Art in Early Childhood

"I'm going to have to draw it to find out":

Children's drawing performances, knowing, and the formation of egocentric speech.

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ABSTRACT

Within peer mediated drawing groups, children become both performer and audience to the worlds and forms emerging onto the surfaces of their mark-making canvasses. Children observe and respond to each other's work, both verbally and graphically, and in doing so, new ideas and meanings form through spaces of shared knowing. As a space of play, children's drawing performances present opportunities for flexible creation of meaning within situational and relational contexts. This paper continues the narrative analysis of data collected in conjunction with a larger research project focusing on epistemology and young children. Theorized within Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, children's drawings performances were utilized as the primary source of data collection, with careful consideration given to the intersections of speech, graphic forms, and concepts of play. This research occurred in three preschool classrooms in the state of Pennsylvania in the United States. This paper attends to the ways that peer mediated drawing performances became vital spaces of learning and it advocates for the arts as a space that generates, supports and extends children's thinking.

Prelude

Five-year-old Kevin began his work one morning at the drawing table creating graphic equations of "algebra" before moving to making a series of dots on his paper with the marker, which he subsequently connected. "What are you making?" I asked. Thinking of the vast numbers of drawings featuring the Starship Enterprise and the Star Wars TIE fighters that dominated the boys' drawing performances in the classroom, I took a guess at identifying his work. "It looks to me like you are making a constellation." "It's South America," he corrected me, multiple times.

What was he making, and what was he thinking? I wondered to myself. Is he thinking about geography? Is he making maps? Has he ever seen a shape of South America, because this doesn't look anything like it. "See, Paradise Falls is here and here," he continued, pointing to points in his picture.

"Who gets to decide that it is Paradise Falls?" I asked, trying to find some connection to make with the children. Engrossed in their own drawings, I initially suspected that the other children were oblivious to Kevin's work. I was totally off base. No sooner did I pose the question then, Melanie responded, "The people who made the movie Up get to decide. That's who decides." She was busy drawing a house. "See, it is the house from Up," she tells me, "see the balloons?" (Figure 1).

Figure 1: The house from UP

My status as "outsider" was instantly revealed. I did not have the context to engage knowingly or to become part of their conversation, and I was disappointed that I had not seen the Disney animated movie. I was humbled by my ignorance of the shared understanding that the peer group was adeptly maneuvering within the spaces of their graphic play.

My experiences as a teacher and a researcher have shown me that the preschool classroom is a place filled with the hum of nearly constant chatter. At Bright Stars and Little Lamb preschools, ideas bounced around the drawing center like a marble in a pinball machine. It can be hard, in a preschool classroom, to keep up with the rapid firing of thinking that seamlessly flows from one child to the next; cognition that is inter-connected to other children and intra-connected through talk with those children.

Introduction

This paper recognizes children as reliable contributors to the creation and re-creation of their own knowing and highlights their aptitude and ability to function as participatory members of cultural groups. Corroborating with the socio-cultural

perspectives shared by contemporary theorists of children's artistic productions (Cox, 2005; McArdle, 1999; McArdle and Piscitelli, 2002; McClure, 2006, 2008, 2009; Thompson, 1995, 2002, 2007; Thompson and Bales, 1997; Wilson, 1997, 2004, 2007; Wilson and Wilson, 2009), I contribute to a body of work that acknowledges children's engagement with artistic explorations as processes that facilitate understanding of their daily lives.

More specifically, my focus is on the important role that peer mediated, voluntary drawing activity plays in the preschool curriculum and the implications this practice holds for pedagogy and research. Thompson and Bales (1991) have explained, that the social processes of children's graphic play provides evidence for the ways that drawing functions as a tool that facilitates the development of egocentric speech. I expand on this by considering, as Vygotsky (1962) did, that language is not a mere display of thinking, but rather one of many symbol systems that facilitate the development of higher mental processes. Defining children's drawing as a performance, I explore the dialectical relationship between verbal and graphic languages to demonstrate how multi-symbolic processes work in tandem to facilitate and extend children's processes of cognition and inner speech.

