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ABSTRACT

This paper looks at how a Brazilian educator implemented Paolo Freire's notion of critical pedagogy. The study describes Brazil's historical background, previous educational conditions, Freire's educational ideas translated into art education, and preservice education. Through participant observation, the study documents the practice of an art educator with 16 years of experience. The study examines instructional content, cultural influences, and issues in one high school art class that consisted of 31 girls who ranged in age from 15 to 18 with mixed racial backgrounds (African, German, Portuguese, and Indio). In this class, the art educator trains preservice teachers to use art and institutional resources with elementary children. The study concludes that little critical pedagogy occurred in the class even though the teacher was familiar with Freire. Evolving classroom issues are conflicting standards of beauty, historical confusion, omission of biracial artists, and stereotyped and appropriated images. The study offers practical implications for preservice teacher education in liberatory pedagogy. (Contains 29 references.) (KC)

Running head: AN ART CLASS FOR BRAZILIAN PRESERVICE TEACHERS



# Sociocultural Influences and Issues in an Art Class for Brazilian Preservice Teachers

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Abstract

How have Brazilian educators implemented Freire's educational ideas? This study starts with descriptions of Brazil's historical background, previous educational conditions, Freire's educational ideas translated in art education, and preservice education. Through participant observation strategies, I document one art instructor who is familiar with Freire's critical pedagogy, her instructional content, cultural influences, and issues in one high school art class. In this class, she trains preservice teachers, some as young as sixteen-years-old, to use art and institutional resources with elementary children. The teacher-trainer employs sacred and profane art images and graphic art explorations when teaching art appreciation. Evolving classroom issues are conflicting standards of beauty, historical confusion, omission of biracial artists, and stereotyped and appropriated images. I offer practical implications for preservice teacher training in liberated pedagogy. The study is historically significant because it deconstructs a way of teaching that is the appropriation of powerful institutional resources for learning.

Sociocultural Influences and Issues in an Art Class for Brazilian Preservice Teachers

Brazil is a country of extremes: dense cities (nearly one-third of the population live in cities near the coast) rain forest, coastal towns, and dry plains. The Portuguese first discovered Brazil around 1500, but didn't settle there until around 1550 when the first colony (Salvador) was established at the Port of Santos in the state of Sao Paulo. Peaceful indigenous people (the Tupi) lived in this area and freely intermarried. The Portuguese aimed to civilize them and Jesuit priests came to convert them. The Portuguese used Salvador as an African slave market and prison.

After World War II, many Europeans (Italian, Lebanese, & Jewish) and Asians (Japanese) immigrated to Brazil (Page, 1995). Brazilians refer to the dominant racial mixtures as mulatto (black and white--the majority) and mestizos (white & indigenous). Some people believe that this racial mix gives Brazil its strength, while others believe that it is a camouflage for serious social and economic problems (Page, 1995).

Sao Paulo is the sixth largest city in the world with a population of 9,846,185. It is Brazil's economic capital. Lively colored houses dot the city. Its rich music traditions include popular samba hits. Blue skies (that are now gray with pollution) hover over the city. Sao Paulo unfortunately has few of its own distinctive art traditions, although north Brazil has numerous ones (Page, 1995). One of the results of rapid development may be mediocrity and loss of historical memory as developers are destroying Brazil's heritages (such as stately mansions and rain forests) for second-rate, high rise apartments (Rocha, 1997).

Previous educational conditions. The megalopolis of Sao Paulo later developed around a major Portuguese Jesuit school (1554) which dominated Brazil. The education situation was

elitist, bourgeois-authoritarian, and preferential. Foreign immigration from 1890-1920 flooded the public schools of Sao Paulo. The military government (1960-1980) supported educational privatization and disdained public education (Page, 1995). This administration was terrible to teachers who were subjected to ostracism and fired. Progressive education proposals were considered communist influences and blocked. Schools continued to reflect a class-based society (Freire, 1993).

