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**BUT IS IT ART?
THE CONSTRUCTION AND VALUATION
OF ILLUSTRATION IN VICTORIA'S
ISLAND ILLUSTRATORS SOCIETY**

by

Shannon Jaleen Grove

Bachelor of Fine Art. Emily Carr Institute, 1999

**A thesis
presented to Ryerson University and York University**

**in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of**

Master of the Arts

**In the Programme
Joint Programme in Communication and Culture**

**Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2006
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Abstract

BUT IS IT ART? THE CONSTRUCTION AND VALUATION OF ILLUSTRATION IN VICTORIA'S ISLAND ILLUSTRATORS SOCIETY

Master of the Arts 2006

Shannon Jaleen Grove
Joint Programme in Communication and Culture
Ryerson University and York University

In Canada, illustration, commercial art, and conservative, traditional art are often spoken of as separate from and opposite to “non-commercial”, “contemporary art”, a division I argue stems from the older distinction between art and craft but one that can be subverted. Using concepts from Gowans, Greenhalgh, Mortenson, Shiner, and Bourdieu’s theory of the field of cultural production, this thesis traces the sociology and art history of the division between traditional and modern art that led to the formation of the Island Illustrators Society in 1985 in Victoria, British Columbia. I argue illustration is an original, theoretical art form indistinguishable from but alienated by contemporary art, that conservative art is neither static nor irrelevant, and that non-commercial contemporary art is a misnomer. I find the Society challenged the definitions of art and illustration by promoting illustrative fine art and by transcending binary oppositions of conservative and contemporary, commercial and non-commercial.

Acknowledgements

Dozens of people helped me on this project, and I consider it a joint effort. Space prevents me from naming everyone personally, but I wish to thank the members and staff of the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, and students, staff and faculty at the Ontario College of Art for assisting me in developing my research questions. I also thank individuals at the F.H. Varley Art Gallery and faculty at Concordia University, University of Calgary, University of Victoria, Camosun College, Victoria College of Art, and Vancouver Island School of Art for many discussions and interviews.

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Members and exmembers of the Island Illustrators Society have been very gracious in allowing me access to membership lists and the entire archives, and I warmly thank all those who responded to my telephone calls out of the blue. This thesis would not have been possible without the co-operation of the dozens of artists who took the time to complete and send back the survey. XChanges was very helpful in this regard. I am also grateful for the generosity and frankness of all who consented to interviews, and to Tim Gardner for permission to use his work in a focus group. Affiliates of Deluge Gallery, Open Space, the Limners Society, 50-50 Collective, Ministry of Casual Living, North Park Gallery and the Victoria Sketch Club also helped me.

All artwork reproduced here is by the kind permission of the artists. I also thank the Belfry Theatre for the use of their poster. I am indebted to the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria (AGGV), Colin Graham, Frank Malerby, and Robert Genn for permission to quote from private correspondence on file at the AGGV. The AGGV has also authorized the citation of unpublished records. I am likewise grateful to Ken Danby for allowing me to quote from his letter to me.

My committee has been excellent. I appreciate the efforts of Anna Hudson, Lorraine Janzen, and my supervisor Ed Slopek for guiding me through such a large and multifaceted project.

Dedication

*To George Grove
who had to stay behind in Vancouver
alone
while I lived it up in Toronto libraries
for eighteen months*

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Note About Symbols

In order to avoid tedious repetition and footnotes I have implemented a system of symbols following the names of artists, to indicate their relationship to Victoria or the Island Illustrators Society.

* denotes an artist who has been a full member of the Island Illustrators Society

^ denotes an artist who resides or has resided in or near Victoria. The artist may also have been an associate member of Island Illustrators or served as a guest speaker at a meeting.

~ denotes an artist who has lived in British Columbia but not in Victoria.

All members – full, life, associate – of Island Illustrators are listed alphabetically in Appendix E.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction of the Topic

When the establishment of the modern European conception of art congealed in the eighteenth century, it was predicated on a division of the fine from the applied arts. The genesis of this division, described by Mortenson (1997) and Shiner (2001), was necessary for the rise of the middle class who needed to demonstrate difference from the peasantry, and for a new system of knowledge that increasingly segregated analytical thought (reason) from imagination. Where in medieval and early modern times the picture painter was a tradesman like any other, in the new era “he” became a gentleman possessing both taste and divine inspiration – a “genius”. The artist’s Art was contrasted to the artisan’s craft, the former supposedly an intellectual endeavour while the latter was one of just skill. “Art” was commonly capitalized to indicate its nobler position compared to the common arts, such as cooking or needlework. Where painting was once always performed for religious reasons, for the recording of stories or events, for beautification or for representing an absent thing or person (Gowans, 1966), painting for Art began to break away from service. It was purportedly no longer for an extrinsic purpose – it was intrinsically worthy, Art for Art’s sake. Other forms of painting, such as signpainting, continued much as they always had, taught by apprenticeship and guided by guild and tradition. The two types of art have been discussed under various nomenclatures. I have just mentioned Art and craft, but they have also been called fine art and applied art, or fine art and commercial art or fine art and industrial art. The dichotomy has also been

discussed in terms of high art and low art, or fine art and popular art, or the major arts and the minor arts.

Illustration presents a difficult case when it comes to classification and status in the philosophy of art. Contemporary illustrators are quick to point out that all the “old masters” celebrated in Art worked for clients with assistants for a livelihood, were handed their subject matter and were required to make changes as the patron wished, taking this direction not as an insult to their rarefied genius but as a matter of course. Michelangelo is a favourite example among the illustrators I interviewed for this study. But because illustration since the old masters’ time stayed a service and was often found in popular forms, it has been regularly referred to as commercial art, applied art and low art (I will use the terms interchangeably). But the best illustrators of the nineteenth century – when the distinction of Art started to become exceedingly pointed – often had the same training and class identity as fine artists. From roughly 1840-1925, when the printed word was the foremost medium of mass communication, illustrators enjoyed a “golden age” and were extremely well paid. Some, like the well-born Charles Dana Gibson, became celebrities and began international fashions. Furthermore, what qualified as a work of art or a work of illustration was in practice often difficult to decide. Yet, despite this difficulty, in the twentieth century the fine art world increasingly distinguished between “fine art” and “mere illustration”. As illustration became more identified with realist styles and blatantly manipulative advertising from the 1920s onward, it lost its former glory and became morally suspect (Bogart, 1995). Meanwhile, fine art eschewed pictorial realism and aspired to ever more spiritually truthful forms. Modern art came to be equated with progressiveness and the avant garde and was

contrasted to traditional art and illustration, which was equated with conservative values. But illustrative forms have been co-opted by fine art since the 1950s (in some cases, even earlier), and the difference between fine art and illustration has once again become unclear. In fact, the difference is so murky that many of my participants in this study declared there was none, or named extremely doubtful characteristics. It is true that the old criteria of style and (often) purpose no longer apply, but there is still a fundamental difference. It is, *illustration MUST strive for common understanding, whereas fine art has no such need*. But this is only a principle, and certainly not one that can always be told simply by looking at the artwork in question. Some fine art communicates as illustration does. Yet, contemporary illustration made for a client is still under-represented in galleries, museums, scholarship, and aesthetic esteem. So too is much fine art, the sort that was once (and sometimes still is) called “mere illustration” by modernists.

My research explores the expression, legacy, confusion and redressing of the old division in the current lives and practices of illustrators today in Victoria, British Columbia. Some object that the discussion of fine art versus commercial art is dated and irrelevant now, and within my research population, two visual art professors, a high-end illustrator and a cultural critic have told me so, while one survey respondent and others in conversation said, rather than asked, “Who cares!” Certainly it is a discussion that is integral to the period of high modernism, an epoch that is generally understood to be over, because fine art now incorporates any and all forms of commercial art. Greenhalgh claims worries among craftspeople over “Why am I not treated as an artist?” ended in the 1990s (2003, p. 3). The debate is indeed old, but while it may have slipped from sight, it

hasn't necessarily disappeared and it is still important. I propose that an argument that dominated visual arts discourse for over one hundred years doesn't just dissolve.

Discussions of the collapse have mostly occurred among fine artists, their critics and their historians, while the perspective of illustrators, non-modernists and others generally excluded from academic fine art is unrepresented. My research suggests that the divide is still with us, but the "sides" are now referred to in common parlance as *contemporary art* and *conservative art*, also called *non-commercial* and *commercial* art. These days, "commercial art" designates gallery art "made for the market" first and graphic design or illustration second, but the term still carries negative connotations, as I discuss later. "Conservative" is understood to mean "resisting change". The conservative-commercial category continues (but is not limited to) the art tradition that was called "mere illustration" during high modernism, while the contemporary-non-commercial category continues the avant garde (despite objections to the contrary). Like elsewhere, in Victoria the division has precipitated two separate art worlds, operating side by side, perceived to have little in common. In Victoria, the conservative-commercial world is thought, to the chagrin of some, to be dominant.

Despite the postmodern embracing of illustration into fine art and the continuing popular reception of illustration and realism as works of fine art, speaking to self-identified illustrators I found that, for them, the status of illustration is still problematic, although many have chosen to ignore the debate. Paul Dallas, Director of the illustration programme at the Ontario College of Art and Design, tells me he still discusses the division of fine and commercial art in the classroom (February, 2006). The contrast of popular versus elite is of importance too. Cultural policy makers, who want galleries and

museums to attract crowds, must balance “high” and “low”, often against their own tastes: ex-Glenbow Museum curator Christopher Jackson has said, “To be sure, so-called wildlife art does not quicken the pulse of some curators because they feel it lies closer to illustration than fine art” (*Globe and Mail*, Sept. 13, 1997, p. D7). Individual artists are also affected by prejudicial criticism. The painter (but *not* self-identified illustrator) Ken Danby relates,

A two page article in the Toronto Star (Oct 2/04), last fall resulted from my October – November Toronto exhibition. The promo for the article, on the first inside page declared, ... *Ken Danby is a) an illustrator at best, who adds nothing to Canadian art, or b) Canada’s greatest living artist. Whatever you believe, check out Danby’s first Toronto exhibition in six years. Story J1.*

The article, under the auspicious heading, ***Canada’s Group of One*** — then proceeded to cast negative comments, snide inferences and in fact, false accusations about my work and my methods. A number of these so aggravated me that I immediately engaged a prominent libel lawyer to demand a retraction and apology from the Star — which was soon accomplished and published (with no contest).

One of the problems was the result of the journalist deciding to accept — at face value — derogatory comments, ... *by several noted curators, dealers and other artists, all of whom asked not to be quoted* — (gatekeepers). (Danby to Grove, Nov. 25, 2005, original italics).

Despite the extremely positive reviews Danby gets as well, his account documents the depth of the perceived divide. Some art historians perpetuate this schism, even unintentionally, as Robert Belton does in his 2001 textbook *Sights of Resistance: Approaches to Canadian Visual Culture*, which I critique in my review of the literature below. Significant numbers of serious art buyers and collectors, especially investors who want to minimize risky purchases, also still operate under established modernist definitions and paradigms.

Perhaps the most striking evidence of the lingering effects of the fine art versus mere illustration debate is an online message board exchange pertaining to the

photorealistic watercolours done by Canadian contemporary artist Tim Gardner (living in Victoria since 2003), who does well in fashionable New York galleries and who just completed a residency at the National Gallery in London, and whose work exemplifies the supposed collapse of fine art and illustration as exclusionary categories. The quotes show all original spelling.

Date: April 11, 2003

Sender: head to toe

tim gardner is a pussy that paints from a fucking projector.... learn to paint like a man. don't be a human camera, bitch.

Date: May 29, 2003

Sender: Dan Turner

Tracing or projecting (or whatever) is not the point- it's only the beginning- it's what you do with the tools you use that counts. ...

Date: July 1, 2003

Sender: blaster

Dan,

you are retarded if you think a projector is just a tool. where does it end. it's not the end product that counts unless your goal is just to sell shit to rich people. ... you can bet that I won't be doing any fucking monkey paintings where I just have to add color to something thats already drawn for me. Thats preschool painting, not art. Art is meant to be expressive, his shit nearly tells a weak ass story of some dumbass rich kids getting drunk. It pisses me off that art is run by nazi [Thomas] kincade and followers like you that want something to match their curtains. my shit may not ever sell or make it on a fancy website like offoffoff, but I feel comfortable knowing that i'm not selling out just to get a piece of the pie.

(<http://www.offoffoff.com/art/2001/gardner.php3>)

The problem of the divide is clearly still with us even among young artists now in 2006.

Creators are negatively affected by it, whether they think of themselves as illustrators or not.

Fine artists enjoy more attention in the academy, museum and gallery than do illustrators, and contemporary fine artists actually stand to *benefit* from being denigrated while illustrators do not, due to the historical precedent of avant garde *refusées* being celebrated for challenging expectations. In recognition of this imbalance of power, this thesis will explore the perspective of not just illustrators, but also artists whose work has been *pejoratively called* illustration: art that is decorative, craft, applied, traditional, narrative, representational, realistic, generic, kitsch, dated, period, amateur, popular, conservative, commercial, pretty or lowbrow. These are forms vernacularly called “art” but that have been excluded from (except through appropriation) what is currently imperfectly termed “contemporary art”. I am opting to write from the point of view of these artists because it is one largely missing in academic literature, despite the ubiquity of these artists’ cultural contribution. Additionally, the quoting of this kind of work in contemporary art cannot be properly contextualized without an understanding of its provenance and conditions of production.

In most scholarly writing the conventional discussion of illustration speaks of it as a picture that accompanies text, one that interacts with the text so much that it might be considered inextricable from it. Text and image are thought to rely upon one another for meaning. I would like to challenge this understanding of illustration, but without denying its validity. Text and image *do* interact and create new, more specific meanings between them, meanings that are lost when either text or picture is removed. But, I submit, illustrations can and do stand apart from text *as well*, as works of art. To most of the people who make them whom I studied, they *are* works of art, regardless of the (usually) text-based role for which they are commissioned and to which they also answer; the

process of their making is, to the illustrator, an artistic one. What illustrations sacrifice in meaning by being appreciated apart from their texts is made up for by the same imaginative interpretation a viewer brings to any work of art. Acknowledging that an illustration can signify an autonomous work of art threatens the mutual exclusivity of the categories “illustration” and “fine art”, and is the foundation of confusion between the two.

Further complicating the issue is that not all illustration has been overtly textual – there are children’s books, animations and advertising campaigns that are wordless. Conversely, in fine art, works are usually titled and accompanied by curatorial and artist statements which introduce an illustrative element into them. The art movements of Dada, Pop art, and postmodernism have all incorporated commercial art, and there is a current fashion for illustrative approaches in recent contemporary art. Some writers, such as Tom Wolfe (1975), have gone so far as to suggest that the most mystifying artwork is actually just illustration of art theory.

Understanding the roots of and current attitudes regarding the friction and friendship between fine art and commercial art can inform our understanding of the demise and/or preservation of the divide today, and how it affects contemporary art practices. The Island Illustrators Society of Victoria, B.C. is comprised of a mixture of fine artists and illustrators, who have debated what constitutes fine art and illustration since the Society’s inception in 1985. They also occupy an interesting position regarding the commercial and the conservative in art. The history of this group provides an opportunity to study the divide as it was and is manifested in Victoria, and what the Society’s response to it has been.

1.2 Island Illustrators Society

I have chosen to centre my study on the Island Illustrators Society in the city of Victoria, British Columbia in part because I have close ties to the Society and to Victoria. A description of my personal involvement appears in the Chapters Three and Seven. This society and city are also my choice because the membership over the years has spanned the entire gamut of painting's fine-art/commercial-art manifestations, yet always stayed spiritually close to illustration.

Island Illustrators has existed for twenty years now, and at least 298 people have passed through it as full and associate members (Appendix E). Founding members started activities as early as 1984, but officially formed as a registered society only on February 2nd, 1987. The publicly distributed newsletter *Illustrator* began in 1987, and there were also public meetings with guest speakers, catalogues, shows and workshops. Although the emphasis was on illustration, several strictly fine artists were members from the start and many illustrators also made fine art for exhibition. A 1986 working manuscript of the first newsletter says,

- I. The group began with the aim of self-promotion two years ago...
 - i) members came from a variety of artistic disciplines
 - ii) membership was open and eclectic...
- II. An illustration is an image created to accompany, illuminate, or enhance a written text.
 - a) This may be disputed/discussed, but we believe that illustration and fine art are not mutually exclusive
 - b) A piece of fine art may be used to illustrate a written text
 - c) This group is for fine artists who illustrate [as well as illustrators]

It got off to a good start, but the group's strength – being inclusive – was also its weakness. As a result, it has always wrestled with what exactly illustration was and who

ought to be a member, leading to membership changes over the years. A shift in emphasis has occurred, away from (and this is putting it in very general terms) illustrators who also paint, to painters who also illustrate. Regardless, the Society has always managed to keep up activities that contribute to the community at large. It was one of the first groups to put on studio tours, something that has since been adopted by other art groups in town. It has developed a tradition of partnering with community groups, businesses and government to produce unusual themed shows. The newsletter was scaled back in recent years but it is still distributed free to the public, featuring artists' biographies and work, technical articles, and announcements.

Most importantly for the subject at hand is that the Society has made a concerted effort to present illustration as fine art at all times. In 1985, a very high profile show was held at the upscale North Park gallery, at which original illustrations and the published versions hung side by side, with educational displays about the offset lithographic reproduction of images. Over 1,000 people attended; 500 of them on opening night (1986 Island Illustrators Projects Report; Gibson, 1985). The Society's themed shows, which are often as prescribed as illustrators' assignments, feature a wide range of approaches and styles from the highly illustrative to the highly artsy, side by side. Much of this work is what I term "illustrative fine art". Such a sustained presence demands analysis of how illustration, promoted as fine art, has affected artistic production and reception of illustrative forms in Victoria.

1.3 Victoria

The history and function of the Society cannot be properly understood without an in-depth knowledge of the city it is situated in and its artistic climate in past and present times. Victoria is almost unshakably stereotyped in art worlds as a conservative holdout. It is also thought insignificant, perhaps because of this conservatism.

Robert Amos, local art historian and art reviewer for the main newspaper, points out two virtues of Victoria. Not being a centre has allowed Victoria to escape artistic scrutiny, which has permitted artists here to nurture art forms long since abandoned elsewhere, and to develop its own aesthetic standards. It also has enjoyed a sense of tradition, lacking in other cities, based on the constant presence of excellent aboriginal art and Asian art alongside the British landscape and Arts and Crafts traditions, unbroken since pioneer times.

This study includes not just the City of Victoria proper, but also the neighbourhoods and suburbs that together make up the Capital Regional District and for which Victoria is the most accessible large centre: most everything south of Duncan, and the nearby Gulf Islands. Besides its traditions, Victoria is an important place to study artists because it has so many of them, and not just at the amateur level. According to Statistics Canada numbers based on the 2001 census, there are more artists per capita in the workforce of this city than in any other of twenty-seven metropolitan areas in Canada (Hill Strategies, “Artists in Canada’s Provinces, Territories and Metropolitan Areas”, 2004, p. 9). However, this oft-quoted statistic needs to be qualified. When comparing by neighbourhood or by riding, Victoria’s artist population falls well behind areas of Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver. But there’s still a case to be made. These numbers are

a sloppy fit regardless of how they stack up, because “artist” according to federal census and statistics means anyone in the arts from writers to dancers, and I suspect Victoria has more visual artists than it has other arts professionals. Secondly, the figures only include those whose primary source of income comes from their artmaking according to tax returns, a completely unfeasible way to determine who is an artist since so many serious artists do not make art for income (Hill Strategies, “A Statistical Profile of Artists in Canada”, 2004, p. 3). Third, it splits into two groups “artisans and craftspeople” and “painters and other visual artists”, despite the grey area between them – if combined, Victoria might well advance in the standings because of the number of artisans there. Fourth, “artist”, according to Statistics Canada and Canada Council (whose definitions are used for such studies), does not include art teachers at all levels, nor even “designers and illustrating artists”, an oversight that speaks volumes about their official status and skews all numbers beyond hope for the whole country (ibid, p. 26). But keeping in mind that all places are treated equally insufficiently by these statistics, we can still say that compared to other cities, Victoria has more visual artists for its size than most cities. Downtown, Fairfield, and Oak Bay have higher numbers of artists in the workforce: postal code regions starting with V8S and V8V are at 2.4%, compared to a provincial average of 1.13% and a national average of .8% (Hill Strategies, “Artists by Neighbourhood in Canada“, 2005, p. 8). Salt Spring Island is seventh in all of Canada for people employed in the arts, or 5% of workers (ibid, p. 6). Salt Spring also appears in an American tourist guide called *The 100 Best Art Towns in America* (Villani, 2005). In all of Canada, B.C. had the largest increase in the number of artists between 1991 and 2001 (Hill Strategies, “Artists in Canada’s Provinces, Territories and Metropolitan Areas”,

2004, p. 20) and has the highest percentage of artists per capita of all ten provinces (but not the Territories).

Victoria's professional "conservative" artists, many of whom are only regionally known, cumulatively have as much or more impact on local artistic production and visual culture than contemporary art stars who are known nationally and internationally. This is because often they are working in ways more acceptable to a greater number of people, and because their work is affordable and therefore makes it into more homes, and because they are less likely to move away to a bigger centre to pursue their art. Collectively, the conservative art scene may provide a field that helps make it possible for the groundbreakers to define their work by providing the young ambitious, fashionable, or rebellious artist with an average against which he or she can contrast their own efforts. Victoria, with its smorgasbord of art and artists of excellent quality, is a potential incubator for young up-and-comers in an environment where the bar of craftsmanship is set at a rather high level and mentors and teachers are readily to be found. How the conservative art world contributes to the contemporary art world has not been much explored, but I would suggest it has grounded artists technically and historically.

Artists who have risen to the top of their respective disciplines and who originated in Victoria or have some other kind of local connection are (and this is an incomplete list that spans more than just contemporary art) Mowry Baden, Sid Barron, Robert Bateman, Maxwell Bates, Carl Beam, Molly Lamb Bobak, Stan Brakhage, Emily Carr, Allan Edwards, Atom Egoyan, Robert Genn, Ted Harrison, Fenwick Lansdowne, Ron Lightburn, Attila Richard Lukacs, Todd MacFarlane, Michael Morris, Tony Onley,

Walter J. Phillips, Bill Reid, Jack Shadbolt, Jessica Stockholder, Jan Vriesen and Julie Wear. Art historian Maria Tippett is Victoria raised, as was Pierre Berton, who once studied visual art there. Victoria's most remarkable feature concerning art is the sheer diversity of the kinds of art being produced, as demonstrated by the dissimilar work of the people listed here. How they all, with their diversity, emerged from or stayed in Victoria and what they may or may not have in common has not been examined.

1. 4 The Research Problem

There are many people who speak of Victoria's art scene in terms of differences. Robert Amos calls it "fractured" (interview, April 7, 2006), while Patricia Bovey, ex-director of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, described it as "pocketed", possibly due to its equally pocketed municipal governments (1996, pp. 12, 89). Other factors contributing to the fracturing and pocketing are distinct geographic barriers like waterways; age and socio-economic class, since many of the art clubs are social and tend to attract demographically similar members; and values, as in Open Space catering to "cultural research and experimentation" (Open Space brochure). Varying artistic ideologies underlie every schism, with some believing art is anything and others considering true art to be a very restricted category. But the division between fine-contemporary-non-commercial art and applied-conservative-commercial art is the one that most interests me here. Although it is often conceived of as an unbridgeable gap, many artists transcend it. Island Illustrators' members have purposely attempted to break it down entirely. Consequently, my research questions are:

What conditions made it both possible and desirable for the Island Illustrators Society to form?

How has the Island Illustrators Society represented a challenge to the historical and institutional distinctions between fine art and illustration, contemporary and conservative art, and non-commercial and commercial art?

The purpose of this study is to initiate a dialogue that spans art world divisions. It presents data that may provide a basis for discussion that is founded upon something more concrete than the vague impressions, misinformation and negative stigma that arose in the twentieth century concerning illustration and conservative art.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

Critical literature on illustration is lacking and scattered under the headings of better-known fields, such as art history, design history, book history, visual communication, literary criticism, and the trade and technical literature of illustrators themselves.

Classical philosophy, aesthetics, sociology of art, cognitive science relating to visual perception and psychology of creativity also come into play. Most fields have a blind spot. Briefly, art history often dismisses illustration as beneath consideration; communication concentrates on the end product rather than the mode of production, and tends towards a marxist dismissal of art used for capitalist gain; design history focuses more on graphic designers than illustrators; illustrators' trade material has no theoretical discussion; and literary criticism and book history disregard illustration that does not appear in books and periodicals, underemphasize the visual's ability to stand alone apart from text, do not consider other kinds of illustration or art that the illustrator might do besides book illustration, or that the illustrator is more akin to an artist's identity than that of a writer. My aim is to contribute to a discourse of illustration from an illustrator's point of view.

Sources I draw upon range from J. Hillis Miller's theoretical treatise on illustration, to Pierre Bourdieu's sociological approach, to art historical and aesthetic arguments from Paul Greenhalgh, Preben Mortenson, Larry Shiner, and Alan Gowans, to histories of the status of applied and commercial art by Michele Bogart, Ellen Mazur

Thompson, and Angela E. Davis. These writers, excepting Miller, Bourdieu and Mortenson, are engaged with the redemption of applied, commercial and popular arts as worthy artistic practices. The work of columnist-historian Robert Amos also fits in here. Contrasted are B.C. writers who intentionally or unwittingly privilege a separate fine art, including Emily Carr, W.P. Weston, Robert Belton, Patricia Bovey, and Audrey Johnson.

Illustration has perhaps been the most exhaustively and esoterically investigated for its theoretical powers by J. Hillis Miller (1992). Using a semiotic approach, he examines the ontology of illumination in woodcuts by Holbein, paintings by Turner and illustrations by Phiz for Dickens, weaving in discussions of symbolism, the graphic arts and the significance of engraving along the way. His is an examination of being, and how illustration gives beingness. Miller makes an argument for writing and images communicating by the same means, through engravure, even as they conflict. He also explores the “doubling” of signs, where illustration signifies not just the text, but conventional symbolism, and the illustration itself, all of which are unstable and insufficient. Meaning can only be arrived at by metaphor, which any sign-creation is. Any attempt to determine meaning with an image will only result in getting it wrong, but by getting it wrong, meaning is ironically and necessarily sparked in the reader’s mind. I use Miller’s conception of the ability of images (he does not differentiate between illustration and fine art) to turn, i.e. to signify multiple meanings, to explain why and how fine art and illustration can be interchangeable and subverted, and to ironically expose all theory and art as insufficient.

In contrast to the traditions of aesthetics, art and art history, sociology is not so much interested in what art is but rather how art is used in complex power relations between people. In his concept of the field, Pierre Bourdieu (1993) argues that a work of art is the product not of the individual artist but of all the social elements that comprise the field such as critics, teachers, patrons, and so on. The field is marked by struggles and forces, working to conserve or to transform the field. In this, Bourdieu can be seen to be in agreement with other sociologists of art such as Janet Wolff (1981, 1993) and Howard S. Becker, who names this space the “art world” (1982). As positions of people and institutions in the field shift, so too does what can qualify as art. What is at stake is not always money, but cultural and symbolic capital: prestige and the ability to gain a more powerful position in the field, and ultimately, the power to name what art is. Elite forms such as avant garde and bourgeois art, can be seen as not bereft of social function, but the opposite – functioning mostly for the purpose of generating cultural and symbolic capital.

In his theory of the production of belief, Bourdieu contrasts the “field of restricted production” or supposedly non-commercial art, with the “field of large-scale production” which is more responsive to and therefore determined by the pressure of economic and political forces. He argues that the field of restricted production is in fact engaged in a longer-term economic scheme and that symbolic and cultural capital can be converted into economic terms. Bourdieu introduces a third element, that of popularity, where an art form may occasionally bridge avant garde and bourgeois taste resulting in economic gain that does not cancel consecration within either field. I adopt Bourdieu’s concepts of field and cultural and symbolic capitals, particularly as they relate to the maintenance of “non-

commercial art” as a category supposedly remote from economic determinism, but I have some reservations.

Bourdieu adheres to something of a binary approach, in that he conceives of the field as being vertically differentiated, with those in power at the top, and those beneath desiring power and struggling to get to the top. As valid as I find Bourdieu’s theory of the field, it is laughable from the point of view of artists I interviewed who impressed upon me how little they care about what those in either the restricted field or the elite end of large-scale field of production think. They measure their worth by popularity, and while Bourdieu might see them as controlled by a wish for power and money, they feel supported rather than controlled (see Appendix B, Q. 21). To them, value is in social service and their participation is self-directed. Another criticism is that Bourdieu’s model grants no power whatsoever to “industrial art” (eg, vaudeville, in his example; perhaps superhero comics is an apt analogy in visual art), which he says is doubly damned as “both mercantile and popular”. I find this overlooks a significant area of popular culture and its impact, and its attendant potential to garner symbolic and cultural capital within its own version of a field autonomous from the bourgeois, avant garde and popular hybrids between them. Bourdieu does not leave much room for grey-area approaches or alternative valuation schemes like this, where the opportunity to heal the rift might be, as Shiner and Gowans suggest (below).

Related to Bourdieu’s conception of the field as a site of struggle between transformation and conservation is Paul Greenhalgh’s theory (2003) of the chief struggle in art as being between irony and positivism. Positivism is absolutist, concerned with aesthetic expression within the established parameters, while ironic practice is relativist,

and is “to do with intellectual deconstruction, with deliberately undermining established or normative values in order to assert the new” (p. 21). Similarly, Bourdieu conceives of the struggle as against “orthodoxy” by means of the ironic: the “parodic effect” or intentional parody is achieved by the incongruous recontextualization of the orthodox form. Greenhalgh assigns all of modernism to either side of the ironic/positivist divide, Dada versus Arts and Crafts, for instance. However, Greenhalgh notes that the ironic is so prevalent that it is now itself normative, while positivists are still seen as “of a previous phase, and are overly caricatured as determinist” (p. 22). I am in agreement with Greenhalgh, but I have chosen to refer to the ironic approach as “contemporary art” which employs a rhetoric of irony, and the positivist as “conservative art” which employs a rhetoric of earnestness, with the obvious caveat that there is occasional crossover, such as in political cartooning. But while I agree with his perception of the art world, I am less inclined to accept his contrast of artists, whom he sees as similarly divided. Greenhalgh states positivists think in terms of permanence, custom, and aesthetics, concerned with perfection and the transformation or forsaking of the world. Ironists are concerned with critique, they ridicule the idea of permanence, engage with the world as inhabitants, and care little for traditional uses or penchants for materials. I find this is too severe, that it imposes the positions of the art world on to creators, thus obscuring not only actual practices but also human agency to challenge or ignore the field. The people in my study resisted such determinism as much as they voluntarily and involuntarily perpetuated it, and this paradox is, I feel, closer to the complexities of real life than a this-or-that model. This paradox will arise frequently in the following chapters as I also compare and

contrast in seemingly black-and-white ways, but my ultimate goal is to show how the polarities collapse when the determinisms of the field are transcended.

The determination of the field is also examined from a cultural economic point of view by Bonus and Ronke (1997), who state the definition and value of art cannot be rationally assessed, that it depends upon credibility that is controlled by “a consensus of insiders” (p. 109). Small events and chance can make works of lesser quality prestigious.

Applying a sociological approach drawing in part on Bourdieu, Mortenson (1997) argues the modern conception of art comes into being in the eighteenth century. He examines how the split between high and low art was one of social behaviour rather than inherent medium, genre or appearance. The conception of autonomous “high art” relied upon whether it was consumed by “disinterested” aesthetic appraisal, and disinterestedness was partly demonstrated by separating the art form in question from economic return, all for the achievement of cultural capital. I find that in contemporary art, although the accompanying concept of autonomy has been widely critiqued, “non-commercial art” still fulfills the role of “high” art as Mortenson describes it.

Mortenson discusses *practice* as a way of defining art, in which art is known as one’s first language is known, through use. Called the “concrete conception of art”, he contrasts it with theory, or the “abstract conception of art”. The latter is predicated on the former and the former obeys barely noticed (but still vital) rules. I find this theory entirely fitting my research subjects’ way of describing how they create, a way that is most easily expressed by demonstration rather than explication and that follows certain established methods. Mortenson warns that understanding art through practice is liable to be blind to its own conditions of making and therefore not entirely satisfactory as a

universal definition of art, unless coupled with rigorous critical analysis. He recommends situating practice within a holistic knowledge of the *context* in which the practice is formed. I find he is correct, and that a lot of my participants do not understand or appreciate art that appears to be made outside of their own system of practice. But, contextualized, a practice-based understanding of art provides a close ethnographic reading of my participants' lifeworld, and this allows for an interesting comparison to be made with other artists and agents of the field, and with the abstract conceptions of art that attempt to explain it. Where I must depart from Mortenson is in what seems in his conception to be a seamless fit between practice and theory. In the case of some of my subjects, they reject articulated theory that appears separate from their practice-based self-conception. Furthermore, Mortenson doesn't discuss what happens when the context of reception changes from the context of production, and how the reading and valuation of a work of art may change because of it. His project is to "reinstate" original context in order to examine how Western bourgeois society defined art in the historical time and place of the eighteenth century. Mine is to explore how contextual shifts explain the evaluation of art or illustration, and how these shifts may be manipulated in the field at the turn of the late twentieth century.

Like Mortenson, Larry Shiner (2001) traces the divisions of philosophical thought over centuries, showing how art became a category unto itself, gradually rising from the menial trade of a worker to the rarified Art of a gentleman. Unlike Mortenson, Shiner dwells at length on the nature of the split in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and describes the ultimate power struggle as being between reactions of "assimilation" and "resistance" to that split. In assimilation, the canon of fine art merely expands to admit of

new forms and leaves the essential polarity intact; while in resistance, new artistic ideologies seek to subvert the entire system of high/low categories. Resistance has generally lost out, due to the process of assimilation being able to co-opt anything, but Shiner feels recent forms of conceptual, environmental and performance art – as well as those artists who cross the high-low divide – are undermining the divide. Even so, he concludes with mixed feelings. On one hand, “A third system of art transcending the divisions of the modern fine art system has yet to establish itself” (p. 306), but on the other, “...the divisions of the fine art system can only be transcended through a continuing struggle. I do believe we transcend them from time to time; what is harder is naming and articulating what we have done” (p. 307). He suggests that “freedom, imagination and creativity” be united with “facility, service and function” to accomplish such a goal, but acknowledges that it is unfeasible to expect any one kind of art or philosophy of art to replace the current multiplicity of art types. Shiner entirely explicates the background for my investigation, and even sets my task out for me: the naming and articulating of how the gap may be transcended. Where his is a necessary general overview, I provide a case study.

In the twentieth century, many thinkers fell into one of two camps that resulted from the split described by Mortenson and Shiner: those who thought that Art should be free of obligations and ought to be complete unto itself, and those who believed that art should be put to some good use for the betterment of society. In the former was Roger Fry, R.G. Collingwood, and Clement Greenberg, who argued for pure art that could operate apart from the worldly, an art that was concerned with its own properties (“formalism”, or art

for art's sake). In the latter were William Morris, Walter Gropius, and Fernand Leger, who sought to collapse the distinctions between art, the practice of art, and everyday experience and objects (the Arts and Crafts movement and later the art in industry movement were their causes). The latter group rejected the idea there ought to be any difference between applied and fine art, while the former decried applied art as enslavement. Alan Gowans represents the next stage of the struggle for recognition of socially responsive art.

In opposition to the dominant Greenbergian line of thought of the 1950s and 1960s, Gowans champions a very populist and pluralist approach to art history, rooted in sociology and cultural studies, and he provides a theory of art with a theory of illustration at its base. While classic art history leaves the impression that fine art is the *seigneur* and illustration is but a disowned bastard, aping its betters, Gowans argues illustration came first and is the womb of all art still, and that fine art since 1840 is an *enfant terrible*. Conveniently for this thesis, Gowans published all three of his fat books on the subject while he was a department head of Visual Art and Art History, then of History in Art, at the University of Victoria. Not only is Gowans the only scholar I have been able to locate who provides a thorough framework of an art history of illustration, but his presence in the very city I am studying has led me to refer to him often. Gowans proposes an entire reworking of the field of art history that dispenses with line-of-progress evolution and instead concentrates on social function.

