INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

Bell & Howell Information and Learning
300 North Zeib Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

UMI®
THE BUREAUCRATIZATION OF CREATIVITY:
THE BRITISH ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT AND ITS IMPACT
ON ONTARIO EDUCATION, 1880-1940

by

Euthalia Lisa Panayotidis

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Euthalia Lisa Panayotidis 1997

Doctor of Philosophy 1997
The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L’auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L’auteur conserve la propriété du droit d’auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.
The Bureaucratization of Creativity: The British Arts and Crafts Movement and its Impact on Ontario Education, 1880-1940

Doctor of Philosophy, 1997
Euthalia Lisa Panayotidis
Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education, University of Toronto

This thesis focuses on the cultural influences undergirding the construction and development of technical education in Ontario between 1880 and 1940. Specifically, it examines the ways in which the British Arts and Crafts Movement’s social-aesthetic philosophies and practices were embraced by English-Canadian technical education advocates. Arts and Crafts ideas were adopted in large part to fight the encroaching dehumanization of industrialization and urbanization. This groundswell of discontent within the tightly-woven aesthetic communities of British-born and Anglo-phile patriots across Canada was expressed in an on-going critique of contemporary Art and design. Adherents strove to construct a classed, racialized, and gendered moral rhetoric which represented technical education as an “noble artisanal calling.” In the wake of societal, industrial, and urban transformation and the decline of the apprenticeship system, the new technical worker became an important part of Canada’s economic policy, and according to Arts and Crafts advocates, the resurrected artisan of old. Artisanal procedures and production became defining features of the technical education rhetoric and curriculum.

As a case study this dissertation examines the Art Department at Central Technical School (CTS) in Toronto, in particular its artist-teachers, curriculum, mandate, and its dynamic relationship to educational, business, and cultural communities. Fundamental issues arise, such as the nature of artistic production in Ontario schools, the cultural and
educational impact of “Art” on national identity, and the capacity of individuals and
groups to impose and redefine intellectual premises and educational structures at critical
historical junctures. Within this broader context, the thesis focuses on a series of
incidents involving artist-teacher Peter Haworth of CTS’s Art Department where many
of these issues came to a head in 1931 and percolated for a generation thereafter.
Haworth was charged by local stained glass companies with unfair business practices for
allegedly using student assistants, school supplies, and taxpayers’ property to undertake
his own, private artistic commissions. Of particular importance is the role of the Toronto
Board of Education in negotiating with these contradictory educational visions.
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the members of my thesis committee: Dr. Keith MacLeod, Dr. Cecilia Morgan, Dr. R. J. Silver, Dr. Harold M. Troper, and Dr. Roger Hall for their helpful and informed suggestions on various aspects of my thesis. I wish particularly to thank my thesis supervisor Dr. David Levine for his vigilant support of my work while at OISE and for his always sage and judicious counsel on professional academic matters. His breadth of knowledge and dedication to scholarship has been a model to which I can only hope to emulate.

I wish to thank Paul Banfield and the staff of the Queen's University Archives in Kingston, Ontario for their kind and prompt attention both in person and through repeated communications on e-mail and by telephone. Their genial good humour made a winter research trip both productive and enjoyable. I also extend my thanks to the estate of Peter and Bobs Haworth who allowed me access to Peter's existing stained glass cartoons and paintings and who reaffirmed my belief that Peter and Bobs were fascinating individuals. I would also like to thank Mavor Moore and the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto for allowing me to quote from the James Mavor Papers. Harold Averill and the staff of the University of Toronto Archives always provided sound suggestions and good company on many occasions.

I am also grateful to a host of people who were kind enough to allow me to read their unpublished works, who sent on fruitful references, and who made thoughtful insights into a particular line of thought. Many thanks to Bill Bruneau at the University of British Columbia, Sara Burke, Susan Gelman, Heather Haskins, Cathy James, Alison King, David
Latham at York University, Phillip McCann of Memorial University, Sandra Mitchell, Alison Prentice, Nicola Spasoff, Malcolm Thurlby at York University, and Ian Winchester at the University of Calgary. Many thanks remain to be made in private to all those friends and colleagues, and to Lance and family who suffered my messianic informal on-the-spot lectures on my current research. I was the one who learned from those experiences. Much of the research for my dissertation was made possible by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada doctoral fellowship, an Ontario Graduate Scholarship, and a series of Graduate Assistantships at OISE.

