products of both individual and group initiative, illustrate the value of observation, awareness and responsiveness, each contributing to the impetus for positive change.

Leadership Attributes. Just as participant understandings of what constitutes valuable leadership skills contribute to the portrait of an effective leader and reflect the school leadership curriculum, the self-defined attributes they described mirror more closely artistic processes and dispositions discussed in the previous chapters. From the responses of the students, adaptability, courage and passion stand out as the predominant attributes necessary for successful leadership.

Being adaptable and flexible allows one to manage both unanticipated events and uncertain outcomes. One participant characterized adaptability as "judging the moment" (Grace), a characteristic shared with the skill of initiative, as both incorporate an evaluative component. In the main, student leaders needed to adjust their expectations for what can be accomplished in a committee context as opposed to what they could do on their own. "As a leader of a larger group, I have come to understand this reality and have adjusted my behaviour accordingly" (Grace). This particular attribute was particularly relevant for the Head student leaders of each school who were required to respond in the moment to unscheduled requests for their time. "I hadn't expected all of the odd jobs that I would be asked to do. There [are] a lot of teachers asking for some help, and there are always kids in the hallways asking if I'll drop by the class. I have adapted my thinking to be more flexible" (Jeff). While on the surface, this issue may appear to relate to organization and time management, responding to emergent situations with poise challenged these student leaders to shift their understanding of what is important.

For one participant, flexibility meant the willingness to abandon a planned event—even at the last moment; circumstances involved a shift in scheduling, and "ultimately, there wasn't enough participation, so we decided the 'day of' to cancel it" (Karen). She subsequently stated that despite the disappointment of all the planning not coming failing to come to fruition, the lessons learned through this situation would be applied to the creation of an entirely new event for the following year. The ability to turn a failure into an opportunity for innovation will be explored further in this chapter within the artistic processes in action section.

For participants, adaptability was not only valuable in their tenure as leader, but was also identified as a new level of understanding that could be carried forward into other contexts. One participant predicted that "because I was open to so many events and… activities, I feel [as if] adapting to something… [new] won't be very difficult for me" (Emmy). When reflecting on their experience, participants were able to trace how their abilities had expanded and developed through this attribute and others.

The second key attribute that emerged from the data was courage. Like other skills and attributes, participants described and experienced courage in a multiple ways. The most apparent context for participants was confronting the public performance aspect of leadership – speaking in front of a group and overcoming the self-consciousness of being observed and evaluated. "There's the courage of going up on stage performing as a band, and also going up and doing a speech" (Jeff). Courage can also be learned from observing others; in this regard, one student referenced his peers in a music class who were able to be confident in a performance situation: "when it's time for them to take a solo, they're not really afraid of what other people are going to think…, they're more just trying something out" (Jeff). Confidence enables the leader to suppress negative self-consciousness and, as one student described it, the fear of "being judged" (Karen), embracing the moment by leading even when an outcome is uncertain. Showing vulnerability, especially in a significant role, was an area of concern for student leaders who were selected on the basis of their ability to problem-solve. Asking for assistance was originally perceived by one leader as a weakness, but through experience, perspectives on this were transformed: "I have learnt [sic] that asking for help is a very resourceful skill to help me move forward" (Grace). Courage in these contexts can be

seen as a willingness to move out of one's 'comfort zone', embracing unfamiliar situations which include a measure of public vulnerability. However, participant understandings of courage were shifted by the initiatives their teams undertook. Challenging the status quo on a profound cultural level requires a symbiosis of reflection, and both individual and organizational courage; the latter by creating an environment where the importance of risk-taking is recognized and encouraged, and the former by those who seize the moment to disrupt the quotidian discourse, moving controversial, marginalized issues to a central focus. In both schools, it took one exceptional individual to serve as a catalyst who would inspire the student leadership team to action. Often, these individuals are visitors to the school, invited by clubs or committees or perhaps even by the school administration. What is remarkable about these situations is the courage shown by individual student members of the school community.

Notably, one participant described how one of his peers had disclosed questions of his own sexual orientation in front of the whole grade during a leadership retreat for the graduating class, early in the school year. "The most impactful thing one person said was he thought he was bisexual [and] how he hated himself for a while, and all the stuff that he went through" (Jeff). The account ended with the student thanking his peers for the opportunity to feel comfortable by sharing in that way, and the student leader related the positive response his peer received, "…from there on, everyone was super supportive of him…" (Jeff). Having the courage to bring forward a personal issue within the peer group built added support for the GSA meeting, as mentioned in the discussion around influence and initiative skills.

Similarly, at the girls' school, a participant remarked that it was a peer leader who proposed the idea for the school-wide event: "it's an assembly that the school's never done before…and I think it was incredibly courageous and intelligent to realize that this was a topic of concern and that it had to be addressed" (Grace). Participants appeared to surprise themselves and surpass what they felt was expected of them and what they expected of themselves. They learned that courage is infectious; and that it can lead to meaningful change, both in the moment, and in the fundamental message that it sends to the community:

> "We talked a lot about courage and how if we can kind of facilitate a space where one person can have enough courage to say something to the whole grad class it kind of inspires the other [students]. They can stand up and they feel like they can say whatever they feel". (Jeff)

Participants gained a deeper veneration for courage and the transformative outcomes that are made possible through its exercise.

The remaining identified attribute, passion (also identified as enthusiasm by some participants) is not unlike initiative; it incorporates an emotional investment in the action—indeed, there is an affective element at play. For participants, the attribute of passion resides at the core of leadership: "the key ingredient that drives one's leadership capabilities is passion" (Emmy). It is a positive approach, a form of self-motivation driven by the heart as much as by the mind. It is also a key attribute connected to influence; generating and sharing one's own enthusiasm towards an idea or project stimulates like-minded peers and inspires those who have less experience in the domain. As with other attributes, the benefits are both internal and external. For the participant,

passion is an energizing force, helpful in accomplishing tasks and reaching goals. One

participant explained: "I think a good leader should have passion towards [their

portfolio], because, …I feel that I could only do half the things that I have done at this

school if I wasn't passionate about it" (Emmy). The value placed on the ideal or on the

project sustains the creative effort required to realize it.

Externally, passion translates as 'inspiration': "Leadership means using the things

you enjoy or the things you are passionate about to positively affect a community of

people, while hopefully inspiring others along the way" (Grace). Ultimately, passion can

be affected, but study participants communicated a sense that passion is more resonant

when it is genuine: "Don't apply for a position because you want it for a title on your

resume or your university application, but apply because you are passionate towards this

position and you would like to make a difference" (Emmy). Passion and enthusiasm are

both internal and external processes. A felt passion serves as an intrinsic motivator,

whereas communicating one's passion can be influential or inspirational for the

constituent group. Nonetheless, it is the most affective disposition which, when applied

effectively, improves the overall quality of leadership: "But I think our philosophy at

school is—anyone who is passionate towards the position can become a great leader"

(Emmy). Passion provides the motivation to coordinate and maximize the benefit of

other skills and attributes, pushing the leader and the leadership team to reach beyond the

more mundane aspects of student life programming.

Influence of an Arts Background. Although participants were aware of the

focus of the study relating to the arts as relevant to leadership, there was no intentional

pre-existing meta-awareness for participants to be able to recognize the targeted

processes.[11] As such, perceptions of any transfer of experience, knowledge or aptitudes

from the arts to leadership are more closely aligned with the participants' interpretation,

rather than any attempt to satisfy perceived intentions of the researcher.[12] The data

clustered around four abilities: preparedness, performance (performing in front of a

group), interdependence and creative problem-solving. The first two abilities are

examples that approximate near transfer, as their form does not change significantly from

context to context. Although the connections for the latter two across contexts are less

literal, participants were able to identify common traits between their application in the

arts and leadership, signalling possible far transfer.

     Preparedness and Performance. Participants noted that the discipline of

preparing for performance shared characteristics with their leadership experience. The

production of an artwork that requires several stages, working through a piece of music in

a school orchestra, or rehearsing a dramatic production all necessitate substantial

preparation. Reworking and repetition facilitates the transition from a raw concept to the

final performance, and where there is a live performance component, equips the

performer with the necessary understanding and confidence to enact the piece under the

pressure of scrutiny. It is a process fraught with challenges at each stage. One male

participant felt that "the best correlation between [leadership and performance lay in

performing] speeches…in front of big groups because in the band you're used to

preparing to perform, doing all the practice… It's the same with writing a speech" (Jeff).

Conversely, a lack of intimate familiarity with the material in question jeopardizes the

endeavour: "if you don't practise your music and you don't prepare, and you don't go

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[11] See Footnote 12 below.

[12] Participants intending to detect and appease the researcher's intentions may, in fact, have developed a greater understanding of artistic processes from the journal or interview prompts.

through all the different songs, when it comes to the performance then you just can't pull it together" (Jeff). This sentiment was echoed by a student at the girls' school; experience in performance contexts in the arts was perceived as very useful: "I think that my experience in the performing arts helped my public speaking skills a great deal. It has helped me perform to a crowd of high school students instead of simply reading a message off a piece of paper" (Grace). Once again, in their capacity as leaders, these students held roles that required frequent public speaking performances in front of a variety of familiar and unfamiliar audiences.

Another respondent, however, suggested that his experience in music did not provide him with any sense of his own leadership abilities, as the ultimate control and responsibility for the performance rested in the teacher/band director: "we're just going through the music and…[it's] teacher-directed, telling us what we need to improve on when practising, you know—'work on that section'" (Jeff). It is possible that this student interpreted the question of leadership in relation to 'influencing outcome' and not 'preparedness' *per se*. In this context, preparedness or practising was not viewed by him as a transferable leadership skill.

The performance itself offered a more obvious link to leadership; participants were aware of the public relations component of the role they inhabited and understood the need to 'perform' to their constituents from this perspective. Understandings of performance included the creative decisions taken to prepare the message, akin to an actor or director interpreting a text for the stage: "You have to create the delivery of that script" (Grace). From preparation to metaphoric and literal performance contexts, most

participants were able to describe their arts experience as having informed their

leadership context.

       Interdependence. Another recurrent theme in student responses was the idea of

interdependence within a performance ensemble. In this reading, interdependence may

be seen as distinct from collaboration: a construct such as an orchestra or theatre

production requires sustained and timely mutual interaction to function effectively.