Public schools were in dismal condition, "... ceilings falling apart, huge puddles in the classroom, exposed electric wires, clogged sewers, threatening rats. There were one million boys and girls living in the streets" (Freire, 1993, p. 51). Paolo Freire, a scholarly idealist, became the city of Sao Paulo's Secretary of Education for a short time. He argued for changes and managed to adjust some policies. He reported, "Because of political disagreements along party lines and cuts in federal grants to cities, construction of new schools slowed. So money came only from the school's budget, which was one-fourth of the federal one" (Freire, 1993, p. 15).

Basic education begins at six years-of-age with eight primary grades. Secondary education consists of three years of pre university studies, technical training, or teacher training school (Pimentel, 1998). Many students at both primary and secondary levels still don't attend schools because they are overcrowded (Barbosa, personal communication, April 28, 1998). Other problems include lack of space, crime resulting in barred windows, administrative neglect and exhausting bureaucracy. Graffiti, which plagues the city's buildings and schools, is the result of student and parental discontent. Many children jump buses to other parts of the city or don't attend school. Due to government changes that featured more conservative economic policies, public schools receive little increase in support. Prejudice still continues against art education, which administrators regard as mediocre (Barbosa, Presentation at Chicago NAEA Conference,

March 3, 1998). Barbosa (1984) explained, "These undergraduate courses, named The Short Degree in Art Education, are producing incompetent related arts teachers" (p. 223). The teachers are expected by law to teach music, visual arts, and drama from first to eighth grade with only two years training. When art teachers advance to a full degree diploma that requires higher pay, school administrators will not hire them.

Freire's educational ideas.

Freire (1973) desires to liberate pedagogy, a process of "problem-posing, striving for emergence of consciousness and critical intervention of reality" (p. 68). The aim of such teaching is to help students become critical thinkers in dialogue with their teachers (Margolis, 1997). As a team, teachers encourage students to analyze their own reality and "become aware of distorted perceptions and gain a new reality" (Freire, 1993, p. 107). While instructing, the teacher also learns when discussing problems with students. Dialogue cannot exist without humility; it is not based on arrogance. People who lack humility cannot be partners in naming the world. Liberation pedagogy has two stages: a) the oppressed unveil the world of oppression and commit selves to transforming it and b) after the transformation, pedagogy belongs to all people. There must be an examination of what happened. In order to do this, teacher and students cooperatively identify and discuss generative themes, based on the students' reality, and develop instructional materials that they all can use (Posner, 1998). Freire (1993) stresses learning based on the context of the student and reading the context is the tool to conscientização or understanding.

In the past, studio art as expression was a dominant part of the art curriculum. Since 1973, art education has been a major part of the elementary school curriculum. The goal is to make education "serious and pleasurable with interdisciplinary aspects and art/culture the center

for literacy training as well" (Freire, 1993, p. 51). Barbosa (1994), Professor Emerita of Art Education at the University of Sao Paulo and former student of Freire, writes, "I am in the same way trying to stress the cultural, political, emotional, and visual literacy through contextualization. I believe that contextualization will be the open door to perceive the differences, to begin to respect them" (p. 19). She believes that respect for multicultural people begins through understanding their lives and arts in context. Barbosa's (1994) model in practice is triangular and consists of "creating (artistic production), a reading of the work of art, and contextualizing" (Ibid). The reading of the artwork, similar to art criticism, encourages emotional responses as well as formal element analysis. Most important of all is contextualization, an understanding of art in its socio-historical milieu.

Teacher Education

The teacher education program, CEFAM (Specific Center of Formation and Improvement of Teaching Profession) has been important since the middle of the 19th century for training preschool and elementary teachers. Independence from Portugal in 1822 meant educating the working class to write, read, and count. In the beginning, CEFAM prepared mostly middle school girls, as young as 10 years-old, to teach students (K-4) in three years. At this time Brazil didn't have enough educated people with college degrees to teach in the public schools. In 1930, the program moved to the high school; boys went to normal high schools; and girls, into teacher training schools (Louro, 1997).