Lastly I want to thank my parents Andreas and Stavroula Panayotidis and my parents-in-law John and Mary Stortz for their unfailing support, penetrating commentary on various stages of my research, and constant interest in my work. I owe my husband Paul Stortz my inestimable gratitude. His provocative questioning has sharpened my sense of analysis and argument and challenged me to value clarity over obscurity in all aspects of my rhetoric. He has been my harshest critic and my most stanch supporter. I am particularly thankful for his support over this past summer where he cheerfully put aside his own doctoral obligations (and a few buffet curry lunches) to allow me to work on my thesis full time. This thesis is dedicated to him.
# Table of Contents

Abstract ................................................................................................................................. ii  
Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................... iv 
Table of Contents ............................................................................................................... vi  
List of Figures ....................................................................................................................... viii 
List of Appendices ............................................................................................................... ix  
List of Abbreviations ......................................................................................................... x  
Prologue ............................................................................................................................... xi

## Chapters

1. Introduction ....................................................................................................................... 1  
   - On the "Honest and Honourable life" .............................................................................. 1  
   - The Arts and Crafts Movement .................................................................................... 7  
   - The History of the Arts and Crafts Movement in Canada: Addressing Problems of  
     Definition, Methodology and Sources ....................................................................... 16

2. The Social-Aesthetic Origins of the English Arts and Crafts Movement ............. 31  
   - "A Crusade Against the Age" ....................................................................................... 33  
   - The "True Christian Architecture" of A.W.N. Pugin .................................................. 36  
   - Utilitarian Principles: Henry Cole and Design Reform at Mid-Century ................. 42  
   - The Politics of Education and Art: Training the Designer ....................................... 47  
   - The Moral-Aesthetic Approach of John Ruskin's "Joy in Labour" ........................... 50

3. Fellowship is Life: William Morris and the Formation and Institutionalization of the  
   Arts and Crafts Movement ......................................................................................... 58  
   - Morris' Early Life ........................................................................................................ 60  
   - "Fellowship is Life": The Oxford Years ....................................................................... 61  
   - The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the Palace of Art ......................................... 62  
   - The Medieval Guild Resurrected: The Establishment of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and  
     Co .................................................................................................................................. 69  
   - Politics and Architecture: Morris in the 1870s ......................................................... 71  
   - Morris' Conversion to Socialism: Integrating Art, Socialism, and Education .......... 76  
   - The Arts and Crafts Guilds: The Institutionalization of the Movement ................... 82

4. The Emergence of Arts and Crafts Ideas in Ontario ............................................... 86  
   - Art Critic and Professor of Aesthetics: Oscar Wilde's Canadian Tour ...................... 93  
   - "What Art Should We Devote Ourselves in this Country?": Wilde's Lectures .......... 96  
   - The "Decorating Craze" in Canada and its American Connections ........................... 101
Table of Contents (continued)

In Defence of the "True and the Beautiful": The Women's Art Association of Canada................................................................. 104
Marginalization of the WAAC: Re-Empowering the Amateur................. 107

5. "Against the Commercialism and Crudity of the Age": Disseminating the Ideal...... 111
   James Mavor's Contribution to the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement............. 114
   Socialism, Art, and William Morris: Mavor's Arts and Crafts Connections........... 118
   Toronto's Arts and Crafts Communities................................................................. 122
   Mavor's Remembrances of Morris................................................................. 124
   Academic Musings on William Morris and Plato at the University of Toronto..... 131
   Mixing Company: J.C. Robertson (1864-1956)..................................................... 134

6. Art in Education........................................................................................................ 142
   Historiographical Problems.................................................................................. 144
   The Institutional Development of Technical Education in Ontario................... 147
   The Ontario Educational Association: "The Interchange of Ideas and Kindly Intercourse"................................................................. 151
   Re-defining the National Landscape of Work and Society: Training, Morality, and the Responsibilities of Citizenship.......................... 153
   William Morris: Poet, Artist, and Social Reformer at the OEA.......................... 157

7. Conclusion................................................................................................................. 171
   The Hiring at Toronto......................................................................................... 174
   The Early Formation of the Art Department....................................................... 178
   Peter Haworth: Artist, Teacher, and Stained Glass Craftsman........................ 179
   Controversy at Central Technical School, 1931: The First Incident................. 190
   1939: The Recurring Complaint........................................................................ 196

Appendices
   Appendix A: Prospectus for Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co. (1861)............ 209
   Appendix B: Peter Haworth's Stained Glass Commissions, 1921-1968............... 210