In *The Restless Art* (1966), *The Unchanging Arts* (1970) and *Learning to See* (1981), he makes his case for considering the popular arts of illustration, moving pictures, advertising, decoration, and photography as the true heirs of classical and folk art, while

Fine Art, in his estimation, was meaninglessly geared towards the creation of what he sarcastically terms “Precious Objects for Exhibition”. Among the many theories Gowans pushed, there are two that seem to have stuck in the memories of his students that inform his three books on popular and commercial arts. The first was about how aesthetic forms and functions are retained in successive generations, and the second was about how similar forms and functions develop in totally separate cultures worldwide, tapping into a sort of universal consciousness.

Gowans provides a methodology for considering popular/commercial arts in terms of four main social functions: substitute imagery, where a visual stands in for an absent actual thing; illustration (proper), where a picture relates a story or records an event; beautification, where visuals make objects culturally identifiable and complement their use; and persuasion/conviction, where visuals express and exhort ideology. Although he makes distinct categories, he explains that they overlap and inform one another. In the case of illustration he says,

Illustration can function as an auxiliary to other arts, so that four variant types can be distinguished: illustration used as substitute imagery, illustration proper, illustration used as beautification, and illustration used for persuasion/conviction. (1981, p. 179)

Although I accept these four functions of illustration, a more conventional definition of illustration-proper that I will use throughout is, *a visual element specifically made to accompany a specific verbal or written text*. This definition encapsulates how most people think of illustration without contradicting that “illustration” (non-proper) can indeed function without text in Gowans’ auxiliary ways.

Gowans uses the term “illustrative art” in conjunction with what he calls the “creative illustrator” in *The Restless Art* (1966):

Nowhere can the range of illustrative art be seen better than in American nineteenth century painting generally; nowhere are its possibilities for greatness more apparent than in the art of Winslow Homer and Thomas Eakins. Their painting is a commentary on the problems and opportunities of creative illustration. (p. 134)

By “creative illustration”, which he uses interchangeably with “illustrative art”, Gowans means art that stands in for an absent real object, art that has a narrative quality, and art that performs a useful function. He theorizes that the influence of creative illustration is present in almost every American artist until 1914 (ibid):

No matter what it was conventional to proclaim in theory, in practice “art” for most Americans has always meant the kind of values and social function inherent in popular arts and industrial design, and in order to survive and work American painters have had to take account of that fact, by incorporating a high degree of naturalism and popular Realism, and by retaining many traditional functions of communication and entertainment which in Europe were early surrendered to “Commercial Art”. (p. 385).

He differentiates creative illustration from academic painting, from popular art such as prints by Currier and Ives, and from “realist” painting, by which he means art for art’s sake in general (aiming for “reality” – truth – rather than ideals) and not with “popular Realism” (representationalism in a realistic style) in the quote above. By 1981, he was using the phrase “illustrative arts” to include all the visual media stemming from early illustration: film, animation, comics, and television (pp. 153-175).

The term illustrative art seems to capture the range of what many members of Island Illustrators members do. I am opting hereon to use “illustrative fine art” instead of illustrative art or creative illustration, to differentiate it from illustrative art meaning all

the media arts that stem from illustration. “Creative illustration” erroneously implies the presence of a tangible text, implies a predetermined client, treads too closely to what various branches of the profession are already called (e.g., decorative illustration, editorial illustration, imaginative illustration), and is easily confused with the term “illustration” by itself, which is a word both troublesomely vague and connotative at the same time. “Illustrative fine art” indicates fine art that is no longer “illustration proper” but is often still referred to as illustration or illustrative.

Gowans, in his analysis of illustrative art as it is manifested in nineteenth century USA, says creative illustration was doomed to failure. On one hand it was too highly polished to appeal to the masses, while on the other its subject matter was too “common” for elite taste. Homer and Eakins, the exemplars, both died in obscurity. Gowans claims their work expressed their alienation as artists from other artists and from society in general; a real, awful alienation not to be confused with the fashionable, romantic martyrdom of “misunderstood” avant garde artists (1966, pp. 136-140), because they weren’t “neglected” but just simply seen as “bad”. There is a certain resonance in this evaluation for Victoria illustrative fine artists and illustrators, because illustrators and illustrative fine artists have indeed experienced this alienation, as my research and interviews with participants reveals. But times have changed. According to a 2001 study, 71% of Canadians surveyed said they liked traditional, classical, and popular styles in the arts (Decima, 2002, p. 45). Taste can no longer be easily divided along economic lines – which puts my study at some variance with the research by Mortenson and Shiner too, who also cover periods and places where economic class was more important. There is in Canada a large and affluent class that can and does appreciate excellent illustrative fine

art, and artists who fulfill this market feel they are active, happy participants in society. Furthermore, technological advances have made it possible for artists to produce inexpensive prints of quite high quality, so that buyers who are not as well off or who have no need for originals (hotels, for instance) can still own a facsimile of the work. The esteem of illustrative fine art cannot be said to be failing in current art practices.

Gowans also distinguished between fine art and high art, where the latter is made up of the most excellent examples of the popular and commercial arts. Although I find his definition of high art acceptable, it is not the recognized one in normal use, in which high art is taken as a synonym for fine art. To avoid confusion, I will go with the common meaning and not Gowans'.

Gowans in 1966 could find nothing of value in modern fine art, and wrote that advance guard painting is a hobby like stamp collecting, of no intrinsic value (1966, p. 394), and that painters were no more than "quarreling petitioners for government aid" (p. 397). By not admitting self-expression and art-for-art's-sake are a vital part of society, Gowans has actually contributed to the idea fine art is autonomous, which leads to the deadlock of neither fine art nor popular/commercial arts seeing value in the other, the very tie he was attempting to overcome. Shiner too notes that "reversing an invidious polarity" does not heal (p. 307). I reject the idea that self-expression and/or difficult art are not functionally important – besides being a way to differentiate socially, such work can innovate, heal, challenge, and contribute to diversity. Gowans softened his belief in the 1981 book, where he wrote that self-expression (which he identifies solely with an autonomous high modernism) is not a true social function in itself, but is a means to developing the four main social functions, and he introduced a way out by

acknowledging that the two kinds of art are “each deficient in the other’s qualities”. Fine art, he allowed, is rich in “extraordinary sensibility” but has no relation to society; while the artistic expression of popular/commercial art may be “crude and banal”, but performs “indispensable social functions”, and he recommended they be blended – just as Shiner did. I contend autonomous art has some importance on the same level as Gowans’ four main functions, but I agree that there is much to be gained by combining its qualities with the other four.

Unfortunately, Gowans formulated his theories without reference to poststructuralist or postmodern theory, which were developing during the same period. The work of Pierre Bourdieu, Jean Baudrillard and others has radically affected art history and cultural theory by taking many of the same positions that Gowans himself was in sympathy with. Nor did Gowans address arguments of aestheticians who were critiquing the narrowness of functionalist approaches to art history. He maintains a doggedly idiosyncratic view and an informal style of writing that make him stand at odds with other scholars. His worthy ideas have not been much adopted by anyone since, even though his work can be seen as a prototype for the field of Visual Culture.

In the 1960s psychologists Jacob W. Getzels and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi conducted a very comprehensive study of fine and applied art students in the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (1976). Their study is a good example of artistic biases of the 1960s, but unintentionally so. Deploying a battery of personality tests, art exercise tests, interviews and observation of the subjects for several years, they concluded that fine artists were “problem-finders” while advertising artists were “problem-solvers”, the

former naturally being considered more creative. The study is to my mind suspect because its findings so closely match certain assumptions the authors make in the introduction: that fine artists work in “a vacuum under enormous pressures to be original” and that applied artists “must be responsive to an array of narrow demands that frustrate their autonomy and imagination” (pp. 48-49). At no point do they consider the ways the two groups overlap and share, but instead focus on how they are “expected to do such widely different things”. Although they usefully describe how the fine art market demands certain behaviour and products of its hopefuls, the authors do not discuss how these expectations are determining factors similar to the way advertising agencies’ demands are determining for illustrators. Instead, they underscore different personality traits that uphold the stereotype of a fine artist as aloof, compelled, depressed, emotional, and not interested in money. However, quite useful are their experiments that highlight different valuation systems between different types of consumers of art, where everyone knows originality when they see it, but only art scene insiders consider it desirable. Also demonstrative are their observations that “selling out” is the making of any art that appears to match the taste of the marketplace, and that fine art risks becoming a sterile “closed symbolic system”, and that the selling of art in sidewalk sales and malls connotes low status. Later studies using the same data and research sample such as Stoh (1989) dispute the influence of personality on artist type and success, as does my own survey.

Since about 1990 historians have brought a more detailed and rational attention to the history of commercial art. Ellen Mazur Thomson, Michele Bogart, and Angela E. Davis have addressed the history and status of commercial artists in the first half of the twentieth century in North America, and are agreed that the marginality of illustrators is

culturally significant yet underdiscussed and underestimated. They all relate how illustrators and fine artists were interdependent and *together* formed the most predominant movements in modern art of the twentieth century.

Thomson, in her book *The Origins of Graphic Design in America, 1870-1920* (1997), treats illustration as an occupation under the umbrella term “graphic design”, which she defines as, after the American Institute of the Graphic Arts, “all arts and crafts intended to make ideas visible”. She documents how the class identity of designers became that of professionals rather than tradesmen, but that graphic design “held an ambiguous place in the American cultural hierarchy” too. Illustration was accused of diminishing text, and of crass commercialism in advertising, and between high and popular cultures evolved what she names “the great divide”.

The “great divide” is further explored by Michele Bogart’s *Artists, Advertising, and the Borders of Art* (1995), which documents the fluctuations of the advertising illustrator’s and fine artist’s identities from about 1880-1960 and the resulting diminishment of illustration. Her account differs from Thomson’s in that it is more specific to illustrators and the use of high and low art in advertising. Art directors, who aspired to raise advertising with better artwork, implemented modern art through the 1920s, but economic pressure in the 1930s coupled with quantitative market research led business to return to representational images, and a concept of the illustrator as providing a service rather than expert taste set in. Advertising and fine art became mutually exclusive. With the subsequent embracing of abstraction and the unpopularity of social realism during the cold war, representational imagery in general became associated with illustration, and hence, with commerce and the servitude of the creator.

Thomson and Bogart offer excellent background for understanding the larger issues and trends, but their work looks exclusively at the Northeastern USA, especially New York. The American events seem to be in general occurring some time before similar movements in Canada. The size of the industry in the US is also so considerably larger that professionalization happens on an equally larger scale. Angela E. Davis' *Art and Work: A Social History of Labour in the Canadian Graphic Arts Industry to the 1940s* traces the shifts of duties and statuses of art-workers in Canada, touching on many of the same themes as Thomson and Bogart, but without as much research, due to the comparative lack of activity in the industry in Canada and a resulting lack of sources, material and literature. She does, however, quote Gowans and use his social function approach. Like Thomson, Davis relates how designers became white collar workers while other workers did not; and in agreement with Thomson and Bogart, says that due to their lack of status as artists, art-workers did not have respect until professionalization started in the 1940s (at least twenty years after New York). Although many contributed to the nation's cultural identity, institutions like the Royal Canadian Academy discriminated against prospective members who defended commercial art as equivalent to fine art, and the art historical record in Canada downplays the role and importance of commercial art. Davis argues, "...when looking at the art of advertising, one can see how, by virtue of its style and need to communicate, its practitioners have retained contact with society in a manner not always possible for fine artists", and suggests this can contribute rewardingly to contemporary art, continuing the custom of Canadian commercial art informing fine art (as the Group of Seven did). I am in agreement with this.

The large studies by Thomson, Bogart and Davis inform my topic, but they give overviews of the industries of design, advertising, and graphic arts at large more than they focus on specific cities (although Davis writes about Winnipeg); and they concern themselves with major centres. My intent is to look at the same phenomena, but within the confines of a small, isolated city far away from any centre of the industry, and several decades later. Where these three studies cover the period 1870-1960, and mostly 1900-1940, I am concerned with history 1900-2006, with a focus on 1960-2006. My research does not follow specific artists and their individual experience over time as theirs do, but explores collective experiences between people who live and work near each other. I also advance the discussion further into the realm of the commercial artist's fine art identity and practice, because legitimacy in the fine art world is the crux of the problem of status and because the blurring of the fine-artist-or-illustrator identity has been the focus of Island Illustrators' struggles.

Related to the histories of commercial art is the 2002 dissertation of Matthew Soar, who explores the habitus of contemporary graphic designers. I set aside Soar's excellent discussion of the theory of the "short circuit" as it does not bear on my task, but I note a key instance where my research confirms his: Soar documents the reticence graphic designers feel for theory (pp. 25-26, 59-60), preferring to look at and do design rather than to listen or write about it. This resonates with what I found in interviews and by participation, where informants had little knowledge or liking of formal art theory, although they would cheerfully discuss art in a casual way.

While the applied, popular and commercial art vantage-point on fine art/commercial art status has been upheld from William Morris to Gowans to Bogart respectively, a third contingent, the Dadaists, for instance, sought to dissolve all categories of art. Later, the Pop artists united them. Optimistic, autonomous modernism began to unravel. Tom Wolfe (1975) satirizes high modern art and cooler-than-thou attitudes attendant upon some art scenes, and provocatively argues that high art just illustrates convoluted art theory. Desperately, critic Hilton Kramer (1985) defends autonomous Art and the “moral grandeur” of modernism. But the third contingent was carried forward by Lucy Lippard (1984), Suzi Gablik (1984, 1991), and Nicholas Bourriaud (1998), who campaigned for a return to socially responsible art. This is the work Shiner meant by conceptual, environmental and performance art that represents a way to transcend the divide, and to these we ought to add relational aesthetics, political art and feminist art. But, as Gowans and Bogart point out, many works in these forms suffer from the same remoteness from the average person’s idea of art as high modernism did, and therefore fail at their intended purposes. They do, however, loom large in terms of current contemporary art status. Not by coincidence, they are also largely non-commercial (in fact, anti-commercial) forms, raising the spectre of the elitism this signifies in art consumption as described by Mortenson and Bourdieu. I would suggest illustrative fine art can achieve the transcending that Shiner hopes for, without running the risk of alienation from large audiences that these other art forms sometimes entail.

The technical manuals of commercial art from 1920-1960 have provided much evidence that Thomson, Bogart and Davis are accurate in their portrayals of illustrator culture,

while the works of those three authors contextualize the commentary of the illustrator-writers. These books give me insight into the thinking of commercial artists and what ideologies they were operating under. Often there is negative commentary on high art, and a general emphasis on getting the job done in a highly efficient manner, as in Aymar (1929), Hunter (1946), and Twining and Holdich (1931). Andrew Loomis was a famous American illustrator, well-known for his advertising work and his pin-up girls. He wrote exceptionally in-depth instructional books in the 1940s, including the comprehensive 1947 volume *Creative Illustration* which was used as a standard textbook by Canadian illustrators (Will Davies, interview, Feb. 2006). Two people in my survey named Andrew Loomis as an artist they admired, and Ken Steacy* has pursued republishing his books. Loomis gives compelling descriptions of the illustrator's process as a deeply creative and original one, and presents psychology as an indispensable tool. Contrasted to the straightforward technical handbooks are two B.C. textbooks titled *Manual of Drawing and Design for Elementary and High School*, circa 1925, and *Manual of Drawing*, 1933, by the well-known B.C. artists Charles H. Scott and W. P. Weston. Caught between trying to teach to schoolteachers and youth useful skills on one hand and high art values on the other, the texts are convoluted and contradictory, and ultimately instill a disrespect for illustrative art.

Visual culture has precipitated new ways of thinking about art history that introduce popular and commercial forms where previously only works considered masterpieces of mostly painting and sculpture were included. But discrimination against certain forms of cultural production persists in Robert Belton's 2001 *Sights of Resistance: Approaches to Canadian Visual Culture*. Where Gowans omits fine art from his purview,

Belton slights popular arts, apparently unwittingly. In a way he suffers from the same desire as Weston and Scott to be fair to both sides of art conflicting with the need to uphold the conventional value system that insists on difference. In writing of commercial art, Belton comments,

At the same time [the 1890s] there was a reaction on the part of those artists who felt that commercialization cheapened their artistic integrity. (This mentality is still very much in evidence in the late twentieth century in the curricular inertia of some art schools, and many art purists still dogmatically assert the inherent superiority of their fine art over commercial art.) (pp. 33-34)

This is an auspicious start to what ought to be a fair treatment of commercial and popular arts, but I find what follows repeats and perpetuates common fine art positions that demean commercial and popular art. Because this text is likely to be used extensively in Canadian art history classes for the next ten years at least, I will here comment in depth on its treatment, which I believe Belton did not mean maliciously but – due to the missing “other” art history of commercial art – knew of no alternative.

There is very little on illustrators and designers in *Sights of Resistance*; many of the biggest names of the field, who won top awards in both the US and Canada and who are celebrated within the industry, are absent. Belton takes a fairly negative position by proclaiming that over the last thirty years Canada has been dominated by American taste, making fine art and commercial seem even further apart than ever. Some cartoonists (Lynn Johnson, Todd MacFarlane) and representational painters (Ken Danby, Robert Bateman, David Blackwood, Alex Colville, Mary Pratt, William Kurelek) are popularly recognized, while other forms of art are greeted “with a mixture of disdain and distrust.” While the influence of American cultural material cannot be denied, I feel Belton

underestimates the long history of taste for realism that is completely Canadian and English, a taste that dates back to Victorian Royal Academy standards long before the onslaught of recent American media saturation. He also overlooks the Canadian content in the work of Todd MacFarlane, Lynn Johnson, Robert Bateman and others who are influential in the USA. Belton proposes that popular realism is only popular because of the domination of photography since about 1940 (photography once being considered a “low” art, I must interject), but this theory is undermined by the fact many non-realist forms are also popular in children’s books, magazines, animation, advertising art, and fine art. By contrasting popular realism with everything else and by equating it with lowbrow American media and low photography, he perpetuates elitist fine art thinking that holds that popular taste is philistine. This weakens his attempt to demonstrate the coming together of fine and popular forms in pop art, and obscures the reality – as Shiner, Thomson, Bogart and Davies see it – that appropriating popular forms into high art contexts does not bridge the divide because it preserves art world structures that are still based on exclusionary ideologies. For instance, Belton mentions as an example that Graham Coughtry brought his commercial art background into his successful fine art career as part of the art dealer Avrom Isaacs’ gallery stable, but Belton gives no background on Coughtry’s acclaim and accomplishments as an illustrator, which perpetuates the supposed teleological fine art ideology that imagines commercial art is merely a way to make a living while developing a “real” art true calling.

On the topic of computers, Belton’s prejudice against them is mystifying to say the least, considering how many fine artists now incorporate them. His words seem to suggest that designers are less creative when using computers, and he fails to offer stellar

examples of Canadian graphic design. Belton's choices of exemplary designers and illustrators are also problematic, since at least one, Vera Frenkel, is a contemporary fine artist rather than a designer; and one illustrator, Ken Steacy*, he mistakenly suggests does not use a computer and presents him as a science fiction illustrator when he is better known as a comic book artist.

My intention is to provide some of the missing point of view and facts that would have balanced Belton's history of Canadian visual culture. Without an adequate understanding of the interrelationship of commercial and fine artists – such as Davis points out – the production of fine art will remain ungrounded and insufficiently contextualized.

The lack of illustration history within Canadian art history is most obvious by its omission. Most references to the role of illustration are typically relegated to brief mentions in monographs on people who became well-known painters, such as those on Tom Thomson, Harold Town, or Jack Bush. Perhaps the only illustrator to receive due treatment as an illustrator as well as a painter is C.W. Jefferys (1984, 1985), who was lucky to have an excellent and devoted scholar-biographer in the form of his grandson, Robert Stacey. Stacey is responsible for books on Canadian posters (1979), bookplates (1997), the designer and painter JEH MacDonald (1996), and for an article on the influence of Ontario commercial artists in London (1996), all of which explore the influence and contribution of commercial art and artists as Davis asks for. Stacey might, however, be criticized for a certain elitist view within graphic arts, as his excellent work does not encompass anything but applied art forms that already enjoy grudging prestige

among even fine art aficionados. His is not really a celebration of *everyday* popular arts in the sense that Gowans work is.

In discussing conservative art in Canada, I have located only a short paper by Mark A. Cheetham (2000), who compares the different value schemata of Alex Colville and Andy Patton. Colville embraces reproduction prints and realism as ways to communicate, but this makes him an outsider among contemporary art “cognoscenti” to whom “popular means bad”. Cheetham names two kinds of commercial galleries, the large firms that take a more obvious “mercantile” approach, and those that balk at commercial enterprises such as the handling of reproductions, and who aspire to the ideals of non-commercial artist-run galleries. He points out that these less-commercial commercial galleries are still engaging in (and economically profiting from) a value of “conceptual exchangeability in the contemporary art scene”. This is in keeping with Bourdieu, although Cheetham does not cite him. I would go further and suggest artist-run galleries also participate in this seldom acknowledged exchange system.

Illustrative artists who have garnered a popular following have sometimes been graced with (or graced themselves with) glossy coffee-table books. These are by their nature neither critical nor theoretical, and while none can be called a key work (their appeal is to a non-academic, limited fan base in each case) they are still a treasure trove of valuable biographical information and portfolio pieces, and they sometimes contain historical information and commentary on the state of conservative and illustrative fine art. Good examples in this category are *Carnaval Perpetuel* by Heather Cooper, *The Art of Len Gibbs* by Betty Gibbs, or *In Praise of Painting* by Robert Genn.

Most of what has been written about Victoria has been in the form of weekly newspaper articles and reviews of shows. Robert Amos in particular often supplements his reviews with historical material, but he himself says he does not like to write critically. The long-standing arts activist and columnist Audrey Johnson (1994) covers some history of Victoria visual art but as a pleasant chronicle only, and she perpetuates the exaggeration of Emily Carr's neglect by a hopelessly conservative Victoria. The catalogue of the 2004 University of Victoria research project *A Woman's Place* led by Karen Finlay gives an excellent background on visual culture and art production among women, but only up until about 1925. The best is Patricia Bovey's *A Passion For Art: The Art and Dynamics of the Limners* (1996), but since it is a history of the city's foremost collective of modern artists, it is one sided in that it does not mention the many non-modern artists and their cultural contribution at all. One is left with the impression that there were no other artists whatsoever in Victoria besides the select few she discusses, never mind any crosspollination that may have occurred. However, she avoids dismissing Victoria as a thoroughly unsophisticated backwater, as many other writers have, as did Emily Carr in her autobiography (1946). A similar emphasis on the avant garde is evident in the catalogue for the 1986 *Art in Victoria 1960/1986* exhibition, by Nick Tuele and Liane Davidson – despite Tuele's self-described "populist" approach.

My hope is that my work, by answering to the issues posed by all these authors, will balance the record of Victoria's artistic heritage and foster the understanding necessary to the well being of the community. I believe the city's ability to move ahead with its plans for a biannual international arts festival, to support its multitude of

foundering art schools, and to have its local conservative character appreciated depend upon it.

3.0 METHODS

3.1 Discursive Realism

This work is strongly influenced by Bourdieu's concept of the field of cultural production, which entails the scholar looking at an extremely broad set of circumstances in order to understand what and why something is art. As a cultural producer myself with experience in more than one position in the field, an autoethnographic perspective informs my study of these circumstances.

Because I am assembling different sets of knowledge – individuals' points of view, histories, the physical appearance of art, published criticism – in order to get as three-dimensional a picture as possible, I am drawn to the “discursive realism” outlined by Schroder, Drotner, Kline and Murray (2003). Grounded in cultural studies and stemming from the better known “critical realism”, it combines two qualitative and two quantitative methods that share a common base in theories and uses of language. Interpretative and empirical viewpoints are balanced, but the advantage is not merely a matter of expanding the toolbox to describe the subject(s). The key advantage, and point of discursive realism, is that by combining inductive (from the interpretive) and deductive (from the empirical) reasoning, a third option – *abductive* reasoning – is allowed to come into play. Abduction allows for intuitive leaps of insight, and favours expansion of knowledge into uncharted territory. This process is referred to in the June, 2006 issue of *Applied Arts* (a prominent Canadian periodical of design and illustration), where editor Peter Giffen writes, “...instead of using inductive or deductive reasoning... designers use ‘abductive’ reasoning. [University of Toronto dean Roger] Martin explains

that this is ‘the logic of what might be. Designers may not be able to prove that something “is” or “must be”, but they nevertheless reason that it “may be” – and this style of thinking is critical to the creative process’” (Giffen, 2006). Since illustration is an understudied area in need of its own claim to knowledge, and since as an artist I am comfortable with abductive reasoning, this framework is very attractive.

The four methods discursive realism uses for data collection are media ethnography, reception research, field survey research, and experimental research. But because Schroder et al are studying audiences and I am studying producers as an insider, I need to change their methods a little.

My autoethnographic approach is related to media ethnography in that I was a participant observer in my home town where I too was an Island Illustrator member, 1990-1997. Of course, my activity then was not conducted with any thought at the time to research questions posed here, although the subject of “What is illustration?” frequently came up. But as it happens, I have kept a journal of my professional activities since 1993, and I am referring to it as a form of field notes. The “voice” of this thesis has grown out of the autoethnographic perspective. I am caught between two different audiences, the one in Victoria and the one at university. One prefers straight-forward language, fun and easy to read, while the other demands a certain formality and demonstration of aptitude in words and ideas. Because my personal stake in this work is not insignificant, it is necessary that I maintain a more colloquial voice than much academic writing would, although it reaches into academia as well. It builds upon my life’s experience in very personal ways and is not remote from my life and artwork, and in that sense, it is as much a work of art

as any of the things I make or do that normally get called art. The tone is therefore not detached, but emotional, narrative, and often casual.

I do not come to this research as a disinterested figure. Not only do I have personal obligations to my informants, some of whom are my relatives and best friends, but my own practice as an artist, illustrator and designer stands to gain by the arguments I put forth. Bias is inevitable, but being intimate with the subject can offer invaluable benefits. Being conscious of my own bias goes a long way toward mitigating it, and makes room for spotting unexpected results. The first benefit, I believe, is that an insider can offer an intimate point of view that is impossible for others to access. Second, whenever a subculture is studied, if the author is of that subculture then pitfalls of interpretation, translation, and exploitation are possibly lessened. Third, when the researcher is of the community under study, then the researcher is still available after publication to address negative fallout that may occur, and if necessary, publish a followup piece. Fourth, informants may feel more empowered by the fact that someone they know is doing the research, and use the opportunity to advance their stakes in ways that would not otherwise come to light, which gives not only more insight to the study but makes possible a humanistic space of potential for beneficial, informant-driven change. Fifth, my experiences in various art worlds lead me to suspect that I might be able to cross borders and “walk the walk” in ways that others cannot; and in a town with such diversity in art practice as Victoria has, this is exactly the skill needed to interpret responses in as holistic a manner as possible. For me, this research is important because it is yet another step towards my resolving the angst that I have felt as a creator over what my role is and what my art can do for the world and myself. Perhaps this is the ultimate

reason why my hopelessly subjective thesis is also hopeful: by laying bare my personal investment and struggle, I can be the guinea pig for others in similar straits to observe and learn from. The downside, of course, is the possibility that my first-person narrative is too limited or biased. It is for this reason that this section all about me is disclosed – so that the reader may understand better the particular lens through which I am peering.

Interpretive reception research is done by interviews, which allow the participant to reflect qualitatively on the “mediation of the media experience”. Instead of responding as receptors of a “media experience” my participants will speak to their making of it. However, as Matthew Soar (2002) has pointed out, producers (graphic designers) are their own audience first, in what he has termed the “short circuit”. The distinction between maker and audience is blurred. Since I am largely focusing on the reception of illustration by other artists and by themselves, how my subjects discuss production may also be taken as how they receive that production. In addition to interviews, I have also added a focus group in order to study how group dynamics might influence the production/reception of art.

Field survey research is intended to give some quantitative context for the qualitative approaches of the previous two methods. I have not departed from any aspect of surveying as laid out by Schroder et al which they summarize as “imposition of the framework of strict questionnaire wordings for the elicitation of subjects’ experiences” (p. 51).

Experimental research forms the smallest part of my research because my topic, the judgment of art, is almost entirely a subjective one. Consequently, I do not use

experimental testing as a mode of measurement and I do not use it as the starting point of theory. I use it to test theory already formulated, and as a leaping off point for qualitative discussion in my focus group.

I have made myself available to participants in several ways: by a local phone number in Victoria and a permanent one in Vancouver, by email, by personal website and by web log. I used the web log to post updates every week through the time I circulated the surveys (January to June), and then occasionally after that. I talked about a few people I had spoken to and about historical information that was coming to light in my research, but did not give away anything concerning theories and opinions in order not to influence the pool of potential survey respondents. Although I asked for help with certain questions and invited people to leave comments on the blog, no one did; but the blog's statistics show eighty-three visitors between January and June. My website provides my full curriculum vitae, a large amount of my artwork, and other research interests. Several people reached me via my website, as I could tell because it gave a different email address from the one I gave out in my surveys and web log.

3.2 Textual Research

Because I am studying why and how contemporary artistic practices have come to be, consultation of historical records comprised a very large amount of research. I used the Provincial Government's newspaper index to look up newspaper articles from 1900-2000. Due to time constraints, I could not read every single article listed, so I depended upon the titles and headlines as listed in the index to point me to the most appropriate

ones. This worked sufficiently for me to identify the years 1963-1969 as crucial in Victoria for the division of the art scene.

I cross-referenced newspaper articles with records in the archives of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria. This helped contextualize the newspaper accounts, and gave me an understanding of how the gallery's policy and mandate both helped and hindered the bifurcation of the art scene. The archives included exhibition catalogues and listings, curatorial statements, and pertinent personal correspondence of gallery staff regarding certain shows. The archives also helped me establish how much illustration has been exhibited at the gallery, and gave me information on specific artists.

To understand the debate around elitism in contemporary art regarding illustration, I searched online databases for academic journals – which yielded little – and North American newspapers – which netted many.

I also found useful information on illustration in Victoria by examining and counting the listings of fine artists, commercial artists, graphic designers and advertising agencies in telephone books and the B.C. Directories, 1890-2006. This revealed the fluctuations of the visual communication industry and provided specific names of key people, whom I was then able to look up in the Provincial Archives' newspaper clipping vertical files of Victoria citizens, and to ask my informants about.

Since 1987, the Island Illustrators Society has published at least four issues per year of its newsletter, the *Illustrator*. Its format has more or less stayed consistent: a cover story about a member, a short article about any number of topics from technical tips to the experience of painting, news about members such as show notices, want ads, calls for entries, and briefs on the monthly guest speakers. Some of the discussion about

the Society's search for identity and the definition of illustration also appear. The newsletter has always been widely circulated for free in Victoria, left for pickup in art supply stores, galleries and schools. Because it is so public, it can be understood to represent the image Island Illustrators wishes to present to the world, the image that differentiates the group from other clubs and societies in town and that was constructed for promotional purposes. I have balanced the newsletters with minutes, meeting attendance sign-in sheets, applications for membership and other records from the Island Illustrators' archives. These behind-the-scenes accounts reveal facets of struggles that the newsletter could not. The meeting sign-in sheets document the full extent of the group's outreach, showing how many people besides members were participating.

4. ILLUSTRATION: VALUES AND BEING

4.1 Craft and the Concrete Perception of Art

The historic lack of esteem for illustration has led to very little being written about it in Canada. Not only is a record of the creators largely missing, but so are theories of the creative act from an illustrator's perspective. A lack of awareness of what it is that illustrators do contributes to ongoing misjudgment and uncertainty what exactly illustration is and how it may be the same or different from other types of art.

In the first half of the twentieth century, what painting was thought to have that illustration did not – the secret ingredient for “Art” – was *self-expression* and *profundity*. Contrasted to self-expression and profundity was *craftsmanship*, and craft truly is at the heart of values as expressed by many of my informants. But it is denied by some that craft is the opposite of self-expression or profundity, or that it is ignoble. Rather, it is the means to expression and meaningfulness. Len Gibbs[^], an illustrative fine artist who has worked as an illustrator, once asserted,

I have no patience with today's general attitude toward teaching fine art which seems to be: *don't damage his creativity!* Serious artists must master difficult techniques – only then can they be free to express themselves....Creative success comes only from mastering basic techniques and knowledge, not from the easy, self-indulgent attitude that so many of today's aspiring artists seem to have. (Gibbs, 1981).

In late modernism, as painting was declared “dead” in ironically-minded high art camps, a show of skill became grossly unfashionable because it implied absolutist values, and the crafts in general lost status (Greenhalgh, 2003, p. 16). Conceptual art that rejected the importance of a material manifestation came to the fore. Conceptual art practice may be

traced to Dadaist Marcel Duchamp's readymades, everyday objects that claimed art status simply by being presented as art, bypassing the hand of the creator altogether – at least, Duchamp's hand; the original designer and manufacturer of the “readymade” was cunningly obliterated from the discourse. Creativity had become a matter of perception, not craft, and it left behind multitudes to whom art was still a “work” and not a thought. But engagement with materials by the hand is, according to one of my illustrative informants, also the means to understanding conceptual art:

If people were exposed to a variety of different art on a regular basis and that they themselves would be able to build and feel the materials and create anything they wanted to do, any shape, form or sound or movement, I think people would appreciate contemporary art a lot more because they would be asked to get involved with the materials and see what feels like. It's all about education....
(Weaver-Bosson*, interview, 2006)

By this, the original sculptor of Duchamp's infamous urinal would have had grounds to claim his piece, in its original setting in a lavatory, had integrity. There is an honour and a way of knowing that is implicit in hands-on engagement, no matter what the end product is to be used for. Chinese-trained Stephen Lowe's^ balance-seal inscription hints at the deeper power in craft:

How privileged I am
To use the brush and ink
To reveal the essence of all nature
Between heaven and earth. (Lowe, 1977, np)

Craft does not necessarily rule out thought. Instead, it is an alternative way to consciousness – craft-based and thought-based approaches, although different, are perhaps not as opposed as modernists thought. This theory merits detailed exploration.

The well-performed craft can so dazzle the viewer that the skill that went into it is forgotten: it looks easy, a matter of innate talent or inspiration alone. Marcia Semenoff*, a plein-air landscape painter, wrote of her frustration with the attitude of the public:

I went to school to learn skills, just as the doctor does, and I invest a tremendous amount of time in polishing and improving those skills. Yet, I am invariably labeled as a hobbyist or student who can paint as if by magic, not because of hard work. (*Illustrator*, April, 2000)

But the magic dazzle that masks the training and the craft is what illustration depends upon to be convincing. It is what makes it suited to advertising, theatre, animation and other arts of persuasion. The more dazzling, the more successful the artist – but also the more unexamined. Ken Danby has said,

A lot of people look at my work and say it looks just like a photograph, which I take as a compliment. But they're not understanding what they're looking at. I'm as much concerned with abstracting the image as I am with duplicating it or enhancing it realistically. I want it to work tonally, I want it to work compositionally. I want to be conscious of spatial energy, I want detail, texture, colour, light, emotion, all of these things ... (in Davis, June 29, 2002)

Dazzle is where the negative side of the arts of persuasion draws its power. If the art is very artful and crafty, the audience thinks it has a life all its own and that it is a non-sentient entity, an innocent: it's *only* a picture, a movie, a cartoon. Bedazzled, some forget there is a professional, a person behind the curtain intentionally implementing tricks of the trade for tangible, material gains. Dazzle is rhetoric.

The aspect of illustration that most critics deride is the taking of virtuoso skill for artistic statement. For instance, a Victoria contemporary artist and college art instructor told me,

I'm not sure [Danby and Bateman] deserve [credibility in the high art world], simply because I think the work is really static, and I think for somebody with reasonable rendering skills it is easily mimicked. It just takes labour to mimic it,

not a particular insight. I'm not a huge fan of a lot of the high realists, illustrators... It's about a surface, replicating a surface....

The well-known Toronto contemporary art dealer Av Isaacs shares this view:

It doesn't really surprise me that wildlife art is ignored by the public galleries... I think these artists are really good at what they do but I see it as technical expertise with a small amount of esthetics. It's very reachable and therefore very popular... (in Ross, 1997)

But while laymen overestimate rhetorical meaning in skill, intellectual critics underestimate it. They try to debunk the “easily mimicked” craft, and hope thereby to spoil the rhetoric, with the aim of educating a “dumb” mass audience into a critical frame of mind. But in fighting craft, what critics overlook is the sincere meaningfulness (the artistic statement) of dazzling illustration to those who like it. Whether the technique of the art in question is replicable or shallow is irrelevant; what counts is whether the picture depicts something the buyer can identify with – which is why the trade in reproductions, despised by the high art world (Cheetham, 2000), has been so strong. Deconstructing the inner workings of a supposedly nefarious image does not cancel sentimentalism. We are all willfully visually naïve when human relationships are at stake. Consumers do not care whether or not they form a mass; the individual buyer conceives of him or herself as a unique individual communing with an image that for personal reasons speaks to him or her. If it happens to also profoundly speak to others, he or she will be even less likely to reject it, not because popularity equals truth but because commonality equals community.