Collaboration, as well, implies a group effort and while this aspect of the artistic process

will be discussed at length in the *Artistic Processes in Action* section, an example is

germane here; one participant indicated that her work in theatre production informed her

work as a leader "[It] helped to prepare me for my leadership role as I experienced what

it is like working with a larger team" (Ana). This example, however, does not fully

convey the imperative of interdependence. Another student drew this experience from her

years in dance: "you learn what it means… be dependent on many others as… the end

result is based on how the group works as a whole" (Emmy). Furthermore, she made a

connection between arts and leadership contexts regarding the essential nature of

interdependence: "If one person did not show up for a dance recital, the ensemble would

have to rework spacing and choreography. Similarly, if a member of my committee does

not complete a task [that] they committed to, there becomes a disconnect that must be

fixed" (Emmy). Student leaders appreciated the essential elements of interdependence,

recognizing in the arts and in their practice an enhanced level of accountability towards

others; a dynamic which transcends individual competence or prowess: "The last and

most important thing it has taught me has been that you don't always need to be the star

of the show to contribute. In music… it is impossible for everyone to have the lead lines

in a song" (Jeff). He then described the relationship of interdependence to leadership:

"This has helped me in my role, as I have learned that it takes more than just a small

group of people to accomplish something, and that there is a lot of important background

work that often times goes unnoticed" (Jeff).

       In addition to performance and interdependence, some participants perceived that

the arts provided useful experience in creative problem-solving—from immediate,

improvised responses to challenges, to more open-ended outcomes: "My experience in

art-related activities has helped me build on my problem-solving skills through having to

find creative solutions to unforeseen problems" (Ana). Another participant confided that

her experience in art has led her to approach problems with less concern and more

creativity: "I feel like, kind of on top of the [situation], [be]cause in art I feel like you can

kind of be very free and your mind is aware of what's about to happen" (Emmy).

By comparison, there was one student who did not perceive his arts experience as having

informed his leadership practice in any tangible way: "maybe it's helped my brain to

become more creative, but I can't say I've definitely taken something from one [context]

to another. It's helped me [by] just gaining experience" (Trevor). This statement is

consistent with other responses from this participant, whose experience included

developing and running a number of initiatives on his own. It's possible that a more

independent mindset contributed to his perspective, in contrast to the others.

       Creativity. While artistic processes are often and inaccurately equated with the

application of creativity, participants were able to identify strategies within the creative

cycle (see Figure 1) to approach their committee work and confront challenges to their

initiatives. One participant defined the value of creative awareness between the arts and

leadership: "[the arts] involve problem-solving and creativity so you can take the creative

aspects and the creative spark and transfer it to being creative [as] a leader" (Trevor).

More specifically, creative tools can bring greater perspective to defining problems or

goals. Although not exclusive to the arts, one student used Visual Thinking Strategies to

plan an event: "I felt that making that mind map [of the day] really help me kind of clear

my thoughts and show the path of where I wanted to go, and then from there it kind of

helped me [to] think [of solutions]" (Emmy). Another student expressed the creative

process in terms of a focus question that drove ancillary initiatives: "how can we suspend

the audience's disbelief enough to make them actually believe that our theater is a

gymnasium?" (Ana). While this example is taken from an arts context, the student leader

framed the question in such a way that allowed for degrees of interpretation, rather than

the execution of a specific plan. While examined more specifically later in the chapter,

collaboration also serves an invaluable role in generating ideas or solutions: "If important

decisions need to be made, collaborating with other leaders to get their input and

feedback is important. Different opinions and thought processes come out during

collaboration, and this can inspire new ideas for a task" (Trevor). Although there are no

clear examples of students adapting a version of the creative developmental process in its

entirety, they were able to detect or relate individual components or processes in their

work.

The range of perceptions listed here indicates that experience in the arts may be

perceived at a general level as being quite impactful, or, as has also been demonstrated,

of negligible influence on student leadership. Those who view the arts as influential

appear either to engage in a context which simulates artistic production and which allows

them to transfer their learning or they view the arts as having shaped the way they think. Among those who did not view the arts as particularly influential, their current leadership role or their interpretation of it may not be framed in such a way as to make this connection valid for them. It's also possible that other experiences may have shaped their current understandings of leadership to a greater extent.

Artistic Processes in Action. Beyond conscious perception, detecting enactments of artistic processes within participant experience formed a significant portion of the data collection. Journal entry and interview data questions probed the identified markers of artistic process dispositions: a tolerance for ambiguity or comfort with uncertain outcomes, and collaborative approaches within a culture of critique. A collaborative process is structured to invite and include the contributions, no matter the scale, of every participant, regardless of their role and, in this regard, differs from a traditional distribution of labour within an organization. Tolerance for ambiguity or comfort with uncertain outcomes removes rigidity from the decision-making process, replacing it with possibility. Within a culture of critique, the openness to a multiplicity of outcomes allows for an initiative to be developed and experienced through a variety of lenses; often those who operate at arms length may offer insights that prove as valuable as those more deeply implicated in the workings of a project.

'Empowerment' also emerged from the data, as a representation of the leadership curriculum of participating schools. The value of empowering members of an organization to initiate or independently manage project components or projects themselves is fundamental; it builds what Pink (2010) describes as intrinsic motivation,

in which a member of an organization finds the reward within the work itself, rather than through any external recognition they may receive.

Collaboration. While the importance of cooperative learning is stressed in education, often with the intent of building social skills, authentic collaboration is viewed by participants as central to the success of any student leadership construct. It is a complex but effective component, and is inherent in the creative development process, operating from idea generation to refinement to realization; collaborative interactions at their best fuse the strengths of each member into a powerful synergy.

For leaders at the boys' school, the teamwork metaphor was prevalent; working together for a common purpose was the primary message about leadership that was received by participants: "the first thing that we learned as a Prefect team is that it doesn't really matter what portfolio you [take on]. In the end, you're a Prefect and everyone's [just] a part of the team" (Jeff). It is articulated explicitly as axiomatic to a leadership structure at both schools: "The structure of our leadership program puts most students on a council or team with our students such that as a group, these students can seek to tackle larger issues as a result of working together" (Karen). The tone and tenor of responses indicated that students had seen the productive possibilities from collaboration in a new way and found new capacity for their team's abilities. Even those who were placed in the role of chair on committees of student leaders recognized the collaborative process: " in the end we decide as a group. I just don't sit there and listen to the 17 other guys and say: 'I hear what you say, but this is what *I* think [emphasis mine] and this is what we're doing'. We all vote" (Jeff). Voting as a means of decision-making is more reflective of a democratic approach than it is genuinely collaborative, but the underlying belief in the

value of the group's influence over any individual or co-leader is apparent. Participants were also able to describe the collaborative process defined earlier, in which the committee or team co-constructs events and projects stemming from the impetus of one or more of its members. It is not necessary to have specific expertise in one domain in order to contribute, especially at the Prefect level. Each Prefect is invited to offer their suggestions on other portfolios: "we're all working together towards one thing, it's not just the sports guy talking about his stuff, …everyone works together and adds their own input because everyone has ideas, really on every part of what we do" (Jeff).

The wording of the process between boys' and girls' schools was quite similar when describing interactions within committee meetings. Compare, for example the following quotes: "In meetings, it is not effective to have one person driving the conversation. Unless everyone chimes in, you don't know about the amazing ideas and opinions you could be missing out on" (Grace) and

> It's not always one person that has an image in mind that has to get done, it's more… one person has an idea and everyone's going to contribute about why that would work and why that wouldn't work and what they could change about it. (Jeff)

One participant saw the greatest benefit of collaboration on a functional level, through the division of labour and shared responsibility: "Collaboration with others is most effective when there is a big task that needs to be achieved, and the work can be divided [among] different people based on their roles and expertise. This means each person has to do some things, instead of one person doing everything" (Trevor). Within these comments,

there is a sense of shared trust and validation of others' contributions, be they comments

or suggestions in meetings or completing tasks that combine to achieve a larger aim.

Participants were able to provide accounts that illustrated the benefits of

collaboration from various stages in the preparation for different initiatives. Some

participants felt that collaboration was most vital at the conceptual stage, when ideas are

generated and discussed:

> Collaboration with others is most effective when looking for new ideas. It is so
>
> important that all opinions are considered. There…are good ideas and better ideas.
>
> You never know if an idea will be the 'best' if you don't have another one to
>
> compare it to. (Grace)

 As another student suggested, gathering a range of opinions and ideas was viewed as

equally valuable: "I think the refinement stages of any task are better done *with* someone

else" (Ana) [emphasis mine]. Working in a collaborative environment allowed for the

collective creative work to elevate the outcome of the initiative. One student's leadership

initiative for a theatrical production illustrated this interaction: "We tried several designs,

and in the end had to try and find a way to incorporate the best elements of all of them

into one final product" (Ana). The transfer of collaborative skills in this example does

not reach as far as in other initiatives, given that the example is specifically related to an

arts initiative, but it illustrates the key product of a collaborative model.

Drawbacks to collaboration. Despite numerous accounts of successful

collaborative situations, participants were also able to describe situations that

demonstrated the limitations of collaboration. Some of these were functional in that they

were tasks that did not lend themselves to a collaborative process: "administrative work

[such as completing] room-booking forms [or] creating an agenda for meetings"(Grace), or, in situations relevant to an individual rather than a group: "when the outcome of something will largely impact you and only you as an individual, I think that it is better to withhold from collaboration" (Karen). Other participants reported that when issues become polarizing or degenerate into conflict, the spirit of collaboration is lost: "[S]ometimes, collaboration can be an impediment. If everyone's ideas are polar opposites and you can't come to a mutual agreement, the ideas simply bounce off the walls and little progress is made" (Grace).

Although working through disagreement to achieve consensus is understood by participants as an effective conflict resolution technique, there were occasions when the overall aim or the process became lost in a personal dispute with destructive results: " [it] can veer the group off course, and can turn into a personal argument rather than a discussion to benefit the group" (Jeff). In addition to the similarities in language between participants, there is an understanding that collaboration is effective once any underlying or competing issues have been resolved.

Participant discussion of the potential uses of collaboration, examples of how they enact it in their work, and the ability to detect its limitations illustrated a high degree of familiarity with the process. By virtue of this, one might deduce that a combination of the pre-existent student leadership structure reinforced through the experience of successful collaboration has resulted in new understandings for student leaders. One student summarized, "Through collaboration I have learnt to problem-solve, ask questions and be resourceful to others" (Grace). The ability to collaborate effectively is an essential and relational component of the process.