The Ministry of Education of Sao Paulo had 47 CEFAM participating schools. Preservice teachers stayed all day and received a small stipend (about $100 per month). The CEFAM curriculum, which continues today, includes general subjects, the arts (four hours a week in the first year and two hours in the second year), and 72 hours of practice teaching during the second

year. This curriculum is a total of 22 courses or 408 hours for a four year program (Cavalcante, 1994).

## Method

This study deconstructs one CEFAM class and explores the major questions: How have Brazilian art educators implemented Freire's (1973) educational ideas? In the following sections, I explain the method, procedure and participants; describe the program, students' preconceptions, and a visit to the Bolero Exhibition. Then I analyze students' representations and aesthetic responses, uncover sacred and profane influences, and discuss related issues.

Participant observation is a multi-person, multi-technique, and multi-concept form of research to document everyday teaching and understand its obvious and hidden features (Spradley, 1980). The researcher learns from people not just studies them (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Research for this study unfolds in three stages: data collection, content analysis, and comparative analysis (Stokrocki, 1997). Data collection is a systematic process of collecting information. Content analysis is the close examination of frequent patterns in the transcribed data. Comparative analysis is the interrelating of findings. The study generates insights on preservice teaching in a large city and my interpretation of another's translation further limits the study (Stokrocki, 1997).

### Procedure

Data collection mainly consisted of simultaneous translation, daily notes, pre and post questionnaires, informal student interviews, and some photography. Since the environment was noisy, tape recording was difficult. I transcribed notes into the computer, the translator added reflections, and together we wrote questions for the following week. Next, the translator analyzed questionnaires by color and marginal coding, while I searched transcripts for repetitive

student behaviors and meanings. For comparative analysis, I observed different class sessions in this school and art programs in other schools. I referred to related literature and Brazilian experts, such as Ana Mae Barbosa (1994) and Paulo Freire (1993). Then I sent my initial study to other Brazilian educators, such as Lucia Pimentel, for additional comments. The study thus featured triangulation of three or more opinions and methods in order to validate findings. Observations started on April 23 and ended on June 5 (total of 7, two hour visits or 14 hours in 1998). Clarifications with the teacher, translator, and Barbosa, continued through Internet correspondence.

Participants

As a result of Ana Mae Barbosa's invitation to teach a four-week graduate "Seminar on Qualitative Research" at the University of Sao Paulo, I invited her students to become co-researchers. One graduate student, Rejane Coutinho, expressed interest because of her experience teaching this CEFAM course for two years in another school. She also acted as translator.

Colleagues of Barbosa recommended Ruth Rhein as a good art teacher because of her love of teaching, search for new methods, dedication to her students, and her work with museums. Rhein has German, Spanish, Portuguese, and Indio ancestry. Rhein, whose specialties are design and art history, taught for 16 years, eight of which were a similar CEFAM school. She taught eight (50-minute) classes, three days per week.

She found that students came to her class "repressed" and she gave them "freedom to talk and learn." Rhein explained how Paulo Freire's (1993) ideas about curiosity and liberation education influenced her. She stated, "I don't build knowledge, but curiosity, an educational practice which makes the students feel free and stimulated. Nobody can produce knowledge without curiosity."

Rhein explained that teaching first year students was difficult because classes were large (nearly 40 students), had few art experiences, were unfamiliar with the program, and generally came from poor families. She discovered that students socialized too much and she spent much time discussing their behavior with them. Because of Coutinho's limited availability, we decided to study Rhein's older students.

School directors selected students for admission to CEFAM based on a test, interview willingness to attend all day classes, and family income. Boys also elected these courses, but more girls (92%) seemed to take them (Cavalcante, 1994). The observed art course consisted of 31 girls (who ranged in age from 15-18) with mixed racial backgrounds (African, German, Portuguese and Indios).