Context of the study

The data featured in this paper was collected in conjunction with my dissertation research. The larger scope of the narrative project addressed epistemological issues of children's cognition through an investigation of American Santa Claus. My research was designed to explore children's active participation in meaning-making, in and of their worlds, and the ways that Santa Claus serves as a form of social and cultural documentation that reveals the visible and invisible complexities of their practices.

My paper focuses on peer mediated art-making practices and ritual to consider how children form and transform knowledge. I explore how children's knowledge construction is mediated by their position as 'child' within the culture, and the intersections between families, peers and schools within this framework. Children's voluntary drawing activity served as one of three modes of data collection for the study. This aspect of the study was conducted in three preschool classrooms where I established drawing centers as part of the regular curriculum.

I entered the classroom spaces of Little Lamb and Bright Stars preschools as a researcher interested in children's thinking, in the month of December. The characteristics of both preschools reflected the broader demographic of central Pennsylvania. Predominantly Christian and almost exclusively white, the primary difference between locations corresponded to social class. The Bright Stars Preschool, located within close proximity to a major Research 1 University, offered a full day, play based pre-school curriculum (children ages 4-5) that catered to dual income professionals. Children primarily guided their own activity in the classroom, with morning and afternoon communal circle time allotted for more direct instruction. Little Lamb preschool, approximately 40 miles east of the University, echoed the agricultural

roots of its location. The three-morning-per-week program operated from 9AM to 11AM and catered to children who were cared for by either a non-working parent or relative. More teacher-centered in curriculum design, the children of Little Lamb preschool participated in group activities that predominantly comprised of Christmas crafts and pageant rehearsals. Sketchbooks were offered as a choice for children in both preschool locations. At Bright Stars preschool, drawing was available as a choice option throughout the morning, where as at Little Lamb, drawing was offered upon the children's arrival and after completion of teacher directed activities.

The drawing sessions exemplified what Lark-Horovitz, Lewis and Luca (1973) define as both voluntary and directed activity. In contrast to spontaneous drawing, whereby children find both the means and the place to engage in drawing activity and for which they choose the subjects, the drawing centers at both Bright Stars and Little Lamb was a choice-based activity that provided markers, sketchbooks, and paper for the children. At times directed by topic suggestions, and at other times left to their own creations, the children at the drawing center enacted a space where meaning was constructed as it emerged through the symbolic worlds of language and graphic representations shared within the peer cultures of the classroom. The voluntary nature of the drawing center allowed for the drawing performances to encompass far more than my intended topic of Santa Claus. Not only did this create rich opportunities to observe and inquire about a variety of ideas deemed important by the children, but also a space to observe the ways that graphic play merged thought and action into a space of both reflection and performance.

Graphic play and the formation of egocentric speech

Thompson (2009) has noted that within peer mediated drawing groups, children become both performer and audience to the worlds and forms emerging onto the surfaces of their mark-making canvasses. Children observe and respond to each other's work both verbally and graphically, and in doing so new ideas and meanings form through spaces of shared knowing. Five-year-old Mason, a student enrolled in the Bright Stars preschool, was particularly interested in the drawing center, though he lacked any real control over his mark-making. Mostly consisting of large movements with his marker over the paper in energetic motions, his drawings regularly resulted in entire pages filled with controlled scribble marks, most typically in a single color of whatever was closest to him. He demonstrated an understanding that his marks had representational and symbolic value by the ways he named his marks as he created them in order to develop elaborate stories that coincided with his movement of the marker. What Mason lacked in graphic skill, he gained in narrative facility. His charismatic storytelling of his own mark-making and his verbal elaborations of other children's drawings, created playful moments between peers.