Tolerance for Ambiguity. If collaboration involves developing a disposition to both contribute, solicit and accept a variety of opinions in order to elevate the overall process, there must be a concurrent willingness to accept change, even dramatic change, to an initial idea or original plan. Just as with descriptions of flexibility within the leadership attributes, tolerance for ambiguity or comfort with uncertain outcomes demonstrates a willingness to maintain an unrealized stasis, individually or as a group, and potentially abandon previous planning in favour of new aims or approaches. While this may only appear as a troubleshooting technique designed to remedy dysfunctional situations, being comfortable with open-ended situations can be seen from another perspective as a stimulus to creativity and innovation. In this case, participant examples reflected a blend of experiences between arts and leadership contexts touching on the innovative, problem-solving benefits of this disposition.

Student leaders were able to recognize how an open-minded approach helped to manage the situation when stressful planning difficulties arose or, at the other extreme, where an emergent, time-sensitive predicament necessitated quick action. The ability to critically examine and reframe an approach was communicated by one participant: "if you're halfway through and you see something's not working, you've got to be flexible and you've got to change gears and change direction...I can see immediately how that would apply in leadership" (Grace). Just as a challenging situation can emerge, there is faith in a student leader's abilities to comfortably co-exist with the problem until an adequate solution is discovered. For example, one student described the process as "Not having an *absolute* outcome but one that you might have to roll with…it makes you more prepared if you have to face a situation that has no immediate or simple solution"

(Trevor) [emphasis mine]. Tolerance for ambiguity allows student leaders to craft responses to situations, rather than react impulsively.

While participants identified open-ended approaches as less direct and efficient than directed, linear ones, they felt that the processes and outcomes are much more fruitful and meaningful when negotiable and organic. One student posited that greater intrinsic motivation is possible through artistic approaches… "the artistic way might be a little messier, might be a little [less] organized, but there's more fun and creativeness [sic] towards it, beside it and around it, [and] more passion towards the situation" (Emmy). It's noteworthy that this same student relied on artmaking as a way of stimulating her thinking in order to remain open-minded and able to access authentic, creative ideas: "once I start painting, or just doodling in class, certain ideas actually come to my head, which is what helps me to become a better leader and to think outside [the] box" (Emmy). Another participant felt he achieved better results as editor of the school newspaper when there was no defined outcome or process for his contributors. "I can give them some kind of direction, I can say 'go off in this way', but really they can write about whatever they want. It'll produce better work, it'll be more authentic… more real" (Trevor). These understandings equip student leaders with valuable perspective on their work and when facilitating the work of others; with a more open-ended approach, they recognize that they are able to create an environment where tasks and challenges can be framed in a more manageable way.

Familiarity with performance situations seemed to provide the strongest link to this disposition, a mindset that is strengthened through experience. Student leaders noted that often the unexpected outcome surfaces as a response to the constituents they are

serving – a type of 'audience'. Describing a parallel between musical performance and leadership, one student recounted: "lots of times you have no idea what other people are going to think of whatever song you're playing or, I guess, whatever you're painting." (Jeff). Being prepared for a multiplicity of reactions became an understanding of the leadership context as well, and he used similar language to describe the outcome of his committee's initiatives: "we had a couple of things this year that we had no idea what people were going to think of, [and] we had a couple of moments where it totally backfired and people were really angry with us but we got the whole group behind it. It all turned out well in the end" (Jeff). At both schools, coping with the uncertainty of collective community reaction to initiatives and formulating responses tested the skills and attributes the participants outlined. A tolerance for ambiguity and a comfort with uncertainty can generate student-led innovation, although consideration must be given both to the development of the initiative and the response of the community. At the girls' school, rejecting dated past practice, so that they might adopt new approaches to student programming required risk: "We decided to change everything with our year-long [plan]. This has forced us to do a lot of creative thinking" (Grace). Although the response was mixed, this same student mused: "We have opened the doors to endless possibilities and it has been [sic] quite an unexpected outcome. Some girls, particularly the older ones who have seen how it was in the past, are overwhelmed and confused by the lack of connection between events" (Grace). Anticipating (or showing) flexibility around constituent response requires detachment from a single particular outcome, however much it may be desired by the student leadership group. This flexibility inspires confidence to risk the unknown, which, in turn, augments to true innovation.

Student respondents showed a clear understanding of the nuances of coping with ambiguity. It is a disposition that encourages patience in problem-solving, greater freedom in creation and an opening to endless possibilities. One student synthesized the essence of this disposition …

> You need to be open-minded in how you think or how you attack a problem, because there'll be goals that you've set that you want to achieve or attain, or you'll have the same problem thrown at you in your position. There'll be multiple ways you can do it. You have to be open to different types of solving the problem or achieving your goal. (Trevor)

Perhaps equally significant for student leaders was the additional challenge of an uncertain constituent audience response on some occasions, and the need to address those concerns. While participation in the arts and performance situations enables growth of this disposition to grow and expand, it happens to flourish in the two subject schools due to the cornerstone of their shared student leadership philosophy: empowerment.

Empowerment. Although it may have only been alluded to briefly in participant discussions of school leadership philosophy, the idea of authentically empowering student leaders was apparent to the participants. The mandate given these students by their peers (if elected) and by teachers (if appointed) is a reflection of the trust the leaders have earned, and the expectation that they will be accountable. In exchange, these student leaders are empowered to design and orchestrate a program for positive growth and engagement in student life and they are challenged to push the limits of the program in directions they collectively value. One participant related the message delivered by

their teacher advisors: it's not like we're being fed a script that we have to spit out…it's [more] 'What do you think the students have to get out of this year?'" (Grace).

This ability to effect change is not lost on the participants: "Numerous decisions that impact students are made through us—I'm impressed and proud that we have as much leeway as we do" (Trevor). If transfer of that trust and power is seen as valuable by the student leaders, then to what degree did they enable and empower those members of their constituent groups? Collaborative work incorporates a form of empowerment by soliciting opinions and ideas from group members, but empowerment within this context means enabling others to make meaningful independent decisions around initiatives that more faithfully reflect artistic processes. Participants demonstrated an understanding of this process in individual descriptions of their empowerment experience. It would appear that concerns over relinquishing control of a situation are only offset by the perceived benefits gained, as with greater engagement on the part of other stakeholders, *i.e.*, other students. For example, one student used the word 'trust' to describe how she empowered intermediate student leaders to teach a school cheer to the younger grades in her stead, despite some reservations about performing in front of peers in order to coach them: "I'd say I'd get out of my comfort zone to give them the space for it. And they had a fun time …they put some extra dance moves in it, and it was great. But if I [said]: 'Do this. Do that. Perform it for me right now. Practise it right now', I don't think they would have so much fun in the situation" (Emmy). Both the enjoyment and the success of the task were enhanced, at least in part, by the freedom accorded to the younger student leaders.

Enabling committee members to make creative decisions within a larger process communicates a level of trust that validates their work and offers the intrinsic motivation

of a personal stake in the outcome. Even tactical, rather than strategic, creative decisions can achieve this effect. Drawing upon another anecdote, the same participant related the planning for a celebratory dinner—planning which included the designation of formal seating place cards. In this case, the participant described two possible scenarios: "I wouldn't mind if she'd said 'you can do the name cards. Do whatever you want' I would be happy with that. But if she [specifies] 'Make sure it's black, make sure it's this font, make sure it's this size, print it this size, cut this way'…[one might respond] 'Why don't you do it yourself?'" (Emmy).

Distinguishing situations where this level of direction is warranted or potentially deleterious to constituent morale is an exercise of judgment. Knowing where empowerment is possible, useful and meaningful requires perception on the part of the student leader. Another participant, while recognizing the traditional infrastructure of the school newspaper required a team of writers to report to him, was cognizant also of the importance of creative license: "I try not to …really impose upon people what they want to write about. I always say: 'What do *you* want to write about? What ideas do *you* have?' because I figure that it's better…that it'll produce better articles" (Trevor) [emphasis his]. This leadership ethic can also operate on a structural level: the leadership process for individual Houses was loosely defined, allowing the House Prefect to bring his or her own interests and attributes to the role: you can go to six House meetings and they'll all be completely different" (Jeff). Individuality is celebrated, although there may be some sacrificing of consistency in programming from House to House.

As part of the cultural ethic, participants recognized the value of leadership potential in the student body beyond their own committee. Student leaders at the boys'

school reached out and empowered those peers who did not have a defined role, but who

were respected within the student body, to assist with small group discussion sessions

intended to counter homophobic slurs: "we made a conscious effort to seek out certain

Grads who we thought… could have been Prefects" (Jeff). Openness and sharing of

influence and responsibility built community within the leadership team and the student

body, ensuring a greater level of success for the initiative.

The ability to interpret tasks and negotiate the creative development process

within a theatrical context was perceived by one participant as particularly relevant to

leadership. As an actor in a production, she experienced latitude in the way the role was

to be interpreted, discussing possible performance options with the director (a peer).

Rather than encountering the typical exchange: a prescriptive set of instructions moving

hierarchically from director to actor, the interaction was surprisingly discursive: "It was

more like 'do you guys like it like this?' It was a much more collaborative process and I

think that's a good model for leadership" (Grace). An invitation to participate creates a

sense of unity between constituent members and the student leaders, who behave in a

more facilitative manner: "It is about creating a path for others to follow, but not

necessarily restricting them to this path" (Grace). Empowerment and negotiation is only

effective within a collaborative culture, one that is able to look with some objectivity on

its work and be willing to make changes, regardless of an individual's personal stake.

A Culture of Critique. A by-product of empowerment, a critical culture invites

and encourages questioning, challenges, even mindful dissent, in order to bring about

positive change to initiatives and, in the case of this study, to the overall structure of an

organization. Returning to the concept of problem-finding, a culture of critique actively

engages its members, compelling them into enacting a reflective and evaluative mindset, thereby opening a pathway to innovation. Like empowerment, critique is also bi-directional—student leaders may feel empowered to offer feedback on a peer's efforts, or on components of the leadership curriculum at the school, but they too will be subject to this same feedback. Therefore, participant perception related to the giving and receiving of critique presented itself as the most apposite data to the study.