## A Description of the Program, Students' Preconceptions, and Visit to the Botero Exhibition

Rhein considers herself a facilitator who shows students the best way to learn and research art. During the first year of the program, she covered technical drawing, art elements, color theory, clay modeling, and art history (Brazilian and European). After her initial diagnostic questionnaire, she asked for students' suggestions. Together they planned lessons for the second year on comics, women, the museum, and art history. Rhein also introduced pedagogy (traditional and contemporary trends, instruction, techniques), the National curriculum, and child drawing and art experiences (not covered in this paper). She informed students, "The objective was to demystify art and bring it closer to the people." This study presents results of three lessons, 1) the Botero exhibition, 2) Baroque Sacred Art Exhibition, and 3) students' comparison and visual interpretations of both art exhibitions.

### Students' Preconceptions and Preferences about Art

Coutinho prepared a questionnaire in Portuguese. She first asked, "What is art for you?" She wanted them to have alternative choices (including fashion, movies, music, & museum visits), not just fine art examples to consider. Responses were varied and the major answer was expression--feelings (9/30). One girl elaborated, "It's everything that give us pleasure in doing, with freedom, without rules to do our art [sic]." The next question was "What's your favorite art experience and Why?" Respondents cited music (16/30), followed by painting (11/30), theater (11/30), dance (9/30), and drawing (9/30). One student answered, "I don't know exactly why, but I know that when I watch a theater play, if it has also a good music, I feel good with myself." About half of the students (17/30) had no dislikes; some students mentioned drawing (5/30). Their previous art experiences were mostly drawing (18/30), painting (14/30), and theater (8/30).

Then we asked students why they decided to become a teacher. Nearly half of them responded that they felt good about teaching (12/30) and liked children (8/30). When we asked them the question "What makes a good teacher?" their answers varied: to like the profession (5/30), capacity to teach and good will (5/30), respect and consideration for students (5/30), and love, passion and care (4/30). Students' ideas reflected concern for children and their world and helping them to comprehend life.

Rhein discovered from last year's post questionnaire that students wanted to know more art history. She previously discussed with them the nature of a museum and its social-cultural purposes. Teacher and students planned a visit to the Botero Exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art. Rhein shared works from Botero's catalog and distributed a handout called "Botero Online" that she obtained from the Internet. Rhein instructed the class to choose one work that they liked and examine it because they would later use it to prepare an art lesson and instructional materials for children. A description of the visit to the Botero exhibition follows.

Visit to the Botero Exhibition

For those unfamiliar with Fernando Botero, the following is a brief review of his life and style. Young Botero made maps in geography class, drew animals in zoology, and painted landscapes at his Andean Jesuit high school from which he was expelled because of his nonconformist interest in Picasso. He finished his baccalaureate in painting and later left Colombia to live in Spain, New York, Mexico City, and Paris (Botero, 1998). Botero believed that art is communication and deformation. People found his work satirical but he was concerned with form plasticity and enlarged sensual body types (Ratcliff, 1980). Botero studied and reinterpreted the works of such European painters as Leonardo, Velasquez, Cezanne, and Manet). Barbosa commented, "Post modernism brought Botero to the art scene. Modernists regarded his figurative style as mediocre and only valued the minimal" (Barbosa, personal correspondence, April 24, 1998).

The tour consisted of a (15 minute) video on Botero, after which the class divided into smaller groups, and visited Botero's contemporary works downstairs (one hour) and his early works upstairs (1/2 hour). A guide introduced students to various sections of the exhibitions with guiding questions. At the end, students used an Internet station to look up Botero's works online.

The Museum assigned a university art student as a tour guide for the group of students. He seemed well prepared with guiding questions. "What do you notice?" asked the guide as he began the tour in one room. Students were intrigued with a heavy nude woman in thin high heels. The guide asked what else attracted their attention? In a second painting, students wondered how the "big woman would sit on the little toilet." Later in the tour, students posed on one foot and imitated a statue of a dancing ballerina (similar to Degas). Their questions involved the principles of balance and proportion.

"Who is the artist looking at?" the guide inquired. Botero's painting of Mona Lisa clearly intrigued students. Rhein had told them that Leonardo painted Mona's eyes to follow the looker. They felt that Botero's Mona was staring at them. Coutinho felt that the leading question was too complex and invited students to consider that the artist wants them to look not only closer but also beyond the room.