The ambiguity of the play situation suspends the pressure of specific goal- driven behavior and provides children with an opportunity to engage with their environment (Sutton-Smith 1997). The concept of play is elusive to define. As Turner (1993) explained, "play can be everywhere and nowhere, imitate anything yet be identified with nothing" (p. 93). At the same time, characteristics of play, like characteristics of

drawing, situate it as a space of transformation. Play, including graphic play, provides opportunity to mentally manipulate and organize experiences, thoughts and actions for the purposes of internalization and connection with others. Playing provides children with opportunities to select, appropriate, and integrate (sometimes) disparate ideas in a mixture of realities of both fact and fiction for their own purposes of creating meaning and sense of their world. It is, as Schechner (1997) explains, "an ongoing, underlying process of off balancing, loosening, bending, twisting, reconfiguring, and transforming—the permeating, eruptive/disruptive energy and mood below, behind and to the sides of focused attention" (p. 43). Thus, the variability that inevitably occurs within the children's play allows for a flexible continuing loop of creation and re-creation where ideas are developed, acted upon, and re-created within situational and relational contexts.

One morning Mason's scribbles began as an alien (a popular topic generated by Evette), but shifted almost immediately to a crab, then became a house with a pool table and then a room with a big bed covered by blankets. Mason was especially fond of his friend Gabe, a quiet young fellow in the classroom who enjoyed the drawing center as well. What Gabe lacked in talkativeness, he gained in graphic communication. His drawing of a house with Christmas lights prompted Mason's decision to change his crab to a house. Mason's picture of a "house" soon became a story.

> Mason: Do you know what? I wasn't sleeping when it was dark out. My mom was with me in my room and she was rubbing my back and I went to sleep like this. Okay, I wake up when it's dark out today, and I'll go downstairs and sleep down there. Because I can't sleep in my room….okay, let's go see Santa.

Once Mason began his story, the other children followed suit both in their graphic play and their verbal discussions. Bedrooms became drawings of Christmas trees IN bedrooms to just Christmas trees, to stars on trees and back to Santa who will leave presents under the tree when he comes to visit.

Vygotsky (1978) noted the ways that children's play provides opportunity for children to separate the world of objects from the world of meaning. As children find ways for objects to become other than what they actually are (a stick becomes a horse, for example), they find themselves moving into a world where meaning dominates objects rather than objects dominating meaning. The lack of specified form on Mason's paper made changes to his storylines (which were frequent) occur with great ease. For Mason, whose lines and scribbles took on multiple forms within a single session, meanings for those marks were inscribed, extended, and re/inscribed (Schulte, 2011).

Inevitably, the drawings facilitated verbal interactions among peers. Thompson and Bales (1991) noted, "as children speak to each other, they learn to create images that speak for themselves. As they confront incomprehension, they modify their drawings to allow for the graphic medium to carry their meaning, unassisted to anonymous viewers" (pp. 47-48). The outward manifestation of thought, or egocentric speech, that occurs around drawing activity is intricately tied to the graphic symbols and representations that initiate processes of internalization (inner speech) which ultimately shapes the child's development of higher mental functions. Children's drawing performances offer support for the development of internalized speech as

visible process. This is evidenced in the ways in which children's planning and focus on their artistic concerns, including both conventions and sources of imagery, are decided and acted upon within peer mediated drawing groups (Wilson, 1997).

This process became particularly apparent when Michelle, a student at Bright Stars, attempted to draw an outdoor scene of a tree and tire swing. On this particular morning, the children at the drawing center were busy working collaboratively on a landscape scene of the North Pole. Featuring Santa's workshop, candy cane walkways, evergreen trees, and snowmen, the children busily worked together to consider both the content of the landscape and the forms of that content.

When North Pole landscapes shifted to other landscape locations (under the sea Sponge Bob pineapple houses and outer space battle scenes, to be exact), I was asked by one of the children how to draw a summer tree. Not very good at drawing, I put my shaky drawing skills to work. Michelle, sitting nearby, watched and listened.

> Michelle: I know, you could add a swing.

> Kris (me): That's a great idea. Oh, I know, I want to put a tire swing on the tree. Does that sound like a good idea?

> Jenny: I've been on a tire swing before.

When the drawing center had mostly cleared out for the morning, Michelle remained. She sat with her friend, transfixed not only by her own burgeoning tree-drawing skills, but also by the opportunity to teach her friend what she herself was attempting to master.