Although, as students, they are subject to receiving feedback on their academic work, the study participants perceived familiarity with a dialogic critical environment as originating from their arts experience. One male participant recounted his experience in a musical ensemble, noting the natural evolution from a linear, vertical, teacher-to-student model to a lateral, reciprocal, two-way model—an environment of peer critique: "while playing music, I have learned to take constructive criticism positively. In music class we are constantly being told things to help us become better musicians, such as paying closer attention to dynamics" (Jeff). Within his own section, he recognized similar exchanges with his peers: "…especially for us in the trumpet section [when you] talk to your own guys who are standing next to you [saying] 'okay, you're a bit out of tune. Change it a little bit' or 'You were playing too loud and keep it quiet'" (Jeff). Assumed are the shared set of values and language that facilitate these exchanges. For another participant, the need to provide the rationale for communicating one's creative choices is embedded within the critique process: "as long as you can explain how you got there and why you did certain things with a certain colour – a certain stroke—you kind of describe yourself through that piece" (Emmy). In the arts as in leadership, there is a common, fundamental understanding that decisions need to be explained, defended and, in some cases revisited.

While challenging a decision is not without its risks, be they social or political, the outcome can be consequential by taking an initiative in a completely different direction. One female participant acknowledged that, despite her greater position of responsibility and authority when compared to other student leaders, she encountered situations in which decisions were overturned due to the internal debates that occurred within the committee: "it's always tough to be the person to stick your neck out and say 'well that's not going to work' or to…to be against the grain, to go against what everyone else is saying, but I've definitely been swayed, more than once, by the team. I thought one thing was going to work, but it ended up being the complete opposite" (Grace). Within a culture of mutual respect, dissenting opinions are considered and, as in this case, accepted. As a result, the collaborative experience is, in fact, enhanced by an environment in which critique is commonplace: "Our Prefect team has amazing chemistry and it is very easy to suggest new ideas to each other. This chemistry [is what] allows for our Prefect team to be so effective" (Trevor). Effective critique is a skill to be acquired and refined, a reflexive form of patient feedback that eschews the most linear or expedient path to an outcome, but whose overall impact elevates the quality of outcome or provides a sober second thought regarding challenging scenarios. One male participant reflected: "Collaborating with this leadership team has helped me to improve my skills at both giving and receiving constructive criticism" (Jeff). This ability empowers students to explore what is meaningful to them as leaders in a supportive, yet rigorous dynamic.

Not dissimilar to both the characteristic of initiative and dispositional tolerance for ambiguity, a culture of critique inspires a degree of confidence in decision making,

even when the outcome is uncertain or controversial. When the evaluative standards of an

initiative or structure are mutually agreed on, the pressure in making difficult decisions is

mediated. As referenced earlier, failure becomes more easily reconciled. In this very

sense, one student recounted her learning experience with the failure of a traditional event,

given that a reasonable effort to mount it had been attempted:

> As a team, we struggled to combat [a] lack of interest prior to cancelling the event,
>
> and we did try our best to brainstorm and work together to try and entice students
>
> to [attend the event]. However, we were unable to succeed, despite our best
>
> efforts and instead, we have chosen to focus our energy on creating a fresh, new
>
> event for next year (Karen) [emphasis mine].

From the decision to cancel the event, to the desire to provide an alternative, the student

leadership group remained accountable and faithful to the process and trusted in their

ability to confront the challenge. At the boys' school, the stakes were higher as dramatic

changes to the leadership structure were proposed from within the existing leadership

team, requiring constituent members to discuss the elimination of positions they currently

held: "This was supported by a couple [of] Prefects, but [was] met with fierce resistance

by others. We… debated the pros and cons of the suggestion with numerous other

suggestions coming out in the process" (Trevor). While proximity to the elections for the

following year precluded the suggested changes, issues of import to the student

leadership program were tabled and examined, challenging the incoming team to bring

their own perspectives to the proposals.

Given the structural and strategic nature of the proposed changes, and that, in both

cases, decisions affecting the leadership system beyond the term of the current student

leader, it is especially notable that a culture of critique is one that favours innovation over improvement. Participants sought out innovative approaches to initiatives, even those that had a long organizational history. In some cases innovation came through the recognition that the leadership role had morphed into different responsibilities and expectations, therefore the title only needed to be updated: "the term 'Advisor' hasn't encompassed all we think that the leadership role should be and so… my leadership advisor [and we] decided that we should change the name to 'Middle School Mentor' for next year" (Karen). This change to 'mentor' from 'advisor' was the result of student leaders taking greater ownership for their middle school charges around behaviour. Illustrating that they could make the messaging more impactful, student leaders felt better placed even than teachers to address concerns about younger students' inappropriate use of social media: "we're also trying to eliminate all teachers (and those of higher power in the school)—who would be often the ones to tell them what they are doing is wrong—from the room" (Karen). Similar to the informal, small group discussions around homophobia at the boys' school, student leaders were supplanting traditional forms of authority in order to create a more meaningful interaction with their constituents: "You go in more on a lower level basis to be more personal. There's other ways that were not necessarily new. But we just changed it up to do this…" (Trevor). These departures from past practice author a new narrative at each school, adding dimension to how student leaders enact the school's philosophy and to the ways in which they view their role.

Gender and Leadership. Both boys' and girls' schools showed many parallels in their student leadership journeys during the school year in terms of curriculum, process

and outcome. The ability to study male and female student leaders in relationship to their

own single-gender environments provided the opportunity to examine, at least in part,

understandings of the influence of gender on leadership styles as well as any gender

differences regarding perceptions of the arts as influential to leadership. A single-

gendered learning environment at once emphasizes the specific identity associated with

being a boy or a girl (with the inherent pitfalls associated with gender stereotyping) while

de-emphasizing or removing from the culture the distractions and complexities that a

mixed-gendered environment can entail. It is within this dichotomous arrangement that

participants contextualized their responses. They were able to comment on the

characteristics of their own environments, but resorted to speculation when considering

mixed-gender or 'other' gender leadership situations.[13] Responses regarding the

advantages of single-gendered leadership contexts were more elaborate and clearly

expressed, while all participants struggled to outline possible disadvantages. Lack of

exposure to other contexts may explain this difficulty.

Participants perceived that the absence of the other gender removes elements of

inter-gendered competition which they believed were present in mixed-gender

environments. On a more practical level, achieving a leadership position in the first

regard is considered more equitable as there is less need to worry about gendered

influences on an election: "I think that…obtaining a leadership position when you're

running, you don't have to worry about the divide between the boys and the girls"

(Karen). Moreover, consideration of another gender's perspective would require a

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[13] For the purposes of this section, the 'other' gender is predicated on the predominant gender group at the other participating school. There is no intention to discount a more nuanced understanding of either gender or 'otherness' which, given the actions of the student leadership group, was an area of exploration and growth.

heightened awareness of the form and content of messaging. One female respondent suggested: "being in an 'all girls' environment… you're not afraid to say your true opinion…and there are just a lot more things I think you can bring forward and focus on that are specifically girl-related, than if you're sitting around a table with a few boys who might be completely opposed to doing an initiative about… *feminism*" (Karen) [emphasis hers]. Another girl stated: "I'm very 'in' my comfort zone. I don't have to worry about what boys think about a situation. I only have to be aware of one gender" (Emmy). This sentiment is echoed by a male respondent who underscored the freedom associated with the absence of the 'other' gender: "People aren't [saying] "What's that girl going to think if I say this?" Here…you don't really care…you kind of do what you do" (Trevor). The perceptual absence of the 'other' gender appears to enhance confidence and risk-taking among participants.

Similarly, there was general concurrence in the perception that student leadership in a single-gendered environment held the advantage of a more homogeneous group. Student leaders' ability to construct a sense of identity and common purpose is enhanced by a belief in the more homogenous structure of a single-gendered environment. One boy stated: "we have a pretty good bond together which I think, comes from the fact that it's an all boys school" (Trevor).[14] Nonetheless, just as 'connection' was valued as a leadership characteristic, social coding within a single-gendered environment may facilitate this bond. The social coding present within a unique gender group operates with a tacit or unstated understanding within the school culture – "as a group of guys,

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[14] This type of independent school is constructed upon a belief in emphasizing a sense of affinity and identity with the institution through its policies and practices. They also strongly promote the value of a single-gendered education, which may in turn influence the perceptions of its students. The perceived 'camaraderie' in this case may be a reflection of the student's relationship to the school culture as a whole, rather than predicated on its single-gendered constitution alone.

rather than a co-ed group, it's more…I don't know…. it seems like there's more

camaraderie" (Jeff).   A key advantage to this *esprit de corps* is the potential to use it to

influence group behaviour: "a close bond [or] connection with that group of boys— you

can use that as kind of a motivator, to get them behind something" (Trevor). The

perception that affinity with a single gendered group fosters an internal motivation was

not well defined by any of the respondents, but it was clearly sensed or felt.

Chapter 5: Analysis and Discussion

This chapter discusses the data presented in Chapter 4 and examines the relationship between the articulated leadership philosophies at each school as they relate to documented leadership characteristics, and to the lived experience of the student leaders. The relevance of exposure to the arts in building these characteristics is considered, as well as the enactment of artistic processes by participants in the study. Based upon these understandings, the supplementary research questions related to artistic processes in organizations, in the experience of student leaders, and in terms of gender differences will be addressed. These questions will form the basis of a response to the overarching question regarding student perceptions of artistic processes as relevant and transferable to a student leadership context. The researcher's analysis of the participants' experience informed the organization of the data into the subsections and categories of Chapter 4 such as *Artistic Processes in Action,* but does not assume a similar perception of categories on the part of the student leaders or their schools. Finally, this chapter concludes with possible extensions of this study, its potential for future application in other contexts, and related research opportunities for artistic processes and student leadership curricula.

5.1 Artistic Processes Implicit in the Leadership Documentation.

Tolerance for Ambiguity. References to ambiguity and uncertain outcomes were found within the role description pages of the girls' school Leadership Handbook, within the "Advice from the Pros" section (referring to content written by outgoing student leaders). The ability to be flexible was seen as essential to managing initiatives:

"flexibility is key – things will happen at the time of the actual event, you just have to

learn to go with the flow and improvise when necessary" (p. 20). Another student

suggested that collaborating with other schools "requires a lot of patience, particularly if

they don't work the same way as you do" (p. 27). Implicit in this comment is the

importance of being able to approach challenges that incorporate a variety of divergent

perspective. While it's arguable that this may be more appropriately aligned with

collaboration, it speaks to the value of a multiplicity of possible outcomes when planning

initiatives. One student summed up the value of flexibility with: "impromptu

everything…always bet ready to move to plan B" (p. 13). Maintaining this perspective is

also useful when facing challenges: "seeing the big picture, staying calm during 'crises'

(p. 24). In the literature, a former student leader addressed her incumbent, promoting the

idea that an open-ended description of responsibilities could be an advantage: "The

expectations of this position are relatively vague, but that doesn't mean you can't go

farther than exactly what is expected of you" (p. 16). Empowerment in this regard

lessens concerns regarding limitations and encourages creative and innovative thinking.

