

CONCERNING THIS ISSUE

The inclusion of Art in the elementary school curriculum is widespread and generally accepted as a legitimate endeavor for young children. This acceptance is based upon such historical antecedents as instruction introduced by Rousseau to his ideal male-child "Emile" and, later, by Froebel in his use of clayforming experiences in the kindergarten.

Specific learnings involved in their early creative experiences were thought to be of value to children and their effectiveness was observed in changed behaviors.

With the current reevaluation of priorities in the education of children, it is significant that considerable attention is being given to the importance of creative thinking and to the specific kinds of learning produced by active participation in art experiences.

In this issue of *Educational Perspectives*, we have included evidence of research in both creativity and learning which occurs as children produce art.

It is with real pleasure that we introduce this issue with a survey of 25 years of research in creativity by E. Paul Torrance. Perhaps no other individual has worked so consistently to identify the creative characteristic in learning.

Approaching the identification of creativity through scientific investigation has been of continuing interest in the Center for Development of Early Education, a division of the Bernice Pauahi Bishop's Kamehameha Schools. We have included three articles which provide insight into these areas of interest: Calkins and Welkowitz have studied problemsolving, analytic and divergent processes among second-grade children with promising results. Louis, Pickens and Welkowitz share the results of their study of cognitive development through art instruction. Speidel reports the results of her study based upon developing creative thinking through clayforming activities with elementary children. Each of these authors contributed important evidence to support the relevance of art in the elementary school program.

Providing a rationale for continued research into the importance of art and creativity, Freundlich decries the lack of national encouragement for the arts and urges identification and support for young artists.



We share Dr. Freundlich's view that "Just as our attitude toward art and artists has evolved, so—to a limited degree—has the attitude toward arts education in the school."

Continued research such as that reported in this issue may well contribute to this evolution.

Alex L. Pickens
Professor of Education in Art and Editor