Dazzling illustrators are not bent on manipulating audiences for ruthless profit – they are bent on making significant signs that inspire others and bring people together (which is not to say that profit is not an important indicator of their worth, but in this no artist is different). Steve Kergin*, for instance, put it this way:

Because I'm an illustrator, because I use symbolism, I want to help people read the symbolism, understand the illustration... I try to create an entry point in my work by making it somehow seductive to draw people in. That's why I like airbrush, because it creates a very seductive effect – there's good reason why it's been used by the advertising industry for so many years! (interview, 2006)

That their work can result in ruthless manipulation and profit is not denied, only that it is not a sufficient motive for what they do from illustrators' own perspective. They want to contribute to the social good, and this desire is sometimes contrasted by them to the popular stereotype of a "real" artist:

Reading books and watching movies about tormented artists has probably perpetuated the notion that many artists are suffering, but artists are not outsiders. They have vital roles to play in giving pleasure, in documenting the times, in providing a vibrant cultural centre, stimulate business. (Weaver-Bosson*, *Illustrator*, June, 2000)

Many participants in my interviews expressed a desire to get as close as possible to a universal expression in their art that others could relate to. Kergin said, "I try to present work that is attractive, friendly, positive work that has deeper meaning if somebody wishes to explore it. ...I feel the world needs as much positive energy as individuals can offer, and as an artist I find myself in a position to do that." He described how his image *Circle of Light* (Illustration 1) was used for a poster promoting first nations health programs, including an RCMP youth violence program, and how from there over 30,000 copies were distributed around the world and that it was often requested, especially by Matsqui Penitentiary inmates. The original art was bought by special request from someone close to the program, then later given to the director of it when she retired. Kergin says the popularity of the image was due to the central theme of the campfire as a place for wisdom to be handed down from one generation to another, a universal tradition in all cultures. Gowans recognized the importance of universality in illustrative art,

arguing that universality resides in the particular: “expressed and embodied in specific events, people, places,” not in stereotypes but in archetypes (Gowans, 1966, pp.124-134). He felt Daumier could achieve it because of his illustrator’s training, both in the drawing technique he mastered as a lithographer and in the purpose of Daumier’s work to serve people rather than autonomous Art (pp. 128, 130). It serves to affirm or subvert, to weave into history, to continue cultural tradition and to tap into universal consciousness.

Universality can of course never be complete, but it is possible to achieve a massive commonality, for short or even long periods, and it is a powerful tool of persuasion or conviction. That illustrators are driven by a desire to communicate, to adhere to common understanding, opens up a space of resistance against the negative aspects of their part in the determinism of hegemonic mass media, because they can play with commonalities, often subverting them through appropriation or caricature. What these days gets called in art jargon intertextuality, quoting and referencing has always been the illustrator’s prerogative, and is referred to by them as inspiration, homage, rip-off, or spoof, depending on the intention behind it. This venerable tradition was, during the height of modernist anti-illustration fervour, misunderstood as mere copying and unoriginality, but it is in fact part of tapping into the commonly understood to facilitate the production and adoption of new meaning.

In arguing for the autonomy of illustrators and their desire to serve rather than control, I am taking up a cause Bogart says was aspired to but lost by mid-century illustrators like Norman Rockwell, who she says

tried to establish some common ground that encompassed a popular public art and commercial practice.....One way they did so was by consciously taking a populist stance: they affirmed that both their publics and themselves were ordinary

individuals engaged with life and with pictures, and denied that their fans were lumpish and ignorant masses and themselves, superior. (1995, p. 11)

Bogart claims illustrators were unsuccessful then because the media moguls who employed them had ultimate control over the message and the audience, which they persisted in treating as a mass. This may have been true in the mid-twentieth century, but with the fracturing of mass media forms, and the rise of alternative channels online, illustrators have more direct contact with specific audiences than before. Also, when their work can be considered fine art (as IIS has enabled), the creator is allowed more leeway to suggest ideas. With autonomy, and the desire to appeal universally, it is no longer feasible (it never was) to suppose that illustration and illustrative fine art are simply empty craft, stylistically and occupationally. These art forms need to be understood for what they are capable of ontologically and epistemologically.

In their love of communication, many illustrators and illustrative fine artists I spoke with are skeptical of or even dismissive of art or art theory that seems impenetrable and alienating. Yet their love of craft doesn't explain why. Maybe in their desire to remain legible to the public at large and to their advertising agency clients they prefer to avoid seeming mysterious and unapproachable. Or, perhaps in a self-defensive reflex of hurt feelings, the field of illustration has internalized the notion that theory is not for them, as part of their construction of a defiant equal-but-different persona against fine art. If so, it has not only robbed them of status but also of a tool for understanding themselves and their own work. The range of depressions, self-depreciation and undervaluing of their own art I noticed in some illustrators may be linked to this.

In Art, commercial artists have been presumed less intellectual because it was assumed ideas originated with the client (therefore, any “theory” belonged to the client); and because the outcome was often familiar (therefore, not “original”, ergo, cannot be artistically theoretical). Because they believe in practicality (or craft), illustrators have been accused of shallowness. Matthew Soar uses designer Kalle Lasn~, the editor of *Adbusters*, a magazine that employs graphic design to subvert corporate advertising, as an example of the alienation of the applied artist from theoretical rigour. Soar quotes Lasn:

Once again, a traditional lefty [Edward Herman] describes as “action” such efforts as “thinking very hard” and writing proposals that others, presumably, are expected to carry forward. But what have you done lately besides talk and write, Mr. Herman? (Lasn in Soar, p. 584)

Because some illustrators roll their eyes like Lasn does at the notion of “thinking really hard”, they don’t always sympathize with what it is that someone like me is doing in the “ivory tower”, which they associate with puffing up bad art. Vic Bosson* compared trusting in the “in-crowd” of critics to believing in Santa Claus (interview, 2006). Len Gibbs^ stated:

Most people don’t have a familiar vocabulary about art. They read the jargon that academics write about it, or they hear the verbose curators expounding their views and they don’t understand what they are talking about.

Frankly, I’m with them. I don’t know what these experts are talking about either. They go out of their way to make a very simple subject sound very complex, and it has the effect of making people very nervous about art and unsure of their own taste in it. (in Gibbs, 1981)

Also of note is a manuscript from a 1987 Island Illustrator committee distastefully calling the Fisher 100 lecture hall at Camosun College, where they tried holding monthly meetings, a “sterile ‘academic’ environment”, and attendance there did in fact drop despite its superior amenities, so it was abandoned. In the mid-twentieth century,

illustrators have been at the academic losing end, as they were in the study by Getzels and Csikszentmihaly (1976). But as I will argue, illustrators do play a crucial creative, originary part. Without claiming that *all* illustration is equally theoretical in basis, I think it is possible to demonstrate that illustration *can* be theoretical and that the *process* of it is inherently a theoretical and rhetorical one.

It's not so much that illustrators are alienated from theory, but that they reject the idea it can be isolated from the creative process. That is, they reject any division between theory and practice: *practice is theory*, and of course, practice is another word for craft. The word *theory* means, etymologically, "viewing seeing" (in Greek, *thea* + *oros*); and illustration means to "shed light upon" (*lux*). Visualizing is theory; crafting that visualization is illustration, so illustration is a way to visualize, i.e., theorize. It happens at an intuitive level. Illustrators I interviewed don't like to analyze what they do, but prefer to leave it vague and intuitive. Nelson Dewey*, a cartoonist and storyboard artist, explains that his task when storyboarding is to interpret the script, to visualize it for the director and other members of the film crew, and that storyboard artists "can have a lot of influence, depending on the director" (Illustration 2). Storyboards are the first, the *original*, visual conception of a film, setting the tone for the sets, camera angles, and action. When I ask Dewey what happens between getting the script and getting the look of it on paper, his reply indicates the level of intuitive creativity at work:

I wish I could tell you that! I suppose [my mind] goes off in some 8th dimension or something like that. I don't think that I visualize, I don't picture it - I don't see pictures in my mind, I just start drawing. I suppose I must be seeing something in order for it to get from my brain to my hand. Well, when I think about it I suppose I'm visualizing *something* I'm trying to put onto paper...in my mind I'm imagining the angle that I'm seeing it at and where things are placed, and trying to

put it all into those two dimensions on paper. The hardest thing is putting the first mark on the paper. Sometimes it can take days, weeks....

As far as the idea process, I don't know, I try not to question it too much. I feel like if I examine it too closely, I'll see it as just a bunch of little nuts and bolts and springs that suddenly collapse in a pile. (Dewey, interview)

Dewey's creative process is an example of Mortenson's concrete conception of art, standing in contrast to verbal articulation of theory or the abstract conception of art, but not in any way lesser. The concept Dewey proposes on paper is a theory of what the script describes.

A drawing is the "articulation" of an intended meaning, and is always and inescapably ideological and rhetorical. But intended meaning cannot be guaranteed to be read correctly by another person. Nevertheless, illustrators rely on their craft to conjure up the correct meaning as best they can – and rely on not just dazzle but also an accompanying text or discussion to anchor that meaning.

4.2 Conjuring and Doubling: Semiotic Slippage

I found many illustrators unconsciously often refer to the intuitive conception process of illustration-making as "conjuring", or "magic". Artists experience it in varying degrees, some hardly at all and some very deeply. For Ken Steacy*, the process of creation is "objective". By contrast, Allan Edwards^, who had mystic experiences, described the making of one particularly special painting like this:

I picked up a brush and dipped it into the glass of water beside me. Suddenly something grasped my hand. There was nothing there that my eyes could see, but my hand was gently moved from the water jar to the box of paints, where the brush picked up some colour and then deposited it upon the paper. Back and forth moved my hand about three or four times. Before my eyes appeared a beautiful little portrait of Bobby. I could never have done anything so perfect and yet so simple. It seemed as though it had been breathed upon the paper. Never before or

since have I ever done anything to remotely approach the delicate charm of that little painting. I cannot say that I painted it. Some power beyond me took over that afternoon. (Edwards, 1991, p. 14)

Similarly, Bill Bartlett* wrote,

One day while I was working on a life drawing something magical came over me. And I couldn't stop drawing. The magic of eye-to-hand-to-page, the feeling that bypasses the brain and just flows through the body, from what you see going directly into drawing, hit me like a bolt from the gods. (*Illustrator*, Sept. 1997)

Beth Dunlop's* words indicate that the translation of magic to meaning is not easy, and that the responsibility illustrators have is to not stay caught up in the conjuring act:

I guess when I paint I am doing two things...one is being selfish and trying to exist in that magic world, and another is conveying that magic into something tangible. (*Illustrator*, Fall, 2004)

In a recent interview on the occasion of the 2006 retrospective at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, pointedly titled *Memory and Magic*, Andrew Wyeth said that he didn't allow people into his studio because to reveal everything and not maintain privacy there would be to lose the "magic" in his creative process (Global TV 5:00pm news, April 22nd, 2006). Karel Doruyter* wrote,

Of course it's magic!...

What has magic got to do with illustration? I think it has everything to do with it.... We deal with 'magic' all the time. When we render our material with pen and ink, colour or on the computer, we can create and disappear things at will. We make fantasy real and vice versa. There are no limits to what we can do... But where does it all come from? Look around you when you are walking through a forest or along the sea shore. Stare at the clouds and see how they shift and form into shapes beyond our imagination...That is magic. We take that and add it to our experiences and our craft, that is magic as well. (*Illustrator*, Summer, 2004)

Vintage American illustrator Andrew Loomis is one of the few who wrote about the magical mental process of illustrating as a matter of hands-on practice under

workplace circumstances. In this passage, he describes the conjunction of idea and form-making:

Let us understand that the primary function of illustration is to make a graphic interpretation of an idea. The idea to be interpreted must be thoroughly visualized. A completely abstract idea can thus be given the semblance of reality...

The beginning, then, of every illustration is really a mental procedure on the part of somebody – an author, a copywriter, or the artist himself. Some sort of mental image is present and transmitted to the artist, or else one is *conjured* up in his imagination. With his knowledge of form, light, colour, and perspective, he is the only one in the group who is able to make that graphic interpretation... (1947, p. 178, italics added)

In this next excerpt, Loomis connects illusionistic conjuring with the illustrator's individual self-expression and feeling:

If illustration is expression, it becomes a transposition of thought. So it is thought transposed to an illusion of reality. Suppose I speak of a man with a face as hard as flint. A mental image is conjured up in your imagination. However, the image is not yet sharp and clear. This quality of hardness, a subconscious interpretation you feel, must be combined with realism. The result will not be a copy of a photograph nor of a living model. *It is a transposition of your individual conception to a face.* You work with your tools of line, tone, and color to produce that quality. Devoid of feeling, you could hardly paint that head. (p. 18; italics are in the original).

In my focus group, illustrators spoke of how their work is misunderstood, thought to be uncreative because it might be directed by a client or art director, when really direction cannot do the job alone – the illustrator must *still* imagine what the client wants, no matter how specific the order. It is the illustrator's job to decide how a face “as hard as flint” will look. Determining how things look – based on a provided text or otherwise – is still a *decision*, this-not-that, and a decision is inherently always inflected by ideology, idea, suggestion, proposal: a *theory* about how things ought to appear, dependent upon the unique individual's ability to express.

Conjuring could also be called ontology. A conversation I had with Terry Merx* comes to mind. In this sequence, the role of the illustrator as an ontologist emerges:

Merx: [My paintings are] all done in transparencies because that's how I see the world... I can see through anything. It isn't just a metaphorical seeing through people's schemes or motives or something, but actually can see through walls ... when we see a wall we aren't just seeing the wall, there is something behind it. We *accept* that reality, otherwise the world's a sham, isn't it? ... just the surface of things... My mandate is to see inside the surface ... so I work in transparencies for that very reason.

Grove: But Terry, how the hell is that different from imagination?

Merx: It isn't. It's not different at all. I mean, that's what makes the world go around. I'm only imagining this computer, this interview and everything because we agree to. Of course it's imagination, what else?

But the ontological product is not recognizable until it has been given a suitable form that moves it into the realm of epistemology. Our conversation continued:

Merx: I learned from [Takao] Tanabe that, when we look at the horizon, and there's the ocean...and then there's the sky, is that when you draw that line, what do you do?

Grove: Make a division.

Merx: That's right, you separate the ocean from the sky. But what happens, when you draw that line, if you *join* the ocean to the sky?

It is the nuance of a slippery signifier that the illustrator tries to control – every image, every sign, can flip into its opposite. The flip-flop of signs reminds me of when I once attended a mask-making workshop, where the instructor, an actor, told us that every mask, no matter what facial expression it seemed to have, could also express the opposite emotion, depending on how it was played. When Merx says he can see through walls, he is acknowledging that a phenomenon is unstable and open to multiple meanings until he, the illustrator, has imagined a form for it: a sky, an ocean, a wall; nothing is anything until it is “seen” – *theorein* – and that cannot happen until it is illustrated. Making the manifestation convincing to a sufficient number of others is a skill of rhetoric, and

subsequent acceptance by the audience is what gives meaning. Skill is *craft*, which is etymologically linked to magic, as in witchcraft or craftiness, as is *art*. Poor craftsmanship – lack of dazzle (*lux*) – breaks the spell and interferes with meaningfulness. By craft, the expert can suggest whether the horizon line is either a dividing line or a uniting one. Although the magical channeling of inspiration affects the convincing effectiveness of the brush, it cannot do it without sound training and determination. A large amount of unmagical skill goes into craft in order to make a sign convincing – but its grip is tenuous, for no matter how dazzlingly well-crafted, an illustration’s meaning can always be reversed if the context in which it is seen or the text with which it is paired is removed or made incongruous. The sign play that illustrators can use for subversive purposes relies upon this. And when an illustration is presented as fine art, as I will discuss more in the last chapter, the contextual shift can threaten the original, intended signification. Bourdieu discusses contextual shifts as a matter of position-taking, which precipitates an “effect of parody” where the work of art takes on irony. This was supported by the experiment I ran in my focus group, where the paintings of Tim Gardner[^] were at first thought to be straightforwardly illustrative more than resembling fine art; and then thought to be ironic once it was known they were made for gallery display (described in Chapter 7).

The sign play that allows Gardner’s work to appear as either sincere or ironic is discussed by J. Hillis Miller, where text and image not only conflict with each other, but conflict internally between signifying themselves and signifying an arbitrary idea – a doubling of signs (pp. 95-96). The line is just a line but it is also a horizon; and it could

be a joining or a division depending on what you are told it is meant to be, but it always challenges that telling even as it affirms it. Miller writes,

All theory or making visible by way of illustration should undercut itself, suspend itself, reveal its own inadequacy in the moment of putting itself forward. The name for this self-negation is “irony”. Theory, illustration, abstraction, reflection as light turned on an object and as an act of mental consideration, the aesthetic, catachresis and irony – all surprisingly, are names for the same mode of putting forward signs....Theory must be ironized if what is abstract about it, that is, the way it is drawn away tropologically from the whole it represents, is not to be taken, falsely, as literal rather than figurative. (p. 141)

The irony of theory connects to the discomfort many illustrators have with the intellectualization of art, because, to use Greenhalgh’s formulation, they are positivists. Subconsciously aware that their sign-making is imperiled and yet beholden to ensuring the stability of their signs, many resist having their work read into and *unintentional* signplay acknowledged. Two people in my study (and years ago, also my own graphic design instructor Wilbur Pendley) impressed upon me how ridiculous and untrue are accusations that commercial artists insert subliminal messages into advertising images (the intentional insertion of subliminal content *is* unlikely, but the viability of unintentional messages is also being denied). Similarly, several people I spoke to scoff at art that has no obvious, meaningful significance. An illustrator* I interviewed said,

[Baden’s sculpture titled *Pavilion, Rock, Shell* (Illustration 10)] doesn’t make any sense to me; it makes me angry. It makes me think... there is a group of people who either call themselves artists or want to be associated with these people who are artists and they have enough power, or they are intimidated, to let things like that happen. I think I’m humble enough to accept there’s a lot of art I don’t understand and I accept that. But I look at something like that and I say, “What’s the purpose of it? What is it trying to say?” and it doesn’t say anything to me... I guess I’m more accepting of representational [art] or maybe something more realistic, but I like other art that isn’t [realistic too]. It bothers me to see constructions or assemblages that somebody said “This is art!” and if you disagree with it being art then you’re obviously a Neanderthal.

It is the irony of signification inherently in image-making that these critical observers are both drawn to and repelled by in visuals – as illustrators they like the challenge of coming up with “a solution”, but once decided, they dislike being told that it means something they did not intend, something not readily apparent to the casual viewer. But when they are shown a work lacking obvious, meaningful significance, that *looks* open to interpretation, that is meant poetically – but are *told* what it means and how to value it (by the title, artist’s statement, curatorial statement or critical analysis), if the meaning doesn’t readily match the appearance, they see the irony of signification immediately. The clash between image and text these detractors take as a failed solution, and it causes them to read it as “a joke”, “a con” or “bullshit”. These words, especially the third, were used many times by different informants to describe conceptual art, minimalism, and other types of non-pictorial fine art, and particularly to describe the curatorial and artist’s statements that explain them. These skeptics are confirmed in their supposition that all that “thinking really hard” about art is indeed “bullshit” when fine artists, curators and critics call them philistines, and fail to acknowledge that their opaque work *is* ironically doubled – that it can have a literal meaning where none was intended, or can read as bad art as well as elite art for example. “Bullshit” has been lifted from mere slang and exhaustively defended as a term worthy of consideration by philosopher H.G. Frankfurt, who defines it as, “making assertions that purport to describe the way things are” where truth and falsehood are in fact arbitrary (1995, p. 62). This is a definition that could, ironically, apply to “theory” as well, either the concrete or the abstract kind – and is necessary – Miller asserts – for a figurative as opposed to a literal reading. But in that it too imposes an arbitrary reality, conjured, dazzling illustration is bullshit as much as fine

art theory. The craft of illustration is a polemic position equivalent to contemporary art jargon – Greenhalgh’s distinction between the ironic and the positivistic is not sustained because both can switch places depending on context; both can be bullshit or meaningful under the right circumstances.

Having reduced both fine art and illustration down to a lowest common denominator, it behooves us to be reminded how they are different. Although both may be said to be bullshit, where two or more people agree they are not, they may be said to *mean* something. But illustration and fine art mean in different ways, even when considered as art divorced from text and titles. The prime difference between illustration and fine art is, *illustration MUST strive for common understanding, whereas fine art has no such need*. “Common understanding” is another term for a text and the property of communication, an agreed upon meaning by two or more people, written or spoken or otherwise shared. This is essentially the classic illustration-proper definition. Where the confusion occurs is that not only can illustration signify as fine art, but fine art can mimic illustration too, since at times artists want to communicate as illustrators do. But although illustration strives for communication, no image is capable of absolute fidelity to a common understanding (even when anchored by text) – and nor is an image capable of completely avoiding it either. There will always be commonly understood meanings imposed on the least communicative visual, just like we see faces in clouds; and there will always be exceptional readings to even the most commonly understood illustration. So, the difference comes down to the artist’s intent and the audience’s reading of that intent; these intents are communicated by social and physical contexts, such as which text the image is paired with, the space it is seen in, the job it performs or what is said about

it. Whether the reading of a given visual is as fine art or illustration can be subverted simply with a change in context, as people in my experiment noted regarding Gardner's work. All art, illustration or fine, is ironically doubled, reading as art and non-art because at its most basic it is contingent upon context for meaning – and this is why Island Illustrators had such a hard time defining which was which when they began to recontextualize their illustration.

The doubling has allowed individual illustrative fine artists to take on the art world. Steve Kergin is very conscious of his power to control context:

I could probably spend some time just exploring all kinds abstract expressionist whims that occur to me from time to time and I could probably present that in the marketplace in a particular way that would have people believing that I'm solidly in that camp and that I've never been anywhere else. It's a world of illusion, right? Perception is reality, right? (interview, 2006)

But breaking the barrier isn't easy. Historically, as Bogart has discussed, the artificiality of art world exclusions was exploited and exposed by pop artists such as Andy Warhol. But while postmodern appropriation of illustration does show the arbitrariness of what can be called fine art or illustration – it does not challenge the arbitrariness of the context that is "postmodern fine art". Putting illustrative attributes into fine art the way Tim Gardner and his curators have done does not collapse fine art and illustration; nor did the work of Andy Warhol. As Gowans put it, "Pop art has nothing to do with any appreciation of the real significance of popular culture. It's just a whim, toying with yet another novelty, another variety of formalism, a minor manifestation of the art-is-what-artists-say-it-is syndrome" (1981, p. 24). Bogart says, "For all the hoopla about the breakdown of borders, the notion of 'fine' art continues to structure some formidable intellectual hierarchies. The integrity of art-art remains very much a given" (p. 301).

Because specific environmental contexts and intents are maintained that signify fine art (curatorial statements addressing art theory, a professed ambivalence towards the everyday communicative properties of the work, white cube exhibition as its primary function), the “great divide” is maintained in the art world. Fine art is not a type of art, but a type of context. In Victoria, the contemporary-noncommercial and conservative-commercial contextual barricades keep Island Illustrators from registering as contemporary artists. Nevertheless, the Society still challenges the boundaries of conservatism and illustration by its exploitation of the ironic doubling of images, with repercussions for the definition of not just illustration but contemporary art too.

5.0 STATUS OF ILLUSTRATION

5.1 Status of Illustration

The difficulty members of Island Illustrators have had over the years defining illustration is not due to any deficiency on the Society's part, but is the result of longstanding turmoil for illustrators and the status of illustration in the art world since the Victorian era.

In 1931, Harvey Darton, one of England's most eminent scholars of illustration, observed that illustration was hard to define, even to illustrators themselves: "As a profession they do not agree in their aims, and even individually they do not always seem firm in their own purpose...." (p. 12). Illustration is a catch-all word, just like those old bones of contention, *culture* and *nature*. It is bandied about, entirely dependent on context for its meaning, and this is one of the problems that leads to its meaning different things at different times to different people. Not just actual flat images but also text, drama, moving pictures, and music can "illustrate"; in fact, any object, action or idea – including a piece of non-illustrating art – that is held up as an example or metaphor representing or explaining something else can be said to "illustrate" it. That anything can be illustration suggests that the word is an empty signifier and therefore harmless, but this is not so since it was commonly used in certain contexts as an insult. Many illustrators are still met with derision in galleries: in 2005, Duncan Weller*, one of Canada's most inventive illustrators, was told by a number of Montreal commercial galleries that they do not handle illustration on principle (conversation, May 2006). Artists who make more acceptable fine art may also suffer if it is discovered that they illustrate as well. Kristi Bridgeman* told me how a couple of serious collectors, enthusiastic over her paintings, dropped them like hot potatoes when they discovered that the children's material in the

display next to them was hers as well. “You have to choose!” they impressed upon her. In a third category are the artists – like Robert Bateman[^] – whose work is not illustration but, due to an association of realism with illustration in many people’s minds, who are called illustrators in a pejorative sense. To understand how the division of fine art and illustration is manifested and how and why the efforts of Island Illustrators are worth noting, the cultural and historical roots of the terminology applied to illustrative creators and their work must first be traced.

The larger currents in the graphic art industry described by Thomson, Bogart and Davis affected even regional outposts like Victoria, but generally the impact there came later and more diluted. Unlike art in employment, idealistic modern Art was thought to be more “true”, the unique individual painting a self-expressive interpretation because he or she was driven by an inner compulsion to do so. Success had less to do with craft (although craft was not entirely dismissed) than it did with a remarkable personality or “vision”, and ability to explore and invent new forms and leave behind custom. Those who preferred traditional art were thought to be falling for false appearances instead of seeing essences, and were characterized by modernists as unsophisticated. Emily Carr[^] complained that,

People did not want to see beneath surfaces. The West was ultra-conservative. They had transported their ideas at the time of their migration, a generation or two back. ...[they] firmly adhered to their old, old, outworn methodsmy pictures were either hung on the ceiling or on the floor, and were jeered at, insulted.... (1946, p. 228)

In Victoria, the French modern stance (there was an English equivalent, but for Carr and others it was largely French) was at a variance with the much-favoured English Arts and Crafts stance of social service and traditional skill. Thomson discusses the impact of Arts

and Crafts on the commercial arts as having contributed to the ennoblement of these arts through a veneration of skill, but also as having contributed to the confusion of the identity of graphic designers and illustrators:

To the extent that the Arts and Crafts movement sought to reunite artisan and artist, it worked against professionalization, blurring the lines between production and design, amateur and professional. To the extent that it celebrated handicraft over machine production, it ignored economic reality. Within the [professional Arts and Crafts] societies, there were tensions between designers and artists.... (1997, p. 101)

Island Illustrators' difficulty with identity and role is linked to the Arts and Crafts conflict between needing to be professional, business-oriented illustrators (commercial), wanting to satisfy a spiritual and moral longing to be craftspeople (traditional), versus a different pressure from the art world that they be self-expressive experimentalists (modern/contemporary).

Art education in B.C. struggled to reconcile the new ideas of self-expressive art with the old expectations of beauty and usefulness. Charles H. Scott~ and W. P. Weston^ were founders of the Vancouver School of Decorative and Applied Arts (now significantly renamed Emily Carr Institute). They were also authors of B.C.'s first art textbook for schoolteachers, the *Manual of Drawing and Design for Elementary and High School*, circa 1925. The book is heavily influenced by English Arts and Crafts, with numerous colour plates showing examples of decorative art highly reminiscent of Glasgow School styles circa 1900. Walter Crane is listed in the bibliography. Weston, who was once a commercial artist, taught art teachers at the Provincial Normal School from 1914-1946, and lectured on art appreciation at Victoria College (precursor to the University of Victoria) (Thom, 1980, p. 9). A later edition (1933) by Weston alone adds a

great many examples of posters and advertisements with Canadiana themes, natural history nature studies, medieval English costume studies, and some coastal native motifs. The texts would have influenced artistic training and taste in Victoria children born from about 1920 until probably, it is safe to guess, 1955. An analysis of these manuals reveals confused statuses of fine and applied art and the role of illustration.

The authors set up a distinction between fine and applied art in which “Art” is “emotion expressed through a personality” and an “expression of personal quality” that cannot be taught, while drawing is “the expression of form upon a plane surface”, a “science” not requiring talent (p 33). Consequently, Art is not the purported subject of the book (yet it is), and drawing is just the “handmaid to crafts and industrialism generally” (design), and “an aid in the appreciation of those truths of beauty seen in Nature and Art” (Art) – two purposes presented as related opposites (p 34). Drawing was not Art but only a skill, taught from primary grades on in terms of illustration and representationalism:

Imagination should be cultivated by encouraging them to record their ideas of familiar objects, animals and scenes of everyday life, or whatever else may appeal to them.... (p. 16)

These exercises should be correlated with language and reading lessons, and with everyday experiences of the pupils. Encourage children to illustrate stories.... (p. 18)

Interestingly, design (in the old sense of decoration) was also taught in terms of illustration. Using the analogy of a story, music, or a play, an ornamental design is personified as a leading idea, character, motif or theme, “supported and contrasted by minor ones, changes of scene, colour, rhythm, or key...subservient to the leading idea or motif” (pp. 143-4). But despite teaching illustratively, true to fine art dogma drawing students were discouraged from copying the examples from plates in the text (p 18), or

the teacher's demonstrations (p 38), while design students *were* told to copy (pp. 84, 142). Hypocritically, all students were encouraged to use snapshots and commercial art in magazines to learn the rules of perspective (p. 46) and to help correct their observational work (p. 18). Yet, although required to produce representational drawings, pupils were sternly warned that representation, especially the "most photographic", was incompatible and diametrically opposed to "seeing the emotional intention of the artist" (pp 35-36). It is only following mastery of representational, observational drawing that the student is then allowed to attempt unstructured "imaginative drawing" (p. 18). So, representational illustration was seen as a regrettable necessary step to the higher ground of self-expressive Art. In design, the representational was equally secondary, for the ideal ornament had to follow specific taste in Art minus the self-expression: "Flowers and other natural objects should not be used as ornament, but conventional representations founded upon them, sufficiently suggestive to convey the intended image to mind. (Universally obeyed in the best periods of Art; equally violated when Art declines)" (p. 75). "Conventionalized" meant abstracted: "To take a natural form and by simplification or amplification of form make it fit a geometric area so that balance within the area is obtained" (p. xiv). In this way, Art could on one hand be self-expression without servitude, or on the other be service without self-expression so long as it adhered to other Art standards; and never illustratively photographic or true to observed nature.

In most commercial art books and articles I consulted published from 1925 to 1950 "illustrator" and "artist" are used interchangeably, and "designer" is a less common term. Whether the worker was doing illustration, rendering, ornamentation, lettering, pasteup, photography, sign painting, showcard writing or what have you, he or she was

also called an “artist”. As the various applications and tasks in the field of what we now refer to as “graphic design” evolved, “designer” applies, it seems, to a new style that is indisputably “modern” and allied with industry. One 1930s article I found distinguished between “pictorial illustration” and “abstract illustration”. The second was concerned with borders, lettering, and blocks of colour, which is what the “graphic designer” eventually took over while farming out the former to an illustrator (*The Artist*, 1932).

The pressure in the 1930s and 1940s to bring art to industry split applied art into craft (traditional, unoriginal, not Art) versus design (progressive, innovative, visionary like Art). Design could not be fine Art, but it could raise its status by separating itself from homespun craft – things were now mass-produced, following international vogues and sanctified by modernism. The original title of *Design for Living*, a major 1949 exhibition of industrial design and modern art at the Vancouver Art Gallery, had been *Crafts in our Town*. It is explained, “The change in name provided insight into the shift in focus from the hobbyist to the trained amateur and/or professional” (Elder, 2004, p. 52). Whereas in the Arts and Crafts movement of the Victorian period “craft” had been a noble endeavour of good, honest labour (much of it women’s labour), it now seemed dabbling, shoddy, impoverished, even unsafe. The old principles of beauty and decorativeness became an embarrassment. In advertising, which was sometimes referred to as an industrial art, “commercial art” slowly gave way to “graphic design”, which was not about rendering a convincing image any more, but about organizing information in (it was implied) a modern style. Swiss or International Style became associated with this new type of commercial art, a style that emphasized cubist grids and typography with little imagery, in a parallel to the fine art of the day. Those aiming to signify

sophistication – in book jackets, for instance – eschewed the pictorial (Heller, 1995, p. 17). With this shift to graphic design came an eventual professional division between graphic designers and illustrators and the dropping of the term “commercial art”, which had come to connote the lowest art of all (in Victoria mostly occurring in the 1970s, judging by phone book headings – see Appendix C) (Glaser, 2000 in Soar, 2002, p. 51).

The shift of occupational titles in the creative industries has resulted in some bizarre combinations. For instance, Faye Lake* studied broadcast media at Niagara College, which was in the division of Applied Arts, but her major was in Fine Arts (Lake, *Illustrator*, May, 1998). The abandonment of some titles in favour of others is partly driven by a desire to escape negative connotations arising from the historic animosity between art and advertising. Some illustrators – Glen Mullaly* is one – have refused to call themselves artists because they didn’t want to be mistaken for irresponsible weirdoes who are “pretty damn irritating to be around”; and who are “spending weeks on paintings that never sell”¹ (Mullaly, *Illustrator*, March, 1997). The term “graphic artist” is particularly rife with contradiction, as has been discussed by Thomson (p. 3). It has been used to refer to printers, illustrators, designers and letterers since at least the 1800s, particularly in Canada, it seems. The title was still de rigeur in 1975, evident in the title of the first national Conference of Graphic Art and Design that was held in Edmonton. Illustrators and designers mostly stopped calling themselves graphic artists, but the terms “artwork” and “graphic artist” were still retained in printshops and design studios to refer to the mechanicals and the pasteup artist respectively. Further confusion comes because “graphic artist” has a parallel history in fine art, where it means “printmaker.” Using it

¹ Mullaly was speaking tongue-in-cheek, but the underlying sentiment seems serious.

was a claim to respectability for illustrators, even though printmakers themselves have typically been of lesser status among fine artists because of their work being issued in multiple (like that of illustrators).

Political matters interfered with representational art's status as much as modernism did. As Scott Watson has written in reference to Vancouver's 1950s heyday of abstract expressionism, the social realism that accompanied the fervor for industrial design before World War II was politically incorrect after it:

No one in the post-cold war west advocated socialist realism, the official style of the Soviet Union and China; rather, this realism, although it owed its pedigree to nineteenth-century French history painting, was universally reviled by western artists. In the highest reaches of cultural brokering, the United States (New York) had established a hegemony over the idiom of abstraction by 1949 (2004, p. 92) [....]

An abstraction of 'inscapes' and 'interior landscapes' begins with the cold war crackdown on artists affiliated with communism and the rapid codification of social realism as emblematic of communist unfreedom and abstraction as emblematic of freedom of the individual in a liberal democracy. (ibid, p. 93)

In 1953 a ruckus was caused when an exhibition of the corporate Seagram collection, about to tour in Europe, was unveiled in Vancouver. A Franklin Arbuckle painting of Vancouver with boats and city skyline was "condemned by critics as merely commercial illustration". Terms they used were: "utterly superficial"; "merely poster art"; and "simply is not art". A Vancouver Art Gallery representative stated, "One must make the difference between commercial art and fine art." Among other critics were Fred Amess~ of the Vancouver School of Art, and B.C. Binning~, who was quoted saying, "...people in other countries will think of us as country bumpkins" (Marsh, D'Arcy, *Vancouver Sun*, March 24, 1953, p. 19). His fears were not unfounded. A Victoria man abroad wrote to say that he was in Stockholm when the exhibit was on display. "All works could have

easily been the product of a single mediocre Victorian school for commercial illustrators,” he said, adding that it got a called “second rate” by a Stockholm paper (Aller, *Victoria Daily Colonist*, Feb. 19, 1954, p. 4).