> ***Collaboration and a Culture of Critique.*** Within the Leadership Handbook at the

girls' school, there are clear indicators of the value of collaboration within the position

descriptions found. Each role is portrayed using signifiers such as "Things to do" or

"People to do them with" and language that supports the leadership task or focus of

interest. For example, one reads "an opportunity to work with a talented and motivated

group" in many of the descriptions. Understandings of the culture of critique are more

evident in advisory notes for the incoming leadership team, written by the student who

previously held the role. Statements such as: "the Grad class is large and diverse – do not

take lack of enthusiasm and participation personally; also remember that not everyone

will like the decisions that you may make" (p. 19) and "stay positive even when you hear

criticism" (p. 20) help prepare student leaders by encouraging them to anticipate a variety

of responses to their initiatives and to adjust their expectations accordingly. A further

suggestion to "bounce ideas off lots of different people, not just committee members or

your friends" (p. 20) enables the student leader to proactively address concerns or adjust

an initiative to increase its chance of success. Conversely, one description of

responsibilities signalled the need to navigate divergent viewpoints by requiring: "team-

building with groups where individuals have independent mindsets" (p. 25). At the boys'

school, the language surrounding the understanding of team-building and teamwork is

prevalent in participant references to committee work. These will be discussed later in

the chapter, in the section entitled *Artistic Processes in Action*.

  Empowerment. The language of artistic processes appeared to be in greater

evidence at the girls' school, but this may be chiefly due to the more extensive quantity

of documentation available. References to 'collaboration/culture of critique' and a

'tolerance for ambiguity were implied through the detailed position descriptions found in

the Leadership Handbook, published by the girls' school for its student body. The most

direct reference, contained in the school's extensive community external magazine

publication, was to the process of 'empowerment'. In an article recounting a discussion

about leadership facilitated by a Prefect, Grade 6 girls identified positive leadership

characteristics, and then identified the knowledge of when to "step up and to step back"

as the most valuable trait. By way of clarification, the supervising teacher commented

that the girls were able to understand the dual importance of making a meaningful

contribution to the community (stepping up) and empowering others to do the same (stepping back). Student leaders sharing agency and facilitating other students to lead reflects the artistic process of empowerment. "Developing this type of effective and communal leadership in the girls…is essential" (p. 10). What is unclear from the article is how the students arrived at this conclusion. Similarly, it would have been useful to understand the nature of the previous discussions that they may have had on the topic. On a broader scale, the experience of empowerment resonated more strongly in participant response data, discussed later in this chapter. These findings recapitulate their understandings of empowerment within their mandate as leaders, as well as through the cooperative, interdependent exchange of leadership roles.

While artistic processes can be traced with varying degrees of specificity within the independent school documentation, the wording of the Ontario Ministry's 2006 Leadership and Peer Support curriculum document describes leadership characteristics in a similarly general manner. The six pages of the Grade 11 course outline describe overall and specific expectations related to 'Personal Management and Knowledge Skills', 'Interpersonal Knowledge and Skills', and 'Exploration of Opportunities'. There are no descriptions of specific leadership roles, such as 'Student Council Head', as the course intends for students to research and discover them independently, or as they exist within their own learning environment. Nevertheless, there are references that require students to consider leadership in terms of "how a variety of factors have influenced their personal motivation and skills" (p. 35), and, indicating the need for effective collaboration, how their leadership qualities "may affect interactions with others in leadership" (p. 35). The requirement to "describe a set of criteria used to assess the effectiveness of those in

leadership roles" (p. 35) hints at a culture of critique, more strongly reinforced by the expectation to "demonstrate the ability to provide feedback to help others identify their strengths and areas for improvement" (p. 37). Elements of empowerment processes are present in descriptions of group dynamics processes such as "task sharing", "building consensus" and "identifying strengths of group members" (p. 38). Indicators of tolerance for ambiguity are less apparent, with a single reference to the characteristic of 'flexibility' (p. 38) and the requirement to anticipate multiple perspectives when dealing with their peer group (p. 34).

Given the diversity of form and content found in documentation from the two independent schools and from the Ministry of Education, it is difficult to achieve more than a rudimentary comparison between them. They all reflect, to varying degrees, leadership philosophies in keeping with a transformative or transformational approach in that they favour more democratic, collaborative and empowering tenets. More specifically, they imply that leadership is open to anyone; its skills and attributes can be learned and practised in different ways. Perhaps the lack of specific detail amongst all of the documents is a reflection of the belief in that individual students bring their own narratives to any process which, were it too prescriptive, would endanger the value of multiple approaches. While each of the documents reveal aspects of individual processes, they are not identified or labelled as such, suggesting that the perceptions of artistic processes by student leaders will be informed by their own interpretations. Moreover, the presence of a transformational or transformative leadership philosophy within each school culture does increase the likelihood of students perceiving these processes in their lived experience.

5.2 Leadership Curricula and the Lived Experience

In what ways do student leaders understand their roles?

How is this understanding linked to their interpretation of the student leadership

curricula?

At various points during the analysis of the data, it was apparent that, at both

schools, the messages communicated to student leaders about their roles fell outside of

the documented curricula. Participants reported conversations held with Teacher-

Advisors, whose guidance extended and refined student leader understandings of the

responsibilities and the aims of their position, and the approaches that would be useful or

necessary to achieve them. Similarly, student leaders identified and emphasized the

importance of leadership characteristics that were either not mentioned or which had only

a passing mention. References to 'being connected' and its positive relationship to

'influence' stood out amongst the data related to leadership skills and attributes. This is

notable, in that it reflects a more transformational than transactional approach to

leadership, and understandable, given that the mandate of student leadership is to serve

and respond to other students in the community. That said, in order to engage students in

school-wide spirit-building activities or, more significantly perhaps, to pursue an agenda

of change around issues like homophobia, the ability to build meaningful connections

with the community was essential to their success. However, there was little mention of

this ability within the student leadership documentation from either school; the closest

approximation being found in the Leadership Handbook from the girls' school. In this

guide, authored by former student leaders, potential leaders were asked to reflect on how

readily they could interact with a variety of peers. The lived experience of this skill was

more resonant: the ability to make connections was expressed as much more significant

by participants, given the frequency and detail of its mention in the data.

The relationship between the skill of initiative and the attribute of courage within

student leadership demonstrated the greatest variance between the philosophy of

leadership espoused in the curricular documentation of each school and the lived reality

of student leadership experience. The boys' school defined the word 'courage' as the

willingness to share one's abilities with the school as a leader, which approximated

understandings of 'initiative' within the girls' stated curriculum. Data from journal

entries and interviews added greater dimension and definition to these terms, as they were

applied quite differently during the school year. Student leaders in the girls' school

interpreted initiative in a manner more closely aligned with the documented interpretation,

reflecting an awareness and motivation to strive for change. Courage, by contrast, had a

much more visceral, affective connotation in the students' experience: it was viewed as

one's willingness to disrupt the existent culture and ask the school community to re-

examine its beliefs and practices. It was also viewed as a catalyst for action, emblematic

of those students who took a large personal risk, inspiring their peers and their student

leadership team.

Although this interpretation of courage appears divergent from that of the boys'

school curriculum, it is evident from the breadth and variety of all student leader

responses that there was active encouragement on the part of faculty advisors to 'make a

difference', even if it meant significant risk-taking within the school culture. The student

leaders felt that their mandate had a valid purpose, and they responded positively to the

challenge, rather than merely inhabiting a role that would develop and hone their personal

skills. Student leaders express the desire to do more than respond to acts of courage; they

aim to create an environment where these can occur. This ethic lies at the crossroads of

two artistic processes: empowerment and tolerance for ambiguity, as it seeks to empower

the community to confront challenges for which there is no certain outcome and reflects

the transformational leadership philosophy in an almost literal manner. Based on the data,

the transmission of this philosophy occurs more through verbal coaching than any

particular curricular statement.   One of the aims set out by the girls' school mission

aspires to create 'transformative leaders' from its students, although there is little in the

documentation that links this idea to actionable processes. One would need greater

insight into singular leadership training approaches at this school in order to observe the

process of and emphasis on transmission. Nevertheless and regardless of the means of

transmission, the markers of artistic processes were incorporated here into the lived

experience of the student leaders.

5.3 The Meaning and Influence of the Arts on Student Leaders

As presented in Chapter 4, the influence of an arts background varied in both

degree and nature amongst actors in the participant group. For the majority of student

leaders, concrete processes such as preparation, performance and interdependence made

more obvious connections across domains, even when the arts were not perceived as

directly formative. The perceptible and applicable influence resulted from exposure to a

culture of critique; the ability to give, solicit and receive meaningful feedback without

any loss of self-confidence prepared aspiring student leaders to understand that criticism

is just another part of the leadership environment. A similar type of exchange can be

found in studios, theatres and rehearsal halls, between actors, dancers, musicians or in

competitive sport contexts, as referenced by Jeff, who described team members

discussing alterations to tactics, even in the middle of a game. Although students are

conditioned to receiving feedback in an academic context, the stakes for student leaders

are different, in that the impact of their efforts affects others in the school community.

Being able to engage in critical exchanges that are frank but supportive, developed in

student leaders invaluable communication skills and the fortitude and patience to amend

situations that proved challenging.

While an arts background or experience in the arts did have occasional perceptual

utility in a leadership context, the connections that study participants made could possibly

be attributed to prompts in journal and interview questions. In other words, meaning was

constructed through the research process and connections with artistic processes were not

necessarily due to pre-cognition. Notable, too, was the diversity of understanding among

participants regarding the nature of artistic processes. For example, responses conveying

improved creativity in leadership actions as a direct result of participation in the arts may

have been true for the participant, but indicate a misapprehension of the direction or

study's objectives. In order to safeguard the trustworthiness of the findings, the

researcher needed to resist guiding participants any further than the wording contained in

the prompts, even during the final phase of semi-structured interviews.