"Why does Botero consider the picture of a woman posing in the bathroom a still life?" This was another question by the guide. Another room featured several still life paintings of lush fruit. Students noticed many paintings with bananas and suggested that it was Botero's "favorite fruit." Then the guide asked why the picture of the nude woman was hanging in this room? No one could answer. The guide suggested that Botero did it to "provoke questions" (Botero, 1998).

"What is beauty?" questioned the guide when the group approached Botero's imitation of Manet's neoclassical painting, Dejeuner sur L'herb. One girl joked, "a different kind of beauty--a fat beauty." The guide explained that Manet questioned issues about female nude representation. Similar to Gauguin, Botero also tried to paint the nude "naturally--fully erotic, without the connotations of shame, scandal, and exposure" (jagodzinski, 1997, p. 79).

## Emerging Issues

Conflicting standards of beauty, historical confusion, omission of biracial artists, and appropriation of images were issues which emerged from this study. A discussion of each issue follows with descriptive evidence.

Conflicting standards of beauty. The first major issue involved conflicting standards of beauty. In a post questionnaire, we asked students to tell us what they learned from Botero's Exhibition. Students mentioned "to be fat is not a fault and nothing is perfect. Then the girls commented on formalistic concerns: art doesn't have rules of proportion; objects don't need to

seem heavy; volume without light and shade, and colorful. Students realized differences in beauty.

Back in the classroom, Rhein asked students to sketch impressions of the exhibition. Most girls drew still life (16/20): oranges, bananas, sunflowers, or guitar. Some students also imitated Botero's version of Mona Lisa (5/20), while others attempted to draw Botero's female figures: a clothed girl from the back view and a little girl. Students probably selected these simple images, because they were realistic and easier to draw.

After class, five girls talked with us and asked questions. One girl joked, "I am a Botero masterpiece-fat!" Another small girl wanted to be "bigger with a fat ass," since people often thought she was about 10-years-old. They were surprised that I was "not a Hollywood style women--a Barbie doll." Barbosa commented that this important dialogue "demystified stereotypes about America" that Brazilians supposed.

Analysis of students' responses further revealed their expressions were ideal reactions to subject matter. The young women realized the aesthetic standard in Brazil was the voluptuous woman. Students also noted the ideal standard in the United States for the Barbie "blonde bombshell." This ideal is based on toy doll images that are commercialized around the world. In comparison, children from seven to nine-years-old in the United States and would be classified in the stage of aesthetic realism (Parsons, 1987). Such commercial images that are also dominated by men may regress Brazilian girls' preferences and judgment.

Such conflicting standards of beauty were present in Brazilian public art ranging from Rio de Janeiro's Sambadrome, which celebrates the female derriere, to the Sao Paulo billboards with advertisements featuring images of emaciated women. Brazilian art teacher Janina Simione clarified, "In Brazil this [issue of beauty] is a problem--pressure from society, friends, and

television. Students live a conflicting world full of vanity, pleasure, and sex." Art instructors may need to instigate discussions of gender representation (Freedman, 1994) and women's work (Stokrocki, 1987). Thus art is not true or false, bad or good, beautiful or ugly, but of different types and intentions (Gombrich, 1988). Using nudes in comparison may not be appropriate in United States elementary schools.

Historical confusion. Confusion over the nature of history was a second issue. Even though students had a history course that sometimes overlapped with art classes, their understanding of history was limited. For example, after a visit to the Brazilian Baroque Art Exhibition, Rhein asked students to compare Botero's artwork to Baroque sacred art. Some of their formalistic comments were "Botero paints rounder forms" and "without proportion." Other responses involved emotions, "Botero's art is light and fun, but sacred art is serious and heavy." Still other comments revealed historical confusion; for example, "Sacred art was historical and Botero's art was not." Rhein explained that both exhibitions were historical but Botero's was contemporary history. She prepared a handout that featured a time line on the Renaissance and Baroque in Brazil. She clarified that "the purpose of studying history was to expand their perception." "The lack of historical knowledge is responsible for the anxiety about the new that is felt by many of the better art teachers in Brazil" and leads to historical misconceptions (Barbosa, 1985, p. 217).