The allergy fine art developed to anything illustrative became deeply entrenched; it was dangerous to let slip that you were a commercial artist. In 1968, art reviewer Ted Lindberg, who thought Victoria was “at least twenty years retarded in its aesthetic tolerance”, wrote a piece on Fleming Jorgenson[^] titled “Abilities Overshadowed by his Commercial Life”. In it, he referred to Jorgenson as an “artist-designer” and wrote,

The painting is intuitive: physical but not visceral; intelligent, but not intellectual. There is evidence of distinct tactile pleasure in laying on the pigment, most often in somber tonalities of local colour. All this has grown out of a genuine graphic sensibility, which is confident and well-developed, but sometimes over-shadowed by his commercial double-life, which must be difficult to suppress at times. (*Victoria Daily Times*, Sept. 14, 1968, p. 9)

Meanwhile, among those who attended art school from the 1950s to the 1990s, there are endless stories of how students were expected to adopt the ideologies of modernism. One artist related, “This [illustrative] approach was nearly anathema at the small loosely organized art college I once attended...one was expected, for the most part, to draw or paint according to the prevailing artistic vogue...I was concerned my work was too pretty....” (Wynne-Boutilier*, *Illustrator*, Dec. 1989). Another said, “I went through the Vancouver School of Art...and had to get over the idea that if you sell a painting you are selling out” (Andrews*, *Illustrator*, Nov. 1997). Although the return of representational methods to high-art circles suggests the prejudices are over, my surveys indicated illustration is still thought of as a category unto itself, sometimes in negative terms (Appendix B, Q. 31).

6. THE FIELD OF CULTURAL PRODUCTION IN VICTORIA

6.1 Artistic Conservatism in Victoria

“Conservative” in its dictionary meaning is, “characterized by a tendency to preserve or keep intact, unchanged” (OED, 1971). By this definition, survey responses to the question “Please name any well-known artists whose work you like” (Chapter 7; Appendix B, Q. 7) indicate that local artists’ taste is indeed conservative insofar as respondents named traditional or historical artists and movements and few contemporary ones: mostly old masters, French impressionists, post-impressionists, modernists and Canadian landscape painters. There was also a marked preference for figurative art. In Victoria, conservatism is in fact a flourishing “other” art world beside the contemporary one, where works that hearken back to these influences can readily be found. But the variety of artists named is also eclectic and therefore hard to reconcile with the term “conservative”, which suggests narrowness or conformity. Island Illustrators is thought to be conservative, and although appreciation for older standards has been preserved, little in their art making has kept the traditional intact or unchanged, and the cumulative output of members through the years is quite varied. It begs the question what exactly conservative taste in art is.

Conservative taste, during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, meant *academicism*, which had developed largely from the Italian Renaissance in European art. Classical proportions, the rules of perspective, the illusionary effects of chiaroscuro, glazing, and other techniques, customary colour harmonies and subject matter all come to mind. Landscapes in the style of the seventeenth century Dutch variety in particular

dominated Canadian collections of the late nineteenth century. Then, as modernist forms such as impressionism, post-impressionism, then cubism and expressionism became common in B.C., conservative taste became synonymous with *realism*, which in the vernacular meant the rendering of the subject in any way that was not abstract. As time went on, impressionism and postimpressionism became “styles” and were accepted under the conservative umbrella. When completely nonobjective forms became *de rigueur*, conservative art became anything depicting a recognizable subject at all. When art began to be concerned more with idea and less with paint, abstraction too started to look conservative, especially if it was being used decoratively. Once all manner of materials and presentations had been explored, conservatism became understood to be any art adhering to traditional media or intent; and conservative has now come to mean anything that prefers the well-made over the clever (Shiner, p. 278). Today, conservatism retains all of these meanings in varying degrees. In postmodernism, as older conservative forms have been co-opted, it has become trickier to discern the conservative. The main indicator of conservatism now seems to be that it is characterized by earnestness, as opposed to irony. But as my focus group experiment showed, whether something is meant earnestly or ironically cannot always be told from looking at the art itself – the maker’s intent, how it is framed and hung, and how it is discussed contextualize it. The difference is in whether the work is made for traditional reasons or for the purposes of art discourse. With regard to this last point, Island Illustrators is certainly uniformly conservative, but in all others, the group challenges conservatism as much as it operates within it.

Despite conservatism being evolutionary – albeit slowly – the word is usually used in nearly the dictionary meaning of resisting change and as an accusation of

philistinism. The cultural character of Victoria has often been called conservative in this pejorative sense, and writers concerned with the art discourse of modern-era and contemporary artists often comment on it. Emily Carr[^] started the trend, when in her 1946 autobiography she claimed that her work was jeered at or ignored. Likewise, teacher, artist and columnist Ina Uhthoff[^] said, as if speaking of garden weeds, that “Realism was rampant, and it was hard to convince students that pure form was something to be desired” (in Crawford, p. 229). AGGV curators Nick Tuele and Liane Davidson wrote in 1981, “Today, [ex-AGGV director Colin] Graham[^] recalls the outraged reactions to his early [1951] exhibition of the then leading-edge artists Paul-Emile Borduas and Jean-Paul Riopelle. Indignant comments about those ‘wild men of Quebec’ reflected the provincial state of affairs in Victoria” (unpaginated, 1981). Frank Nowosad, in his biography of Ricky Ciccimara[^], wrote, “Up until the late 1950s and early ‘60s , Victoria was something of an artistic hinterland” (1988, p. 99). More recently, a participant on Robert Genn’s[^] website message boards wrote, “...just the fact that [Mowry Baden’s[^] public art] is being criticized by the more-conservative-than-average Victoria establishment lends it some credibility in my opinion” (Pratt in Genn, July 9, 2003).

I find the whole concept of conservatism in Victoria is unexamined and exaggerated. Audrey Johnson noted that “other Canadian cities” asserted Victoria was a “pause in time” (1994). Ex-AGGV director Patricia Bovey wrote, “Victoria has never been an unsophisticated and unenlightened community” (p. 15, 1996). A closer examination of records does challenge the conservative reputation. Emily Carr, for instance, has been shown by two biographers to have fabricated the extent of her

rejection there (Tippett, 1979, pp. 73; 76-78; 100-102; Blanchard, 1987, pp. 10, 125-127), and Colin Graham has noted the prevalence of her early works in local collections suggests the “legend of the neglect” should be “considerably modified” (1976). The 1951 exhibition of Quebec abstract expressionists mentioned above actually received good reviews, busy curatorial talks, and not a single miffed letter to the editors of either major newspaper in the five weeks following its opening (*Daily Times*, Nov. 21, 1951, p. 16; *Victoria Daily Colonist*, Nov 25, 1951, p. 36), due in part to the efforts of Graham, Uthoff and other modernist sympathizers (Graham, interview, 2006). Victoria artists in 1976 or so were among the first to experiment with colour photocopying (Bartlett*, *Illustrator*, Nov. 1997) and in 1981 among the first in the world to explore computer graphics as an artistic medium (Leyne, *Victoria Times-Colonist*, Oct. 18, 1981, p. 6). For over twenty years there has been an annual erotic art show. A vibrant “colony” of contemporary artists flourished in Chinatown beginning around 1978 (Scott^, interview, 2006). Culturally speaking, although radical change was grimaced at by an English elite who did not stand to gain by it, there has always been just enough free-thinking in Victoria – even in its most colonial-minded days – that alternative forms and attitudes have always quietly eked out an existence just beyond the shadow of the Empress Hotel, and prejudices have never been quite strong enough to stop a multiplicity of art forms from taking root by even 1950, which since then have blossomed into an array of art practices. In fact, conservatism can provide a strong historical context against which alternative practices can be defined more sharply. Michael Morris^, for instance, speaks of how three versions of modernism he was exposed to in the 1950s in Victoria – Arts and Crafts, European Bauhaus, and Pacific Northwest abstraction – informed his later

conceptual and performance art (interview, 2006). The hidden diversity accounts for the range of favourite artists named on the survey. Essentially, Victoria's public face of dominion propriety masks a provincial freedom, including the freedom to ignore art world discourse, and I would suggest it is this groundwater that is nourishing so many offshoots of art now, such as the acceptance of illustration as just another form of art. Conservatism is a broader ideology than has been granted.

The misleading use of the term "conservative" to mean resisting change needs to be understood (per Bourdieu) as a ploy of avant garde artists in the field, like Carr who needed to contrast her difference and innovation with what was thought to be already known in order to qualify as "original" and worthy of notice. Contemporary art – in the restricted sense of the term as it is used by non-commercial galleries – has inherited this value, demanding contemporary art be of its time and address in a new way what has gone before. Unlike contemporary art, conservatism is thrift, where cherished old forms are augmented only as social needs change and not for change's sake. Conservative art is concerned with preserving connectivity between people, using communicative properties to reaffirm values and knowledge and to improve them. This passage about the influential B.C. bird illustrator Allan Brooks (b.1869-d.1946) expresses earnest conservative philosophy well:

It is at least certain that in honouring the tradition of Audubon, but greatly improving the earlier naturalist's techniques [that made birds look dead], Brooks founded a tradition of his own: that bird art had best be kept on the good foundation of common sense, demanding that the "illustration" must remain at the level of commonality that insists the picture must look like the bird it represents, as seen in the hand [as opposed to in nature].

If this be bad art, at least it seems to have held firm through more than half of this century while nonscientific art wandered with its changing "isms" in the wilderness, trying to find a new soul. (Laing, 1979, p. 242)

The subtle evolution of new form in traditional art is largely unremarked by those used to the avant garde with its self-conscious, insatiable need to be new and different all the time.

6.2 Illustration and Illustrative Fine Art in Victoria, 1900-1980

Historical Roots

Four major traditional influences – landscape, native, Arts and Crafts and Asian – have gone into the making of conservative and illustrative sensibilities in Victoria. In 1958, the elderly Sophie Pemberton[^] said, “Victoria is such a good place for artists. Such lovely things to paint ... Artists will always be happy here, in this lovely place,” and that she was “greatly interested in future hopes for Victoria becoming a cultural and artistic centre of the Canadian west” (Williamson, *Victoria Daily Times*, Oct. 25, 1958, p. 6). Coming from someone who had in her day painted to the top of her field in both England and France, these were not simply gracious words. She truly believed that the physical surroundings have an impact on the quality of artwork, and that Victoria is bountiful in the right ambience. For artists concerned with social wellbeing and popularity, it is quite probably true. Many of the illustrative fine artists I spoke with related their art and creative process to the beauty of Victoria, even if they were not landscape painters, often in spiritual terms. This spiritual connection has come to be closely linked to environmentalism, and by that connection it is possible to see landscape not just as a picture, devoid of the human, but as a place for humans to live. In this sense, landscape is the stage set for peoples’ plans, identities, and ideologies in the illustration of life or

lifestyle. Like any stage set, it is possible to argue it is a social construction, but for those living within it, it is the foundation of everything and therefore more real and dependable than anything else. Things come and go, but the land remains.

Landscape begins with curious and scheming Europeans, who relied upon their watercolour sketches for accurate records of the new colony. Paul Kane, Frederick Whymper, Sarah Crease and other early visitors' and settlers' works were made with documentary more than aesthetic sentiment in mind, establishing from the outset a type of illustrative outlook that informs much landscape, ethnographic, and natural history art ever since. After the colony was more established and there was more leisure time, picturesque watercolours in the British tradition influenced by Constable were common, in which the documentary aspect is secondary – but it is never quite forgotten. Lucius O'Brien and Frederick Bell-Smith both frequented Victoria and fall into this category. The large 1977 AGGV group exhibition *100 Views of Mount Baker* is an example of the persistence of the British landscape tradition (and of Japanese prints). Excellent critical theory has been developed on the colonial gaze in landscape painting (eg, WJT Mitchell's *Landscape and Power*, 1994), but that is not my focus here. Nevertheless, it is important to note that by transposing the British tradition to the new world, immigrant Anglophones made themselves feel at home. It facilitated their adaptation to a foreign land.

Besides the beauty of the area, Victoria also has an ancient art tradition. The First Nations' artistic sensibilities have continued despite attempts in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to disrupt them, and over time the aesthetic senses of aboriginal peoples have permeated everything. First Nations people have a rich visual culture intrinsically linked to spiritual beliefs and proprietary rights, where privileges accompany

images – making an inherently conservative system where art is concerned, in the dictionary sense of resisting change, because to alter tradition was to transgress on all levels. From this I propose naming a distinction in all art between traditionalism and conservatism, the first adhering to strict time-honoured rules and resisting change, and the second referring to tradition but allowing for new forms. Native art forms are illustrative, in that they portray characters from stories and spiritual narratives. They have been adopted by many non-natives in the past, such as Paul Kane, Emily Carr, Archibald Fairburn[^], Jack Shadbolt[^], and Margaret Peterson[^]. Several Island Illustrators affiliates are also inspired by North West Coast art: Steve Kergin, Ron Stacy, Terry Merx, Karel Doruyter, Frank Lewis and Kristi Bridgeman are some (Illustrations 1, 3, 5, 6). Native art to them is spiritual, and they implement it carefully and knowledgeably (although, for some, not always without controversy) in both traditional and conservative ways.

The English Arts and Crafts movement was another British import that established Celtic homeyness, with its emphasis on the decorative arts (another facet, it will be remembered, of illustration and design). Victoria was urbanized largely by English and Scottish immigrants between 1870 and 1930, as Arts and Crafts became the reigning middle-class aesthetic idiom. Many old houses show the Arts and Crafts influence in post and beam architecture, stained glass in symmetrical geometric forms, and combination shingle-and-siding exteriors. To this day local firms purvey hardware and fabrics of the English Arts and Crafts period and even new houses still follow this aesthetic. Although it was modern and exciting during Victoria's colonial period, Arts and Crafts was essentially a conservative philosophy. It valued "surfaces" in that surface appearance expressed inner morality. As demonstrated by a passage in the *Manual of*

Design written by the Surveyor of Her Majesty's [Queen Victoria's] Pictures, it sought to achieve a pinnacle of perfection through the suppression of detail – that was the modern part of it – and then polish it:

The constant search after novelty [is] one of the sources of bad taste in modern adornment... The efforts of those past ages, when taste was most indisputable, appear... to have been directed rather to continually perfecting and refining their designs and inventions, rather than to creating new ones. (nd [circa 1890], p. 59)

Arts and Crafts ideals were not too different from the idea of spiritual wholeness the native art embodied, with an emphasis on a holistic way of life espousing beauty, integrity and functional forms.

In 1909 artists from the more influential families formed the Victoria Arts and Crafts Club (Lover, p. 5). This is the body Emily Carr cruelly tarred in her memoirs as, “a very select band of elderly persons, very prehistoric in their ideas on Art” (1946, p. 205). It was renamed in 1912 the Island Arts and Crafts Society (IACS), and presently is known as the Victoria Sketch Club. The Society was not a small affair. In 1932 its membership numbered about 135 (outstripping the membership figures of most local artist collectives today), while the population of the entire region was only about 61,200 (1931 census data, given in the 1936 B.C. Directory, p. 1551). It had quite a number of serious and professional artists, many of whom also had membership in the Art Workers Guild, which played an important role in establishing the Vancouver School of Decorative and Applied Arts (*Victoria Daily Colonist*, Nov. 8, 1919, p. 15). The Society not only agitated for a civic gallery but also had already opened its own (short lived) School of Handicraft and Design in 1913 (Lover, p. 8). In 1934 the president, Tom Gore, claimed that it was the largest art society in Canada (Lover, p. 12). It was probably true

on a per capita basis. The Society's annual exhibits included crafts such as weaving, painted china, pottery and book design, as well as oils, watercolours and other conventional fine art. Historically, craft was not considered lesser than painting or sculpture. Old ideas were not superceded by the new, yet the new wasn't completely forsaken, which is the root of Victoria's reputation for artistic conservatism. Emily Carr showed with the IACS 1911-1916 and 1924-1940 (Provincial Archives records). To my eyes, Victoria is not so much stuck in the past as it is preserving and adding to it, in obedience to the Arts and Crafts doctrine of perfecting what you have rather than seizing at novelty. As Don Harvey^ jokes, "If you missed it first time round, you can catch it in Victoria" (interview, 2006). Among Island Illustrators members, woodworker and artist John Oliver Dendy adheres to the typical Victoria profile, although he is not from the area:

I was family trained in the British Arts and Crafts tradition - father a precision metalworker, clockmaker, jeweler - both grandmothers Royal School of Embroidery quality needleworkers, and mother a professional dress designer and oil painter...since retirement from the civil service I have entered Andy Lou's studio. (survey data)

The history in Victoria of the status of non-Europeans and their art is unfortunately marked by hypocrisy. It is a story that merits a thesis all to itself; here, I will only briefly touch upon it as it relates to art from Asia. Victoria has an unusually rich abundance of Indian, Tibetan, Chinese and Japanese art, brought by British civil servants and military families. The English appreciated the booty from an aesthetic and ethnographic standpoint that was compatible with museology of the late Victorian period, but they did not completely extend that appreciation to contemporary non-Western artists. The IACS, populated with English bourgeoisie who had grown up within colonial

systems of apartheid, did not allow people of colour to join. But there was always a space of resistance against this racism that eventually allowed Asian artists and influence to become a very large part of Victoria's artistic heritage. For instance, when painter Lee Nam was refused membership in the IACS, Emily Carr gave him a show in her Peoples' Gallery (Tippett, 1979, p. 218). Also, white artists, especially those born in China or those who learned Japanese pottery and printmaking under the auspices of Arts and Crafts, or others who, like F.H. Varley, studied Buddhism and theosophy, were influenced by Asian traditions. As with native art, Asian art forms gave displaced Europeans another way to connect with a history that not only helped them assimilate in the colonial context, but also (if Alan Gowans is right) gave them roots where the Western artistic tradition had been uprooted by the rise of a fine art practice that fluttered free of history, social function and integrity. Certain art forms from across the Pacific were explicitly illustrative, such as the ukiyo-e that had such an impact on Whistler, Cheret and other precedents of Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau, and later on Walter J. Phillips, who retired in Victoria, and on Steve Kergin and Victor Bosson of Island Illustrators (Illustration 4) (interviews, 2006). The oriental integration of painting and lettering is another form that had enormous import for commercial artists and those schooled in the European tradition of calligraphy and illumination. For instance, Takao Tanabe brought this teaching to commercial art classes at the Vancouver School of Art, where Terry Merx* absorbed them (interview, 2006). The AGGV has long had artists come from Japan and China to teach traditional art. Notable artists and teachers in Victoria are Zhang Bu, Stephen Lowe, Cindy Shin Min Wang and Andy Shutse Lou with

whom Dendy above studies. Japanese collector, connoisseur and dealer Bunzo Nakanishi in particular contributed his expertise to the AGGV's collection (Amos, 2005).

The Art Gallery of Greater Victoria

The AGGV has practiced a rather broad collection strategy, friendly to applied arts. In 1960 it plainly stated, "Basically the Gallery's acquisition policy is a simple one. It is to build a collection of paintings, sculpture, ceramics and all other so-called minor arts representative of all periods of history and all cultures...." ("New Acquisitions."

Introduction... Sept 15, 1960). Director Colin Graham's determination to be all things to all people has left an unusually eclectic legacy, one that built upon Victoria taste in all its variety and one therefore perfectly poised for postmodernity with its mix-n'-match flair. Subsequent directors and curators, like Roger Boulet, Patricia Bovey and Nick Tuele, have also respected the breadth of the gallery. This has been comparatively good for illustration and conservative art by local living artists such as Dar Churcher*, Ted Harrison^ and Robert Bateman^.

Since inception, the gallery has hosted a few shows of strictly illustration, and many others with applied art or illustrative interest in them. Generally speaking there were such shows every three years, although between 1965 and 1975 they taper off significantly (AGGV exhibition records). These are the same years during which high modernism and especially non-representational art became established in Victoria, with postmodernism just beginning. Shows of prints from old masters to ukiyo-e have occurred usually several times a year since the gallery's inception, significant because of the close relationship between illustration and the printing arts.

The University of Victoria

The establishing of UVic in the mid 1960s coincided and to some extent brought about the dethroning of traditional art of the four kinds named above from the position of privilege it had enjoyed. Some Visual Arts faculty succeeded at carving out a space of appreciation among locals for new forms. But as many have lamented, they have not been able to completely oust conservative preferences. Victorians are sometimes accused of not caring about art, but it would more accurate to say they don't care so much about avant garde or contemporary art. Why they cling to traditional preferences can be partly explained by some characteristics of the History in Art and Visual Art departments.

Alan Gowans was an extremely popular lecturer, with unregistered students sneaking in to his classroom just to listen (Scrivener, Mar. 17, 2006; Tuele, interview, 2006)². At least two Island Illustrator members were students of his, and a third, when a teen in Ontario, discovered him through a local television documentary and read one of his books. It is my contention that Gowans' influence in Victoria has been underacknowledged. He taught a first year survey course that reached a very large number of people, for which he wrote his own textbook, also used by least one of his colleagues as a supplement to the standard *History of Art* by H. W. Janson (Bassett-Price, Mar. 19, 2006). Said one student,

I was sorry to read about the death of Alan Gowans ... [he] kept more than 300 students spellbound giving his lectures in History in Art 120.

He took us on a journey through history. He handled huge amounts of information from any discipline and made an incredibly beautiful pattern.

² But, due to his strong personality and ideologies, there were also those who disliked Gowans intensely.

Art history was my discipline, although I had not intended it until Dr. Gowan's classes. So I thank this professor who dared to think so deeply and with such enormous breadth. What a life! (Clark, 2003)

Among Gowans' students who have gone on to play very important roles in art in Victoria were Paul Scrivener[^], now Director of the Community Arts Council, Martin Segger, now Director of the Maltwood Museum and Art Gallery, and Nicholas Tuele, curator of Canadian and later also contemporary art at the AGGV (retired since 1998). Gowans lived, in all, twenty-two years in Victoria, minus some years away. He must have left a great number of people with the conviction that, while they might not agree with all of what he said, they at least could feel justified in appreciating any kind of art they cared to. Although there is no easy way to prove it, the fact that so many artists can make, show and sell so many kinds of work in this city could in part be attributed to his emancipation of taste from the stranglehold of elitism. This stands in contrast to the development of the art scene in Edmonton, where the frequent visits of Clement Greenburg exerted considerable pressure on local painters and the Edmonton Art Gallery to conform to his formalist doctrines (Pizanias, 1992).

Ironically, UVic Visual Arts probably has contributed to the city's taste for the same conservative representational art its instructors have been thought to disapprove of in the past. Craft may have been officially discouraged, but the interest never abated. Pat Martin Bates kept her printmaking area open to all manner of artistic expression, fashionable or not (conversation, March 20, 2006). Secondly, relevant to my focus on illustration, according to Martin Bates, the faculty agreed that drawing was important. While some other Visual Arts departments across Canada relinquished drawing as an essential discipline, UVic maintained it as a core part of the programme, with classes

drawing from life almost every day. Don Harvey – who most will know for his abstract and semi-abstract paintings – was “trained in a traditional British art school where crafts and commercial arts were taught alongside the so-called Fine Arts of Painting and Sculpture” (interview, April, 2006; correspondence, July 14, 2006). He preserved a respect for craftsmanship, once bringing in internationally renowned British designer Dennis Bailey, RDI, of *Graphis* magazine for a workshop on typography and design.

UVic’s Maltwood Gallery is another significant player in the valuation of conservative art in Victoria. It was created through the bequest of John and Katharine Maltwood, who had a quintessentially Victoria art collection made up of Arts and Crafts, Asian art, local art, European art, American art and more – forty-two categories of art are listed by “style/period” on the gallery website. Gowans’ legacy can be seen in his donation of his own collection of 20th century Popeye collectibles, and in the ongoing direction Martin Segger. In 2004, the Maltwood hosted the culminating exhibition of one of Victoria’s most important art history projects ever, a study of local female artists 1850-1920, titled *A Woman’s Place*. Conducted and curated by History in Art Department students and faculty, it included fine art, decorative art and design in equal measure.

Camosun College and the Victoria School of Art

As a community college, Camosun’s art department has been sensitive to local tastes and needs. It has always run a wide variety of continuing education courses in everything from native carving to cartooning to painting. The diploma programme in visual art includes graphic design, painting, printmaking, photography, and animation and its vibrant visiting artist lecture series brings in expertise from various fields (Stanbridge,

interview, 2006). The Victoria College of Art has not offered as broad a selection of concentrations, but it too has fostered a strong respect over the years for drawing and painting (Gordaneer, interview, 2006).

The Royal British Columbia Museum and the Provincial Archives

Charged as they are with keeping records of the history of the province, the museum and archives are of course very interested in media that are illustrative by nature. The archives have an extensive collection of art, with a focus on documentary works and samples by early artists. Material is usually presented in narrative forms with artifacts used as illustration, such as (at the Museum) in time-capsules by decade, stage sets like the ship visitors actually board, the dramatically lit native masks with voice-overs, and inserted illustrative media like in the Old Town's working Edwardian movie theatre. Beautiful illusionistic murals form the backdrop of dioramas, and displays of early colonial life are set up like film stills or snapshots, right down to the narrative temporality of the cinnamon smell wafting from the fresh-from-the-oven fake apple pie in the Old Town's kitchen.

It is probably safe to say every child in Victoria has been to the museum. Its exhibits have had an impact on the perception of history, the uses of illustration, and in particular on how people appreciate native art. When the museum brought Mungo Martin to carve in public in the 1950s, Martin became in effect a living illustration of the museum's text of what a First Nations artist was, and by executing his carvings, he illustrated for others how to do it. Several of my interviewees say they were influenced simply by watching him as children.

The museum has always been popular, and through its popularity, it has kept enthusiasm for illustrative art alive. It has also been a significant employer of illustrators, some of whom are Lillian Sweeney, Frank Beebe, Jean Andre, Jan Vriesen, and a few Island Illustrator members.

Critics and Columnists

The more prominent critics of the modern period leaned towards modernism. Some, like Robin Skelton[^] and Moncrieff Williamson, wrote vociferously in favour of the avant garde. In a town where the usual custom has been to politely ignore what isn't liked (except when it is at the public's expense), Lucia Sanroman's pointed observations were considered out of line by some (myself included, in 1996). But the critics who remained the longest, such as Ina Uhthoff[^] and Audrey Johnson, knew Victoria intimately and generally took an interpretive rather than critical role. Even though they gently prodded the reader in a modern direction, they respected the local traditions. Since the mid-1980s Robert Amos[^] has been the most prominent writer on art for local papers. Amos decided some years ago to stop being critical because he felt criticism wasn't particularly helpful, relevant or effective for an artist's practice. Instead, he prefers to meet with artists, hear them contextualize what they are doing and give him a way to see something positive in their efforts that he can then use to explain that work to the public. Amos also describes his method as being different from most art writers in that he finds art of interest at all levels from "Hillside Mall to Open Space", whereas others usually stick to an elite strata – such as just those winning grants, showing in public galleries, or teaching at universities (interview, 2006). The advantage to such an approach, which Amos himself

says is “dangerously close” to being “Pollyannaish”, is that all art forms are permitted to be themselves, young artists have a chance of getting a review, and the public is informed while being respected for being able to make up their own minds.

Policy

Paradoxically, the predominance of a flourishing conservative art scene in Victoria may be in part due to the relative lack of effective government arts policy over the years. Left to manage on their own, local artists and groups like Island Illustrators have had to be quite aggressive and inventive in making opportunities for themselves. With few financial resources, they have had to cater to local taste whether they liked it or not.

Victoria operates under a two-level system of governance, where the Capital Regional District (CRD) oversees any policy that requires co-ordination with other municipalities that make up the urban, suburban, and rural areas that comprise the region. The CRD in 2000 amalgamated the core area (of four municipalities) with the outlying ones (nine more municipalities); before that, arts policies were not integrated much if at all (some argue they still are not). Historically, both the province of British Columbia and the capital city of Victoria have offered minimal support to visual artists. Indicative of this is that the B.C. Arts Council was only established in 1996, and that it is only in 2005 that B.C. finally created its first Ministry of Tourism, Sports and the Arts (previously arts had been a secondary or tertiary hat of other ministries). Funding to artists at both the provincial and municipal levels has been poor, with B.C. usually ranking ninth out of the ten provinces. The per capita arts funding for the CRD as a whole is \$7.72 per person

(RASP, p. 53, numbers based on 2002 data). This is exceedingly low compared to Vancouver at \$16.35, and Montreal at \$26.62.

It has been the custom in Victoria to treat “arts” and “culture” as two separate spheres, and this custom goes back to at least 1989, when the landmark Arts Policy adopted that year (I am unaware of any previous policy) explicitly stated that it would be limited to arts and not cultural policy (p. 1). This split has been preserved in a 2003 major study for the CRD titled the Regional Arts Strategic Plan (RASP) that sets vision and policy for the foreseeable future. The tendency to think of the arts as separate demonstrates the extent of the isolation of the arts from business, society, education and other aspects of culture from a policy perspective in the Victoria area. Consequently, artists have not been given opportunities to partner up outside of their usual circles, reducing the likelihood that new applications, influences and markets would open up.

While through the 1990s the trend in arts policy across Canada was to admit more ethnic diversity through special initiatives, this trend mostly bypassed Victoria. Although FolkFest supports multicultural performing arts, the visual arts with the possible exception of First Nations art have been largely unsupported. Issues of diversity were named as a weak point in the 2003 RASP study.

Grassroots efforts that seek public support have been minimally supported, sometimes actively discouraged. For instance, instead of working to improve the quality of street art, the City has attempted at least three times to oust artists from the Causeway, in 1986, 1988 and 2005. In the face of opposition stiff license fees have been imposed – from \$30 in 1985 to \$2000 in 2005. In 1986, an official defended the clampdown, saying, “We don’t want it to look like Coney Island” (*Victoria Times-Colonist*, Aug. 18, 1986, p.

A3). Notably, Martin Segger was an Alderman and advocated for street artists (*Victoria Times-Colonist*, May 4, 1988, p. B7). In the 1990s outdoor markets on Government St. and Bastion Square were allowed artists' displays, but more long term support initiatives such as that led by Colin MacLock* to meet the needs of the visual arts community by establishing badly needed facilities at the vacant Work Point did not meet with key City or CRD support due to, he feels, reluctance on their part to recognize a grassroots collective as legitimate – even though that collective included all the major arts organizations through the Pro-Arts Alliance, plus the Federation of Canadian Artists, Island Illustrators, Island Artisans Association, XChanges, and high profile people like Martin Segger and Pat Martin Bates (interview, 2006).

The best support has come through the Community Arts Council, which rotates visual shows art every week. Under the direction of Paul Scrivener, all manner of arts, amateur and otherwise, find support with small grants, but amounts are minimal. The Sooke Museum produced its major juried show with volunteers, and contributed much to many conservative and illustrative fine artists' careers. But the number of artists in the CRD far outstrips the resources of any of the local granting bodies.

The lack of funding, of protected real estate, of initiatives to promote diversity, and of policymakers' trust of artist groups may have contributed to maintenance of the status quo in Victoria more than elsewhere.

Individual Illustrators and Illustrative Fine Artists

Although Victoria's institutions played important parts in keeping the local traditions going, their attention was necessarily divided, and one could just as easily say other

strains of art in their agendas overwhelmed the few instances of conventional taste in their midst at times, such as when – as it became more of an institution – Open Space had to narrow its focus, largely leaving behind conservative art (Open Space, 1992, p. 6). Conservative art, including illustrative fine art, was actually better kept alive by the dedication of individual artists working usually at arm's length from the institutions. Because so many professional artists in town have supplemented their income by teaching their own classes, regionalized taste has been passed on unbroken from generation to generation in private studios. There has also been a passing on of skills among illustrators, parallel and intertwined with the passing on of fine art, often in the same person. The assembly of this history is another project; suffice to say here that there are certain key figures who helped keep illustration and illustrative fine art in the public eye between 1900 and 1980 as either teachers or popular practitioners. They include Ina Uthoff, Will Menelaws, Allan Edwards, Bill West and Fenwick Lansdowne. Although she is better remembered as a modernist, Uthoff taught commercial art, illustration, interior decoration and fashion design from the late 1920s until 1951 (Tippett, 1992, p. 64). Menelaws trained several commercial artists and painters, including the highly influential Robert Genn, and operated a commercial studio of his own, advertising in the telephone book between 1925 and 1948. Edwards taught art and illustration in Victoria in the late 1930s and again in the 1960s, to Sid Barron, Pierre Berton, Bill Reid, Roy Mercer, and others. He encouraged talented peers such as Harry Heine, Brian Johnson, Brian Travers-Smith and Stephen Lowe, and he also revived the Federation of Canadian Artists, which is the largest and most active group tending towards traditional and conservative art. According to Robert Genn, many members are ex-commercial artists.

Bill West was versatile and worked in theatre design, pottery, graphics, and painting. He taught at Oak Bay high school, where his students included both fine and illustrating artists. Lansdowne has set an example by achieving fame for his natural history renderings of birds both locally and abroad. His long residence in Victoria has made him something of a mainstay, where his work continues a long tradition of bird painting in the vicinity. Other prominent artists such as Robert Bateman, Brian Johnson and Len Gibbs have also helped keep illustrative fine art popular in Victoria.

6.3 Struggle in the Field: Conservative and Contemporary 1960-1980

Despite their long history in Victoria, conservative, traditional and illustrative artists do not enjoy recognition in the same channels that experimental, avant garde, and non-traditional artists do, and vice versa. When one faction discusses the other, it is usually with reference to some well-known controversy. For instance, when asked to reflect upon conceptual art, many Island Illustrators members mentioned Mowry Baden's *Pavilion, Rock, Shell* (Illustration 10), which many among the public feel is inappropriate and ugly. When asked to reflect upon illustrative art, contemporary artists associated with academic institutions sometimes mentioned Robert Bateman and the price and number of his limited edition prints, which are felt by many to be exorbitant. At no time did anyone speak of the "other" art as being part of their own visual culture or as having any relevance to or impact on their own work. The division is so familiar that it is bound to seem natural and irreconcilable, but the recent appearance of traditional, conservative art forms in the bastions of cutting edge institutions internationally suggests this is false – as an example, Gillian Carnegie, a painter working in still life, landscape and the female

nude was nominated for the notoriously *outré* British 2006 Turner Prize. The alienation of (broadly speaking) two artistic ideologies, conservative and progressive, each with their own galleries, publications, values, stars, collectors and so on was not inevitable, but was the outcome of specific maneuvers on the parts of individuals and institutions who wanted to dominate the field. It is in the 1960s that this division gelled in Victoria.

The scene was once so small that all artists were aware of each other, and even though they might not have liked each other's work, they still showed together and influenced each other by either affinity or repulsion. Prior to 1930, institutional English colonial values were firmly dominant. The reigning aesthetic tastes were rooted in Arts and Crafts, nineteenth century academicism, and the picturesque. On the sidelines were both traditional native and Asian art and contemporary art in the form of Emily Carr, Ina Uthoff, Olive Allen Biller, Edythe Hembroff-Schleicher and a handful of others. The Island Arts and Crafts Society (IACS) dominated most of the organized visual art activity in this period, and although it hosted talks by Group of Seven members its focus was quite traditional. Between 1930 and 1940, traditionalism weakened as modernists began to grow in strength with younger artists such as Max Maynard and Jack Shadbolt. In the 1950s the IACS dwindled to only its Sketch Club arm, and new modern artists from Europe arrived, such as Jan Zach and Herbert Siebner. Traditionalism got a boost when the Royal British Columbia Museum (RBCM) sponsored Mungo Martin, signaling a new return to grace of native arts, but a cynical view would be that this was because "primitivism" was hip in modern contemporary art circles. The founding of the AGGV brought in cutting edge exhibitions and large amounts of Asian art from local collections. Although commercial arts were not getting attention, modern and traditional art was

approaching equilibrium: both sides complained the other was getting too much attention. However, in the 1960s the balance of power began to shift in the favour of contemporary modern artists, as is evident from a scandal that occurred over the 1963 Vancouver Island Juried Exhibitions. This division repeated in Victoria the swing to autonomous modern art in North American generally. It is worth looking at this struggle in the field between the conserving orthodox and transforming heresy more closely, because it entrenched the divide that caused Island Illustrators to form and to show illustration as fine art. It is a divide that I feel is still affecting artistic evaluation today, even though on the surface the demise of categories of high and low art appears to be happening.