Those who view the arts as influential appear either to engage in a similar

context that allows them to transfer their learning or they view the arts as having shaped

the way they think. Among those who did not view the arts as particularly influential,

their current leadership role or their interpretation of it may not be framed in such a way

to make this connection apparent for them. It's also possible that other experiences may have shaped their current understandings of leadership to a greater extent.

5.4 Artistic Processes in Action

All three of the identified artistic processes: tolerance for ambiguity, collaboration within a culture of critique, and empowerment resonated with the experience of the participants. Student leaders shared multiple anecdotes that reflected the characteristics of each process. Of the three, the most consistent threadline through all data types was empowerment.   The 'stepping up and stepping back' construct within the documentation at the girls' school, was mirrored in multiple instances at both schools. Student leaders were surprised and pleased by the trust that was placed in them to set the agenda for school life, which encouraged confidence, motivation for change and, in turn, risk-taking. By extension, they embraced the philosophy that everyone can be a leader in some way, seeking out and supporting peers who may not have had the identified leadership role, but whose abilities or personal goals were congruent with the overall aims of the leadership team. Entrusting and empowering others offered the potential to build a stronger commitment to larger initiatives, while inviting new and perhaps innovative approaches that had not previously been considered.

By the defined student leadership structure at both schools, collaboration was established as an imperative. Prefect committees and sub-committees all required the ability to negotiate with others, find consensus, plan together and ensure accountability. Less apparent, but still traceable through the documentation and accounts of agency was the value of a culture of critique. Past student leaders at the girls' school had noted in the Leadership Handbook that responding to all types of feedback, through committee and

through the student body is a necessary part of the leadership journey. Grace, in particular, commented that, in her abilities as a new Head Girl, she initially felt disappointed when a particularly strong idea was proposed by someone other than herself at one of her committee meetings, then realized that it is through just such critical exchange and collaboration that more effective and innovative solutions are achievable.

Tolerance for ambiguity or uncertain outcomes numbered the fewest direct references in the documentation, but was woven into responses around risk-taking, and it became apparent that these leaders took many positive risks. Although referred to later in chapter 4 and later in this chapter, efforts to address homophobia at both schools tested the resolve of the student leadership team, who, while firm in their conviction about their initiative, were uncertain as to how the student body would respond to their message or its delivery. Related to the leadership traits of flexibility and adaptability, assuming an open-ended (and open-minded) approach to initiatives and challenges was perceived by the actors to strengthen and enhance any outcome, even if the pathway moved circuitous or less structured than more standard, linear protocols.

When considered as a whole, the data consistently reveal characteristics of artistic processes as enacted through the leadership experiences of the two schools.   Moreover, they appeared to operate interdependently: authentic empowerment without a tolerance for ambiguity would result in less risk-taking, and a narrower leadership structure centred on the student leaders. Collaboration and a culture of critique require an ethic of empowerment to ensure that a variety of perspectives are heard, that delegation can be meaningful, and that the diverse strengths of all members are maximized. Finally, within a culture of critique, the tolerance for ambiguity invites a multiplicity of possibilities as

well as the willingness to be flexible and responsive as choices are made and evaluated.

Artistic processes exist in practice; how they are perceived as relevant to student leaders

and schools will determine, in part, how best to make them visible.

5.5 Other Research Questions Revisited

Chapter 2's Literature Review outlined the extensive research that has been

carried out in both organizational and educational theory, respectively, regarding

characteristics of artistic thinking processes and their potential for beneficial application

in other domains. Both share a similar understanding of which processes are desirable

and both seek ways of making these processes visible for organizational members, on the

one hand. and for students on the other. Organizational structures aim to create a more

dynamic, fluent and interdependent operational strategy, empowering members to

achieve organizational objectives through co-constructed, open-ended approaches. This

latitude generates greater intrinsic motivation for members of organizations and creates

an environment that will stimulate innovative practices. For educators, the incorporation

of artistic processes into pedagogy and curriculum encourages metacognitive thinking

strategies in students, and offers ways of experiencing and responding that are applicable

to interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary learning opportunities. Activities such as *I see-I*

think-I wonder (Ritchhart et al., 2011), in which students move from careful observation-

to initial response-to inferences about an image or text, are applicable in multiple

contexts, across disciplinary and developmental levels. Similar strategies strengthen

student abilities to compare and contrast, make connections, and appreciate multiple

perspectives. Although the purposes and objectives of organizational and educational

theorists may differ, the pursuit of artistic processes as relevant and useful cognitive and communication approaches is evident in both domains.

Do student leader responses communicate an understanding of the transferability of skills developed through an arts based education?

Of the three sources, the journals and interviews provided the richest data in understanding this question. The data revealed a range of response 'types', which are portrayed here using five representative participants, three girls and two boys. At one end of the spectrum, is a student who demonstrated a high level of awareness of artistic processes and who was able to recognize them in her leadership practice. At the other end of the spectrum is a student for whom these processes, while apparent to him, did not make the connection between that experience in the arts and his leadership practice. Dispersed across this spectrum, between these two examples, is a range of representative students for whom the processes were enacted with varying degrees of cognition of their relationship to the arts.

As Head Girl, Grace's role was to support and coordinate the school's student leadership (or Prefect) team, the members of which managed a number of student life portfolios. Grace provided responses to journal and interview prompts that were congruent with artistic process theory, frequently using metaphoric language that was very arts focused. She provided clear references to empowerment, collaboration and critique and understood the importance of being able to cope flexibly with unforeseeable demands on her time and challenging initiatives. She was also able to draw clear links between her experience in the arts and in leadership, making particular reference to the co-creative relationship between actor and director as akin to the collaborative leadership

process with her peers. Given the alignment between her responses and artistic process

theory, warrants her inclusion in discussion of the data, but one must allow that her

singular experience could be seen as an outlier in a study of greater scale.

At the boys' school, Jeff shared an equivalent position of responsibility as Head

Boy within his student government. He made a number of connections between his

background in ensemble music and the interdependent aspects of leadership. In

particular, he noted the necessity of empowering others—peers with or without a

designated leadership role—who were better suited to certain tasks. While this conveys

confidence in the act of delegation, in this context he relied on the relationships these

boys had fostered in the school to reach smaller groups of students in a more intimate

manner. Finally, Jeff's willingness to withstand challenges raised in response to his own

decisions and those of his team's reflected skill development within a culture of critique.

Jeff is representative of a student who has experienced artistic processes in all but name;

his vocabulary is predictably much more reflective of his school's culture, with

references to courage and 'team structure', but descriptions of his experiences

communicate the complexities of artistic processes in an operational capacity.

Emmy held a Prefect position at the girls' school; she sat on one committee of

peers and chaired another. In this regard, she was able to understand the dual

perspectives of collaboration: both as a leader and as a supporting member. For her,

understandings of authority and empowerment relationships were prevalent in her

responses, described as the need to be accountable in her position and to rely on others

without micro-managing them. She made frequent references to her arts background in a

more literal manner, invoking their formative influence on her leadership development

through organizational strategies such as 'mindmaps', or using drawing to help focus her

thinking. While these specific descriptions fall outside the definitions of artistic

processes, the perception of transfer was a meaningful one for her, and she enacted the

defined processes (although perhaps tacitly, like Jeff) throughout her mandate. For

Emmy and others like her, added precision in defining which processes are considered

transferable would assist in clarifying her perception of a positive transfer.

Karen also held a Prefect position at the girls' school. Her anecdotes reflected

characteristics of artistic processes, but she was less inclined to relate these to any

experience in the arts. She echoed other participants' sense of empowerment, at least

within the Prefect committee, but only going so far in her role as to propose structural

changes to other Prefect portfolios and revising descriptions of responsibility for the

members of her own committee. She perceived the value of collaboration and critique

for elevating the work of a team equally keenly. However, most of her arts participation

had occurred too early in her school career to be perceived as influential or to warrant any

meaningful connection to her current leadership skills and attributes.

Trevor's responses fell at the other end of the spectrum, in that he perceived the

fewest links between artistic processes and his leadership experiences. In fact, when

asked directly whether his arts experience had informed his leadership abilities, his first

response was that it had no connection. Given the scale of the study, his contrary position

illuminates that perceptible 'far' transfer may require greater pre-cognition of the

processes—his notion of leadership development theory may not encompass these

approaches. However, when considering the follow-up questions, he did allow that there

are some parallel attributes necessary for both the arts and for leadership. Moreover, he

did articulate experiences which were similar to other respondents regarding the importance of collaboration and the value of empowerment among team members.

There was general agreement regarding the significant, innovative actions taken by the leadership teams at both schools, especially around the Gay-Straight Alliance, anti-homophobia and sexual orientation assemblies; these actions made the described processes more apparent and meaningful to participants. Within their descriptions of the evolution and success of the events at both schools, attributes of courage and risk-taking, meaningful work, intrinsic motivation, and making a difference in the life of the school were all in evidence. Because of this experience, informal discussion of artistic processes with participants shifted from an academic or abstract exercise to a more authentic one, bridging the diversity of response types and offering a clear reference point for those enacted approaches.

Does gender inform student leaders' understanding of artistic processes?

Regarding the question of artistic processes and leadership from a gender perspective, the data from previous sections was balanced across male and female participants regarding leadership characteristics, and the influence of the arts. There was no meaningful difference, other than phrasing of a similar concept between male and female participants (e.g. 'teamwork' as opposed to 'collaboration'). It is apparent that an empowering, collaborative, transformational leadership ethic is reflected in both schools, underscoring a degree of consistency between institutional curricula. What emerged more clearly from the specific questioning illuminated understandings of operating within single-gendered environments, rather than any particular gender-specific leadership dispositions or practices.