Select Bibliography.................................................................................................. 213
List of Figures

Figure 1: Peter Haworth's "Lectures in the History of Art" Stained Glass Course Outline (n.d.).................................-.........-...-.--..................-.......................................................187
List of Appendices

Appendix A: Prospectus for Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co. (1861)..................209
Appendix B: Peter Haworth’s Stained Glass Commissions, 1921-1968.......................210
List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CTS</td>
<td>Central Technical School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCWC</td>
<td>National Council of Women of Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OEA</td>
<td>Ontario Educational Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRB</td>
<td>Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>Royal Academy (London, England)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>Royal College of Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDF</td>
<td>Socialist Democratic Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPAB</td>
<td>Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBE</td>
<td>Toronto Board of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBERMA</td>
<td>Toronto Board of Education, Records, Museums, and Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TFRBL</td>
<td>Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library (University of Toronto)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTS</td>
<td>Toronto Technical School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAAC</td>
<td>Woman's Art Association of Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMSC</td>
<td>William Morris Society of Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTA</td>
<td>University of Toronto Archives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prologue

In 1993 while researching a course paper at the Toronto Board of Education’s Record Museums and Archives (TBERMA), I came across a file which contained several letters of complaint written to Dr. C.C. Goldring, then Director of the Toronto Board of Education (TBE). Written in 1931 by three local stained-glass firms, the letters alleged that artist-teacher and Art Department head Peter Haworth from Toronto’s Central Technical School (CTS) was engaging in unfair business practices by using school supplies, property, and student assistants during school time to produce stained glass windows for his own private commissions. They added that the stained glass students graduating under Haworth's supervision lacked the basic skills of the trade and had to be retrained at their expense and effort. Several letters in the file were replies from Haworth who categorically denied the provocative allegations but argued nonetheless for the importance of students’ first-hand experience on actual artistic projects. While the details were sketchy in the few existing documents, I sensed the substance of an engrossing debate. Given my art historical background, I recognized in Haworth’s pedagogical practice a traditional apprentice-like method of teaching art popularized in the late nineteenth century by the British Arts and Crafts Movement, but I was also struck with the audacity of industrial interests (a pre-cursor in some ways to the present infiltration of corporate “sponsorship” in the educational system) attempting to interfere with educational mandates.¹ The fact that Haworth needed to officially respond meant

¹ On-going research showed that Haworth was a graduate of the Royal College of Art, London. He was not only influenced by William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement from afar but
that officials at the TBE took the complaints seriously, or at least wanted to make it seem so.

Subsequent research revealed that the firms that objected to Haworth and the apprenticeship training at CTS's Art Department were concerned about their professional status. Although they were faced with the loss of commissions, the firms were more worried that the system of training advocated by Haworth and his aspersions about the methods of production and the quality of the final products of the firms' factories and workshops would lessen their stature as an emerging artistic professional body in Canada.2 A brief perusal of Peter Haworth's extensive and prestigious stained glass oeuvre before 1931 makes it clear that the firms did indeed have cause for concern. Professionalism aside, personal animosities, collective collusion, and self-interest played no small part in the eventual and sometimes bitter exchange of correspondence which re-surfaced again in 1939 and 1949. The firms were not only resentful of Haworth and how he had managed to become the stained glass artist of choice for high end clients but they were also frustrated with the TBE which had hired Haworth to organize the Art Department around a pedagogy and curriculum that was popularly used in English art schools and in opposition to the firms' practices. The firms leveled allegations in the hope that the TBE could effectively censure their "teacher" from "moonlighting" and thus accepting further stained-glass commissions.

For Haworth and his supporters — noted artists, historians of art, and patrons — the

was in fact trained for a brief period at Morris & Co. under its artistic director J.H. Dearle.

2 Interestingly, the firms were overly optimistic about their progress towards professionalization. Stained glass was one of last crafts to be professionalized in Canada. The Association of Stained Glass Artists first forming in 1976.
issue had nothing whatsoever to do with Haworth personally but was perceived as an attack on all artist-teachers and their unique pedagogical teaching practices in the schools and their outside professional ambitions. Who should teach art in the schools, artists certified as teachers or teachers trained in art? This was a perennial question with a consistent theme (and remains to this day) in early discussions of vocational education in the schools. Haworth had in fact solidified his reputation in the department and in the artistic community by insisting that all his staff be practicing artists trained through the art school system to be later certified as teachers. By this method, Haworth, with the blessings of his superiors and the broader artistic community, was able organize an impressive and notable group of artist-teachers who all employed traditional guild-like pedagogical practices in the curricula.