Omission of biracial artists. Another issue was the absence of biracial artists studied in art history. For example, the most famous artist of the Brazilian Baroque was Aleijadinho, a mulatto sculptor who carved remarkable statues. Although the instructor used his artwork on her handout, she did not reveal his heritage nor his affliction (crippled). Six months later, Rhein and

students visited the city of Ouro Preto and church in which Aleijadinho worked. Students also made books for children on his life, sculpture, and the church.

The teacher and students may not be ready to discuss racial issues nor know how. Sebastio Perreira, Brazilian art teacher now living in Phoenix, clarified, "We are a culture of denial of our ethnic roots. Much unspoken racial prejudice and stereotyping exists. Even the African-Brazilians cover up their Black heritage to survive. Brazilian students need to identify with bicultural role models as well" (Personal correspondence, 7/13/98). Page (1995) found that loss of historical consciousness was a major problem in Brazil. In addition, a lack of understanding about Brazil's artistic traditions in contemporary society still exists.

Image appropriation. A fourth issue concerned appropriated images, namely the teacher's practice of photocopying copyrighted images of Botero. Appropriation is the assimilation of cultural goods, stripping them of original context or using them in art productions (Marcus & Myer, 1995). Rhein asked students to choose a Botero reproduction, which she photocopied, and to reinterpret it in any medium. Most of the students chose Botero's painting, Woman Falling From a Sacade. When I asked why they selected this work, one girl mentioned, "[It's] a lighter image." Most students finished the photocopied reproduction by copying one half of the work in a different medium or by making collages or puzzles out of it. Other students used such graphic design techniques as overlay papers, checkerboard designs, or mosaic cutouts. Several students managed to create hybrids for Mona Lisa, which they titled as Africa Mona, Amazonia, Mona Lua (moon) and Mona in the Year 2000.

Mary Erickson, one reviewer of this article, strongly felt that teachers must discuss issues of copyright with students. Another anonymous reviewer asserted that poverty or lack of materials is no excuse for plagiarizing art. Teachers therefore may need to stress the idea of

reinterpreting artworks, as Botero did, rather than copying them (Wilson, Hurwitz, & Wilson, 1987).

Rhein insisted that Brazil is a poor country and teachers can use photocopies for educational purposes. Flavia at the Itau Cultural Center added, "We teach students to appropriate institutions for their own purposes." Freire also encouraged teachers to use cultural resources for learning. Rhein saw nothing wrong with this practice and complained how Western capitalism exploits the poor. Barbosa pointed out that the appropriation theme was dominant in Brazil at the time because of the Biennial theme of anthropofagia, cultural cannibalism, a form of cultural production which led teachers and students to use many foreign images (Personal correspondence, May 12, 1999).

Cultural cannibalism is the process in which a dominant culture attempts to anesthetize and devour a subordinate culture's difference. "Appropriation incorporates the objects and sensibilities into the dominant, Western-based culture, sometimes by domesticating and sometimes by erasing the origins of these objects" (Root, 1996, p. 78). Brazil struggles with such colonial roots. Root warns that the focus is usually profit and the biggest offenders are governments, tourist industries, museums, movie producers, and anthropology departments.

Anthropologists Marcus and Myer (1995) further debate this issue. They challenged museums with their privileged self position as "one that is capable of absorbing all difference with it" (p. 33). They revealed sources of stress that affect the artworld, such as inflationary art markets, censorship, and alternative communities. Debate over appropriation practices continues.

## Conclusions

Through participant observation, researchers can study instructional content, cultural influences, and issues associated with preservice teaching. Cultural influences tend to include

sacred and profane exhibitions and commercial arts. Balance of art styles in instructional content is noteworthy. Although Botero's artwork transcends profane interests, students' verbal and visual responses seem secular and realistically ideal (Parsons, 1987). Teaching art history through contrast of styles, such as Baroque realism and Botero's super-realism, is Calabrese's (1993) bipolar approach of using opposites to reveal dimensions of contrasting historical artworks.