Although the setting and participants offered a unique opportunity to study gender groups independently of one another, it was challenging to analyze the data such that it produced a cogent understanding of gender differences. Discussions regarding gender during the interview phase met with a greater proportion of hesitancy and uncertainty in the responses. Moreover, students felt that they were merely speculating when commenting on leadership styles of the 'other' gender.   The data from Chapter 4 did reveal that, despite acknowledged variance in sexual orientation, a single-sex environment provides a more homogenous culture.   This is seen to allow for communication to be framed in a targeted manner, achieving a greater influence, hence, the leadership process was perceived to be more simplified. However, students were not able to clearly articulate the subtler nuances of operating as leaders within their single-sex school culture, as they had no basis for comparison. Interschool collaborative meetings were not of sufficient frequency or length to provide sufficient exposure to other leadership styles. A more dedicated and reflective process of observation across schools would be more helpful to probe for similarities and differences, and then determine whether they would be perceived by participants as attributable to gender as opposed to any other factor. Given that both male and female participants shared many commonalities in their leadership experience and offered similar commentary regarding the influence of the arts and the markers of artistic processes in their work, it appears that gender does not predicate any difference in perception. Replicating this study in co-educational environments would be a useful next step to clarify this issue. In fact, one might speculate that the data would be richer given the ongoing exposure to the opposite gender that would exist in those contexts.

The Principal Research Question. *In what ways do student leaders perceive artistic processes to be transferable to student leadership contexts?*

This study indicates that while the degree of perception varies from student to student, upon reflection, student leaders are able to identify and provide examples for the specified artistic processes. Their accounts of their leadership experience clearly favoured these processes, and underscored their efficacy. Moreover, they were able to identify congruent processes that occurred in their experience in the arts. As indicated earlier, the majority of participants made clear connections between processes that they had learned in the arts and their application in a leadership context. Allowing for the relatively narrow scope of the research, and the particularity of setting and inclusion boundaries, student leaders, with little contextualization were able to perceive artistic processes as transferable in a student leadership experience. This case study would need to be replicated in a number of other similar contexts in order to strengthen this understanding.

Perception of artistic processes within school leadership curricula was left to the discretion of the researcher by means of the document analysis and discussion with school research directors. While some elements of artistic processes are mentioned within school leadership curriculum documents, they are not characterized as such. Any similarity to artistic processes within the documentation lies in a tendency towards a transformational leadership philosophy; one that favours approaches like those found within artistic processes. When framed in those terms, artistic processes do constitute a component of a student leadership curriculum, but to conclude that this was intentional

would be premature given the evidence. Further research to ascertain school culture or
delineate the aims of the curriculum would be necessary to clarify this point.

5.6 Implications and Recommendations for Future Research

This study represents a starting point in establishing understandings of artistic
processes and transfer. The ongoing interest in research on these processes, extant in
both organizational and educational contexts, conjoin with student leader perceptions that
processes learned in or distilled from the arts are transferrable to other contexts. How
metacognition of these principles is achieved and the mechanisms by which the transfer
occurs warrants further investigation. If perception of transfer or, at the least, relevance
of artistic processes has been recognized by student leaders, further exploration of
Hetland's (2008) interest in transfer could be pursued in a leadership curriculum as a way
of framing their awareness. While it would be premature to conclude that a background
in the arts is an imperative for student leaders, awareness of these processes and the
ability to enact them, have been perceived as very effective in practice.

Ultimately, the design of student leadership curricula may benefit from an
examination of the role artistic processes play in desired leadership profiles.
Understanding how these processes and dispositions can be fostered in students with less
exposure to an arts background will shed light on the matter. At the least, striving for a
consistency of metacognition will familiarize student leaders with dispositions that will
enhance their educational and leadership experiences. Bowman's (2014) understanding
of leadership curriculum as driven by a values-based personal focus is reflected in the
documentation of both participating schools. Students involved in this constructivist
approach could potentially benefit from a more transparent understanding of the

cognitive and affective dispositions found in artistic processes, providing useful models of problem-solving and interaction. Similarly, all stated school leadership curricula examined in this study could benefit from greater clarity regarding the more universal characteristics of effective transformative leaders and the processes that enable them to develop. Naturally, it is hoped that leaders will offer diverse individual traits and passions so that all students can see opportunity for themselves as leaders in some way. Nevertheless, recognizing and fostering those processes which may make a student leadership experience richer and more meaningful seems only logical. The arts and artistic processes have a potentially valuable contribution to make to student learning at both the personal and leadership development levels.

To increase the scope of this study, it would be worthwhile to amplify its participant base, extending beyond an independent school context where leadership development is crucial to the culture and mandate of the organization. To this end, a greater depth of research on other student leadership curricula and their underlying premises will reveal the role that artistic processes play. Additionally, for the study to yield comparable data in public institutions, some familiarity with or implementation of strategies for learning through the arts (Upitis, 2011) is critical, as the metacognition around artistic processes would be established. Of particular interest are publicly funded schools for the arts, or magnet schools, as these employ a selection process to both locate and situate students who are gifted in the arts. In principle, students at these schools may have an increased awareness of the creative and critical cycles and be more attuned to artistic processes.

Finally, including these processes in a transparent manner in the communication and standardization of guidelines for leadership curriculum would be of beneficial support to those who are charged with advising student leaders, and in so doing, achieving meaningful and authentic leadership development.

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Appendix A: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION & SURVEY CONSENT

My name is Trish Osler and I am a teacher and Master's Thesis candidate at the Faculty of Education at Western University, London, Ontario. I am currently conducting research into artistic thinking and leadership and would like to invite you to participate in a study. The aim of this study is to explore the relationship between creative problem solving and habits of mind found in the arts and the development of student leadership. I am interested in your perceptions of transfer between artistic processes in arts courses and those found in leadership contexts. I am also interested in your understanding of the leadership role that you hold this year.

If you agree to participate

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to answer an online survey in which you describe your leadership role at your school this year. The data provided by your responses to questions on this topic may be used within the larger study. You will also be asked to list any courses in the arts that you have taken or are taking at your school, and describe any past or current involvement in co-curricular arts-related activities. Based on responses to the survey questions, some students will be invited to continue with subsequent phases of the study which will involve keeping an online journal of your leadership experiences once monthly and a follow-up interview at your school with the researcher. If you are interested in participating in the second part of the study, please indicate this on the survey and the researcher may follow up with you (depending on your responses to the survey).

Confidentiality

The information collected will be used for research purposes only, and neither your name nor any information which could identify you will be used in any publication or presentation of the study results. All information collected for the study will remain confidential. Research materials will be stored securely.

Risks & Benefits

There are no known risks to participating in this study.

Voluntary Participation

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any of the survey questions or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on your academic status or grades.

Questions

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant you may contact the Office of Research Ethics, Western University, at 519-661-3036 or ethics@uwo.ca. If you have any questions about this study, please contact me, Trish Osler, at [telephone number and email address] or my thesis Supervisor, Dr. Daniel Jarvis, Associate Professor (Nipissing University) and Adjunct Professor (Western University), at the following email address [   ] or telephone number [   ].

Thank you for considering participation in this study on the arts, learning, and leadership. This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Trish Osler

Research Study into Artistic Processes and Learning Transfer

Dr Daniel Jarvis, Adjunct Professor
Western University
Trish Osler, Master of Education (Arts Focus)
Thesis Candidate, Western University

SURVEY CONSENT FORM

I have read the letter of information, have had the nature of the study explained to me
and I agree that my child may participate in the preliminary survey for the study. All
questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

_____

Name of Student

_____   _____

Student's Signature   Date

_____

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

_____   _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature   Date

Appendix B: LETTER OF INFORMATION & STUDY CONSENT

My name is Trish Osler and I am a Master's thesis candidate at the Faculty of Education at Western University, London, Ontario. I am currently conducting research into artistic thinking and leadership and would like to invite you to participate in a study. The aim of this study is to explore the relationship between creative problem solving and habits of mind found in the arts and the development of student leadership. I am interested in your perceptions of transfer between artistic processes in arts courses and those found in leadership contexts.

If you agree to participate

If you agree to participate in this study you (and other selected volunteer students) will be asked to keep an online journal in which you record your leadership experiences once monthly, from November until February. Prior to this, we will schedule a meeting at your school in the next two weeks for the purpose of introducing you to the study. A follow-up interview will also be conducted at your school, to be held at a time which is convenient for you.

Confidentiality

The information collected will be used for research purposes only, and neither your name nor information which could identify you will be used in any publication or presentation of the study results. All information collected for the study will be kept confidential. Any research materials including audio and video recordings of participants containing identifying information will be secured. Identifying information contained in research notes stemming from interviews will be coded to preserve anonymity. Participants will be given password protected access to the online journal website which will be maintained until the end of the study, at which time the site will be deactivated.

Risks & Benefits

There are no known risks to participating in this study. Your participation is limited to online journaling, an introductory briefing session and a follow-up interview, which,

owing to your course and co-curricular commitments may cause you to feel stress or time management challenges. As a benefit of the study, participants may become conscious of new leadership and organizational strategies as they relate to artistic processes.

Voluntary Participation

Participation in this study is voluntary. Student volunteers will track their experiences with artistic processes as a means of inquiring if, and in what ways, they perceive that artistic processes are enacted across disciplines in a meaningful way. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time.

Questions If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant you may contact the Office of Research Ethics, Western University at 519-661-3036 or ethics@uwo.ca. If you have any further questions about this study, please contact me, Trish Osler at [telephone number and email address] or Dr. Daniel Jarvis, Associate Professor and Faculty Advisor at the following address and telephone number: [   ].

Thank you for considering this opportunity to participate in an exciting study on the arts, learning and leadership. This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Research Study into Artistic Processes and Learning Transfer

Dr Daniel Jarvis, Associate Professor
Western University
Trish Osler, Master of Education (Arts Focus Candidate)
Western University

CONSENT FORM

I have read the letter of information, have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree that my child may participate in the study. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

_____

Name of Student

_____   _____

Student's Signature   Date

_____

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

_____   _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature   Date

Name of Person Obtaining Informed Consent: Trish Osler

Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent:

Date:

Appendix C: STUDENT LEADERSHIP SURVEY

What is your role in student leadership? Is there a title for your position?

Briefly describe your student leadership responsibilities (meeting/coordinating activities with others on a committee, planning events, preparing presentations to the school community, communicating with organizations outside of the school community, mentoring younger students)

Which courses in the arts (music, dramatic arts, visual arts, dance or media arts) have you taken during secondary school? Please circle all that apply.

Grade 10   Dance Drama Music Media Art   Visual Art

Other (please identify)_____

Grade 11   Dance Drama Music Media Art   Visual Art

Other (please identify)_____

Grade 12   Dance Drama Music Media Art   Visual Art

Other (please identify)_____

Have you participated in school-based extracurricular arts activities (theatrical productions, school orchestras or choirs, visual arts exhibitions) while at secondary school?

If you replied 'yes' to the previous question, please briefly identify describe your participation.