The annual Vancouver Island Juried Exhibitions were held at the AGGV, which had in effect inherited the annual shows formerly run by the traditionalist IACS. The intent was to showcase the best of art in the area, and therefore by custom and definition it was regional in purpose and focus. The 1963 Jury Show, however, reflected the concerns of its Vancouver-based jurors, B.C. Binning³, Roy Kiyooka, and Richard Simmins, who were avant gardists all. They accepted only twenty-nine of 296 submissions, and saw fit to issue an official statement that

the majority of these works did not evidence a great deal of professional competence. The stylistic range of the material submitted accounts for the jury's selections, which include examples of primitive, abstract-expressionist, and representational work....In conclusion, it was felt that few cities the size of Victoria could produce an exhibition of high caliber, and that perhaps invitational shows served a more useful purpose in maintaining standards. (AGGV, exhibition catalogue)

³ Recall Binning's comments re: Franklin Arbuckle in 1953, discussed p. 75.

Apparently under advisement, the jurors admitted a further seven pieces, which are not listed in the catalogue but are numbered in the gallery's press release (Binning et al, 1963; Hesse, *Victoria Daily Colonist*, May 10, 1963, p. 21). But of these thirty-six total works, thirty were considered "abstract" by one letter-writer (Davidson, in the *Victoria Daily Colonist*, May 15, 1963, p. 4). Conservative artists began to get upset, not because they thought modern art should be banned but because they resented being told their own work was lesser and undeserving of equal representation. According to an angry artist who was rejected,

The tendency is toward a closed shop in art circles by a few of the better-known artists, turned critics, who seem to feel it presumptuous of the unknown or amateur artist to submit his work.... Most of the paintings shown are abstract. Now it's no use entering any paintings in representational style. (Luchinsky in Hesse, *Victoria Daily Colonist*, May 10, 1963, p. 21)

Meanwhile another argued that "distortions and contortions" do not make the 'Ordinary Joe Viewer' happier: "I can only come to the conclusion that the experts are sunk in a morass of confusion, and like the beatnik with his creased trousers and greasy beard, are endeavouring to create an impression and develop a cult that is extremely distasteful to the ordinary individual" (Ordinary Joe, *Victoria Daily Colonist*, May 15, 1963, p. 4).

A peek at the list of submitting artists is telling⁴. As it happens, well-known modernists were among the refusées along with the many highly competent illustrators, showing that modernism was *not* an automatic entry condition – and the conservative artists Biddy Gaddes, Brian Travers-Smith and Stephen Lowe had been accepted. The jurors did value modern art over traditional, since the first place award winner was Nita

⁴ The citation of this material is by permission of the AGGV. Privacy concerns prevent the naming of specific individuals here.

Forrest, followed by Ricky Ciccimara and Maxwell Bates, all of whom did figurative subjects in expressionist and abstract languages, but the jurors were not as exclusively biased as they were accused of being. It seems that in this case the conservative backlash was not just about the Jury Show, but was symptomatic of the general modernist bias in art appreciation that had been building for some time. It is the gallery's official statements that betray the true extent of the bias. Colin Graham's comment was that, in the words of journalist Hesse, "the majority of painters all over the world are today painting in abstract style. 'I don't think we could find a jury who would say 'We prefer representative paintings'''" (ibid). This was patently untrue, since excellent representational painters had never actually gone away – there were just none fashionable. A letter from the gallery's Board was even worse: it said most trained professionals were working in abstraction; that there were few good realist painters "with something to say and the ability to say it;" and that some would be welcome, since there were "few in Canada" (*Victoria Daily Colonist*, May 18, 1963, p.4). If they had been open minded enough to accept top-notch trained professional illustrators as candidates, they would have been overwhelmed with options – for instance, Allan Edwards, designer for Hilton Hotels and a prizewinning exhibitor with the Society of British Watercolourists, was available. Most disingenuous of all was this salvo:

Those Victoria artists whose abilities have gained them national or international reputations mostly work in abstract idioms. But those facts have nothing to do with the gallery's policy as such. Galleries reflect but do not create art movements. (ibid)

The AGGV was evidently willfully ignorant of Edwards' reputation (he was teaching and running a gallery only about eight blocks away), and fooling itself about its own role in

legitimizing art. To its credit, the Board's letter did point out that, of the last forty shows at the gallery, only seven could be called abstract and that *all* the submissions of the Jury Show had been exhibited for two days before the jurying. But these official remarks suggest the gallery was more interested in modern contemporary art.

The conservative factions, although they overreacted to the Jury Show, were correct that a shift was occurring, and this realization ought to put into context what may appear at first glance to be yet another example of philistine Victoria conservativeness. At least one "conservative" was able to recognize what was being lost. Nancy Malerby of the Oak Bay Art Club⁵ wrote Colin Graham to say she felt jurors didn't understand the purpose of the Jury Show, which was, to her mind, to survey local work and to build "comradeship" between artists. She continued,

Incidentally, acting as they did, the Jurors dealt quite a blow to the solving of yet another and well recognized problem which plagues ART these days, namely the rapprochement or understanding of the professional's art by the people. Amateurs should not be the "drag" these people seem to think we are – they need to teach us, not divorce us. (AGGV archives, May, 1963)⁶

She went on to request that the open jury show stay; Graham agreed with her on that point (AGGV archives, May 3, 1963)⁷. Malerby had put her finger on the crux of the matter: whether art ought to please the artist, or whether it should please people. This is the most persistent division between progressives and conservatives, painters and illustrators, fine and applied art. The stakes of conservative agendas were not

⁵ Although the Oak Bay Art Club may be considered conservative, Nancy Malerby herself is not so easily pigeonholed. She went on in her retirement to take classes in the UVic visual art programme, graduating at age 74 in the late 1970s.

⁶ Permission to quote from unpublished material is courtesy of Frank Malerby.

⁷ Permission to quote from unpublished material is courtesy of Colin Graham.

insignificant: they had a duty and higher purpose in life to uplift and communicate with the public in ways the mystifying avant garde could not. This is why they clung to their rights and their ways so determinedly. Every one of my illustrative interviewees spoke of this higher purpose.

Malerby's words and those of the others point to a disturbing, dangerous tendency, in which "professional" had become synonymous with the avant garde, and traditionalism was associated with amateurism. Indeed, "artist" had come to connote only modern artists; this is the sense Emily Carr presumably intended when she falsely declared there were no artists in Victoria upon her return in 1911 (Carr, 1946, p. 205). In 1956 Tony Emery wrote there were only two "professional artists", Herbert Siebner and Jan Zach, which conveniently overlooked Will Menelaws, Lillian Sweeney, H.D. Genn, and many others (*Victoria Daily Colonist*, Aug. 26, 1956, p. 7). In this same vein, Pat Bovey wrote, "In the early years [early 1970s] the Limners included most, though not all, the artists active in Victoria" (1996, p. 8). Such rhetoric contorts our view of the field into one that romantically heroizes the avant garde artist as a martyr and a unique visionary. It makes it appear as if conservatives didn't take their work seriously and never do anything meaningful or innovative. Crucially, this language shift signals an important change in the fine/commercial art contrast. Illustrative fine art was now by default also amateur and conservative art. As time went on and illustrative techniques became acceptable in the avant garde, the distinction laid aside the stylistic prejudice against illustration but held on to the amateur/conservative label. The great divide became one of contemporary art (read: avant garde) versus conservative taste. The birth of this new state is a perfect living example of Bourdieu's theory of the field, where the production of and election of new

art to a dominant position is not naively and naturally accomplished but is calculated and aggressive.

The bifurcation of the two broad categories of representational traditionalists and abstract modernist artists was institutionalized when later that year (1963) the AGGV mounted the *Victoria Group Show*, parts One and Two. Part One included modernists Max Bates, Ricky Ciccimara (his expressionist work), Don Harvey, Nita Forrest, Fleming Jorgenson, and Michael Morris. Part Two included Allan Edwards, Fenwick Lansdowne, Ricky Ciccimara (his botanicals), Edward Goodall, Brian Travers-Smith, Eryl Cianci, and Patience Birley. Part Two had over 2000 visitors; figures for Part One are unmentioned (Graham to M.F. Feheley, AGGV Archives, Aug. 31, 1963)⁸. In the 1964 Jury Show it was reported that the work was 50-50 abstract and representational (Learoyd, *Victoria Daily Colonist*, Apr 30, 1964, p. 26). Don Harvey's non-objective *Angel of the Labrys* and Nora Lewis' *Landscape* shared First Prize. The gallery was obviously – too obviously – trying to resurrect a semblance of fairness, a different-but-equal bonhomie. But it was not to be.

Moncrieff Williamson, then an AGGV curator, was also an art critic for the newspaper, and he objected in his column that Lewis was undeserving of the prize (*Victoria Daily Colonist*, May 2, 1964). Indignant Lewis, who had been painting for seven years, sent her prize money back to Colin Graham, intimating that it had been given for political reasons only and that the gallery must in reality feel she was unworthy. “I never for a moment thought I was being judged in the same class as the

⁸ Ibid.

professionals,”⁹ she said, once again equating modernism with professionalism (AGGV Archives, Nora Lewis to Graham May 2nd, 1964). Graham replied that Williamson did not represent the gallery’s views in his column, and said that amateurs and professionals should not be judged separately (May 4, 1964). Lewis’ response is illuminating, because it shows that while she does not think of herself as a professional, nor does she relinquish the seriousness of her work:

“...when I read Mr. Williamson’s article, thinking it expressed the opinions of the Gallery, I was both hurt and bewildered. I thought, as I told you, I had no right to the prize and that with other amateurs or as we were contemptuously styled ‘Sunday Painters’ we were being presumptuous in submitting our work along with professionals to the jury show, this in spite of the fact we had always been kindly encouraged to do so.” (May 6, 1964).

In having to distinguish between a forced dichotomy of professional modernists and amateur representationalists, the idea of excellence in the latter was being lost.

Clearsighted Graham wrote privately to Fred A.E. Manning, “My personal feeling is that the paintings must be judged entirely on their own merits without regard to who has done them.... I do not see how one can separate the professionals from the non-professionals, especially as some of the latter are better than some of the former” (AGGV Archives, May 8, 1964)¹⁰.

Graham was fighting a battle on two fronts. In May, 1965 poet Robin Skelton, who was at that time art critic for the *Victoria Daily Times*, had a war of words with Graham and Gwladys V. Downes (*Victoria Daily Times*, May 11, p. 4. 1965), another gallery administrator and also a poet. Skelton was crying for more representation of local

⁹ Permission to quote from unpublished material is courtesy of Robert Genn.

¹⁰ Permission to quote from unpublished material is courtesy of Colin Graham.

contemporary (modern) art and less for “oriental” art. Graham defended his collection policy, with the full support of the Board, who publicly acknowledged so in the same paper (ibid, May 18, p. 4). He said that the AGGV was representing contemporary art often, and that to concentrate more on contemporary art would be to lose patronage. The collections strategy, he said, with its strength in Asian art was garnering international stature and taking an educational focus to go with the new university (which did indeed develop a strong program in non-Western art history). Graham emphasized that the gallery’s aim was NOT to be regional only, warning of the dangers of a “suffering parochialism and a false Canadianism” (May 12, p. 4). The ever-vocal Herbert Siebner, who was instrumental in promoting local modernism, seized the opportunity to untactfully accuse Victoria residents of being

flower-minded, grass-minded, golf-minded, bridge-minded, and hobby-minded but hardly culture-minded... at one time Emily Carr was forgotten and Margaret Peterson receives little acclaim. (*Victoria Daily Times*, May 18, 1965, p.4)

Siebner’s accusation could not have done anything more than drive factions further apart by yet again insinuating only modern art was art (and his claim that Carr was ever forgotten is untrue).

Only a year later, the controversy again erupted when the provincial and municipal governments got the then unheard of idea (from Vancouver) of letting artists paint murals on the hoarding fence around the construction site of the new Royal B.C. Museum. Many enthusiasts eagerly volunteered, and gleefully got to work. The governments offered cash prizes for the best murals. The excitement attracted many onlookers and tourists alike, and was welcomed as a great thing for the community and

the appreciation of art; my parents remember it with smiles. But someone protested.

Robert E. Wood[^], an artist and teacher, demanded the fence-painters not be called artists or their work art, compared the project to bathroom-stall graffiti and threatened to shoot any of his students caught lurking around it – despite admitting he had only observed the work from his passing car (Bill, 1966). But Victorians were not about to let any elitist take away their right to call whatever they liked art. High profile columnist Bruce Hutchison wrote a poignant piece pondering the social value of art and the symbolism of fences between state and public; that people must always be allowed to make their mark, to self-express, if they are to be close to happiness:

But when a man paints an actual picture of something beautiful, however badly he paints it, his picture is full of meaning and instantly arrests the public's eye. [Happiness and an ideal state] will be found, if it is ever found, by the artists who can paint their fragments of reality and the spectators who may be able, some day, to put them together. (1966)

It was a gentle reminder that elitism on the part of a “state” of elitist artists is oppressive. An editor pointed out that Wood’s claim that the fence “makes a mockery of painting” appears to a layman’s eye “the purpose of quite a number of others dabbling in the medium these days,” and wryly advised Wood to “wait for the wrapping” (*Victoria Daily Times*, Apr 15, 1966, p. 4). The reference to wrapping was a poke at N. E. Thing’s~ show then on at the AGGV, which featured decaying foodstuffs wrapped in plastic shopping bags and a large amount of other plastic packaging marked with exorbitant prices. But the joke was on everyone: Robert E. Wood was active with the devotedly conservative Victoria Society of Artists, and is remembered by Brian Travers-Smith[^] not as a radical modernist who would have applauded the exuberant murals had they been abstract or

wrapped in plastic, but as a traditionalist, an adherent of nineteenth century academicism, of the sort sometimes derided as “formula painters”. This might explain why I haven’t been able to find many references to him. It is a crucial piece of the conservatism puzzle: what was dismissed as common Victoria conservatism and philistinism – the fence hoarding painters of 1966 (akin perhaps to the charity-project decorated fiberglass whales and bears of 2005 and 2006) – was actually unacceptable in the eyes of the traditionalist too. The fact that everyone leapt to the conclusion that the fight was between elitists and populists when it was not shows that the fight was more complex than such simple reductionism. True Victoria taste, by 1966, was more in the centre than has been recognized. Maybe this is why, even in that hostile atmosphere, the N. E. Thing plastic wrappings didn’t raise any more furor than the fence – in fact, apparently less.

The *Plastics* show by N.E. Thing Co. (Iain and Ingrid Baxter) was probably the first conceptual art installation ever in Victoria, and therefore, one would assume, a magnet for sarcastic, philistine commentary. But, like with the Quebec abstractionists in 1951 and Emily Carr before that, outrage was not unidimensional. The show actually received not a bad review, but one that couldn’t reconcile it with *visual* art. Critic Jerry Boulton did indeed call the installation “sick”, and say it was a mockery of art, artist and gallery, but he also said the work could be “a caustic and amusing commentary on ‘our plastic age’,” appropriate in the university campus environment, and that “This reviewer would have been a good deal more impressed and amused had the display appeared in the McPherson Playhouse foyer.” He also noted “poppishness is in vogue, especially among the young university crowd” (1966).

Around then, Alan Gowans' book *The Restless Arts* haplessly came out. Given the overcharged atmosphere of Victoria in 1966, and the trend of art in general, it is not surprising that it offended colleagues and students who resented his efforts to make them into what they called "an industrial arts school" (Thomas, *Victoria Daily Colonist*, Apr 19, 1969, p. 21). A rift occurred on campus that reflected the one in the art scene at large, and in 1969 he was forced to give up jurisdiction over Visual Arts, although he kept control of the History in Art department. Conservatives saw that with further barriers in art eroding, they were being displaced. "It is time representational artists became vocal. The 'gimmick' artists make so much noise and receive so much publicity these days and sincere painters and sculptors who are trying to express themselves in a real and genuine way are completely overlooked," wrote one (Bass^, *Victoria Daily Colonist*, Apr. 20, 1966, p. 4). The tide had indeed turned. The opening of Pandora's Box gallery in 1966, the first commercial Victoria gallery specializing in modern art, marked the establishment of non-traditional art. By 1971, when the prestigious Limmers artist collective of modernists formed (Appendix F), they were the undisputed establishment in institutional circles. The modernist avant garde was now institutional, being taught at UVic and favoured at the AGGV, and people were ready to buy it. Soon Richard Simmins, one of the controversial 1963 jurors, became Director of the AGGV.

While modern contemporary artists rose to the forefront of the institutional channels of recognition, traditional, representational and genre artists enjoyed a less fashionable yet equivalent success beside them in Victoria, through alternative channels. The phenomenon repeats at the local level what, according to Michele Bogart, went on in the USA, where she reckons that in the late 1950s aesthetic competition peaked between

avant garde, romantic elites (trained in academic schools) and popularist “Sunday painters” (often trained by illustrators in the Famous Artist correspondence courses, taken even by Victoria artists) (p. 296). These were the types of artists – even the most professional and decidedly un-Sunday painterly of them – that were called “mere illustrators” when critics were feeling surly: Limner member and UVic English professor Robin Skelton, wearing his newspaper art critic hat, once snidely referred to some of Brian Travers-Smith’s watercolour figure studies as “chocolate box lovelies” (interview, 2006). Alternative channels were private studio classrooms, word of mouth acclaim, and shows in accessible places such as in parks, malls and rented venues. As proof of alternative channels’ effectiveness, in 1979 Travers-Smith’s annual sale, which he held in his home based studio, sold out in ten minutes – all thirty-four watercolours (interview, May 6, 2006; *Victoria Daily Times*, Dec. 11, 1979).

By 1975, representational art was so out of institutional favour everywhere that someone wrote a sarcastic letter to the editor about it:

Somehow a painting got in the Provincial Archives display which actually showed a scene with houses. This was an obvious mistake since all the other displays were careful not to portray anything. ...The local people should have the right to a painting of something rather than nothing.... Communities should have the right to decide what they want, and get the money (which is the people’s money) to pay an artist to paint a local scene. (Cameron, 1975).

The writer was timely with his criticism. Only a year later, provincial MLA Sam Bawlf of the newly elected right-leaning Social Credit party criticized the kind of art that had been and was still being bought for the new provincial collection. He referred to it as “mothball art” for its lack of popular appeal (the collection was intended to decorate government offices) (Brown, 1976). Five years later it was referred to by another

politician as “garbage art” (*Victoria Times-Colonist*, June 8, 1981, p. 4). Colin Graham pointed out it contained conservative art too, and that all the work had appreciated in value (1981). Notably, artist Jack Wilkinson had managed the program. He became a Limner member, as did Graham.

Regional juried exhibitions were ultimately taken over by the B.C. Festival of the Arts, locally administered by the Community Arts Council and implemented in a semi-open format that provided a more democratic venue once again. But this legacy has entrenched the division of contemporary artists receiving the more prestigious public gallery shows while other artists, no matter how excellent and professional, are confined to sharing space with amateurs and hobbyists in B.C. Festival of the Arts, the Sooke Fine Arts Show, and the Sidney juried show. An artist in 1986 wrote that the B.C. Festival was for professional artists too and that galleries encouraged them to submit to it, but that some people’s attitudes were perpetuating the erroneous idea that the event was amateur only (Michener~, 1986). This writer was correct. In 1990 when the Festival came to Victoria it had the best attendance in its nine years, but was referred to in the press as “the largest amateur arts festival in Canada” (*Victoria Times-Colonist*, May 30, 1990, p. D2). In Victoria, most of the professional conservative and illustrative fine artists (including many Island Illustrator members) exhibited in the Sooke Fine Arts show, and curator Nick Tuele tells me he first spotted Dar Churcher’s* work there. But no matter how good the work or the prizes or the sales, regional juried shows of any kind never carry the same cachet as exhibitions in public galleries like the AGGV – and they are vulnerable to mismanagement and cutbacks because of their “amateur” reputation, which only serves to make them seem even more amateurish. For instance, Max Wyman called

the B.C. Festival of the Arts “that shamelessly political glorification of artistic amateurism” and advocated shutting it down during a recession (*Province*, Jan. 13, 1984, p. 40). The Sooke show, once the best and biggest juried exhibition on Vancouver Island if not in B.C., has now died due to insufficient support and aptitude at the administrative level. Its hockey rink venue did not lend it much prestige either – the reputation of the best conservative and non-contemporary art suffers from lack of proper gallery space. The split between conservative and contemporary art has been reinscribed by institutional divisions and policies that have dragged on even though art types have ceased to be so different in their formal properties.

7.0 STUDY IMPLEMENTATION AND FINDINGS

7.1 Autoethnography

Many participants asked to know more about me, and why I took an interest in this subject. It began as soon as I was old enough to comprehend the world of objects, because I had a favourite uncle who was an undergraduate at UVic in the History in Art Department with Alan Gowans. From my uncle, thanks to Gowans, I learned to find worth in all art forms. In high school, I had four influential art teachers, and I emerged from high school with the equivalent of a first-year BFA level of knowledge in painting, conceptual art, printmaking, and photography, and a staunch belief in the equality of all types of art and media. I took the general rule that art should break all the rules quite literally and applied it even to the unwritten rules of the art world. My sense that all arts were created equal was deepened by my three years spent at Medicine Hat College (1987-1990), where, although I was earning a Diploma majoring in graphic design, I was told that a good designer had to be a good artist and vice versa and that there was no inherent prestige in one over the other. However, there was no theoretical grounding and art history was taught on the H.W. Janson line-of-progress model.

Upon my return to Victoria (which I had left at age seven but visited each year) I began freelancing as an illustrator and making oil paintings: art for clients and art for galleries, side by side. I also apprenticed for a short time in traditional book arts with bookbinder Courtland Benson. I supplemented my meager income by modeling for life drawing classes, which is how I met Glenn Howarth, and got involved with J.C. Scott's annual erotic art show. In 1995, I married another artist, George Grove, which introduced

me to his connections: I shared his studio at XChanges artist cooperative, became a member of Open Space and occasionally gallery-sat there, met more of the Chinatown artists, and got to know some of the Limners Society, since his parents, Jan and Helga Grove, are members. Herbert Siebner, Pat Martin Bates, and Rhona Murray (not a Limner, but married to one) were all encouraging. The diversity of my artistic interests took me into the fold of many huddles of artists in the city several times a month for seven years, and witnessing the variety of activity through the connections I made have proven crucially important in this study.

I was a member of the Island Illustrators Society from December 1990 to Spring 1998, during which time I was the newsletter editor, president, guest speaker coordinator, and life drawing class manager. I participated in most of the exhibitions and studio tours, and took the lead in organizing the 1995 show at Crystal Gardens in partnership with the Royal B.C. Museum. Because of this large task the membership gave me that year's "Member of the Year" award. During the time I was president the membership peaked, and I had to steer the transition to a membership jury process.

After seven years I found myself dissatisfied with my work and with the lack of critical inquiry that had been missing in my education to date. I had always harboured certain reservations about the designer's and illustrator's role in the machine of capitalist persuasion. And, I wanted to whet my powers of argument, after a 1996 episode where I sparked a debate in Victoria's *Monday Magazine* over the role of their art critic, Lucia Sanroman, whom I felt – at the time – was inappropriately applying academic avant gardist criticism to Victoria art (Grove, 1996). I left Victoria and enrolled at Emily Carr Institute, entering into the third year fine art studio practice stream. I was teased by a

realist figurative sculptor for going to “Emily CRAP Institute”, whose criticism was soon borne out. There, I ran in to the opposite problem from that at Medicine Hat: there was intellectual discussion all around, but a serious lack of appreciation for tradition or common visual language that is accessible by many, and not much instruction in craftsmanship. A few professors discouraged me from using recognizable imagery, especially anything figurative. When I took Design History as an elective, I was the only student from the studio practice stream in a lecture hall of around sixty design students. Frustrated, I made a final year project titled *Free From the Art World* addressing the construction of value in visual art. It was the precursor to this thesis and informs it greatly (see my website for more details).

The project I undertook at Emily Carr collapsed any solid concept of value in or purpose for making my own art, and resulted in a drastic reduction in my output of personal work, and I have not yet entirely recuperated the productivity I had before attending Emily Carr. My exhibitions, since graduating in 1999, have been strictly in DIY group shows, where I have shown digital images and performative-interactive installations, sometimes with a political intent and often with a collaborative angle with the audience. I also have a series of paintings, largely unseen because of my distaste for galleries’ application processes and the attendant posturing. I turned back to design and illustration work, first for an online comic strip, and then for the Faculty of Land and Food Systems at the University of British Columbia, where I remained until I began this MA at Ryerson University in 2004.

Also informing my study is research I have been conducting since 1996 on the forgotten illustrator Olive Allen Biller (b.1879-d.1957), who was active in Victoria from

1919-1934; and on Frederick H. Varley during 2005. Biller and Varley knew each other, had similar training, and were almost the same age. Varley had the superior talent, but Biller is remarkable for her contribution to Edwardian popular culture and women's changing identity. My experiences in trying to locate Biller's original illustrations and in getting the art and museum establishment and her descendants to take her seriously have been frustrating to say the least. This stands in extreme contrast to the archival and scholarly attention that Varley has benefited from. The difference in archival representation is not one of quality, because the majority of Varley's surviving work that I studied in the AGO and the F.H. Varley Art Gallery is quite poor. Rather, it is indicative of the biases of the art world that privilege paintings over illustrations, men over women, solitary genius-ego over community art worker, and the big name over the unknown.

7.2 Interpretive Reception Research: Interviews

I began formulating my project in Toronto, where I interviewed and had casual conversations with a few well-known, mid-career, nearly-retired and retired illustrators/artists. Some of these people also attended focus groups where they helped me develop and test my survey. Their experience, dating back over fifty years in Toronto's art, design and publishing industries, guided my identification of important commonalities in their professional identities.

In my Victoria interviews, my approach was different depending on the participant. Because of my closeness to some of the people, some interviews were quite informal and were sometimes more of a conversation between friends. Although I asked certain

questions of every person I did not stick to a script. Because of the variety of specializations among the people I interviewed, questions were often geared to elicit information on specific topics not necessarily common to all the participants. I allowed the conversation to flow unimpeded by a predetermined sequence of questions, which may have let people answer more naturally, to allow unexpected or sensitive information to come forth. Conversations happened on the phone, by email or in person, and sometimes spread over more than one encounter. Interviews covered historical events, studio practice, perceptions of Victoria, and Island Illustrator activities. The in-person ones usually happened at people's homes or studios, where we could look at art and where the interviewee was most comfortable.

Fourteen Island Illustrator members were selected based on their involvement with the group as founders, as past or current executives, or as longterm members for in-depth interviews in person; another thirteen I spoke with at length on the telephone. I also interviewed six notable people in Victoria with no connection to Island Illustrators, to help me understand other perspectives and to give me historical background on several institutions; and spoke at length with another twenty-seven. The formal interviews were audio recorded for accuracy, and notes were taken for the rest.

With the core research population (Island Illustrator Society members) I tried to reveal a minimum of information about the project, especially my thoughts about it, to avoid biasing people's answers, but it was implicit I was intending to present their point of view in a favourable light. Where I wanted to elicit comment on a certain point of view or belief, I first tried very general, open-ended questions ("Tell me about what is important about your work, that your clients or fans say it does for them"). Once a person

had expressed themselves, especially if they had said something different from other interviewees, I might ask them to respond to a point of view, which I always attributed to someone other than myself (“A man named Alan Gowans wrote a book in which he says that popular and commercial arts are the true carriers of meaning in society, not fine art. What do you think?”).

I had to change my approach when speaking to non-illustrating artists. Whereas illustrators had a personal stake in my work and were therefore quite willing to speak, contemporary artists had no such motivation to be involved. I was afraid my questions might anger people working in contemporary art and that I would appear idiotic, and although I tried to hide it my discomfort likely put others ill at ease too. Overall, contemporary artists were more inclined to prefer to communicate over the phone or email while illustrators never turned down an in-person interview. Contemporary artists brought the interviews to a close sooner while with illustrators it was usually I who ended the interview after at least two or even four hours. Conversations with contemporary artists were sometimes marked by an awkwardness that did not occur in talks with illustrators; two people challenged the theoretical basis of my thesis proposal as outlined on the consent forms and questioned whether I was asking something that could be answered at all. Because of the different reception contemporary artists gave the project, I could not be vague at all. I had to convince them it was important to get their points of view, so I told them about ideas and theories I was examining in order to engage them. At the same time I had to try and minimize my own project of redemption of illustration so as not to alienate them or trigger an unduly antagonistic exchange. I was not always able to keep as neutral as I would have liked. I suspect much of the awkwardness of these

interviews came from the fact that I was asking questions that no insider of the contemporary art scene would ever ask, such as: “Can contemporary *traditional* art be considered in the same light as other contemporary art? What makes them different, especially when they look the same?” Such markers of difference were provocative and they drew out some of the more important evidence, but at the risk of erecting barriers. However, all interviews proceeded and ended on friendly terms.

Significant Trend in Interviews

In their personal artistic tolerance, members of Island Illustrators and other illustrative and illustrating artists in Victoria whom I interviewed fell into two camps: those who feel all creativity is “interesting”, and those who cannot abide art that appears to them shoddy, mystifying or purposeless (bullshit) – and a lot of art made for reasons of art discourse looks this way to them. Due to their lack of interaction with contemporary art circles, generally none I interviewed were very familiar with the art theory vogues of the last fifteen years, and this is most likely related to the average age group of members, between 45 and 65 years old. Many spoke of the art scene as it was in the 1970s as if it were unchanged since then. For instance, one said, “Some of the most brilliant, original thinkers were the Dadaists, but try and get that across to people today.” Very few used the term “postmodern” when discussing contemporary art, nor did they mention any of the identity issues that dominated academic art making through the 1990s. I attribute this to the fact that, having felt alienated at art school, illustrative and traditional artists have simply ignored academic issues, art theory and contemporary art. On the whole I found that those with a fine art post-secondary art education – they were in the minority – were

more tolerant of challenging art than those who did not, but even among the most receptive, there was usually some reservation. For example, Soren Henrich welcomes all art but “if the work has a dark or morbid theme”, he “looks to see if the artist offers way out of it.” (July 22, 2006). Steve Kergin told me he was actively educating himself about contemporary art and showed me magazines such as *ArtNEWS* he was buying, and that he approached it as he would an idea from a client: in a detached, professional manner, taking seriously any pitch no matter how ludicrous. But he said he still found much of contemporary art “confusing”.

7.3 Field Survey

The survey results are given in Appendix B. Although my survey does contain some qualitative questioning, it is primarily meant to compile numbers that can be used to compare types of artists. In order to compare Society members to other artists in Victoria a survey was sent out to both Society members and ex-members, and to other artists not connected with the Society. It was not at all an easy or light survey, and this probably affected the rate of return. There were also a few questions that turned out to be badly worded, which resulted in some negative feedback (40H, 42D, 42E). Others were lacking options that people wrote into the margins (16, 18, 27, 33). Another factor that may have negatively affected return is indecision and bewilderment on the part of the respondent, not always because of not understanding the question but because of being unable to identify their own habits and opinions, or being disconcerted by being asked to do so. On the other hand, many of the participants made an effort to help because they know me personally. Others did it for the sake of wanting to know more about their city’s art scene,

or out of loyalty to Island Illustrators, and still others did it just out of respect for academic research. All surveys came with a self-addressed stamped envelope that made it easier for people to return them.

Island Illustrators members and ex-members

I introduced the project by an email sent to the current membership, and then again in person at the February, 2006 meeting and at the April, 2006 AGM. The survey was sent to full members and ex-members that could be easily located in a three-month period.

Those who could not be reached by telephone were not included. Associate members were also largely excluded because many of them had been guest speakers who were not artists, and because they tended to be not much involved with Society activities.

Exceptions were made where I knew the associate member was an active artist with similarities to other Island Illustrator members (e.g., Robert Bateman). The Society made available to me a list of all members since 1986, from which I tracked down as many people as I could by word of mouth and by searching in public listings such as telephone directories and Google. Because it was easy to locate a large enough population within the Victoria vicinity I decided to exclude those who had moved away, but exceptions were again made where I knew the member had contributed an exceptional amount to the Society in the past and had an exemplary career as an artist (e.g., Ron Lightburn). Each person was telephoned, told about the project, and asked permission of to send a survey to.

Other Victoria artists

I located other artists by attending art openings and speaking directly to artists there, and handing them a survey. I also approached artists associated with artist-run centres, including Open Space, XChanges, Fifty-Fifty Collective, and the Ministry of Casual Living, and one tattoo shop. I also met members of the Federation of Canadian Artists and the Victoria Sketch Club, the Limners, and other groups. I went on the Fairfield Studio Tour and handed out four or five surveys to participants in it, and met with several faculty members from the University of Victoria, Camosun College, the Vancouver Island School of Art and the Victoria College of Art. A further selection of artists was made based on their notoriety (those having both resided in Victoria for more than twenty years and having had high-profile careers, e.g. Len Gibbs). Everyone was approached either by phone, email or in person (usually the latter) and asked permission of to give a survey to.

Further Breakdowns

Not all Island Illustrators members have been illustrators, and not all the other artists surveyed are primarily fine artists. In order to see trends more clearly, the surveys were also grouped into three categories based on what the respondents identified themselves as: Fine Artist, Applied Artist, or Both. Details of the breakdown, the survey and complete survey findings are given in Appendix B.

Most Pertinent Survey Findings

IIS respondents were fairly homogenous in age, mostly between 46 and 65, but non-members were more diverse in age, mostly spread evenly between 35 and 75. There were roughly equal numbers of men and women. On the whole, non-members fit the stereotype of an artist (determined in part by Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi, 1976) slightly better than did non-members, but not enough to be important. Members tended to be less poor and more conservative in lifestyle and politically. Members had less formal education than non-members overall (Q. 38-41).

Asked to name favourite artists, respondents listed familiar international, national and local figures. The most popular artists/schools were the Group of Seven, Rembrandt, Emily Carr, Georgia O'Keefe, Gustav Klimt and Robert Rauschenberg. Very few living Canadian artists were named; even fewer contemporary ones. Fine artists named Emily Carr and Robert Rauschenberg most, while illustrators named Klimt, the Group of Seven, and Andrew Wyeth. Those who identify equally as fine artist and illustrator named the Group of Seven, Rembrandt, Georgia O'Keefe, Paul Klee, and John Singer Sargent. The B.C. artists most often named were Emily Carr, EJ Hughes~, Phyllis Serota^, Joseph Plaskett~ and Robert Bateman^.

Although differences in the “illustrativeness” of all respondents’ art are minor (Q. 5), survey data supports the proposition that IIS members operate in more “commercial” ways – but non-members usually have symmetrical equivalents to these more overtly commercial methods. Non-members are slightly more likely to work for an art gallery and far more likely to teach art at a post-secondary level, while members teach

extensively in community level venues and work for creative industries (Q. 22-27). But non-members made their income from teaching more than members did in the last five years, and were more likely to have had scholarships, grants and CARFAC fees, and non-art income (Q. 42). They also made more of their income from sales of uncommissioned original art than did members, while members made more of their income from commissioned work and reproductions or copyrights, and prizes. Both groups depended to a roughly equal extent on employment in art-related fields as creators or non-creators.

Members are far more likely to begin work because of a commission or a competition. However, approximately equal numbers of both members and non-members say they *primarily* begin work just because they are inspired and not for commercial reasons, and secondly because they have the intent to eventually show or sell. (Q. 8). Non-members show more in “proper” galleries, while members show more work online and through non-gallery methods. Members are more likely to pay for advertising or representation, but are less likely to be written about in a book or be a juror. IIS members show more in regional juried shows and other alternative venues, and are more likely to give their work away (but whether reproductions or originals is unknown). In pricing their work, all respondents favour copying what other artists charge, using an hourly or day rate, and going by intuition. But members also favour pricing by personal attachment to the piece, pricing by the square inch and by published trade price lists, while non-members are more apt to let a dealer decide, or set prices depending on the buyer’s circumstances. When it comes to taking criticism (Q. 18), although members take direction from their clients, buyers, collectors, and dealers more than members, they do not value these people’s opinions more (Q. 19). Instead, they prefer the opinions of the

same people fine artists did: mentors and fellow artists, especially spouses. Non-members are just as aware as IIS members (54%) that having a signature style is desirable, and they are in fact less likely to see it as a detriment: 5% of non-members compared to 12% of members (Q. 34).

