

mentor's introduction

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Much has been written about aesthetics as of late, due in part to the influence of the 1960's seminars on Art Education which first introduced the idea that a grounding in history, philosophy and aesthetics is important to the field of Art Education. The Penn State Conference was wide-ranging and influential. It brought together such diverse fields as philosophy, criticism, aesthetics, psychology, sociology, education and, of course, artists and art educators. This conference set the tone of debate for decades to come. Subsequent conferences were based upon the dynamic set-up at this 1966 conference. One of the most recent spin-offs of this dynamic is DBAE which, borrowing some parts of the idea, dropped other disciplines including psychology, sociology and anthropology for reasons which remain obscure.

The various dimensions now being considered in Art Education will all require careful scrutiny. What will be the substance of history instruction, studio instruction, aesthetic instruction and critical instruction? And work remains in the process of clarifying just what will be meant by aesthetic instruction in Art Education.

This paper on aesthetic attitude theory opens, once again, the question of the nature and dimensions of a useful aesthetic theory in Art Education. Mr. Hicks develops a substantial review of the origins of such seminal concepts as **disinterestedness**, **contemplation**, **empathy** and **psychic distance**. He develops a grounding for using these aesthetic dimensions in thinking about teaching and learning and thus contributes to the on-going dialogue regarding suitable content in Art Education.