Have you participated in community arts events or activities (theatrical productions, school orchestras or choirs, visual arts exhibitions) while at secondary school?

If you replied 'yes' to the previous question, please briefly identify describe your participation.

As part of this study, would you be willing to describe your leadership experiences in an electronic journal on four occasions between October 2012 and February 2013?

As part of this study, would you be willing to participate in a 45 minute interview (at your school, at a convenient time) in February, 2013, to discuss your student leadership experience?

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey.

Appendix D: PARTICIPANT JOURNAL QUESTIONS

This survey is part of a study conducted by Western University on student leadership and artistic thinking processes. Please respond to the questions below, citing examples or stories from your own leadership experience. Provide as much detail as you are able. If you have questions regarding this survey or any other aspect of the study, please contact Trish Osler [email address]

1. Please describe what leadership means to you.

2. In what ways have your own experiences in arts courses, rehearsals, performances, or arts-based extracurricular activities prepared you for your leadership role this year? Try to provide examples of situations which illustrate this.

3. Describe the process by which you and your committee members worked together to create or develop something this year. Describe your role in the process.

4. In your opinion, which situation did your leadership team encounter that required the greatest amount of creative problem-solving or which had the most unexpected outcome? What was unique about this situation? What did you have to do differently to find a solution?

5. Do you experience your leadership role as you expected to, based on its description? What has surprised you? How have you adapted your thinking to best fulfill your responsibilities?

6. How has collaborating with your leadership team informed your leadership experience? In your opinion, when is collaboration with others most effective? Have there been situations in which it can be viewed as an impediment?

7. How would you describe your school's philosophy of student leadership? How is this philosophy communicated to students? Which messages about leading other students are emphasized?

Appendix E: SAMPLE PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Did you notice any connections between your thinking about situations in your leadership role and those related to creative work that you do (or have done) in the arts?

How did the group you were leading set goals?

How did the group organize its work?

How did you arrive at decisions?

Were there situations that proved particularly challenging? What was the nature of the challenge? How did you and/or your team overcome them?

How would you describe your leadership approach in your role this year? What has been your greatest success to date?

How do you compare what you do in your leadership role with the written description of your role?

Have there been any changes in your understanding of leadership based on your experiences?

Appendix F: ETHICS APPROVAL

Western Education
WESTERN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
USE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS - ETHICS APPROVAL NOTICE

Review Number: 1210-2
Principal Investigator: Daniel Jarvis
Student Name: Trish Osler
Title: *Examining Artistic Process and Transfer*
Expiry Date: June 30, 2013
Type: M.Ed. Thesis
Ethics Approval Date: November 28, 2012
Revision #:
Documents Reviewed &
Approved: Western Protocol, Letters of Information and Consent, Advertisement

This is to notify you that the Faculty of Education Sub-Research Ethics Board (REB), which operates under the authority of the Western University Research Ethics Board for Non-Medical Research Involving Human Subjects, according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario has granted approval to the above named research study on the date noted above. The approval shall remain valid until the expiry date noted above assuming timely and acceptable responses to the REB's periodic requests for surveillance and monitoring information.

During the course of the research, no deviations from, or changes to, the study or information/consent documents may be initiated without prior written approval from the REB, except for minor administrative aspects. Participants must receive a copy of the signed information/consent documentation. Investigators must promptly report to the Chair of the Faculty Sub-REB any adverse or unexpected experiences or events that are both serious and unexpected, and any new information which may adversely affect the safety of the subjects or the conduct of the study. In the event that any changes require a change in the information/consent documentation and/or recruitment advertisement, newly revised documents must be submitted to the Sub-REB for approval.

Dr. Alan Edmunds (Chair)

	2012-2013 Faculty of Education Sub-Research Ethics Board
Dr. Alan Edmunds	**Faculty of Education (Chair)**
Dr. John Barnett	**Faculty of Education**
Dr. Farahnaz Faez	**Faculty of Education**
Dr. Wayne Martino	**Faculty of Education**
Dr. George Gadanidis	**Faculty of Education**
Dr. Elizabeth Nowicki	**Faculty of Education**
Dr. Julie Byrd Clark	**Faculty of Education**
Dr. Kari Veblen	**Faculty of Music**
Dr. Jason Brown	**Faculty of Education**
Dr. Susan Rodger	**Faculty of Education**
	Faculty of Education, Associate Dean, Research *(ex officio)*
Dr. Shelley Taylor	**Faculty of Education, Western Non-Medical Research Ethics Board** *(ex officio)*
Dr. Ruth Wright	**Faculty of Music, Western Non-Medical Research Ethics Board** *(ex officio)*
Dr. Kevin Watson	**Faculty of Music, Western Non-Medical Research Ethics Board** *(ex officio)*

The Faculty of Education	Research Officer
1137 Western Rd.	Faculty of Education Building
London, ON N6G 1G7	kueneman@uwo.ca
	519-661-2111, ext.88561 FAX 519-661-3095

Copy: Office of Research Ethics

CURRICULUM VITAE

Name: S. Patricia (Trish) Osler

Post-secondary   Queen's University
Education and   Kingston, Ontario, Canada
Degrees: 1979 B.A. (English)

                       Ontario College of Art and Design (OCADU)
                       Toronto, Ontario, Canada
                       1999 A.O.C.A.D./B.F.A
                       (Advanced Standing, Drawing & Painting)

                       Western University
                       London, Ontario, Canada
                       2014 M.Ed. (Curriculum Studies, Arts Focus)

Honours and   David L. Stevenson Scholarship
Awards: Ontario College of Art & Design

Related Work Experience:

Havergal College   2005-2012

Teacher, Visual & Media Arts, Communications Technology, Film Studies, Advanced Placement

- Coordinated vertical mapping of Arts program and redesigned course offerings to improve delivery, increase engagement, and consolidate learning opportunities.
- Initiated strategic alignment with new Ontario Ministry Arts guidelines.
- Coordinated artist-in-residence program.
- Integrated new technologies at senior level and incorporated social media in the classroom.

- Facilitated differentiated learning and global capabilities through personalized approach and exchange program.
- Connected learners to authentic audiences through publication and exhibition of works.
- Professional learning teams:
  - Assessment and Evaluation
  - Co-Chair, Teaching for Understanding
  - Chair, *Intellectual Character*
  - Brain Theory – Girls and Learning
  - Vertical Mapping

Upper Canada College   2002-2005

Teacher, International Baccalaureate Visual Arts (MYP)

- Redesigned curricula and implemented new scope and sequence across Middle Years Program, generating international media for project design adopted by IBO.
- Integrated Outdoor Education, introducing off-site sculpture/installation program.
- Established Open Studio.
- Curated centenary art exhibition

Crescent School   2002

Teacher, Visual Arts – Full Time, LTO (Middle/Intermediate)

Toronto District School Board   1995-2000

Visual Arts Specialist/Artist in the School (Primary/Junior)

- Created a successful Primary, Junior, and Intermediate cross-curricular art program, a model for a District-wide arts initiative.

Relevant Professional Development:

Ontario Art Education Association Conference, Toronto   2013

Mark Church, *Cultures of Thinking,* Havergal Institute   2012

Mind Shift Action Research, Conference of Independent Schools/OISE   2012

Margaret Searle, *Meeting the Needs of Every Student*, Havergal College   2011

Richard Siegesmund, *Art Education After Postmodernism*, OAEA, OISE   2011

Sir Ken Robinson, *Creativity in the 21st Century*, SEAL Best Practices

Conference, Crescent School   2010

Heidi Hayes Jacob, *21stCentury Assessment and Evaluation*,

Havergal College   2010

Project Zero, *New Approaches to Thinking and Understanding in the Arts*,

Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge: 2008

- *Teaching and Assessing for Understanding*
- *Making Thinking and Learning Visible*
- *Learning In and Through the Arts*
- *Multiple Intelligences*
- *Understanding of Organizations*
- *Educating for the 21st Century*

IBO Training:

- Theory of Knowledge, Toronto   2005
- Visual Arts II, Florida   2005
- Visual Arts I, Denver   2003
- PYP, MYP Training Workshops, Toronto   2002

Cooperative Learning, Havergal College   2005

Canadian Independent Schools, *Assessment in Visual Art, Curriculum*

Share, Classroom Management in the Art Studio, Sterling Hall School   2004

International Boys' Schools Coalition Action Research, *The Teacher*

as Researcher   2004

Ruth Sutton, *Assessment for Learning*, Branksome Hall   2004

Ken O'Connor, *Assessing Creativity*, Upper Canada College   2004

Jay McTighe, *Understanding By Design,* Upper Canada College   2003

Dr. Sandra Witelson, Dr. Leonard Sax, *Brain Theory*, Havergal   2006

College, Upper Canada College (2003)

Selected Solo, Group Shows, and Exhibitions:

Photographs, Lower St. Lawrence, Métis-sur-Mer, Québec	2009
Town Hall, Métis-sur-Mer, Québec	2005
Then and Now, Centenary Exhibition, Upper Canada College, Toronto	2002
Peter Adams and Trish Osler, Arcadia Gallery, Toronto	2002
Spring Salon, Arcadia Gallery, Toronto	2002
Winter Salon, Arcadia Gallery, Toronto	2001
Juried Exhibition, The Roundhouse Gallery, Toronto	2001
Open House, Atrium Gallery, Toronto	2001
Juried Exhibition, Women's Art Association, Toronto	2000
Ecco/Echo, 401 Richmond St., Toronto	2000
Arts Junction, Toronto	1999
Shifting the Frame, Nora Vaughn Gallery, OCADU, Toronto	1999
Basta, Studio Gallery, Florence, Italy	1998

Professional Associations and Memberships:

> Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO)
>
> Ontario Association of Art Galleries (OAAG)
>
> Ontario Art Educators Association (OAEA)
>
> Visual Arts Ontario (VAO)

Publications and Bibliography:

Matthews, D. (2004). Presenting the Diploma Programme at Upper Canada College. *IBO World, 39*(May 2004), cover, 12-13.

Millard, L. (1999). Shifting the Frame. *OCAD Gallery Publication*, Toronto, ON: OCADU.

Osler, T. (2012). The Baroque Exchange Project: Using Social Media to Construct Narratives About Visual Culture Art Education. *Mindshift Consortium,* Conference of Independent Schools of Ontario and Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Osler, T. (ed.), (2009). Havergal Woodlands, Toronto, ON: Havergal College.