I was disappointed that I didn't see more critical pedagogy in Sao Paulo, although other historical lessons on Indios and females occurred later. Little critical questioning happened during the observed art education class. Either my observation time was too short, the observed teacher preferred not to demonstrate it, or she simply did not know how to conduct a socially critical discussion of art. Graduate Assistant Coutinho also noted that the instructor's lesson plans were simple and incomplete.

Such issues invite further deconstruction. According to Efland, Freedman, and Stuhr (1996), "Deconstruction is a method of reading that attempts to uncover inherent oppositions in a text or work of art" (p. 107) and even in educational policies. Earlier the observed teacher complained about too much socializing. This mindset might have been problematic initially. The liberated teacher needs to redirect students' socializing to explore problems that are bothering them. The program also seems to focus too much on the artwork and not on the development of students' meanings about it. Art needs to connect to student lives and to empower them to use art for the betterment of their social cultural situations. Whereas Freire (1973) advocates liberation pedagogy and literacy and artwork as a springboard for dialogue, he later (1993) admits, "A critical analysis of reality may, however, reveal that a particular form of action is impossible or

inappropriate at the present time" (p. 123). Teachers first need training to develop their own critical and aesthetic thinking skills and values. They also need program models.

These issues point to implications for preservice teacher training. A liberated facilitator needs to use a variety of instructional strategies; for example, to help preservice teachers identify their problems, find their own answers, and press for change. They need to plan instructional activities with students so that they can interrogate the activities and justify reasons for doing them. Preservice teachers need to compare old and contemporary images and include social-historical information. In this way, they can compare different versions of history, become aware of the fact that history is made by people, and help create it. The facilitator helps students appropriate institutional resources for learning so they help change them. In this way, institutions are demystified. Teachers should include Brazilian biracial artists in order to retrieve submerged histories and re-interpret artworks not merely copy them. For example, socially aware students can render different concepts of the family and discuss stimulating issues based on their provocative questions, not only the teacher's. This requires that teachers intervene and redirect students' learning, not merely let them do their own thing.

Freire further believes that critical questioning should be rooted in students' daily experience so that they can examine their assumptions. Let's question their assumptions for example on beauty. Where do these ideas come from? Who changes them? What is beauty for them beyond the surface? What is moral or spiritual beauty? How can we beautify the school and surroundings? How can we help people act beautifully towards one another? More collaborative and cross-cultural research on preservice art education examples is needed. Brazilian art educators seem to be facing problems that teachers in the United States have for quite some time.

With its cultural mixtures and economic problems, Brazil beacons what art education in the United States may become in the future (Crossley & Vulliamy, 1997)[1].

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[1] Special thanks to Ana Mae Barbosa, Regina Coutinho (my cultural and educational adviser), Lucia Pimentel, reviewers of this article, and Ruth Rhein and her class of preservice teachers. A third reviewer, Edith King who is a noted educational sociologist, wrote, "What is shocking is that the government and Ministry of Education have such little regard for education, that they still train high school students to teach younger children (Personal communication, April 21, 1999). She regards this practice as a form of child labor which exploits their rights (King, 1999). Swift (1997) also observed that teachers in Brazil are still monstrously underpaid, lack resources, and are poorly educated. Furthermore, a huge gap still exists between university professors and classroom teachers. A lack of art education professors with PHD qualifications at the university persists. Art educational philosophies at the university also compete for attention (Barbosa, personal correspondence, May 12, 1999).

Brazilian educators are fighting to push the preparation of elementary teachers to four years at the university level. Barbosa clarifies the dilemma, "We agree with the criticisms about having 16-years-old kids responsible for the education of other kids. In November 1996 a new law opened the possibility for the creation of colleges to prepare elementary teachers. This contextual article with all its criticisms about the current system will help our fight" (sic) (Personal correspondence, May 12, 1999).

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