> Michelle: Now let's try again. Here's how you do it. Here is how you do it. Like this, with the branch on the tree, to hold the leaves. Okay? Oh yes, and now this. Now draw the leaves, and the leaves. And I won't teach you the next thing yet, until I'm done coloring in my leaves. And now that's good for the branches and now I will show you the other thing. You draw a line. Let me show the other thing, okay, the other thing. A line down, oh wait, no. And draw it with the black. And then you have to use the black. The um, the um, the fat black.

Michelle's discussion with her friend, as she described the parts of the tree, demonstrated the ways that her graphic activity required her to access her knowledge of the structure of that object. She used that knowledge to verbally demonstrate her planning efforts in creating the tree with forethought while at the same time the verbalization with her friend demonstrated her developing process of inner speech.

Graphic play and the formation of scientific concepts

At Little Lamb Preschool, children's drawings frequently reflected their agricultural surroundings. Jeff and Doug, who both lived on farms, were frequently sharing with me their knowledge of life on the farm through conversation and drawing. Jeff, for example, liked to add to his existing drawings each time he came to the drawing center, changing the meaning ever so slightly with each addition. Doug, on the other hand, liked to revisit his ideas in new drawings, engaging in explorations of graphic forms in an attempt to communicate. His verbalizations while he drew, of plant growth, extended an invitation for an audience.

> Doug: I'm going to draw a monster flower. It's going to have a potion.
>
> Kris: What will the potion be for? Will it make for magic growing?
>
> Doug: It's a potion. I'm not really sure this is going to work, I am going to have to draw it to find out.

As he continues to put marks to his sketchbook, he checks in with me to confirm that he is understood (Figure 2).

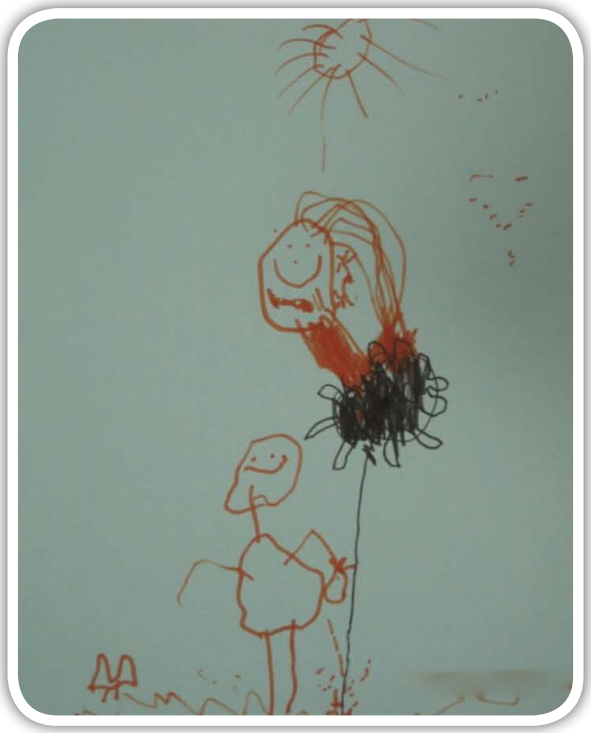

Figure 2: Monster Flower

Doug's work exemplifies the ways that children's drawing performances mediate knowledge production through a complex re-appropriation using multiple symbol systems embedded in social and cultural contexts. The use of multiple symbol systems allowed for a reinterpretation of appropriated materials within the frameworks of his

individual experience. Different symbol systems provided the opportunity to highlight different aspects of information that united in a comprehensive display of knowing. For Doug, the combination of image and language symbol systems provided him with the means to articulate and work through his understanding of plant life. As he constructed his "monster flower" narrative, he recalls, recounts, and makes sense of his agricultural world. Corsaro (2005) refers to this phenomenon as "interpretive reproduction" and notes, "children do not simply imitate or internalize the world around them. They strive to interpret or make sense of their culture and to participate in it. In attempting to make sense of the adult world, children come to collectively produce their own peer worlds and cultures[1]" (p. 24).

