

# *mentor's introduction*

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GEORGE HARDIMAN & THEODORE ZERNICH  
University of Illinois

For the past five years Dennis has focused his research efforts on how the structural properties of paintings can influence a person's response. Now, Dennis has produced a dissertation that will add much to our understanding of how complex concepts, such as paintings, are learned by students representing various grade levels. His dissertation focuses on an important issue related to the perceptual and cognitive processes used to view and, ultimately, respond to art stimuli. How, for example, do the various attributes of paintings receive the attention of the viewer and to what extent are these attributes differentially weighted?

This dissertation has implications for art education and mainstream cognitive psychology. The obvious educational implications are to be found in the teaching of art appreciation, and the testing of learning. Applied dimensions of psychology benefit by the contribution of solid data related to the development of ambiguous concepts.

Dennis is an experienced public school teacher and he will be able to translate this experience to a successful career in higher education. He is proficient in research, he is able to identify important research questions, and he is sufficiently disciplined to set a research agenda that will make him a highly valued member of the art education profession.