When asked to define commercial art (Q. 30), the most common answer is that commercial art sells or advertises something, followed by: that it is commissioned by a client, that it is directed by the client, that the artist is paid, or that it is reproduced (especially mass produced). A few of all groups say commercial art is synonymous with graphic art or graphic design, although one Applied and one Both say it is an obsolete term. The most striking difference between the answers of Fine Artists and Applied Artists is that the former often define commercial art as art that is closely directed by the client and/or that it is made explicitly for profit, while the latter define it as just art where the artist gets paid. The most negative answers are that commercial art is art made mechanically or electronically rather than by hand (from a Fine Artist), that it is “bad art that sells” (from a Both), and that it is less imaginative (from a Fine Artist and a Both). The most positive answer is that it is art made for a social purpose (from an IIS Fine Artist).

Several of all three groups say that “commercial art” is any art that sells, a definition that is technically correct but goes against the normal use of the term in art circles, where it usually refers either to applied art for commerce, as in advertising design or illustration, or to fine art made for a mass market. That both senses are negative (particularly to Fine Artists) is suggested in that on one hand, a clear majority (64%) of self-proclaimed professionals from all disciplines voluntarily say that a “professional

visual artist” is in part defined by their making some money or a living from their art (Q. 1); but on the other hand, 57% of Fine Artists, 34% of Boths, and 17% of Applied Artists say their work is not commercial “in any way” (Q. 31). 49% of those who claim their work is not commercial in any way admitted on Question 20 that they have in fact adjusted or made art in a way previous sales have suggested would sell better.

Asked whether there is a difference between Fine Art and Illustration, 21% of Applied Artists and Boths said No, compared to only 8% of Fine Artists. Island Illustrator members also answered 21% No, compared to 11% of non-members. 76% of Fine Artists thought that there *is* a difference, compared to just 58% of Applied Artists and 55% of Boths.

In explaining the difference between fine art and illustration (Q. 32), Fine Artists were far less likely to acknowledge that there was some kind of overlap or that they were the same than Applied Artists and Boths. Island Illustrators members were very likely to mention overlap or sameness (70%) compared to non-members (15%).

Illustration to many is still suspect, thought by some fine artists to be not new, innovative, or original, but propaganda, secondary to text, or motivated by money alone. Some Fine Artists and Boths said illustration was commercial, commercial art, or market driven, but Applied Artists did not. Across all three groups but more strongly among Fine Artists, the most commonly cited distinction between illustration and fine art was that illustration is for a client and limited, whereas fine art is for the artist’s needs, self-expression or for art’s sake, and is not limited. But the idea that the applied arts *negatively* infringe on the personal freedoms of the creator is challenged by the finding

that the large majority of all respondents feel supported rather than controlled by their buyers, galleries, clients, teachers and others (Q. 21). The idea that illustrators are primarily motivated by money is challenged by the majority of members claiming on Q. 8 that they usually begin work because they are inspired.

People also frequently mention illustration has a communicative property, is didactic or explanatory, or is related to text (the definition of illustration proper). Three Fine Artists defined illustration as something that illustrates, demonstrating the lack of clear understanding of the profession outside applied art circles. Indeed, Fine Artists mention several characteristics they suppose are integral to illustration that the Applied Artists and Boths do not, and that would be disputed by many illustrators: that illustration is subordinate to text, that it is “literal”, that it has no artistic license, that it is not new, innovative, or original, that it is propaganda, that it is motivated by money alone, that it is decorative, and that it is stylistically tight and accurate. Among Applied Artists there are also two surprising answers: that illustration cannot be three-dimensional, and that it is “nonart”. On the opposite side of the coin, an Applied Artist and a Both respectively claim illustration takes longer and requires more skill than Fine Art.

The negative attitude many Fine Artists have towards illustration relates to how little prestige they assign to it (Q. 29). In a remarkable show of a difference in values, non-members most often thought commissioned art objects for display are the most prestigious type of art made for clients, while members said portrait commissions are the most prestigious, closely followed by advertising, children’s book or editorial illustrations, and then art objects for display (Q. 28, 29).

7.4 Focus Group and Experiment

The last stage of my research was a focus group, where I wanted to get feedback on my main theories, on the survey data, and particularly, on whether images can be said to be illustration or fine art simply by their appearance. I used discussion and experiment in the focus group.

The focus group was held with five artists, handpicked to reflect as wide a spectrum of age, sex, and art practice as possible, but the availability of volunteers limited the group more than I wished. The artists included a post-secondary art instructor with a strong background in contemporary art and art theory; a mid-career, established portrait artist with a background in commercial art; a senior-aged artist with many years experience in both gallery art and commercial art; an established, mid-career illustrator with a modest gallery art practice; and an established mid-career commercial gallery artist. All have lived in Victoria for at least ten years. Three had been members of Island Illustrators. One was female.

Discussion

The major trends of the survey were discussed. In considering the mild trend that illustrators are more conservative than fine artists, it was suggested that this might be related to illustrators being slightly more affluent. Participants spoke of how the art market has changed, with so many more artists now that galleries no longer nurture artists, and many online dealers exploit artists. There were also complaints of too much inferior work being shown and sold. Victoria was described as being apathetic to art, especially about debating aesthetics and theory in the course of daily life, which was

bringing down the standard. The divisions between “language groups” – art cliques – was mentioned, and between students who want to learn skills versus the institutions that want to teach theory. That the “old hierarchy” still exists even though there is supposedly a collapse of high and low art was mentioned. Illustrators spoke of their work as being highly creative, even when directed by the client, and that it is more challenging than fine art where there are no parameters. It was pointed out that conceptual artists set themselves parameters too, and many work in representational styles, and that UVic has begun a joint BSc degree for fine artists studying engineering and computer science, showing a trend towards applied art. The morality of whether public art ought to be pleasing to the public was brought up and general discussion of how Mowry Baden’s controversial sculpture is good and bad ensued. The tendency of academic artists to consider it “beyond reproach” versus the public who think it is “reprehensible” was acknowledged to be a useless deadlock and that a middle ground discussion such as this was welcome. It was proposed that the difference between illustration and fine art is just about who is consuming art and how.

In general, the discussion confirmed most of my theories and the points of view that had been expressed in surveys and interviews.

Experiment

Tim Gardner is a 32-year old contemporary artist working in watercolour and pastel in a photorealistic style. His images are illustrative in that some have narrative qualities, are realistic, and portray recognizable subjects, but they are made with fine art exhibition in mind. The paintings of Tim Gardner provided an opportunity to test the ability of

illustrative images to slip between signifying various of kinds of art, and the stasis of that act of slipping with contextualization. My hypothesis was,

Illustrative images cannot be said to be either fine art or illustration simply from their appearance, but if a context is given for them, then viewers are more likely to assign them to either “fine art” or “illustration”.

The questions I posed for my experiment were,

- 1) *Can an illustrative image be correctly identified to belong to the context it originated in simply by judging from its appearance?* In other words, is there an intrinsic quality that cues a correct reading as either “fine art” or “illustration”?
- 2) *If they know the original context of the image, and it is different than supposed, will people change evaluation of the work?* That is, do certain expectations trigger certain readings?

If the answers to the questions are No and Yes respectively, then the reading of an image is so affected by what we know of it that it is *taken* to mean specific things, despite it not *intrinsically* meaning them, which shows how important context is.

The participants were shown three of Gardner’s paintings (Gardner and West, 2005) that none of them had seen before and provided with a list of twelve possible contexts where the images might be seen (Appendix A; Illustrations 11-13). They were asked to decide which of these contexts it was likely to see the image, and to mark Yes, No, or Maybe for each option, making a total of thirty-six answer opportunities for each image. They were also asked to state what the most likely context would be for each image. The list of possible contexts included various artworld institutions in Victoria and

various commercial and domestic applications. The images were printed in colour by inkjet on 8.5x11” paper with 1.5” white borders. The size and medium of the original art was the only information given; there was no discussion or remark made about them before they were unveiled.

There was no unanimous agreement among the five artists on any one context for any of the three images, and out of the one hundred and eight answer opportunities for Yes, No and Maybe, they only agreed by a clear majority (four of the five participants) seven times (6.5%): for a Yes six times, for a Maybe only once, and for a No, never. Of the thirty-six contexts, in sixteen (44.4%) the answers were spread over Yes, No and Maybe. In nineteen of the thirty-six contexts (52.7%), answers were in Yes and No categories simultaneously.

There were in fact two possible “correct” answers: that these works are likely to be seen at Open Space and at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria. These are the correct answers in that they are the local equivalent of the contexts these works were made for and have already been hung in. Of the thirty possible correct Yes answers (two “correct” contexts for each of the three images, multiplied by the number of participants), there were seven Yes, eleven Maybe, and twelve No. Participants’ most strongly agreed answers (four of five) were that image (A) [*Family Group*] was suited to the cover of a book of fiction; that image (B) [*Mom with Sons at Christmas*] was suited to a non-fiction magazine article, and that image (C) [*Blind Ambition*] was suited to a greeting card, a non-fiction magazine article, or a fine art limited edition print (Illustrations 11-13).

Participants were moderately agreed that image (C) was suited to fine art situations besides Open Space and AGGV, namely, at the Sidney jury show, Winchester

commercial gallery, or as a fine art limited edition print. Of fifteen possible Yes answers for these three situations, there were eight Yes, one No, and six Maybe; and participants thought it was most likely to appear as a limited edition print, but second most likely (but barely) as a magazine article illustration. Image (B) was also moderately thought to suit fine art situations at the Sidney jury show, Winchester commercial gallery, or as a fine art limited edition print. Of fifteen possible Yes answers, there were seven Yes, three No, and five Maybe answers; and participants thought it was most likely suited to a limited edition print, but second most likely (but barely) to an advertisement. Image (A) was the least likely suited to fine art contexts. Of fifteen possible Yes answers for these three contexts, there were one Yes, four No, and nine Maybe answers; and participants thought it was most likely to appear as a magazine article illustration or, secondly, on a book cover.

These results support the hypothesis that these illustrative images' original and intended context cannot be definitively identified only by appearance. Participants did not identify the correct fine art context of the images, but instead were more likely to assign them to highly illustrative or decorative contexts. However, it is possible that participants did not identify the correct contexts simply because they are ignorant of what Open Space and the AGGV are likely to hang, since only one participant had a strong background in contemporary art. This cannot be ruled out. On the other hand, in general participants still picked illustrative contexts over other fine art contexts besides Open Space and the AGGV.

The second research question was addressed by discussion. Before being told where the images came from or the point of the experiment, participants were asked to comment on the images. One participant stated that the technical proficiency of the artist was extremely high, and speculated that the artist could not be young or just out of art school; others concurred that these were not the works of a beginner. It was also remarked the works were “very illustrative” and that they were emotionally evocative; again, others did not disagree. Nobody guessed all three images were by the same artist. They compared the work to that of Jack Chambers.

When it was revealed the artist was young, briefly out of school, and successful in the contemporary art world of New York city, participants said they “weren’t surprised”, because realism is popular in contemporary art at the moment and that people want to return to accessible art. They mentioned there was a pop art influence in them, and that upon closer inspection they weren’t really photorealistic because the paint handling is loose, and because they “don’t have the look of life”. It was remarked that the appeal of this kind of work is perhaps “shallow” because when it is “served up in a conceptual framework” it is “easy to like”. That the images can be read in multiple ways was brought up.

It was suggested realism in this manner dehumanizes the subject, because the virtuosity of the technique overwhelms the viewer. Participants felt there was a kitschy aspect to the work, which sparked a comment about the appropriation of “lumpen, popular” art forms of “the small grid” by “the big grid”. One person said the pictures were “obviously done for irony” and that he would see that in them no matter what context they might appear in; and that “substance” was missing in them. Another person

countered that emotional content *was* there but perhaps the artist was unaware of the “plasticness” of them, and suggested the execution wasn’t good enough to get that across. Other participants felt the images were masking a negative reality, that the apparent happiness of the people in the pictures was fake, perhaps because the technique was only rendering and not painting. Most agreed the pictures were “cold” and “hollow”, “unaffectionate” and “disrespectful”, that the irony was obvious. The coldness was said to be apparent from considering the pictures as a group, because it was the only thing continuous about them. The realism was necessary to the effect of coldness because impasto or texture would reveal the artist’s hand and more warmth.

The catalogue from which the images were taken (Gardner et al, 2005) was then passed around, and it was pointed out that the artist was using historic photographs of his own family and himself. One person said that the artist can’t help but know his work can be misconstrued depending on context, and that he is marketing them really well so that they don’t read as “schlock” but as high art. Others pointed out that “positioning” is a better word than “marketing” because the latter suggests the pursuing of sales. One could put illustration in the same context of a high end gallery and have it be Art too, because then people are cued subconsciously to look for deeper significance. It was noted that opinions around the table were shifting as more background about the work was revealed. Someone said seeing the catalogue made the work more interesting, “richer”; that the slight distortions of the portraits were taking on “resonance”; that the catalogue “validates” the art and “makes the artist more important”. Art in a gallery or church makes it “sacred” but in a mall is “commercial”. It was remarked that the pictures were very documentary and will look historic in the future, that the realism is appealing but so

is the subject matter. Being an artist is largely about being a good chooser of subjects. His work looks a little retro, similar to that of Chuck Close. Seeing one image alone doesn't "speak to the artist" behind it.

The way participants changed their minds through the course of the discussion about Gardner's work supports the proposition that context will influence how people think of a work of art. When they knew nothing of the image the participants felt the pictures were benign and illustrative, showing excellent technical prowess. When they knew the images were "hot" in contemporary art, they then spoke of how ironic, cold, hollow and insubstantial they were. When they were informed that the work is very close and personal to the artist and were shown more, they said it was now more interesting and richer, and acknowledged the work will be an important document of their time. The participants were very conscious of the role of "positioning" and how it affects the reception of art. No one mentioned any of the commercial or illustrative contexts again after they knew the work was fine art. The hypothesis,

Illustrative images cannot be said to be either fine art or illustration simply from their appearance, but if a context is given for them, then viewers are more likely to assign them to either "fine art" or "illustration".

- is supported.

7.5 Textual Records

An examination of telephone book listings (Appendix C) from 1969 to 1990 shows ten artists, freelancers and employers of designers and illustrators in 1969 (under the

headings Advertising Agencies, Commercial Artists, and Fine Artists; Graphic Design was introduced in 1973). By 1975 there are twenty-three, in 1983 there are forty-two, and in 1990 over sixty. By comparison, only about six of these each year, on average, were Fine Artists. Graphic Design has one entry in 1973, seventeen in 1983, and thirty-seven in 1990; many designers stayed listed under Commercial Art or Advertising Agency, and some listed under multiple headings (the totals are adjusted to reflect the double-ups).

8. DISCUSSION: ISLAND ILLUSTRATORS IN THE FIELD

8.1 Introduction

So far I have discussed binary oppositions as they have been used historically. They can be loosely sorted into epochs, showing how the discourse has evolved (note: these dates have been adjusted a little to reflect local conditions in B.C., so may appear later than is normal elsewhere):

1840-1920	Art	Craft
1840-1960	Major arts	Minor arts
1870-1950	Fine art	Applied art
1890-1990	High	Low
1900-1975	Fine art	Commercial art
1910-1970	Modern	Traditional
1920-1970	Progressive	Conservative
1930-1950	Fine art	Industrial art
1920-1980	Painting	Illustration
1930-1980	Avant garde	Conservative
1980-2006	Contemporary art	Conservative art
1990-2006	Non-commercial art	Commercial art
1990-2006	Field of restricted production	Field of large-scale production
2003-2006	Ironic, relative	Positivist, absolute
2006	Irony	Earnestness

From this, it is evident how the debate has moved away from comparisons of the outer form of art to one of the underlying values and the conditions of production. This trend follows the rise of illustrative forms in fine art – outer appearance is no longer important and any art may take any shape. But the underlying division in the discourse has remained intact. However, in their practices, artists can transcend it.

I have found that the Island Illustrators Society has contested and overcome the great divide by challenging the historical and institutional differentiations in the art world in three ways:

1. By presenting illustration and illustrative fine art as valid fine art, they make illustrative techniques and approaches acceptable. They break down the autonomy of fine art, simultaneously losing the conception of autonomous illustration, thereby making space for what I have termed “illustrative fine art”.
2. By using familiar styles and popular subjects, members use a polemic voice to rhetorically express their worldviews and opinions. Members also experiment with media, particularly for themed shows. By using traditional forms in subtly different ways, they demonstrate conservatism in art is not a matter of resisting change, but of implementing change in response to social needs.
3. By using commercial strategies in both profitable and nonprofit ways, members get their messages out and contribute to society. Their example of working within dominant economic patterns points to a more realistic and effective standard for contemporary art practice to operate under than that of a reified, utopic autonomous, non-commercial art.

Each of these is discussed below. In implementing these strategies, all the binaries are blurred or collapsed.

8.2 Illustration as Art

I have used Tim Gardner’s paintings as an example of art that belongs to the contemporary art world, that takes Greenhalgh’s ironic rather than the positivist stance, even though they can be formally mistaken for the opposite. Gardner’s art is an example of “intentional parody” (which is not to assume it was *consciously* made so), which Bourdieu argues is a statement of emancipation from orthodox forms, made by repeating

the orthodox form in a “non-congruent context”. The purpose is to “‘get beyond’ the dominant mode and expression” (p. 31) – an inherently avant garde motive, I note. Irony is a means for an artist to propel themselves forward and upward in the field of cultural production by creating ironic distance from the predecessor – the play of the heretical transforming contemporary versus the orthodox conservative, as Bourdieu would have it. But the decidedly un-avant garde Island Illustrators manipulated context and the doubling of signs in order to heretically problematize illustration and fine art as mutually exclusive categories, and they often did so without sole recourse to irony. They did this not just by parody but also by hybridity. Their example challenges the assumption that irony is the only strategy for change or the only criteria for meaningful art.

Gowans suggested fine and commercial/popular arts ought to be combined (1981, pp. 24, 464). It is this that I see Island Illustrators achieving. I have offered a definition of illustration that requires illustration only to retain its obligation to communicate a specific intended meaning. My definition not only enfolds all Gowans’ four variants (as substitute imagery, illustration proper, beautification, and persuasion/conviction), but it also allows for the illustrator to self-express. Gowans felt self-expression is contradictory to communication; my assertion, based on what illustrators have told me about their love of craft and of delivering specific messages to the viewer, is that illustration can be very self-expressive for the creator. Furthermore, because contexts are social constructions, context can be manipulated. Island Illustrators, by creating new contexts in which illustration could become fine art and fine art become illustration, problematizes the conventional definitions of the two.

The origins of the Island Illustrators Society begin several years before its formal inception, with the expansion of the graphic design sector in the 1970s. Photo-retoucher Colin Fudge (b.1932) came to Victoria in 1975 and was part of this swell in the industry. Prior to his arrival he had worked for the eminent commercial art studio TDF in Toronto. Fudge started a similar enterprise in Victoria called Western Illustrators, which employed at least two people who went on to become Island Illustrators members, Ken Campbell and Steve Kergin. The rising number of people working in jobs related to communication allowed Fudge to help establish the Communication Arts Association in 1976, which sought to bring together all the workers in media, film and TV, advertising and related disciplines. CAA's purpose was to "provide a forum and a focus for professionals and students in the field to promote a lively exchange of ideas and sponsor activities and projects for members" (First Annual Jury Show Calendar, 1981). With the Vancouver group, they put together *West Coast Art Show: The Development Of Commercial Art* at the AGGV in 1977, and held at least one juried show of their own work in 1981. The AGGV show was billed as "a bit of a departure from the usual fine arts that constitute exhibitions", and arts reporter Jim Gibson unflatteringly said of it that "Commercial artists are those devious folk who think up billboards and magazine ads which trick you into needing all sorts of things you really don't want at all" (Gibson, *Victoria Daily Colonist*, May 26, 1977). Unfortunately, the CAA withered away in the early 1980s, but not before inspiring a twenty-four year old illustrator and graphic designer named Soren Henrich to start planning a similar group just for illustrators.

Island Illustrators first began activities in 1985, and was originally known as Vancouver Island Illustrators. Official society status came into effect Feb. 2, 1987. The

founders were determined to establish a more delineated identity in order to avoid the fate of the CCA (Kergin, interview, 2006). Its constitution was a direct adaptation of that of the Graphic Designers of Canada, and many of its early members were professional illustrators with an interest in promoting illustration in business. Many envisioned a guild-like group similar to what the Canadian Association of Photographers and Illustrators in Commerce (CAPIC) offered. Early members were eager to make Victoria known as a talent hotspot. Henrich stated that,

The Society's mission is to develop a wider awareness of illustration.... Specifically, to put Victoria on the map as a resource centre of illustrative talent, so that clients from mainland markets will come to Victoria for illustration, and come to know the Island Illustrators Society members to represent the best illustrators available. (IIS questionnaire, 1989)

In addition to the business and technical improvement of illustration, most if not all members supported the idea of promoting the aesthetic value of illustration on a par with fine art. There were what one early member calls “art-artists” involved from the beginning, and many illustrators were also gallery artists already. So began the Society's identity struggle, due to the double signifying tendency of images: if they were to challenge the idea that art was an autonomous and fixed category, then they had to accept that illustration was equally porous. The group's activities led to their establishing a new definition for “illustration”, but not without costs.

The first major event produced by Island Illustrators was the *Island Illustrators* 86 exhibition held at the commercial North Park Gallery in the autumn of 1985. Bringing illustration proper into the sphere of fine art was a provoking thing to do, because at that time illustration and commercial art was still widely thought to be inherently different from fine art. Fran Willis, the gallery proprietor, speculates that probably university

affiliates thought such a move was very commercial, because, as she put it, “certainly at the university to sell your work is to be a prostitute anyways” (interview, 2006). When the call for submissions was announced, Soren Henrich had occasion to write to *Monday Magazine*,

Thank you very much for mentioning the submission dates ... We have had a good response from other artists in the local arts community, but we must take exception to the phrase, “...non-participants should enjoy seeing crisp graphic pieces that are more accessible than the blobs and smears of contemporary ‘serious art’.” We would like the public to know that this phrase does not represent the views of Vancouver Island Illustrators. Illustration and fine art are not mutually exclusive. (*Monday Magazine*, Aug. 22-28, 1985)

Also unusual was that the show exhibited not just finished illustration matted and framed, but also samples of the printed copies it was made for. There were also educational displays of the printing process. The show attracted the notice of columnist Gorde Hunter, whose “One Man’s Opinion” editorials did not normally cover art. He remarked, “Different type of art show starts at the North Park Gallery tonight at 7:30. It’s entitled Island Illustrators and features the work of magazine, book and poster illustrators – and there is some excellent work indeed in the exhibition” (*Victoria Times-Colonist*, Sept. 9, 1985). Robert Amos, calling it “this most satisfying realm of commercial art”, also gave it a positive review, saying it was an excellent educational experience for children and that “it is an eye-opener for those people who prefer magazines to art galleries” (*Monday Magazine*, Sept. 19, 1985).

Writing in 1989, Ron Lightburn recalled that the show “was praised widely ...for the way it distinguished illustration as a unique art form” (*Illustrator*, Oct. 1989). Fran Willis found it interesting for the way it crossed over art for art’s sake.

Illustration in an art gallery might have been novel and educational in 1985 as long as it was “pure” illustration, but it was seen by Amos as troubling once it was mixed with decidedly “fine art”. In 1988, on the occasion of the third Society show, Amos wrote a review titled “Fine Art or Commercial? Show Points Up Confusion”. In it, he remarked:

The show now on view is a mixed bag and points up the usual confusion between “fine art” and “commercial art”. Paradoxically, commercial artists seem to draw too well and employ too close a connection between idea and image for the fine art world. For commercial art to be properly accepted, the context – magazine, poster, package – must be right. The idea of turning illustration loose in a fine-art gallery is confusing. (*Victoria Times-Colonist*, Feb 13, 1988, p. C5)

It is interesting to compare this review with one eight years later that spends no space wrestling with the question of the difference but merely says, “Most [members] tend to be realists of some sort, which is to be expected” (*Victoria Times-Colonist*, Aug. 17, 1996, p. C13). Island Illustrators seems to have succeeded both in normalizing illustration in exhibitions and in reconciling it with non-illustrative fine art, which has hung with illustrative fine art and illustration-proper in all the Society’s shows since 1985. But although the impetus from the start among Island Illustrator members was to bring illustration into better aesthetic esteem, doing so inadvertently made the group become a magnet for all types of artists looking for a way to popularize their work. While illustrative fine art has done well in the market, and has thereby brought illustration-proper into better aesthetic appreciation, Island Illustrators lost its original identity as a group *primarily* for full-time commercial illustrators who wanted to concentrate on illustration in its commerce and publishing aspects. The idea that illustration is *not* the same as other kinds of fine art began to be lost. That, combined with the equally rising number of emerging and amateur members and with the pressure to volunteer for tasks,

led the original membership to gradually drop out. By about 2002, only six members from the 1980s – none of whom were charter members – still held membership, and they were awarded lifetime memberships.

The slow depletion of the most experienced members caused the Society to self-examine its parameters frequently, but a solution to the problems of what illustration was and what the group ought to be was (and is) not easily resolved. The earliest written definition of illustration I have found in IIS papers is dated 1986, and reads, “an image created to accompany, illuminate, or enhance a written text” – illustration proper. Then, the inaugural newsletter of January, 1987 used the 1986 definition but continued, “You might think this is a club for commercial artists only; well, it isn’t. A work of fine art might be used to illustrate an editorial piece or even advertise a product. However, this is an interesting topic for discussion, comparison, and spirited debate.” And debated it was. 1989 was a pivotal year of self-evaluation, when members tackled the identity issue in earnest. On August 8, 1989, a mandate was finally circulated that read:

The Island Illustrators Society was established to foster a greater interest in the art of illustration within the community, and to educate ourselves and our clients about the value of illustration, both commercial and aesthetic. (unpublished)

Later, the sentence was expanded with:

...and to provide for the support and promotion of all visual artists (Handbook, 1990).

Significantly, there was an attempt by some members in late 1990 to start a separate guild that would have concentrated on the professional practices, ethics and business side exclusively. It did not happen due to the feeling there was not enough will in Victoria to adhere to professional practices and ethics to make the effort worthwhile (*Illustrator*,

January 1991; Steacy to Grove, June 19, 2006). The words “for the promotion and support of all visual artists” were added to the newsletter masthead beginning in 1992. Some people feel that it was this concession that signaled the point of no return for the society’s move away from illustration-proper as its focus, but in my opinion that point had already been passed by 1988. The by-line was merely reflecting the fact that the membership was made up of all kinds of visual artists, and that the group desired to provide a common ground for artistic endeavours of all sorts.

It took longer for a formal definition of illustration to be drafted than it did for the first mandate. An article titled “Artist? Illustrator? Artistrator?” in the September, 1990 newsletter stated that,

For the past several years we have been trying to determine the difference between ‘fine art’ and ‘illustration’...In the dictionary, the word ‘art’ isn’t used in the definition of illustration, so we trash the dictionary... It seems reasonable to agree with [Howard] Pyle that illustration is an integral part of fine art. Therefore, to ask the question [of difference] is like asking, “What’s the difference between a chassis and a car?”

Minutes for the executive meeting of Nov. 7, 1989 record that the proposal to print a definition in the newsletter’s masthead was rejected. The minutes for the executive meeting of Jan. 12, 1990 state the executive pressed for its inclusion in the official mandate instead. Finally, the following was agreed upon and inserted as a footnote into the mandate and published in the February, 1990 newsletter:

Illustration is a piece of visual information, either drawn or photographed, which usually illustrates an accompanying text. The purpose is to enhance the ideas presented in the text or simply to transmit information or concepts visually.

This somewhat awkward definition left room for exceptions to the rule of illustration-proper being text-bound: any visual information that transmitted concepts was

acceptable. Essentially, combined with the mandate to support the aestheticism of the art of illustration and all visual artists, the IIS definition of illustration could apply to any kind of art. Although they now had a written definition, it did not help members feel any more certain that they knew what illustration was and how it might be different from fine art. Eventually a complete collapse of the distinction between art and illustration happened. In 1997 a Membership Directory was published, which bore on the first page the following:

The IIS is a group of professional illustrators committed to the promotion and support of all visual arts...
...our focus is on the nurturing and support of the professional illustrative arts. The purpose of illustration is to explain or make clear an idea by the using of drawings, pictures or other artwork. The illustration may stand alone or be accompanied by text, it may be something as simple as a line or as complex as a towering sculpture.

Lately, the current membership has struggled with the identity of the group in slightly shifted territory. At the time of writing, executives of Island Illustrators are also executives in the Victoria chapter of the Federation of Canadian Artists (FCA), a group dedicated to fine art alone, and it has been suggested that the two merge. The idea has been resisted however – some sense remains that Island Illustrators is different, because of its more experimental vibe and themed shows (Semenoff, interview, 2006; Bridgeman, interview, 2006; Doruyter, interview, 2006).

The showing of illustrative fine art became the big attraction for members. The workshops that IIS sponsored in its first few years were given up, while annual shows absorbed much of the available volunteer hours of members. This helped shift the society's focus even more towards the aesthetic concerns and away from the technical

and business interests of the early years. The display of printed final work next to original illustration was not repeated after 1988. However, what the group lost in promoting hardline professional illustration in industry it made up for in community outreach and creative variety. It has been particularly good for fine artists who prefer their personal work to communicate specific messages or to serve a greater social purpose than just personal satisfaction alone. By losing its illustration-proper focus, IIS forged a new group identity for illustrative fine artists.

Because of its assertive character, Island Illustrators has had an impact on its members by improving their self-image, their professionalism, and their exposure to different forms of art. I myself joined for these reasons. Lynda Heslop claimed that although she had been practicing for some time, she was uninformed about rights, royalties, pricing and selling, and that the group provided all that (*Illustrator*, Dec. 2000). Kristi Bridgeman came to a meeting in order to ease back into art after a long hiatus, and had a feeling of having found “her people” there (*Illustrator*, Fall, 2001). Bill Bartlett also joined because IIS was a non-threatening way to ease back into art. His is a particularly interesting case because Bartlett came from a background of conceptual and experimental art, and served as president of Open Space 1974-1978. He became president of Island Illustrators in 1997. He wrote,

Where does ...Island Illustrators fit into this agenda for re-kindling my artistic energies? The Society is full of creative working people with a professional attitude towards their art, regardless of style or framework. I don't see a lot of barriers in the Society; the artists come together to share, not compete...I felt I could come into the Society just being who I am... (Bartlett, *Illustrator*, Nov. 1997)

Most of all, Island Illustrators supported artists who, having been made to feel like second class citizens in the academic art world for their illustrative art, were alone and discouraged. It made it possible for them to create without trepidation, and to show illustration proudly.

The Victoria interest in commercial art interdisciplinarity continues with the founding of the Maltwood Guild in 2005 by artist and designer Jordan Stratford and art director Zandra Gutierrez, an “exhibition group” comprised of “fashion designers, photographers, architects, publishers and graphic designers” (Stratford, 2006).

8.3 Conservatism in the Island Illustrators Society

As already mentioned, Island Illustrators is conservative in that members do not create for the purposes of contributing to art discourse, and in that their understanding and tolerance of contemporary art is wanting. However, Island Illustrators is not monolithically conservative in the rigid sense of resisting change that I critique in Chapter Six. Instead, they represent a middle ground between avant garde progressives and staunch traditionalists, where old forms and ways of being an artist in the community are being subtly played with and changed.

Exhibitions by IIS have never been exactly like other artists’ shows. The first show in 1985 that hung printed work next to original artwork was the first oddity, and the hanging of fine art next to blatant illustration was the second. Then, themed shows began in 1988, with the *Opera* show at North Park Gallery and at the MacPherson Playhouse, in conjunction with the local opera company’s season opening. Themed shows require participants to work on specific subject matter and often in a specific size, format and

media, and the display is intended to benefit a third party. Over the years it has become the custom for the theme shows to be planned in cooperation with a local business, charity, public office, or event, bringing the practice of artmaking into line with social functions and goals. Artists are free to interpret and express the theme in any way. As Bogart has discussed, the difference between fine art and illustration has historically been thought of in the art and advertising worlds as hinging upon whether the work in question was in service of a client. But in IIS assignments there is no client exercising veto power over the results, and most themed shows are not juried (the *Opera* one was, due to it being in a commercial gallery). What is essentially an illustrator's assignment results in work that is intended for exhibition, that may be primarily self-expressive or self-referential or polemic, yet is still illustrative of the set theme. Illustrative fine art like this playfully subverts the supposed autonomy of the fine artist and the supposed subservience of the illustrator. By using illustrative approaches in their personal work (not just their commissioned work), members present a combination of craft and self-expression. Self-expression, however, is still devoted to service, in the form of a desire to communicate a specific message and not, as some put it, for "self-indulgence".

In terms of ideological content, the work presented by Island Illustrators tends toward the apolitical, even though members described themselves on surveys (Q. 40) as, on average, slightly politically left-leaning (although not quite as left-leaning as non-member local artists). In this sense the group could be fairly termed conservative. Individuals might be quite political, but there has always been a tacit understanding that Island Illustrators is not a platform for debating beliefs that might be too controversial. Because they are tools of mutual promotion in business, the society and its newsletters,

shows, catalogues and other items need to avoid the troublesome. Occasional political pieces such as Carl Coger's *Jobs* of 1992 (Illustration 7) do show up in the newsletters, and some artists working in landscape or wildlife subjects mention environmental activism, and other members, such as Ron Stacy, have found themselves embroiled in political issues concerning the use of native imagery in their work (Illustration 3). But such examples are the exception. Instead, members invest their work with what I will term a *polemical* voice rather than a political one. I base the distinction between polemical and political on whether the critical element is covert or overt, working within established systems of economy and knowledge versus working to break them down. This is roughly analogous to Greenhalgh's distinction of positivist and ironic, except the largely positivist Island Illustrator members use irony as well. The polemical is effective because it is rooted in the rhetorical conjured craft described in Chapter Four. I suggest that the polemical is possibly as successful as the political in effecting change because of its communicability and widespread acceptance. Work submitted to the themed shows sometimes carries polemic intent, if the artist is inclined that way. For the Saanich Municipal Hall banners, Kristi Bridgeman depicted the blankets that the British purchased Saanich with from the First Nations who lived there, with X's indicating the number of chiefs who signed the treaty, bringing attention to the ongoing legal settlements (Potter, March, 2006) (Illustration 5).

In their work, Island Illustrator members through the years show considerable variety. April Bending Docherty worked in abstract landscapes, while Dar Churcher is primarily a sculptor. Imke Pearson worked in stained glass, and Marcia Semenoff paints landscapes in oils. Greg Glover is a 3D computer graphics expert, while David Goatley

and Carl Coger specialize in portraiture. Ken Steacy is a comic book artist, and Kristi Bridgeman is known for her mandalas. Although it is convenient to attach specialties to names, in fact almost everyone works in more than one medium, sometimes in several styles, and with varying subjects. Several of the “feature artists” in the newsletters state they do not adhere to any one kind of art making, and this is a characteristic that illustrators I met in Ontario shared. In this respect fine art institutions have been far more conservative than illustrators’ practices, because variety has been discouraged in fine artists – it is a detriment to present too much of an assortment when applying for grants and shows. The Federation of Canadian Artists website, for instance, explicitly tells applicants to submit similar works when applying for Associate status. At Emily Carr Institute in 1998 I and other students were given the same advice when submitting slides for awards. Survey data suggests that illustrators acknowledge the pressure of the market to appear as if they specialize, with most saying it is not a detriment to be known for a particular style. Island Illustrators has nurtured experimentation and fence-leaping by holding workshops, inviting a very wide range of guest speakers, and allowing a multitude of different works to hang together in shows.

Several members told me that they value the themed shows because they offer an opportunity to explore unfamiliar media and ideas. This has resulted in personal breakthroughs for some, breakthroughs that push the boundaries of illustration. Dar Churcher wrote, on the occasion of her being awarded a Lifetime membership,

I attribute any personal development as an artist to the society. Over the years I have had many opportunities to expand my artistic horizons with a host of new techniques precipitated by the challenges of theme shows.

If truth be known I doubt whether making 3D models would ever have occurred to me had it not been for a show organized at North Park Gallery on the theme of Opera. (*Illustrator*, Summer, 2004)

Churcher eventually made her three-dimensional illustration into an enormous walk-in book with interactive sculptural illustrations, titled *Just Imagine* (Illustration 8). It was accepted for exhibition at the AGGV by self described “populist” Nick Tuele, who tells me he thought it “had more behind it” than just illustration. He recognized that it needed a gallery context in order to engage with an audience in a serious way, compared to a mall where it would just appear as “a backdrop”. He speculates many contemporary art curators would have passed it over and that it probably would not have been considered by the Vancouver Art Gallery at all.¹¹ Churcher’s work represents how conservative and contemporary can be transcended.