When children appropriate information from adult culture into their peer world, "childhood knowledge and practices are gradually transformed into the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in the adult world" (Corsaro, 2005, p. 41). Interactions with peers and peer culture offer the child the opportunity to try out information that he/she has gathered from the adult world with and among his/her peers. This enables children to see the ways that the complex matrix of the larger society is constituted by a variety of discursive spaces that must be negotiated. Their peer culture gives them a space where they can do this, repetitively, and in doing so, skills and understandings of the adult world become more refined. The inner layers of their experiences, as part of distinct contexts and peer groups, both confound and contour the ways that individual children make meaning within their lives and the larger social and cultural contexts.

Brent and Marjorie Wilson (2009) support this idea by noting how drawing provides children with opportunities to engage in worldmaking. Basing their theory on the work of Nelson Goodman, Wilson and Wilson suggest that the drawing activity of children becomes a space where they "develop, present, and examine ideas about the realities of the world" (2009, p. 23). Wilson and Wilson (2009) utilize the four realities developed by Kreitler and Kreitler (1972), to examine how children draw as a means to understand the seemingly familiar parts of their everyday worlds, including relationships and how things work (common reality), to understand the complexities of the self (archeological reality), to understand the implicit social norms of good and bad (normative reality) and to develop modes for their future selves where children can deal with the complexities of death, romance, and danger (prophetic reality).

One morning, Doug deviated from his regularly themed drawings of agriculture and began making marks on his paper that I was certain involved intricate detail. At that moment I was involved with other students at the table and therefore could not engage Doug about his work. Luckily for me, Seth was sitting on the sidelines and took an interest. At first Seth sat across from Doug and looked carefully at Doug's drawing. He carefully asked for an invitation to Doug's play.

Seth: What is it?

Doug: no response

Seth: What is that called?

1 Peer culture is defined, by Corsaro (2003), as a "stable set of activities or routines, artifacts, values, and concerns that kids produce and share in interactions with each other" (p. 37)

Seth watched for a few more seconds and then grabbed his own sketchbook and began a dialogue with Doug's topic on a separate drawing. Before long, the boys were interacting both verbally, graphically and physically on their sketchbooks, drawing on each other's pictures and debating ideas about energy (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Energy Debates

Doug: This is just a tester, you test how much energy it has.

Seth: This radio station powers that.

Doug: No it doesn't

Seth: It powers that machine

Doug: No because it's a car.

Seth: This machine powers that car.

Doug: You know the vehicles you make by hand? If you drive, I'm just drawing a picture of one

Seth: This radio station powers that vehicle.

Doug: No it doesn't because it contacts your cars.

Seth: No that powers the car contactor. It gives it a lot of electricity.

Doug: It doesn't use electricity. It uses electro-magnetic to check electricity like this.

Seth: Yeah but the electricity is going to the electric magnet

Doug: Yeah but see this?

Seth: What?

Doug: That's electric coming out of the vehicle. Electric.

Seth and Doug's graphic play allowed them to become "the creators of their own worlds, in which things may be seen, and examined, to find out what they are like, what they can do, and how they work" (Wilson & Wilson, 2009, page 23). Seth and Doug's exploration of the common reality provided them with an opportunity to explore pseudo-concepts, or concepts that remain attached to the concrete objects and activities of everyday life. Pseudo-concepts are concepts that are not fully understood, but rather aggregates of familiar attributes that come together to form conceptual thinking (Vygotsky, 1962). The use of pseudo-concepts is an important step in gaining fluidity with scientific concepts, concepts that are independent from concrete embodiment. The dialectical relationship between the two ignites the move from interpsychological to intrapsychological, and subsequently the development of higher mental functions.