The ensuing debate extended beyond the narrow confines of the educational sector to question the very legitimacy of art and artists and their role in society. Resulting exchanges between Haworth and the stained glass firms brought to light the beliefs and historical conditions under which artists came to be employed in CTS's Art Department, and specifically, the kind of support lent to both sides of the debate by both the educational bureaucracy and industrial interests. Whether the firms knew it or not, they were up against not only Haworth but the very structure which had brought together education, industry, and art into a congenial union in support of an emerging economic state. Significantly, the firms seized the only avenue opened to them to complain and used the only argument that promised to grant them a hearing: that the students Haworth was training were ill-prepared for the specific requirements of the industry.

With Ontario's massive industrial and manufacturing expansion in the late nineteenth
and early twentieth century, vocational training—manual arts in the public schools and industrial and technical education in the secondary schools—became a vehicle through which to stream and mold students into a skilled labour pool, adaptable to the specific needs of industry. This streaming of students, beginning at the kindergarten level, also served the interests of those advocates who saw a necessary separation between those destined to vocations of manual labour and those deemed for "higher" opportunities requiring the use of mental faculties. Clearly each citizen had a role to play in the ultimate working of the state.

Though industry and labour admittedly played an integral part in the definition and structure of technical education in Ontario since its inception, it was not until the Industrial Education Act (1911) that industrialists were able to secure powerful positions of authority on advisory committees within the educational system alongside local school boards. They were in the end responsible for evaluating the extent to which graduating students satisfied the needs of industry. The Haworth controversy brought to light the connections between technical education and industrialists and the growing business community in the early decades of the twentieth century. The business community appeared self-serving and protectionist, intent on dealing with technical education students as a pool of available labour to the exclusion of other educational aims and mandates while Haworth and his supporters fashioned themselves as defenders of cultural imperatives and traditional pedagogical practice.

---

3 The need for a practical education in which students were trained for the needs of industry had been discussed in the 1860s and 1870s by Egerton Ryerson.

4 For example, in 1931 the Advisory Vocational Committee received a letter from the Toronto District Labour Council "opposing the proposal to teach the unemployed various trades in the
Importantly, this union between industry and education, reflected in the membership composition of the TBE's Advisory Vocational Committee (AVC), made disputes such as the incident with Haworth difficult to deal with. The TBE wanted best to ignore the controversy but was bound by the official complaint mechanisms already in place. The TBE was compelled to deal with the offended stained glass firms, and it did so cautiously lest it lose its own autonomy. To protect its social and educational authority was of paramount importance. Meanwhile, the membership of the AVC made objective decision-making problematic for the TBE. AVC members from industry were quick to support business interests because its lack of support in industrial/educational disputes could result in its members' lost business, reputation, and in some cases retribution from business and labour associations. The board and the AVC committee also had to deal gingerly with Haworth who by 1931, and certainly by 1939, had developed a large network of influence both inside and outside the educational system. At the very least, Haworth had almost single-handedly raised the stature of the Art Department at CTS to national recognition to rival any art school in Canada. Interestingly, the documents reveal that while the board maintained an outward show of dispassion, Haworth was in fact being apprised by the board on issues likely to arise at meetings and suggestions as to the best way to deal with them.

Significantly, given the conflicting and vague nature of technical education and art in the 1920s and 1930s, artist-teachers at CTS militantly re-defined the parameters of technical schools in view of the present large percentage of skilled workers out of employment." AVC Minutes, 28 April 1931, TBERMA. Similarly, in 1931 the Toronto Typographical Association wrote to the AVC insisting that teachers hired at technical schools be members of the Typographical union. AVC Minutes, 11 May 1931, TBERMA.
their discipline. By the 1920s, CTS's art department was considered by its artist-teachers and students as a separate school of art similar in structure and function to an art college, such as the Ontario College of Art. By the time of the complaints the art department had recast itself into an autonomous and internally governed realm. The ensuing investigation of the firms' allegations may have been a way for the TBE to redefine its authority over the art department and particularly over its increasingly powerful and charismatic department head Peter Haworth. Although the art department saw itself as a separate entity within the CTS, the TBE took steps to pull in the administrative reins, and while always dealing cautiously with Haworth, reminded the department of its official role as a disciplinary member of a technical school. Many scholars have since lamented this fact as detrimental to art education in Ontario. Dawson Kennedy, for example, then assistant head of the Art Department (and a former student in the department), who wrote in a 1961 article, there were "shadowy implications of censure or derision of art in general...Art education has always been more or less on the defensive in Canada. Until the last twenty-five years—a mere coffee-break in the history of art."  