8.1 Commercial and Non-commercial

With the shift of art appreciation in the 1960s, a gap widened between two supposedly irreconcilable foes. This is how it appeared then, and how it appears to many even now. Robert Genn[^] recalls the scene of the 1950s and ‘60s as being very divided between old and new, and that traditionalists felt the AGGV had been usurped by modernists. Robert Amos[^] calls the early 1960s a “fork in the road”, after which stature never returned to the traditionalists. Portrait artist David Goatley* describes the scene today as “cliquey”, divided between representational artists on one hand and experimental, grant-funded artists on the other, completely out of each other’s spheres. Among artists, distinction is

¹¹ *Just Imagine* did in fact garner shows at the Kamloops Art Gallery and the Malaspina Art Gallery.

commonly made between “commercial” and “non-commercial” galleries, with the understanding that traditional painters paint for the market of the commercial galleries, and the grant-funded work for the non-commercial.

From my surveys it appears Fine Artists in particular but others too still prefer to reject the term “commercial”, despite considering income to be part of their own professionalism, and negative associations with the word are common. “Commercial” for many is not whether the work results in income, nor whether they create with the intention of generating income (which by their own admission they must, to consider themselves professional), but whether they *pander* to the market. This is supported not just by observation and interview, but by the finding that about half of those who claimed their work was not commercial admitted that they have been known to adjust or make art in a way previous sales have suggested would sell better. Greenhalgh, in relating the clash of high and low in the late 1980s, says that the craftsperson was vilified for falling into either an “abyss of commercialism” or a “ghetto of bourgeois individualism” (2003, p. 14) – two types of pandering. The first was a money-driven slave to mass market demand, the second a slave to what one of my informants called “the cult of personality”, the demands of a fine art market that trades upon hype rather than integrity (also identified by Bonus and Ronke, 1997). We can recognize in this pair Bourdieu’s fields of large-scale production and restricted production, both commercial in different ways.

The commercial/non-commercial divide seems to be aggravated by Canadian cultural funding policy. One contemporary artist and one high-level cultural policymaker felt that things are in the kind of moral balance with prestige on one hand and profit on the other, and that if illustrators and conservative artists want prestige too then they are

asking for more than their fair share, especially where grants are concerned. Robert Belton (a University of British Columbia professor) repeats the position of those who think grants should not go to commercial art in his textbook *Sights of Resistance*:

Theoretically, commercial enterprises like design and illustration do not need governmental funding. (In fact there are governmental supports of various sorts, like publishing grants and funding for research and development.) More often than not, the entrepreneurial rule is that consumer demand dictates supply, and it seems consumer demand is increasingly satisfied by the ubiquitous, generic solutions offered by inexpensive computer programs for design, page layout, and typography. (In fairness, that satisfaction may sometimes be a measure of recession-era thinking rather than philistinism. The consequence is the same, however.) (2001, p. 67)

There are several misconceptions and inaccuracies in this. First, I am unaware of any Canada Council Visual Arts grants available to individual illustrators and designers. “Commercial” artists are explicitly excluded from funding, although comic book artists, newly fashionable, have recently been admitted under writing rather than visual arts. Second, the assumption commercial artists should look after themselves disavows that commercial artists are artists too, and need from time to time to recharge their creative energy in the same exploratory manner that fine artists are awarded grants for. Third, if a commercial artist should decide to apply anyhow, his or her portfolio might not even make it past department staff and on to the peer review, because it is staff who are charged with determining the eligibility of the application, and if they decide the artist is commercial, then it goes no further (presumably; I couldn’t get a straight answer from people who have served on the Council other than “You’re asking the right questions.”). Fourth, the Canadian art scene has evolved around its granting system so much that a visual artist’s status as a professional is severely questioned if he or she has never received a grant. This is supported by the Council’s own commissioned research (WME

Consulting, 2000). By being excluded, illustrators and designers are severed from that important status. Fifth, ironically, by throwing them to the mercy of the market, proponents of the exclusion of commercial artists from grants have promoted the likelihood that these artists will move into even more commercialized forms – as Belton puts it, “generic solutions” – such as they are criticized for. Finally, given the use of the word “commercial” in the art world to mean both illustrators/graphic designers and fine artists whose work is saleable in commercial galleries, the stigma is that neither are deserving of funding, and therefore not really art.

I do not aim to attack the virtues of arm’s length, peer-assessed grants but to expose how the system plays into the older fine art/commercial art prejudice, to the detriment of balanced Canadian cultural self-knowledge and comprehension of visual art. The grant system maintains in the field the dominant position of the cultural producers who already enjoy recognition by other dominant producers, and perpetuates their values. As Niedzwiecki (2000) has argued, the bureaucracy wields so much power in consecration that artists’ practices are swayed by its demands.

The distinction between non-commercial and commercial is problematic because so-called non-commercial art practice is, as Bourdieu argues, caught in a political economy of its own. An economic framework isn’t necessarily negative, but it ought to be acknowledged in order to see better the subliminal motivations and machinations of the field, and to demonstrate shared territory with commercial art. In arguing the economic undercurrents of non-commercial art, I am building upon work I undertook as part of an art intervention I executed in 1999 (Grove, 2003). The summary of this theory, which is essentially the same as Bourdieu’s, is that the art system that supports

contemporary art is a “client”, with expectations and value systems that are largely self-referential, and this client is no less demanding than an illustrator’s client. Rewards take the form of exhibitions in nonprofit galleries, critical writing, and grants, which then translate into acclaim, better likelihood of being represented by commercial galleries, sales to museums, and most commonly, teaching positions at post-secondary institutions. The bottom line comparison of commercial and non-commercial artists shows no difference, except the commercial art does not get taken seriously.

I am aware that I am describing a system that has become paradoxical, if not hypocritical. Although the “non-commercial” rhetoric and reification is still prevalent, in fact some very high-profile non-commercial contemporary artists have started engaging in merchandising. Grunt gallery in Vancouver is a contemporary art gallery funded by Canada Council, B.C. Arts Council, City of Vancouver, and private donations. They also now operate a shop, which advertises,

Pillowcases

The Rebecca Belmore limited
edition Grace, attractively
packaged and numbered,
is available at **grunt** gallery
for \$65 plus shipping.

(Brunt , June 2006)

Belmore~ represented Canada at the 2005 Venice Biennale, and her work is largely devoted to breaking down hegemonic social structures. This indicates an obscured middle ground, one that has in fact been lurking all along. For instance, in Victoria in the 1960s, the offended prizewinner Nora Lewis had actually studied with Herbert Siebner and Jan Zach. Ricky Ciccimarra, a Limner, also painted botanical illustrations. Bill West was at home in both theatre design and painting (and other disciplines), while Limner member

Myfanwy Pavelic mixed figurative and abstract idioms extremely successfully. Len Gibbs admires and collects abstract art (conversation, July 23, 2006). Victoria's small size ensured friendships flourished between artists regardless of discipline and behind the polemics of the field, there is considerable common ground. The amalgamations of styles, subjects and media in postmodernism that increased in the 1980s and 1990s was largely nourished by this lurking, underacknowledged commonality between the commercial-conservative and non-commercial-contemporary artists' day to day activities.

Importantly, the commercial versus non-commercial distinction obscures the fact that, according to my illustrative respondents, conservative art is not made *only* for the market. While sales are important because artists count on them for livelihood, at the root of it there is love and attachment for the subject matter, craft, and experience.

Conservative art is made for personal satisfaction first, and popular salability second.

Robert Bateman[^] and Robert Genn[^], since they are the most popular, with high volume sales and steep prices, and because they sport unfashionable subject matter, are perhaps the most misunderstood in this regard in contemporary-non-commercial art circles. The sale of reproductions at high prices in particular seems to lead some purists to think these artists are only in it for the money. But examining the other activities of both reveals the depth of the commitment each has: Bateman for his environmentalism (he has just established a research centre at Royal Roads University) and Genn for his generous professional and psychological support of other artists with his online community. To be sure, both artists work within capitalist frameworks and these philanthropic gestures fit neatly into their respective business plans, but monetary feedback (e.g., donations of art

to fundraisers, time spent away from personal work on behalf of others) into charity and community accompanies the social benefits. As Steve Kergin* explains,

Anybody in arts who tries to deny that [art is separate from business and society] is fooling themselves. We [illustrators] are just realists, pragmatists... I feel I have an opportunity to contribute to changes in our society that I want to see happen through being a successful artist, successful artistically and successful financially. If I am perceived to be a successful artist then that will add more weight to anything I choose to say as an artist. (interview, 2006)

The commercial is a means for the polemic voice to reach the audience, for the conjured craft to rhetorically do its work.

Island Illustrators is certainly a commercial enterprise. They depend on “alternative channels” of distribution today, just as Brian Travers-Smith did in the 1970s, and the current membership have participated in a national independent distribution system called Night of Artists. IIS has put on shows in shops, the billiard hall, Market Square, and outdoors, and individuals often produce mechanical and digital prints. They have also produced studio tours since 1992, printed catalogues and directories geared towards drumming up business, sold calendars, and auctioned off art. But, I argue, they also represent the grey area between commercial-conservative and non-commercial-contemporary. In themed shows, the entities that Island Illustrators has partnered with over the years include the Royal B.C. Museum, Langham Court Theatre, St Ann’s (a heritage building now publicly owned), Saanich Municipal Hall (for Earth Week and for its centennial), Craigdarroch Castle (a heritage museum), and the Slow Food Society (a gastronomic activist group). Themed shows done in conjunction with charity organizations are a happy medium between commercial and non-commercial practices.

That IIS could successfully mount a show of illustration and have five hundred guests on opening night in 1985 was made possible not just because of the local appreciation for illustrative, conservative art, but also because their illustrative fine art offered an alternative to the tiresome choice between the same old traditional landscapes on one hand and impenetrable highbrow art on the other, without sacrificing the best of both art worlds. IIS charter member Grant Leier notes that his work was collected by both conservative and avant garde collectors alike (conversation, 2006). Leier was in high demand as an illustrator, notably for the Belfry Theatre (Illustration 9), while Fran Willis represented him in her gallery. But he was also a participant in an Open Space project that took contemporary art into public space in 1988 (*Victoria Times-Colonist*, Apr. 30, 1988, p. C4), something largely unfathomable today. A clue to why this is so is contained in Open Space's 1992 retrospective catalogue *The October Project*, where ex-directors Sue Donaldson and Jeanne Shoemaker remarked that part of the change to narrower programming was due to the need to conform to Canada Council criteria for funding (pp. 4-5). Gene Miller, the founder of Open Space, warned current and future directors,

...every once in a while, don't forget to open up the place to the Vancouver Island stamp collectors or the model railroaders, just to confound your supporters. Every once in a while, the people whom Open Space should most shock and most outrage and whose sensibilities should be most disturbed, are the very people who identify with this place. (Open Space, 1992, p. 6)

Popularity need not disqualify art from non-commercial venues, if non-commercial venues would not fear loss of cultural and symbolic capital in the high art world for showing popular art.

8.5 Conclusion

Illustrative fine art contains much latitude for the expression and growth of conservative art as I have defined conservative art: as thrift-loving, slowly evolving art that responds to social needs. Although styles and materials may change, Gowans' four essential functions of beautification, illustration-proper, conviction and persuasion, and substitute imagery persist. The ability of Island Illustrators to carry on these functions in the context of fine art Precious Objects for Exhibition (as Gowans says) demonstrates how the division between contemporary/ fine/ non-commercial and conservative/ applied/ commercial arts can be reconciled. From the activities Island Illustrators has undertaken it is apparent that illustration can be a starting point for diverse functions and forms of art. The illustrator's approach goes beyond simply capitalizing off saleable subject matter and charm. It manipulates traditional and commercial arts and produces new forms that resonate culturally. The illustrator's craft in distilling the universal and reconfiguring it in meaningful, accessible ways gives it relevancy that goes beyond the ephemeral.

IIS confronted the lack of status that they had and successfully made illustration part of art in Victoria in part because of the history and friendliness towards illustrative fine art and conservatism there. In 1998, IIS minutes record that the AGGV invited Island Illustrators to have a show in the main galleries, the art rental, or as part of the Young Associates activities. Unfortunately this offer came at a bad time with many long-term members leaving, and the offer was not pursued successfully. It does, however, stand as evidence of how far the Society had come in establishing a standing in Victoria for itself, for its members, and for the status of illustration and illustrative fine art.

Since for so long the commercial and conservative have been for many the automatic stamps of non-excellence, some may feel a standard of quality is lost when the

commercial or conservative are considered as legitimate contemporary art. To that, Robert Bateman counters by distinguishing between “escape art”, which is made as a pastime and has nothing personal in it; and art made in response to the world, which is engaged with the artist’s own experiences (interview, 2006). Style, popularity, salability and intent ought not be factored in at all when deciding whether something is excellent – nor when deciding whether it is “contemporary”.

Contemporary art (in the restricted sense) is in constant dialogue with other art, yet it remains remote by denying membership to contemporaneous conservative and commercial forms. In doing so, it erodes its actual comprehension of what it is in dialogue with. This works against contemporary trends such as relational aesthetics that depend on the artist’s affinity with the audience. Island Illustrators, due to their earnestness, traditional values of social engagement, and avoidance of abstract conceptions of art, do not qualify as “contemporary artists” in the sense it is meant in the academy and artist run centres, but they are contemporary and not controlled by the market any more than so-called non-commercial artists. Their example can provide others with ideas about how to be more meaningful to more people, how to communicate, how to effect social change by encouragement rather than browbeating. Perhaps it is time to move beyond the divide, and acknowledge that all creative activity is equally vital to cultural health.

Illustrative fine art and illustration thrive in the field of large-scale production, but suffer in the field of restricted production. Robert Bateman, for instance, is notoriously excluded from the National Gallery (Gessel, Dec. 5, 2000) and “contemporary art” shows, but enjoys respect in popular milieux (an exception was Bateman’s show at the

AGGV in 1993, curated by Nick Tuele). I would like to see recognition in the field of restricted production for excellent illustrative art. The rift is artificial, constructed by disputes such as the one that drove apart modernists and conservatives in Victoria, caused by power-plays in the field for symbolic and cultural capital. In my desire to close the rift I am consciously following in the calls to action by Bogart and Davis. But some illustrative artists I spoke with didn't see the point. One illustrative fine artist impressed upon me it was inconsequential because an artist shouldn't worry about what others think, but just do what they feel like doing. Bateman insisted that it doesn't matter if the "priesthood" like him or not, since he feels they have little impact anyway. Others balk at the idea they should be entitled to grants because that would insultingly imply they weren't good enough artists to make it alone. A high-level Vancouver illustrator felt that representation in museums was irrelevant because his work is subliminally preserved as part of the matrix of visual culture, even if all samples and reproductions of his art are lost. These four responses are symptomatic of the isolation of illustrative artists from the academy that the divide has perpetuated. They do not acknowledge the value of and trickle-down effect of academic recognition and research in society at large.

My main concerns are for those of posterity and cultural understanding. For instance, one artist I spoke to who had majored in multimedia at Alberta College of Art in 2003 told me there was "no art history" for her medium – I hope my work can help correct this sort of ignorance by dignifying communication art forms like illustration that underlie new media. Conservative and illustrative fine art also deserve to be supported, documented and analyzed as other art is. Without it, what is missed is an account of the unclear interface between illustration, conservative art and other art, robbing us of

discovering what is important in each and of admitting how they influence each other. We are running the risk of preserving unhealthy power relations that could be blinding us to more important things, such as how illustration can provide useful communication skills in contemporary art or how understanding the earnest social intent behind conservative art might change the way we understand cultural consumption. If the illustrative arts had more of a place in the field of restricted production and academy, then perhaps illustrative cultural producers – and by extension, their audience, the “masses” – would see more value in museums, archives and academy. Institutions in turn would connect better with the world outside their ivory towers they purportedly want to reach in more direct ways than waiting for research to trickle down through generations of progressively more popular media. The divisions of the concrete conceptual thinkers and the abstract conceptual thinkers go beyond illustrators and art theorists, but it need not be so. Literacy in both modes of thinking is necessary for an inclusive and well-rounded society.

I feel I have documented what may be an old system rapidly disappearing. As I finish writing this, the 2008 International Congress of the History of Art (CIHA) theme has been announced. It is on globalism in art history. The organizers state:

“For this Congress, the definition of art is broadly conceived so as to include traditional media, painting, sculpture, architecture and the crafts, as well as design, film, visual performance and new media.” It will be interesting to see if future Congresses keep to this broad definition of art.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustration 1

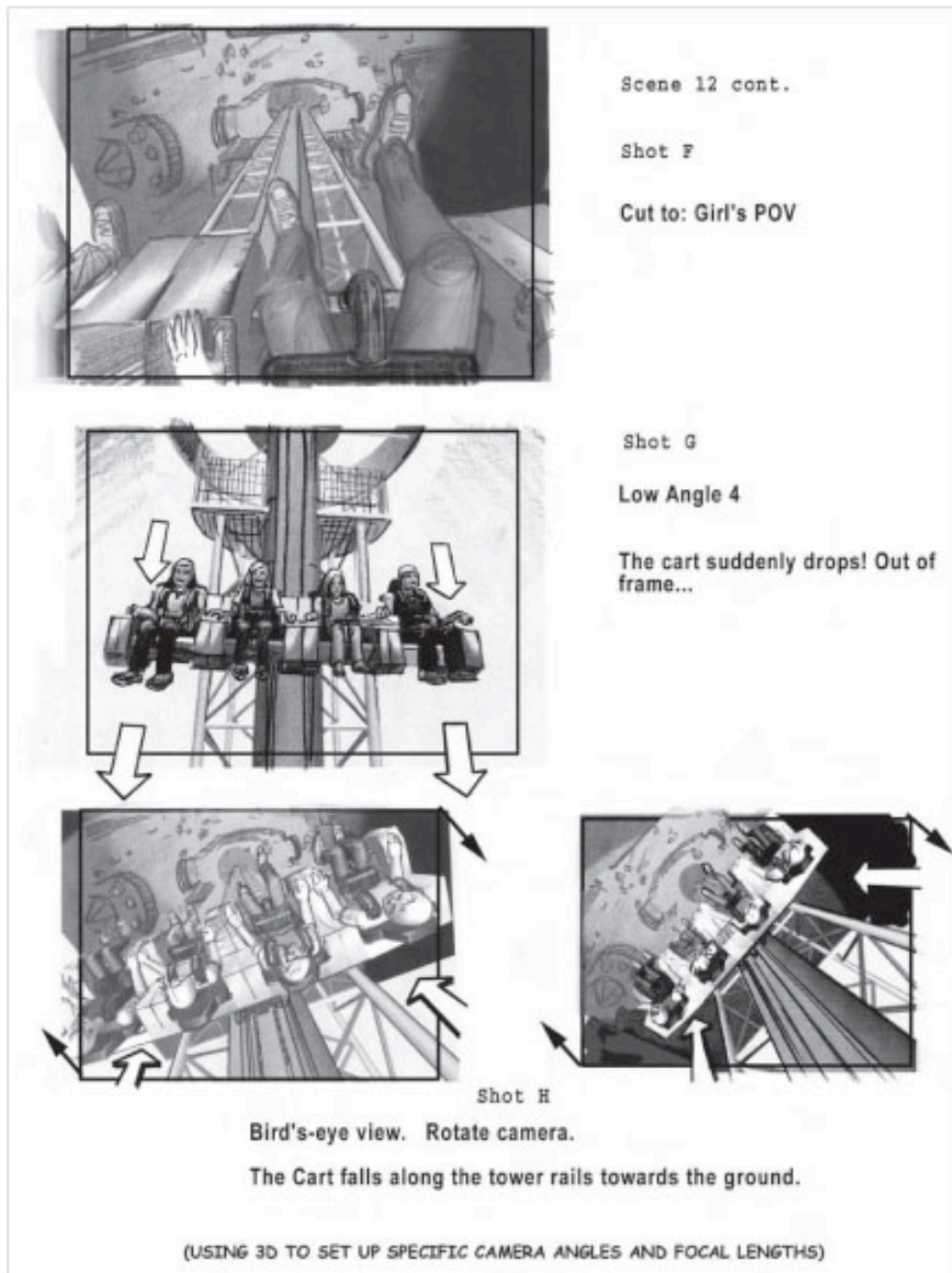


Image area approx 32" x 20"
Watercolour and gouache on illustration board,
1996

Steve Kergin
Circle of Light
© Steve Kergin

Reproduced by permission of the artist

Illustration 2



Nelson Dewey
Storyboard

© Nelson Dewey

Reproduced by permission of the artist

Illustration 3



"Raven and Eagle are working together, having been sent by the chief of the village to bring word to all the other villages who are invited, to attend the potlatch at the beginning of the next Spiritual Season, or Sacred Time. Their job is very important and they must follow the protocol exactly and make certain not to omit anyone, for to do so would be a terrible insult and could cause a deadly rift in the relationship. They are very good messengers, because Raven is very intelligent and has a good memory and Eagle is a symbol of peace."

Ron Stacy
Above All

© Ron Stacy

40" x 40"
Acrylic on Canvas

Reproduced by permission of the artist

Illustration 4



Victor Bosson
Empress Jingo Goes Shopping
© Victor Bosson

8.5 x 12.25"
Digital art, 2004
Reproduced by permission of the artist

Illustration 5



Kristi Bridgeman
Saanich banner
© Kristi Bridgeman

Approximately 2 x 5'
Acrylic on Canvas, 2006

Reproduced by permission of the artist

Illustration 6



Karel Doruyter
Birth of Raven (Raven series)
For book *Origin Tales of Raven*
© Karel Doruyter

18x24"
Acrylic, 1996

Reproduced by permission of the artist

Illustration 7



note: an adequate reproduction of this image was not available and this reproduction has been digitally retouched to remove damage.

Carl Coger
Jobs

© Carl Coger

20" X 24"

Mixed media: pastel, gouach, on
Canson paper and papyrus, 1992.

Reproduced by permission of the artist

Illustration 8

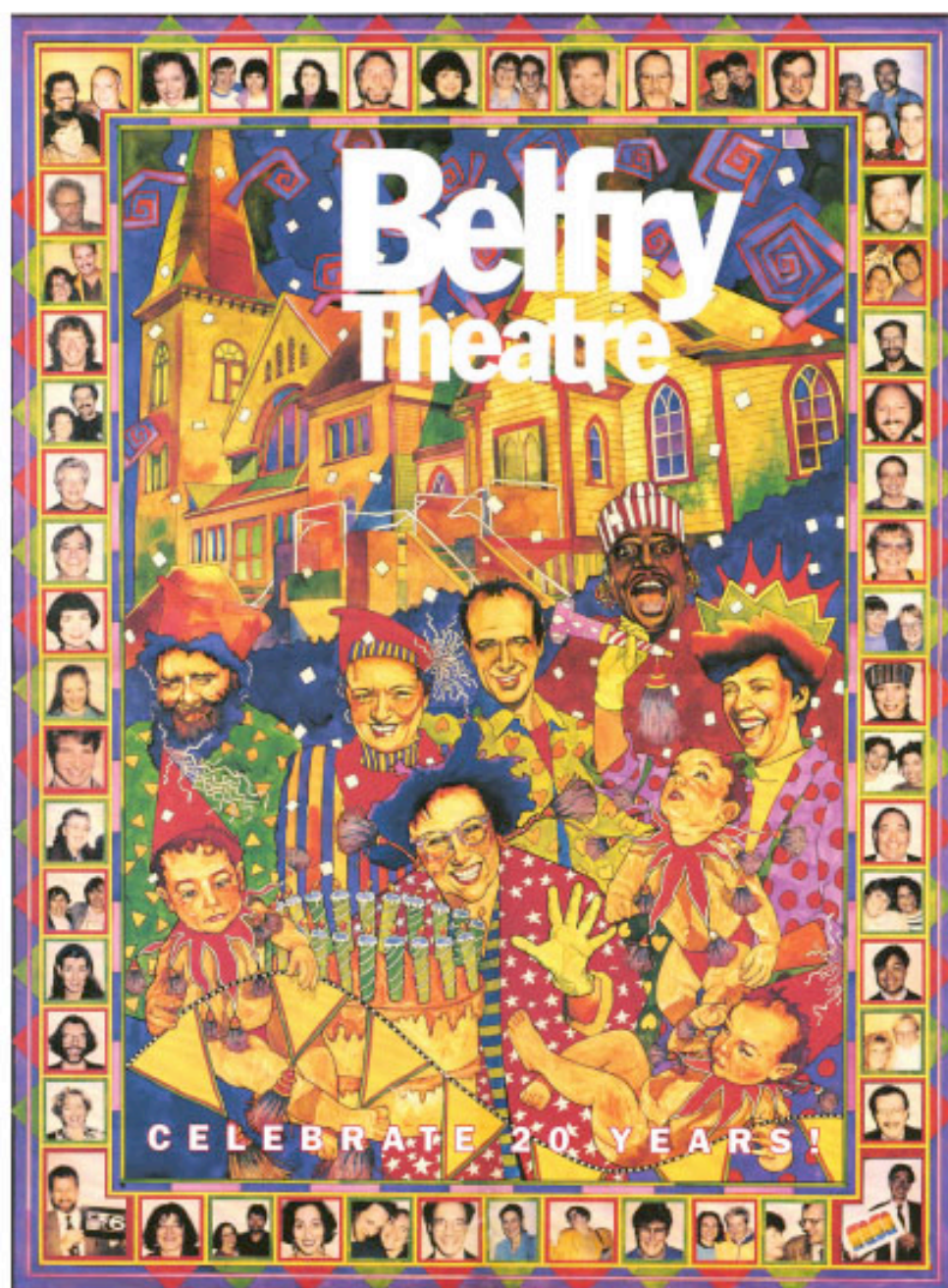


Dar Churcher
Just Imagine
© Dar Churcher

Mixed media installation including
animatronic figure, puppet theatre and
interactive components. 1993-1994

Reproduced by permission of the artist

Illustration 9



Grant Leier
Untitled

© Belfry Theatre

30x40"

Mixed media on rag board, 1996.

Reproduced by permission of the artist and the Belfry Theatre

Illustration 10



Mowry Baden
Pavilion, Rock, Shell

© Mowry Baden; image by Jaleen Grove

Mixed Media, 2003

Reproduced by permission of the artist

Illustration 11



"Image A"
Tim Gardner
Untitled (Family Portrait 1)

© Tim Gardner

37 1/2" x 44 5/8"
Pastel on gessoed paper mounted on canvas
2004 - 2005

Reproduced by permission of the artist

Illustration 12



"Image B"
Tim Gardner
Untitled (Mom With Sons at Christmas)
© Tim Gardner

10" x 14 1/2"
Watercolour on paper, 2000
Reproduced by permission of the artist

Illustration 13



"Image C"
Tim Gardner
Blind Ambition
© Tim Gardner

10 1/2 x 9"
Watercolour on paper, 2003
Reproduced by permission of the artist

APPENDIX A

Focus Group Experiment

(Refer to the three images by Tim Gardner)

Circle which image this sheet is for: A B C

Where would this image likely appear?

Write **Y** for yes, **N** for no, and **M** for maybe.

- A. in an advertisement _____
- B. at Open Space _____
- C. on the artist's Mom's wall _____
- D. at the Sidney fine art show _____
- E. on a greeting card _____
- F. in an AGGV main gallery _____
- G. on the Causeway _____
- H. with a magazine article, non-fiction _____
- I. on the cover of a book of fiction _____
- J. at Winchester Gallery _____
- K. in the UVic grad show _____
- L. as a fine art limited edition print _____
- M. other _____

Of the above choices, where would this image **most** likely appear?

#1 _____

#2 _____

#3 _____

APPENDIX B

Survey

Overview

Island Illustrator affiliates	98	Returned	57 (58%)
Other artists	<u>94</u>	Returned	<u>50 (53%)</u>
Total	192		107 (56%)

Island Illustrators affiliates are a little older and slightly more experienced than other artists surveyed, but the differences are slight enough that the groups may be compared without unreasonable imbalance.

Island Illustrators Participation

Full members	207
Associate members	74
Undeclared	<u>7</u>
Total	288
Contacted	98 (34%)
Returned	57 (58% of contacted; 20% of total 288)

Of the returned surveys the respondents were divided almost evenly between male (47.5%) and female (50.9%), with one person claiming “Neither”. The most common age group was 46-55 (36.8%) followed by 56-65 (29.8%). No one was younger than 25, and only one was older than 76. On average, Island Illustrators affiliates had 25.45 years of experience as professional visual artists.

Other Artists' Participation

Contacted	94
Returned	50 (53%)

Of the returned surveys the respondents were divided almost evenly between male (46.9%) and female (51%), with one person claiming “Other”. The most common age group was 46-55 (24%) followed by 35-45 (22%), 56-65 (18%) and 26-35 (12%). Two people were younger than 25, and two were older than 76. On average, artists had 22.48 years of experience as professional visual artists. They described themselves as painters most often, followed by mixed media artists (half as often as painters) and printmakers, conceptual artists, and designers (each a third as often as painters). There were lesser numbers of sculptors, multimedia, film and video artists, animators, potters and textile artists.

Further Breakdowns

Not all Island Illustrators affiliates are illustrators, and not all the other artists surveyed are primarily fine artists. In order to see trends more clearly on some questions, the surveys were also grouped into three categories based on what the respondents identified

themselves as: Fine Artist, Applied Artist, or Both. This was determined primarily by looking at what options people chose for Question 3, which asked the respondent what occupational titles they called themselves and how often. Although most Fine Artists and Applied Artists do both kinds, they were sorted firstly according to what they identified as, and secondly to what they do most of. For a respondent to get classified as Both, he or she had to show no easily discernible predilection for one kind of work over the other. In the tough cases, Questions 4, 10, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28 and 42 were consulted.

“Applied artists” are mostly illustrators, but include one architect, one window dresser, and about five graphic designers, where these individuals do these other applied arts more than illustration or fine art, and none exclusively do architecture, window dressing, or graphic design.

There were almost twice as many primarily Fine Artists (54) as there were Applied Artists (24), but if the Both artists (29) are added to the Applied Artists, then those who illustrate (or do other applied art) most or half of their time (53) almost exactly equal those who do not (54). On average, the Applied Artists had five or more years of experience than the Fine Artists, probably due to their higher average age.

	Experience In years	m	f	25- under	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	66-75	76- over	total
IIS	25.45	27	29	0	3	9	21	17	6	1	57
Not IIS	22.48	23	25	2	6	11	12	9	8	2	50
Applied	25.79	14	9	0	1	4	6	10	4	0	24
Fine	20.43	22	30	2	6	12	16	8	8	2	54
Both	29.42	14	14	0	2	4	11	9	2	1	29

Appendix B

Question 1: “This survey is ONLY to be filled out by those who are part-time or full-time ‘professional visual artists’. The definition of ‘professional visual artist’ is for you to decide. Please write your short definition here.”

Terms given are in words used by respondents	Non members			Members			TOTAL S
	FINE ARTISTS	APPLIED ARTISTS	BOTH	FINE ARTISTS	APPLIED ARTISTS	BOTH	
Makes some money	14		4	4	6	9	37
Spends time	8			1	3	4	16
Makes a living	5				2	4	11
Takes it seriously	2		1	1		4	8
Teaches, passes on knowledge	3			1	1	2	7
Has formal training	4					2	6
Shows	4				1	1	6
Obsessed/compelled	3			2			5
Ethical; obeys standards				1	2	2	5
Highly skilled	1			1		3	4
Recognition by peers	3						3
Keeps learning, improving	1			1		1	3
Self expresses	1				1	1	3
Has gallery representation				2			2
Has a body of work	1				1		2
Doesn't do anything else	1					1	2
Has published work				1	1		2
Belongs to art org.	1						1
Not a student	1						1
Can judge own work	1						1
Familiar with and makes contemporary art	1						1
In art related employment	1						1
Puts other income into art	1						1
Participates in art community	1						1
Makes art that benefits mankind	1						1
Paints	1						1
Unsure	1						1
Runs a business in art					1		1
Plays spiritual role						1	1
Has clients in graphics						1	1
Makes with intent to sell					1		1
Works for client's benefit					1		1

Appendix B

Question 5: “Circle one number in each and every row: Describe the kind of work you have *most often* made.”

This question is problematic because of the wide range of kinds of art an individual might make, and the subjectivity of deciding how “realistic, representational” etc it is. The purpose was to see whether illustrators described their art in terms related to illustrative approaches more than others did.

Circle one number per row:

A.	Abstract, nonobjective	0	1	2	3	4	Realistic, representational
B.	Disordered, vague,, loose, painterly	0	1	2	3	4	Precise, controlled, tight, linear
C.	Many possible meanings	0	1	2	3	4	Only one possible meaning
D.	No category of style, theme, genre	0	1	2	3	4	Familiar style, theme, genre
E.	Does not follow familiar traditions of colour theory, composition, etc	0	1	2	3	4	Follows familiar traditions of colour theory, composition, etc
F.	Has no narrative quality	0	1	2	3	4	Has narrative quality

Respondents who didn’t fill out the entire scale properly were omitted. All the circled numbers were added up then divided by the number of respondents to reach an average.

IIS Members: 17.45 out of 24

Non-members: 15.89 out of 24

Question 6: “Would you like to comment on the exercise in question 5?” was provided to solicit feedback on how well Question 5 could be answered.

There were 34 people who either complained about its shortcomings or augmented their answers with details.

Appendix B

Question 7: *“Please name any well-known artists whose work you like.”*

356 artists and schools were named. The most popular ones named by respondents (broken down into those primarily identifying as Fine Artists, Illustrators, or Both) are as follows. Where a group did not name the artist/school three or more times, the numbers have been omitted for clarity, while the most popular names of each group are in bold:

Name	Fine Artists	Applied Artists	Both	All respondents
“Group of Seven”		3	5	9
Rembrandt			5	8
Emily Carr	4			7
Paul Klee	3		4	7
Georgia O’Keefe			5	7
Tom Thomson			3	7
Vincent van Gogh	3			7
Gustav Klimt		4		6
Lucien Freud	3			6
EJ Hughes			3	6
Andrew Wyeth		3		6
John Singer Sargent			4	5
Maxwell Bates	3			5
Salvador Dali			3	5
David Hockney	3			5
Claude Monet	3			5
Pablo Picasso				5
Robert Rauschenberg	4			4
Francis Bacon	3			4
Paul Cezanne	3			4
Leonardo da Vinci			3	4
Edward Degas			3	4
“Impressionists”				4
Henri Matisse	3			4
Michelangelo				4
Arthur Rackham				4
Egon Schiele				4
Jean Miro	3			3
Joseph Plaskett	3			3
Winslow Homer				3
Robert Bateman				3
Caravaggio				3
Alex Colville				3
Richard Diebenkorn				3
Albrecht Durer				3
Giacometti				3
David Milne				3
Henry Moore				3
Paul Nash				3
Maxfield Parrish				3
Renoir				3
Phyllis Serota				3
Wayne Theiebaud				3
Waterhouse				3
Frank Lloyd Wright				3

Appendix B

Question 8: “Currently or in the past, what circumstances lead you to starting new art work?”

	All respondents		
	Fine	Applied	Both
Total number of replies	54	24	28
A. because you just have an idea that inspires you; for your own enjoyment with no thought to showing or selling (even if either later occurred)	47	17	24
B. because you intend eventually to show or sell – but with no prearranged agreement yet to show or sell it anywhere	43	15	20
C. because a proposal of yours has been accepted by a gallery/curator for a show, and the work does not yet exist or is not finished	19	5	9
D. because you solicited a commission to make an original work, where you approached the client first	12	7	5
E. because you were commissioned to make an original work, where the client approached you first	36	19	21
F. because you wish to make something specifically to enter into a competition	20	13	18
G. because an agency or employer asked you to do something for a client	16	16	13
H. because an employer asked you to do something in the course of your job (ie, the employer is the “client”)	14	12	15
I. Other	11	3	7

Question 9: “Of the boxes you selected above, which one best describes why you start work?”
(Some people gave more than one answer anyways, so totals below outnumber respondents)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Non-members	26	7	2	0	4	0	0	0	2
Members	20	12	1	1	5	0	0	2	2

Appendix B

Question 10: “Check all that apply: Have you at any time in your career ...”