As stated by Vygotsky (1978), "upon conversion to internal speech does it [language] come to organize the child's thought, that is becomes an internal mental function" (p. 89). Thinking begins as an external social act and moves inward as activity and interaction in the child's world mediates concept development leading to internalization. The ability to internalize permits the child to plan and control their thinking in increasingly more complex ways. The child is able to utilize increasingly more complex problem-solving strategies to negotiate the experiences and activities that they encounter.

Doug and Seth's drawing performance illuminated ways that their narratives allowed for a construction of knowledge that became more personalized rather than generalized. My observation of their work mirrors Anne Haas Dyson's (1989) observation in the sense that "children's dramatic and narrative language serves multiple functions. It not only helps children to create an imaginative world that may be recalled or retrieved by others, but also links children to each other. It also helps children to make sense of their perceived and real [worlds]" (p. 10). As a form of worldmaking, children's drawing performances (like Doug and Seth) demonstrate the fluid boundaries between the four realities and how children can invoke multiple worldmaking strategies during a single drawing performance. In doing so, the boys negotiated the borderlines between pseudo-concepts and scientific concepts through their connection to real objects, creating mental processes of thinking (Dziurla, n.d.)

Children's understanding and knowing that emerge from the worldmaking of their peer-mediated drawing groups are enmeshed within discursive spaces of lived experiences. The structural world of adulthood provides the language and the accepted

meanings of scientific concepts that are developed through the child's ability to separate the visual field from the field of meaning. Scientific concepts have formalized meanings. These meanings are derived from social interactions with others, and in particular, in the process of communication with adults (Dziurla, n.d.). As children enter formal institutions of teaching and learning via schooling, their generalized pseudo concepts are transformed to scientific concepts that ultimately lead to new relationships between the child and his/her world and the child with his/herself.

The boundaries between the four realities of worldmaking are porous; children's meaning-making and understanding can occur within multiple realities within a single drawing performance. The fluidity of the boundaries, and the conversation that facilitates the movement, demonstrates how dialogue and graphic play influence, inform, and propel one another in multiple directions. The multi-symbolic worlds present ample opportunity for thinking to be shared outside the limited arena of a uni-symbolic mode of thinking, thus opening possibilities and trajectories of narratives that may otherwise be limited by a single symbol system.

Drawing as performance

Vygotsky's ideas of inner speech and internalization provide useful theoretical tools to consider children's drawing activity as modes of knowledge production that are bound to the social. Furthermore, it corroborates contemporary ideas of children's drawing that specify drawing as more than an artifact resulting from an activity but considers the activity itself as part of the cognitive process (Pearson, 2001). Despite the fact that Vygotsky did not consider verbal language as the sole mediator of higher mental functions, it is the predominant mode of communication highlighted in his work. Activity (and thought), however, is not enacted through language alone. Additional communicative modes intertwine to create comprehensive understanding of the ways that children utilize multi-symbolic means of representing their worlds. Drawing, conceived of as performance, attends to the ways that it is situated between multiple points, frames, and practices and thus is resistant to stabilizing points of view (Pollock, 2006).

Children's drawings cannot easily be defined (or interpreted) and demand reflection on the work itself, in the time and space of its creation. Doing so not only reveals the connections between verbal language and graphic language, but also how the body becomes part of a drawing event. To do so illuminates how children's drawing can be characterized as both a noun, trace evidence that an aesthetic event has taken place; and as a verb, the act of drawing itself that includes the contexts, conversations, and embodied engagement that occurs during the processes of drawing.

Drawing as performance attends to the idea that knowledge is activity. As a theoretical paradigm, performance is situated in the space of in-between (Schechner,1977). Furthermore, Carlson (2004) notes that

> [performance] is associated not just with doing, but with re-doing, —its embodiment of the tension between a given form or content from the past and

> the inevitable adjustments of an ever-changing present make it an operation of particular interest [in] cultural negotiations—how human patterns of activity are reinforced or changed within a culture and how they are adjusted when various different cultures interact. Finally, performance implies not just doing or even re-doing, but a self-consciousness about doing and re-doing, on the part of both performer and spectator (p. 195).