Art colleges and departments in "some" technical schools such as CTS he suggested, are the last bastion of "real" art in the secondary school system. It had been a mistake to place "art schools into technical."  

Another line of on-going research focusing on the relationship between women's artistic associations in Ontario and their particular educational initiatives provided an

---


6 "An Art School Should be an Autonomous Institution," Art Department, CTS. Toronto: n.d. p. 3.
important link in understanding the relationship between art and education. Since 1991, I had been looking particularly at the Toronto branch of the Women's Art Association of Canada (WAAC; est. 1892 still extant) and its position within the local arts communities. Though marginalized in the historiography of Canadian art as an elite social art (albeit amateur) club, the WAAC appeared quite different from the vantage point of the archival literature. On the contrary, its members were vital contributors and active participants in many important artistic, social, educational, and economic questions of the day and were pivotal in infusing a notion that art was central to every aspect of daily life, and more importantly, crucial to social and educational reform.

The messianic call to art that the WAAC so earnestly promoted was in fact the social-aesthetic domestic and craft revival engendered by the British Arts and Crafts Movement which symbolically reconceptualized the domestic environment and promoted an inseparable connection between art and labour. Although aesthetic in nature, the movement was based on a set of social and moral imperatives which dictated that the physical environment reflect and transform the moral character of the individual and hence society. Consequently, design and manufactured products in the home became more than aesthetic or material objects: They were capable of emitting a "serene beauty" with moral regenerative and therapeutic benefits on the lives of those around them. With an increasing emphasis on domesticity, Arts and Crafts reformers accordingly deemed art as an essential and noble part of the daily domestic and "natural" life of women. Under the direction of its founder and president Mary Ella Dignam, the WAAC was instrumental in promoting, practicing, and exhibiting the home handicrafts as an essential "part of our daily lives."
Though scholars have analyzed the revivals as they occurred in Britain, the United States, and elsewhere, relatively little is known about its existence in Canada. The substantial archival collection of the WAAC proved an instructive starting point from which to examine the import of these ideas, how they were incorporated into the practice of WAAC members and by what process they were communicated to the broader cultural communities. Significantly, by redirecting the WAAC from the periphery to the centre, I was able to confront the bias and limitations inherent in the historiography and begin to re-chart an altogether alternate way of looking at the cultural context of art in Toronto in the last decades of the nineteenth century. What I did not know then was how this line of research—distant as it was from the educational bureaucracy and its controversies—would bring me full circle back to Peter Haworth and his pedagogical practice.

Through exhibitions, lectures, and an aggressive educational mandate, the association became one of the most vital disseminators of Arts and Crafts ideas in Toronto. Believing in arts centrality to all aspects of life and its restorative moral balance, the WAAC capitalized on its massive local, national, and international formal and informal networks in order to promote its ideals in what President Dignam called a “bond of union.” Through affiliates bodies such as National Council of Women of Canada, Women’s Institutes, and the Ladies School of School Art, and as executive appointees on the boards of institutions such as the Ontario School of Art & Design (now the Ontario College of Art), the Guild of Civic Art, the Toronto Art Gallery (now the Art Gallery of Ontario), and the Toronto Art Museum (now the Royal Ontario Museum), the WAAC realized an immense cultural influence whose contributions cannot be overstated nor
should they be minimized. 7

Focusing on the artistic network forged in the last decades of the nineteenth century, I became cognizant of the extent to which Arts and Crafts social-aesthetic ideas had taken hold in Toronto. This network connected Arts and Crafts ideas with the politics of educational innovation in turn of the century Toronto. To determine whether it was a discrete phenomena promoted by a small group, I shifted my emphasis to other agents and agencies. I discovered a rather vibrant dissemination of knowledge which included artistic groups and artists, university professors, social reformers, and public and secondary school teachers and administrators.