	All respondents		
	Fine	Applied	Both
Total of respondents	54	24	29
A. submitted to a large trade show (participants sell similar kinds of items; often reproduced; variety among sellers is not an issue) where you had to pay to get a spot (may or may not have been juried; but where the fee is NOT a jury fee but buying a booth/table) (whether you were accepted does not matter)	10	6	8
B. submitted to a large art or craft show (participants sell unique items, usually handmade, and the organizers may attempt to have variety among sellers) (may or may not have been juried, usually involves a fee for a spot or for jurying) (whether you were accepted does not matter)	23	11	15
C. submitted to a large juried competition and/or show where prizes for best pieces were offered (whether you were accepted or won does not matter)	41	16	25
D. submitted to any other juried/curated group show in a gallery (whether you were accepted does not matter) or invited to be in one	44	12	26
E. submitted to or applied for a juried/curated solo show in a gallery; or were invited to have one	41	7	15
(Ei. if you have ever been successful in getting a solo show, check here)	27	6	12
F. submitted to an online gallery run by someone else (whether you were accepted does not matter)	13	6	7
G. organized a solo art show or sale for yourself in your home or studio	30	5	18
H. participated in any art show or sale that included your work, but NOT occurring in a gallery, your home or studio (like: outside, in a mall, in an academic conference, restaurant, doctor's office, etc)	36	17	25
I. organized a group or solo art show or sale that included your work, in an artistrun space (studio, gallery, etc) where you had a lot of independence and did most of the work and noone juried your work (ie no curator, no funding, no help)	31	10	18
J. Other	7	3	8

11. “Of the boxes you selected above, which **one** best describes how you *usually* show?”

	A	B	C	D	E	Ei	F	G	H	I	J
Non-members	0	1	3	8	10	1	0	5	2	7	0
Members	0	3	7	2	5	0	1	4	4	6	0

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Question 12: “Check all that apply: Have you at any time in your career ...

	All respondents		
	Fine	Applied	Both
Total of respondents	54	24	29
A. had a discussion with an agency or business <i>other</i> than a gallery about representing you for selling work you've already made, original or reproductions (regardless of outcome)	27	16	19
B. directly and personally approached a client, collector or buyer to sell them an original piece you have already made (no reproduction intended) (regardless of outcome)	23	9	10
C. directly and personally approached a client, collector or buyer to sell them an original piece that you already have made OR just the rights to it, for reproduction (regardless of outcome)	16	10	9
D. posted online a piece you have already made – original or reproductions or rights – for sale	20	10	11
E. donated work or artistic labour to a charity auction, raffle, or fundraiser for a good cause	46	22	24
F. entered work in a commercial auction house (where you yourself entered it for sale) (regardless of outcome)	3	0	1
G. traded art with other artists	43	12	20
H. traded your art or artistic labour for goods or services in lieu of cash	33	15	19
I. given it away	47	19	27
J. Other	6	1	2

Question 13: “Of the boxes you selected above, which **one** of the above is your most common way of distributing without showing?”

	A	B	C	D	E	Ei	F	G	H	I	J
Non members	7	5	1	1	8	1	2	4	2	4	1
Members	5	3	1	8	6	0	0	0	0	0	2

Appendix B

Question 14: “Have you at any time in your career...”

	All respondents		
	Fine	Applied	Both
Total of respondents	54	24	29
A. paid for advertising or an agent to promote your services or your work in print or online	18	9	15
B. been a guest speaker at a public or private meeting, event, conference, plenary, symposium, round table or similar function where you spoke about art	36	17	21
C. been interviewed about art by the media, news or a TV or radio show host	45	15	22
D. had a personal web site	32	11	14
E. had a review or article published about you and your art in a magazine, newspaper or online	47	18	25
F. had a book published with something in it about you or your art	25	9	13
G. served as a juror for a government granting body	12	1	3
H. served as a juror for a show, gallery or artists' organization	35	7	15
I. Other	11	3	2
J. none of the above	2	2	2

Question 15: “Of the boxes you selected above, which **one** of the above most commonly occurs for you?”

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	“all”
Non members	1	6	5	7	9	0	0	1	2	0	2
Members	2	4	3	13	5	1	1	1	4	1	

Appendix B

Question 16: “How do you calculate the base price of the art objects or services you currently *typically* sell? (Base price means before extras like copyrights or picture frames are added on).”

	All respondents		
	Fine	Applied	Both
Total of respondents	54	24	29
A. n/a; never get income from selling art objects or services (go to question 18)	-	-	-
B. the gallery/dealer/agent decides with little input from you	2	0	0
C. multiply an hourly/day rate by how long the piece took to make	9	3	1
D. copy what other comparable artists charge	16	10	6
E. add up the cost of materials and then tack a consistent percentage more	27	11	14
F. post a price but barter with individual buyers	8	2	4
G. set price according to how attached you are to the piece	7	2	3
H. go by a published trade price guide	17	10	10
I. start high; lower the price until it sells	2	4	3
J. post no prices; get buyer to make an offer first	2	1	1
K. set unique prices depending on buyer's circumstances	1	2	1
L. use auction prices of my own and other artists' work as a guide	10	5	1
M. can't explain/gut feeling/guess/	2	1	1
N. other**	16	10	9
O. By square inch/foot*	14	7	9

* This option was not included in the survey but so many people mentioned it that it was included in tabulations

** most people named some combination of the above choices

Question 17: “Of the boxes you selected above, which **ones** of the above most commonly occur for you?”

	Non-members	Members
Most Common	N – 10 C – 6 B – 5	N – 11 M – 8 D – 6 C – 4
Second most common	D – 9 E,G,K – 4	D – 6 C,G – 5 M – 4
Least common	F,G – 3	G – 5 D,I – 4

Appendix B

Question 18: “Thinking of times when you may have adjusted or created a piece in a way that someone else suggested would make it “better” (just as an experiment or otherwise), who was that person?”

	All respondents		
	Fine	Applied	Both
Total of respondents	54	24	29
A. gallery owner, dealer, or agency rep	4	1	5
B. critic	2	0	2
C. client, buyer, collector	14	9	8
D. mentor, or teacher you have studied with	31	9	14
E. an author in an instructional book	5	4	2
F. another artist (who isn't in any of the categories in A-E)	29	11	18
G. someone who is not an art professional but whose opinion you respect	24	11	9
H. other:	7	4	2

Question 19: “Of the people you selected above, whose opinion would you *normally* value the most? Write **one** letter here:”

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Non members	1	1	2	12	0	13	7	1
Members	3	0	2	13	0	10	7	2

Question 20: “Have you at any time in your career adjusted or created at least one piece in a way that previous sales have indicated will sell well?” Note: see Q. 31 for more info.

	Non-members (49 respondents)	Members (56 respondents)
Yes	22 (45%)	30 (54%)
No	15 (31%)	11 (20%)
Don't know	3 (6%)	4 (7%)

Question 21: “Circle a number: On the whole, do you feel your creativity is *controlled* or *supported* by galleries, buyers, clients, teachers and others?”

Controlled | 1 2 3 4 | Supported

	1	2	3	4
Non-members	1	2	18	16
Members	1	4.5	15.5	22

Appendix B

Question 22: “If you have ever done creative work for companies whose main product was **interactive or video games, animation (2D or 3D) or visual effects (except for film industry or theatre – see # 25)**, in all how much have you done for various employers?”

Non-members: 2 Members: 3

Question 23: “If you have ever done creative work for companies whose main product was **graphic or web design, prepress, sign painting, screen printing or related field (except for film industry or theatre – see # 25)**, in all how much have you done for various employers?”

Non-members: 26 Members: 63

Question 24: “If you have ever done creative work for companies whose main product was **interior design, window display, architecture, fashion design or related field (except for film industry or theatre – see # 25)**, in all how much have you done for various employers?”

Non-members: 13 Members: 23

Question 25: “If you have ever done creative work for companies whose main product was **for film industry or theatre** use, in all how much have you done for various employers?”

Non-members: 10 Members: 20

Question 26: “Have you ever worked for a gallery or an artist-run centre?”

	Non-members	Members
Total surveyed	50	57
A. n/a; go to next question	-	-
B. volunteered doing clerical, reception, security, docent or gallery sitting work	12	11
C. paid employee doing clerical, reception, security, docent or gallery sitting work	5	3
D. paid/volunteer researcher or curator	5	2
E. worked as upper management or senior curator	2	1
F. other	3	4

Appendix B

Question 27: “Have you ever taught lessons in visual arts in ... “

	All respondents		
	Fine	Applied	Both
Total of respondents	54	24	29
A. a degree program at an art school or university	18	1	2
B. an accredited, diploma-granting college or art school	10	1	8
C. in a continuing education program at a college or university	16	3	5
D. a private, unaccredited art school	17	5	8
E. a class operated by a gallery or art supply store	13	2	8
F. a community centre	19	4	10
G. a class operated by you in your studio or other location	22	5	13
H. as a private tutor or mentor to a client, or to an apprentice or coworker	24	6	16
I. have never taught	12	11	4

Appendix B

Question 28: “What sorts of work have you done for clients?”

	Non-members	Members
A. medical, scientific illustration	2	14
B. technical, instructional, industrial illustration	4	18
C. architectural rendering	5	20
D. fashion illustration	3	10
E. advertising illustration	9	26
F. product illustration	5	21
G. editorial illustration	2	21
H. political cartoon, caricature	1	14
I. other cartooning, comic book, graphic novel	3	16
J. animation: 3d or traditional	0	7
K. children's book illustration	3	21
L. mural	8	23
M. stencilwork, decorative art in interior design	3	12
N. portrait commission (depiction of specific people, or pets, houses, cars or other belongings of client)	11	29
O. commissioned art object – sculpture, painting, craft piece, etc; for display	11	24
P. other	9	9

Question 29: “Of the categories listed in #26, are there any that carry more cachet or prestige than the others? Write them here:”

	Non-members (42 respondents)	Members (57 respondents)
A	2	4
B	3	2
C	3	4
D	2	4
E	1	9
F	1	3
G	2	7
H	2	1
I	1	1
J	1	0
K	2	8
L	2	7
M	0	0
N	3	10
O	9	6
P	0	0
All		2
None		2

Most common picks are in bold.

Appendix B

Question 30 asked respondents to define “commercial art”.

Question 31 asked whether the respondent felt their work was commercial

Question 32 asked whether there is a difference between Fine Art and Illustration, and

Question 32a asked respondent to explain why.

(Percentages have been rounded)

	Total in sur- vey	Q. 30	Q. 31				Q. 32			
		Total who ans- wered	Total who ans- wered	Yes	No	Partly	Total who ans- wered	Yes	No	Unsure
IIS	57	56	57	15 (26%)	20 (35%)	22 (39%)	57	36 (63%)	12 (21%)	9 (16%)
Non- IIS	50	42	50	5 (10%)	27 (54%)	18 (36%)	47	32 (68%)	5 (11%)	9 (19%)
Ap- plied Artists	24	22	24	11 (49%)	4 (17%)	9 (38%)	24	14 (58%)	5 (21%)	5 (21%)
Fine Artists	54	49	54	5 (9%)	31 (57%)	18 (33%)	49	37 (76%)	4 (8%)	8 (16%)
Both	29	27	29	4 (14%)	10 (34%)	15 (52%)	29	16 (55%)	6 (21%)	7 (24%)
IIS							Q 32a			
Non- IIS							53			
							39			
Ap- plied Artists							19			
Fine Artists							46			
Both							27			

Appendix B Question 30: “What is your definition of commercial art”?

Definitions:	Non-members			Members			
(Terms listed here are words respondents used)	FINE ARTISTS	APPLIED ARTISTS	BOTH	FINE ARTISTS	APPLIED ARTISTS	BOTH	total
Sells/advertises	8	2	1	2	5	12	30
For clients, commissioned	7			4	3	6	20
Client directed	5		1	6	1	2	15
Any kind of art sold	4				3	1	8
For profit	6					1	7
Artist is paid					5	2	7
Graphic art/design	1				1	2	4
Any art made to sell	3						3
Client specs subject	3						3
Mass produced	1					2	3
Restricted	1			1		1	3
For others, not self	2						2
Unsure	1					1	2
Concept is secondary to Selling	1						1
For reproduction	1			1			2
Obsolete term					1	1	2
Visual art that sells other than itself					2		2
Limited imagination	1						1
Made in an office	1						1
Mechanical/digital; not handmade	1						1
Blends in	1						1
Some else's idea	1						1
To profit others	1						1
Bad art that sells			1				1
For display				1			1
Text-based				1			1
For social purpose				1			1
Communicates					1		1
Decorates product					1		1
For market					1		1
Visual art that promotes					1		1
Art pieces that sell to masses						1	1
Ephemeral						1	1
Illustrative						1	1
Less imaginative/ creative than illus or graphic design						1	1

Appendix B

Question 32: “To you, is there a difference between ‘fine art’ and ‘illustration’?”

Question 32a: “If yes, what is it? If no, why not?”

	Nonmembers			Members		
	FINE	APPLIED	BOTH	FINE	APPLIED	BOTH
Illustration and Art are both...						
Overlapping	4			5	5	11
Same	1	1		2	4	3
Illustration is....						
Client directed	2			2		1
Client assigned					1	
Money driven	1					
Decorative	1					
Debateable	1					
Depends on quality	1					
Didactic	1				1	
Describes					1	
Explains	3					
For client, commissioned	4				1	2
For others, not self	3					1
Illustrates	3					
For a purpose				1		
Graphic art	1					
Is Commercial						2
Literal	1					
Made by a graphic artist	1					
Has message/communicates	2			1	2	2
Narrative	1			1	1	
Market driven				1		
Has no artistic license	1					
Not fine art	1				1	
Not new; not innovative; unoriginal	1					
Is propaganda	1				1	
Non-decorative						1
Reveals all	1			2		
Restricted				1	1	2
Sells, advertises	1		1			
Serves goods and services	1					
For social purpose				1		1
Is subordinate/secondary to text	2					
Suited for reproduction	1					
Subject over form						1
Is two-dimensional					1	
Requires more skill						1
Takes longer to do					1	
Text-based	2		1	4	2	4
Tight, accurate	1					
Ephemeral			1			1
does not generate new knowledge				1		

Continued...

Continued from previous page, Q. 32a	Nonmembers			Members		
	FINE	APPLIED	BOTH	FINE	APPLIED	BOTH
Fine Art is...						
aesthetic exploration					1	
art for arts sake	3			2		1
artist controls all				1		
artist's charisma more imp. than the art						1
artist's choice					1	
artist's inspiration	3					3
artist's needs	3			2		2
artist's transaction w subject						1
can be 3d					1	
complete in itself			1			
debateable	1					
decorative						1
depends on quality	1					
freestyle						1
hides something	1			1		
illustrates art					1	
lasting					1	1
meaningless term	1					
more creative						1
newness; innovation; originality	1					
no restrictions				1	1	2
not cartoons						2
not illustration	2					
not necessarily literal					3	
not too client directed				1		
plastic effects	1					
questions	1					
repetitive						1
self expression					1	1
spontaneous					1	
unique	1					
Unsure			1			

In explaining the difference between fine art and illustration, Fine Artists acknowledged that there was some kind of overlap or that they were the same ten times (22%), Applied Artists eight times (42%), and Boths fourteen times (52%). Island Illustrators mentioned overlap or sameness thirty-seven times (70%) and non-members six times (15%).

Appendix B

Question 31 and Question 20 were compared.

Of those who claimed in Q. 31 that their work was (or was not) commercial, how many also said in Q. 20 they have (or have not) made or adjusted a piece of their art to make it more saleable?

Q 31	Said work <u>was not</u> commercial				Said work <u>was</u> commercial				Said work <u>was part</u> commercial			
Q 20	To-tal	Y	N	DK	To-tal	Y	N	DK	To-tal	Y	N	DK
IIS	19	11 (58%)	5 (26%)	3 (16%)	15	10 (67%)	4 (27%)	1 (7%)	22	18 (82%)	3 (14%)	1 (5%)
Non-IIS	26	11 (42%)	14 (54%)	1 (4%)	4	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	19	13 (68%)	3 (16%)	3 (16%)
Com-bined	45	22 (49%)	19 (42%)	4 (9%)	19	12 (63%)	5 (26%)	2 (11%)	41	31 (76%)	6 (15%)	4 (10%)

Q 31		Commercial & part commercial from above combined			
Q 20		To-tal	Y	N	DK
IIS		37	28 (76%)	7 (19%)	2 (5%)
Non-IIS		23	15 (65%)	4 (17%)	4 (17%)
Com-bined		60	43 (72%)	11 (18%)	6 (10%)

Y = Yes, has made/adjusted art in a way that previous sales have indicated will sell well. N = No DK = Don't Know

Question 33: "Have you ever felt penalized or criticized for making illustrative, commercial, popularly saleable or traditional work by any of the following?"

This question was omitted from the study because the design of the answer-schema was ineffective. However, it is apparent all kinds of artists *have* felt penalized or criticized by dealers, government granting agencies, critics, buyers, others artists, the public or themselves for the kind of work they make, whatever it may be.

Question 34: "Is it a boon or a detriment to have a style or kind of artwork that your name becomes identified with? Please write a short answer here. "

Q. 34					
	Total in survey	Total who answered	Yes	No	Both yes and no
IIS	57	52	28 (54%)	6 (12%)	18 (35%)
Non-IIS	50	39	21 (54%)	2 (5%)	18 (46%)

Appendix B

Question 34: “Please list any organization, guild, society, club or informal collective of artists that you have ever been associated with or held membership in. (eg, “Group of Seven” or “Graphic Artists Guild”)”

- data from this question was not used

Question 35: “The nonprofit Island Illustrators Society has provided support for artists in Victoria since 1986. This research project is analyzing the impact and effectiveness of this society. Please check if you have ever...”

	Non-members	Members
A. heard of the Island Illustrator Society	39	
B. read the newsletter <i>Illustrator</i>	21	
C. attended a group show of the Society	17	
D. attended a Society meeting	7	
E. been a member		57
F. been a guest speaker at a meeting	6	28
G. n/a; have never heard of this group	11	

Question 36: As far as you know, what kind of art and artist does the Island Illustrator Society support?

Terms below are in words used by respondents	Non-members	Members
Illustrators / illustration	12	19
All	2	18
Fine artists	2	14
Commercial art	4	9
Emerging/amateur/ new/ hobby	2	6
Professionals/ Established	1	6
Representational	4	1
Visual artists/art	1	3
Variety		3
Unsure	2	2
Graphic designers	2	1
Published artists		2
Any artist interested in art/artists		2
Those who need to learn business practices/ethics		2
Painting	2	
Graphic art	2	
Calligraphers	1	1

Realistic	1	
Traditional	1	
Eclectic	1	
Animation	1	
Trade	1	
Cartoonists	1	
Fine artists' commercial services	1	
Drawing	1	
Each other	1	
Etching	1	
Watercolour	1	
People who want to be (but are not) book illustrators	1	
Decorative	1	
Artists who benefit from learning about experiences and success of others	1	
Typographers	1	
Photographers	1	
most kinds for commerce	1	
Art verging on commercial/saleable		1
2D art for reproduction		1
Broad		1
Higher standard than art clubs		1
That which can be used in print		1
Artists interested in variety of expression		1
Middle class		1
Artists who produce for galleries		1
"both"		1
Craft guild		1
Creative art		1
Serious and dedicated		1
Wide expression and media		1
Unknown		1

Question 38 and 39, age and sex, are discussed in the survey Overview at the start of Appendix B.

Appendix B

Question 40: “Circle a number for each row. How do you compare to the popular stereotype of an artist?”

sample of how respondents showed answers:

	Not like you				Like you
A. Poor	1	2	3	4	5

To score it, the quantities of each number chosen above were multiplied, then all the results from each row were added together. E.g., if there were two 1’s and two 2’s, and none for the other numbers, the total would be six.

Higher percentages mean greater agreement with the stereotype:

	Non-members	Members
<i>Total who answered in full only</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>51</i>
<i>Total highest possible score for each</i>	<i>205</i>	<i>255</i>
A. Poor	112 (55%)	113 (44%)
B. Live in unconventional housing	96 (47%)	89 (35%)
C. Have unusual clothing, hairstyles	83 (40%)	93 (36%)
D. Imbibe drugs or large amounts of alcohol	60 (29%)	78 (31%)
E. Work at unusual hours or sporadically	127 (62%)	159 (62%)
F. Dislike rules, conventional etiquette	125 (61%)	139 (55%)
G. Politically left-leaning	143 (70%)	166 (65%)
H. Prone to depression, strong emotions*	111 (54%)	128 (50%)
I. Aloof, antisocial, awkward	87 (42%)	108 (42%)
J. Unbusinesslike; bad at keeping affairs in order	100 (49%)	120 (47%)
totals	1044	1193

*H is double-barreled and so answers are uncertain

Since there were ten questions worth up to five points each, a person who fit the stereotype perfectly would get a score of 50. The average score for non-members is 25.45/50; for members it is 23.39/50.

Differences are slight, but on the whole members are more conservative than non-members politically and in lifestyle, and are slightly better off financially.

Question 41: “What formal accreditation do you hold?”

	Certificate	Diploma	BFA	MFA	Other	None
Non-members	1	9	11	10	13	7
Members	3	20	11	0	14	9

Appendix B

Question 42: “Over the last five years, about what percentage of your annual income was from each of...”

Numbers indicate total number of people reporting that particular percentage of their income as coming from the source indicated. Results are very approximate, since not everyone filled out the chart correctly so that 100% of their income was accounted for.

NM = Non-members

M = Members

	1-20%		21-40%		41-60%		61-80%		81-100%	
	NM	M	NM	M	NM	M	NM	M	NM	M
A. selling your original art pieces – uncommissioned works	19	22	4	6	1	3	6	5	4	2
B. selling your original art pieces - commissioned works	23	20	3	1	1	3	1	1	-	4
C. selling your art, commissioned or uncommissioned – but copyrights only, not the original object	8	15	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	1
D. selling mechanical, digital (offset, computer prints) reproductions of an original art object	4	14	1	3	-	3	-	-	-	-
E. selling handmade (casts, etchings, silk-screens, darkroom photo) reproductions that could be considered original art objects	5	6	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
F. teaching art	9	16	3	5	3	2	5	-	4	1
G. working in an art-related employment situation but not as a creator	3	2	-	1	-	1	3	3	2	2
H. working in an artistic employment situation using creative expertise	10	5	-	1	-	2	1	2	3	3
I. CARFAC or other artist fees for showing	18	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
J. grants for making art or studying art/artists	8	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
K. prize money from art competition	5	8	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-
L. scholarships for making art or studying art/artists	3	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
M. non-visual art related sources	1	4	4	-	-	3	5	1	6	3
N. other	1	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	4	1

The most obvious conclusions are that non-members make more of their income from teaching and non-art day jobs, and members do slightly better selling commissioned work and copyrights. Non-members get more grants, but members get more prize money.

APPENDIX C

Numbers of creative professionals listed in Victoria telephone books and B.C. Directories

	Artists fine	Artists comm	Gr des	Ad agen cies		Cross listed fine/ comm	Cross listed ad ag ency/ comm	Cross listed Ag ency/ fine	Cross listed gr des/ comm	Cross listed gr des/ ad ag ency	Cross listed Gr des/ comm./ agency	Totals
1891	1 art dealer		*									1
1893	1			1								3
1895	2			1								2
1899	9			1								10
1902	2											2
1908	2			2								4
1909	2			1								3
1910	9			2								11
1912	3			3								6
1913	5	1		7								13
1914	3	2		5								10
1915	3	3		2								8
1918	3			2								5
1921	6			3								9
1923	11	1		2								14
1924	9	1		2								12
1925	7	1		5								13
1928	4	2		4								10
1929	4	3		4								11
1930	2	4		3								9
1933	3	5		2								10
1934	3	3		1								7
1935	0											0
1936												0
1937	0	0										0
1938	1	1				1						1
1939	1	2				1						2
1940	1	2				1						2
1942	1	2				1						2
1943	1	2				1						2
1945	1	4		1		1						5
1947	1	2		3		1						5
1948	4	4		4		1						11
1949	3	4		6			1					12
1950	3	3		2								8
1952	0	3		4			1					6
1954	1	1		7			1					8
1961	5	*		3				1				7
1965	2			4								6
1969	6			5				1				10
1973	6			1	8			2				13
1975	12			2	12			2			1	23
1976	4	9	1	12			2			1	25	
1978	2	9	8	16			1		1	2	31	
1980	4	16	9	19			2		3	3	2	38
1983	2	13	17	20			1		4	2	3	42
1990	4	18	37	23		(not tabulated)						
2000	17	8	67	25		(not tabulated)						
2005	6	5	71	24					2	12	1	91
*Categoryv eliminated Note: there were no X-listings for “Gr des/fine art”												

APPENDIX D

Interview Questions

The following is a general list of all the themes I asked all the interviewees about. Not all themes were discussed with all respondents.

Biographical

Where were you born?

How long have you been in Victoria and why did you move here?

Schooling

How have you been trained?

Who was your high school art teacher? (if local)

What was the atmosphere at art school?

What was the relationship between fine and applied artists?

Work

Who have you worked for?

Where have you taught?

What kind of courses does your school offer? What is its focus?

What kinds of art do you make?

Victoria's Art Scene

If you were to describe Victoria's artistic climate to someone who has never been here in one or two words, what would it be?

Does the name Alan Gowans ring a bell?

Does the name Allan Edwards ring a bell?

Do you ever go see shows at ____ (a venue they haven't named)

Art

What do you think of conceptual art/illustration?

Is there any kind of art you don't think is actually art?

Are limited edition reproductions art?

What, to you, is the difference between fine art and illustration?

Island Illustrators

What do you recall of how the group began?

What was its intention then?

Why did you leave the group?

How is it different from the FCA?

What made II special?

APPENDIX E

Island Illustrators Society Membership 1987-1996

Guest Speakers are given associate memberships for one year, so not all associate members may be considered active members. Records prior to 1987 have not been located and may not exist.

1. Abwren Hostler	Associate	39. Campbell Jill	Full
2. Adams Bill	Full	40. Campbell Ken	Full
3. Alcock-White Amelia	Full	41. Capik Peggy	Full
4. Amisson Kathryn	Associate	42. Carberry Laura	Full
5. Andrews Mavis	Full	43. Chamberlain Blake	Full
6. Angus Jocelyn	Full	44. Churcher Dar	Full
7. Painted Words	Full	45. Churcher Iris	Full
8. Ashworth Jann	Full	46. Coger Carl	Life
9. Baker Lynn	Full	47. Conroy Rick	Full
10. Bakken Pye Eleanor	Associate	48. Cook Bill	Full
11. Barber Jerry C.	Associate	49. Corman Hope	Full
12. Bartlett Bill	Full	50. Costaz Alain	Associate
13. Barton Nixie	Full	51. Crapnell Victor J.	Full
14. Bashaw Daniel	Associate	52. Cravens Paula	Associate
15. Bassett-Price Theresa	Full	53. Crovet Brian V.	Full
16. Bateman Robert	Associate	54. Crovet Joanne M.	Full
17. Beckner Janine	Full	55. Dall Lorna	Associate
18. Bennett Paul	Full	56. Danesin Lisa	Full
19. Ben-Oliel Margitta	Full	57. Davis Craig	Full
20. Bernier Nicole	Associate	58. De Roos Karan	Full
21. Birke Hanns	Full	59. Dendy John Oliver	Associate
22. Blair Bill	Associate	60. Devine Heather	Associate
23. Bocking Diane	Full	61. Dewey Nelson	Full
24. Bohemier Josephine	Associate	62. Didrikson Locke Sandra	Associate
25. Bolt Gary	Associate	63. Docherty Bending April	Full
26. Bosson Vic	Life	64. Dockerill Jan M'ghee	Full
27. Bridge Kathryn	Associate	65. Doruyter Karel	Full
28. Bridgeman Kristi	Full	66. Driscoll Brent	Full
29. Brodie Allison	Full	67. Duncan Stuart	Full
30. Brodie Michael	Associate	68. Dunlop Beth	Full
31. Brooks Richard	Associate	69. Dunlop Susan	Full
32. Brown Heather	Full	70. Fergusson Susan	Full
33. Budreau Mairi	Full	71. Finlayson Ian	Full
34. Burford Della	Full	72. Finnen Ron	Full
35. Butler Helen R. H.	Full	73. Fleischeuer Karin	Full
36. Buttner Laura	Associate	74. Fong Chun	Full
37. Buzzard Garth	Full	75. Fowler Sandra	Full
38. Campbell Adrienne	Associate	76. Frank Peg	Student Application

77. Franklin Richard	Full	122. Isaac Patrick	Full
78. Friesen Gordon	Full	123. Iwasko Za	Full
79. Friesen Jenus	Full	124. Jackson Filu	Full
80. Fuller Grant	Full	125. Janse Willem	Full
81. Gale Dee	Full	126. Johnston Joan	Associate
82. Gatt Elizabeth	Full	127. Johnston Sharen	Associate
83. Gatt Malcolm	Full	128. Kearney Lorna	Full
84. George Lex	Associate	129. Kergin Steve	Full
85. German Ana	Full	130. Khulana Irene	Associate
86. Gibbs Krystyna	Full	131. Kingham Lynn	Full
87. Gillmore Karen	Full	132. Klahm Roland	Full
88. Glover Greg	Full	133. Klambauer Peter J.	Associate
89. Goatley David	Full	134. Korven Cathy	Full
90. Gordon-Findlay Lynn	Full	135. Kuipers Jeff	Full
91. Green Doreen	Full	136. Kwan Clement	Full
92. Grist Richelle	Full	137. Lake Faye	Full
93. Grove George	Full	138. Lambert Matthew	Associate
94. Grove Jaleen	Full	139. Lang Olga	Full
95. Guest Graydon	Full	140. Lawrence Corinna J	Full
96. Haider Matt	Associate	141. Lawrence Maria M	Full
97. Harkley Nadine	Full	142. Leeuw Margaret	Associate
98. Harper Les	Full	143. Leger Margaret	Full
99. Harrison Ted	Associate	144. Leier Grant	Full
100. Hart Patricia	Full	145. Barton Nixie	Full
101. Hathaway Margaret	Associate	146. Letain Ed	Associate
102. Hatherly Joanne	Full	147. Lewis Frank	Full
103. Haynes June	Associate	148. Leudke Brandon	Associate
104. Heine Caren	Full	149. Ley Gillian	Full
105. Heine Mark	Associate	150. Lightburn Ron	Full
106. Herbison Noah	Full	151. Linney Verna	Associate
107. Herriot Robb Beverly	Full	152. Lockhart Dwight	Full
108. Hescox Richard	Associate	153. Lopatecki Margaret	Full
109. Heslop Linda	Full	154. Love Lorraine Y.	Full
110. Hilgemann Judy	Associate	155. Lucas Diane	Full
111. Hiscock Keith	Associate	156. Lynch Kathleen R.	Full
112. Hodgson Stanley	Full	157. Macgillivray Carla	Full
113. Hoelsing Larry	Associate	158. Macintosh James	Full
114. Holms John	Full	159. Maclock Colin	Full
115. Holt Mike	Full	160. Macphail Miriam	Full
116. Honeycombe Lori	Full	161. Mah Anna	Full
117. Hume, Ellen	Full	162. Malczewski Andrew	Associate
118. Humphrey Karen	Full	163. Maloney Paula C.	Full
119. Hunt Shannon	Associate	164. Maltby Jeff	Full
120. Hutchings Dixie Jayne	Full	165. Markovich G.D.	Associate
121. Irvine Wendy	Full	166. Marrison Mick	Full

167. Martin Bates Pat	Associate	212. Rapson Bridie	Full
168. Masters Thomas	Full	213. Rausch Gudrun	Full
169. Mc Allister Ken	Associate	214. Recinos-Drago Randall	Full
170. McBride Cheryl (Cyr)	Full	215. Rees Michael	Full
171. McCallum Stephen	Full	216. Regnerus Trudy	Full
172. McCarrol Ingrid	Associate	217. Richer Bill	Full
173. McCooey Mary Ann	Full	218. Ritchie Dawn	Associate
174. McConnell Kim	Full	219. Roberts Christine	Full
175. McDonald Scott	Full	220. Ruhland Ramona	Associate
176. McKellar Kyla	Associate	221. Saunders Judith	Full
177. Mckenzie E. Ann	Associate	222. Saunders Michelle	Full
178. Mckenzie Myles	Full	223. Schneider Bruce	Associate
179. Meinke Stephanie	Full	224. Schneider Roy	Full
180. Meredith Dalia	Full	225. Scholes Graham	Full
181. Merx Terrance	Full	226. Schutz Karl	Associate
182. Milne Brenda	Full	227. Scobie Mary A.	Full
183. Milne Jessica	Full	228. Scott Susan	Full
184. Minaker Dennis	Associate	229. Segal Nathan	Associate
185. Mitchell Barbara	Full	230. Semenoff Marcia	Full
186. Mitchell Jackson	Full	231. Semple Frances	Associate
187. Mitchell Sherry	Full	232. Serota Phyllis	Full
188. Morrison Sophia	Full	233. Seton Kirk C.	Full
189. Mullaly Glen	Full	234. Seymour Brian	Full
190. Nahser Mike	Full	235. Shostak Peter	Associate
191. Newans Cynthia	Full	236. Shumka Natalie	Full
192. Nienaber-Roberts Chrissie	Full	237. Silverson Ane	Full
193. Norwich-Young Dorset	Associate	238. Simpson Vern	Associate
194. O'Kane Linda	Associate	239. Singleton Clare	Full
195. O'Neill Maureen	Full	240. Smallfry Virginia	Full
196. Oram David	Full	241. Smith Charles	Full
197. Page Wendy	Full	242. Smith David	Full
198. Paranich Della	Full	243. Smith Kathy	Full
199. Parker Ron	Associate	244. Smith Terry	Full
200. Pashuk Lauren G	Full	245. Soames Marilyn	Full
201. Pavesic Sergei	Full	246. St. Arnaud Raymond	Full
202. Pearce John	Associate	247. Stacy Marcia	Full
203. Pearson Imke	Full	248. Stacy Ron	Full
204. Perrin Sharon E.	Associate	249. Steacy Joan	Full
205. Phillips Rory	Full	250. Steacy Ken	Full
206. Pickering Shirley	Full	251. Stephenson Irene M.	Associate
207. Poole Marjorie Claire	Full	252. Stevenson Marla	Full
208. Pratt Andrew	Full	253. Stuart Duncan	Full
209. Prazma Jay	Full	254. Stuef Kristine	Full
210. Pye Eleanor	Associate	255. Stusek Christine	Full
211. Questo, Silk	Associate	256. Sundby Nina	Associate

257. Sunderland Terry	Associate
258. Sutter Bruno F.	Associate
259. Tames Diane	Full
260. Taylor Susan	Full
261. Tessaro Chris	Full
262. Thomson Joanne	Full
263. Thorn Anthony	Full
264. Tyrrell Bob	Full
265. Ueberschar Frank H.	Associate
266. Uldall-Ekman Karen	Full
267. Vakil Haren	Full
268. Van Eyk Kristine	Full
269. Verna Linney	Associate
270. Vernon Allegra	Full
271. Vickery Rob	Full
272. Visser Tineke	Full
273. Vogt Raymond R.	Associate
274. Von Getz Karl	Full
275. Walker Judith	Full
276. Walsh Rand	Full
277. Walz Mclane Barbara	Associate
278. Ward Marney J.	Full
279. Watson Claire	Full
280. Watson Marlene	Full
281. Weaver-Bosson Barbara	Life
282. Wein Richard G.	Associate
283. Weinhandl Bruce W.	Full
284. Weller Duncan	Full
285. Wheeler Matthew	Full
286. White Carl	Full
287. White Jeremie	Associate
288. White Terese	Full
289. Willson Ron	Full
290. Wilson Gitte	Full
291. Wing Dorothy	Full
292. Wispinski Jim	Full
293. Wolfe Linda L.	Full
294. Wooder Jane	Full
295. Woods Tory	Full
296. Wright Jimmy	Full
297. Wynne-Boutilier Bryony	Full
298. Zimmermann Corinna	Full

APPENDIX F

Limner Society Membership, 1971-2006

Many members have passed on, and some may not have current membership.

Bates, Maxwell
Bates, Patricia Martin
Ciccimarra, Richard
De Castro, Bob
Dexter, Walter
Forrest, Nita
Graham, Colin
Grove, Helga
Grove, Jan
Jenson, Leroy
Lavdovsky, Alexander
Mayhew, Elsa
Pavelic, Myfanwy Spencer
Sabiston, Carole
Siebner, Herbert
Skelton, Robin
Skelton, Sylvia
Spreitz, Karl
Wilkinson, Jack

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