Kevin and David, for example, were the resident sci-fi experts at Bright Stars preschool. When left on their own to draw what they wanted, it was not unusual for the boys to perform and repeatedly draw battle scenes, where markers dashed across the page as artillery fire, complete with sound effects. Their graphic play was an act that was fully embodied, performed and negotiated. The eruption of repeated drawings of the Star Ship Enterprise and Star Wars battle scenes engaged Kevin and David in the complexities of concepts. On the pages of their drawing, they became hero AND villain, conqueror AND conquered, the good guy AND the bad guy, while stretching the boundaries and parameters of what these classifications meant.

One morning David chose to come to the drawing center and initially he began his North Pole drawing as a way to join an area already occupied by a group of his peers. Entering the play space cautiously, he imitated the candy canes and workshops from the other drawings at the table. But after a short time, it seemed as if he could not contain his own interests any longer and before my powers of observation had fully grasped what was happening, the North Pole became a Star Wars battle scene. I failed to ask David about this drawing. The drawing (noun) that remained was only a trace of the drawing (verb) that had taken place. Outside the performance space of the event, the object that was left was an incomplete picture of meaning that I could only speculate about (Figure 4). I wonder, now, if he meant to invite the Empire to the North Pole for a confrontation between good and evil. I wonder if the frozen climate of the North Pole reminded David of the ice planet Hoth, from The Empire Strikes Back.

Figure 4: Battle North Pole

What I can say with certainty is that David chose to bring battleships to the North

Pole. I wonder how the themes and spaces of Star Wars intersect with the themes and spaces of Christmas. Santa Claus, like Star Wars and many of the other popular culture interests of young children, highlights the ambiguities of seemingly dichotomous ideas. Egan (1997) suggests that young children think in binaries and that their ability to understand concepts such as good/bad or love/hate stem from the ways that they break ideas down to their most basic elements. Evidenced by the work of Gussin-Paley (1981,1984,1991) and Edmiston (2007), I would argue that in the moments of drawing events and other play-related phenomena, young children move beyond binary thinking to engage with the complexities of the very dichotomous philosophical issues they create and re-create in their play worlds, including their graphic play. In the process of sharing, verbally, graphically, and as performance, the children found themselves fully engaged in the process of shared mediation of their knowing through complex narrative strategies.

The negotiation of the binaries that are evidenced by the drawing performance requires reflecting, converging, and reconciling ideas, interests, and ideologies that are sometimes consistent and sometimes contradictory in presentation. These processes happen in action and through encounters and experiences that challenge or reify previous conceptions of discovery and "truth." To put it more succinctly, making meaning takes place in-between the space of action and reflective thought whereby drawing serves as a mediator of both.

Conclusion

For the children of my research, working through scenarios, ideas, and social relationships through their drawing performances was a practice of coming to know that involved the processes of narrative, world-making, and logic. It was a blending together of social worlds through peer-mediated drawing groups where language, play and graphic symbols generated, supported and extended their thinking. This work stresses the convivial nature by which children participate with the processes of making meaning and I have provided evidence of the ways that drawing performances create multi-symbolic relationships as processes of knowledge construction. Peer-mediated drawing groups facilitate and extend children's processes of cognition and inner speech that ameliorate the extension of children's vital but unique divergent perceptions.

Not only does "art tend to give shape and weight to the most invisible processes" (Bourriaud, 2002, p. 32), art provides the very avenues by which this learning becomes visible (Guidici, Rinaldi, & Krechevsky, 2001). The various dimensions by which knowing is disseminated, interpreted, and shared is highlighted by the social processes that make up children's drawing events. Meaning is elaborated collectively and collaboratively, rather than privately.

Knowing never becomes but rather is always becoming. This is true for the children of my research as well as myself, as a researcher. For adults and children, art is liberating as it provides avenues prompting reflection and subsequent locations for regeneration and transformation of knowing. As a space of performance, children's voluntary

drawing events allow for facilitation of the very processes that propel the development of higher mental functions and thus offer children in the early childhood classroom the means by which their thinking not only becomes personalized, but also internalized.

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