To ascertain the depth of Arts and Crafts ideas in the school, I focussed on the annual conventions of the Ontario Educational Association (OEA) and discovered that presenters including administrators, professors, principals and teachers, knew of and promoted the social aesthetic ideals of the movement. In the OEA’s wide-ranging disciplinary and school related divisions and sections, Arts and Crafts ideas were discussed in a variety of contexts. In opposition to industrial and more austere bureaucratic interests, Arts and Crafts advocates at the OEA came to oppose certain pedagogical aspects of vocational training. The advocates appealed to the distinctive language of the “true and the beautiful,” a wholly different representation of the skilled worker. Concerned with what they saw as the erosion of the social cohesion due to rapid industrialization and urbanization, reformers recast the skilled laborer into a venerable craftsman: one who combined both mental and manual labour and represented the best qualities and

---

7 Arts and Crafts ideas in English-Canadian communities pre-dated the WAAC and in fact may have prompted its formation.
attributes of citizenship.

Though artistic in nature, the Arts and Crafts movement's socially-inscribed theories and practices fit in with new educational imperatives (this included curriculum offerings such as kindergarten education, manual arts and art, domestic science, nature study, picture study, and technical and industrial education), arguing against the formalized system of pedagogy and curriculum that was in place. Educational reformers conceived of education more broadly as training the "whole child"—attending to personal growth rather than to rote learning, fostering imagination and creativity as opposed to disciplinary requisites, and to activity rather than passive transmission. Bolstered by readings of Pestalozzi and Froebel, advocates deemed art and craft, not the 3 "r"s, as the most important curriculum with which to train tomorrow's citizens.

At the advanced technical education level, Arts and Crafts advocates argued for a form of pedagogy which imitated the specific practices of traditional craftsmanship. This method stressed that under the close supervision of an artist-teacher, students learned all facets of the work from the initial design to the finished product. Significantly, students were introduced to a system of production that stressed original design as opposed to the reproduction of a set of designs, the method often used by stained glass firms in Toronto. As a consequence students trained in this manner did not easily conform to the rigid division of labour inherent in local stained-glass firms, often rebelling against the tired repertoire of static and antiquated pattern books. The firms wanted students adaptable enough to take direction, rather than ambitiously aware skilled craftsmen who cared and argued about form, process, and intent. For this they blamed Haworth and the process of pedagogy which created students who did not want
to conform to the demands of industry.

The recurring Haworth controversy illustrated the growing animosity of Toronto industrial interests towards the Arts and Crafts Movement’s fundamental tenet of the inseparable union between art and labour. To industrialists, art was not necessarily central to daily life. Waning support for Haworth and the system of educational training he represented was attributable to the increased compartmentalization and specialization of labour processes, the more rigidly disciplinary divisions within education and higher education, and the lack of consensus due to poor communication among members of industry, education, and the artistic communities on the role of or place of art in society. The Haworth controversy presaged a dispute over the definition of art in Ontario education and society which lingered for decades to come.
Chapter 1

Introduction

"Instead of all workmen being artists, as they once were, they were divided into workmen who were not artists, and artists who were not workmen" (William Morris, 1884)

"Every artist would be a workman, and every workman an artist" (R.F. Fleming, 1910)

On the "Honest and Honorable Life"

In 1953, Dr. C.C. Goldring, Director of the Toronto Board of Education (hereafter TBE), gave a brief but significant speech at the opening celebrations of the new south wing of Central Technical School (hereafter CTS) in Toronto. Similar to educational commentators before him, Goldring heralded CTS, commenting that it was a "monument to the vision and zeal of men and women, many of whom have long since left us, who believed in vocational education." The success of this type of education, he asserted, was borne out in the increasing enrollments and continual growth which now

---


3 Dr. C.C. Goldring, Speech made on the opening of the new wing of the CTS, Toronto, 22 September 1953. Historical Collection, Central Technical School File, Toronto Board of Education Records, Museums and Archives (hereafter TBERMA). In 1950, Goldring had earlier written a historical sketch of CTS for the student newspaper The Vulcan.
necessitated the addition of a new wing to this "old historic school." 4

In a single-paged script, Goldring proceeded to outline a linear and gendered history of technical training and particularly the social connection between mental and manual labour. "For thousands of years," he suggested, "in some parts of the world, the person who worked with his hands was not regarded as the social equal of the man who did not work with his hands." 5 For example, in the ancient Greek and Roman worlds, little value was placed on the handwork of artisans and craftsmen while a similar social inequality in Egypt relegated hand workers to the status of slaves, not citizens. He argued however that craftsmanship and labour became dignified and ennobled during the period of the Israelites' period of bondage because it was craftsmen "who produced much of the art...and temples in that era." 6 Goldring's connection between craftsmanship, art, and religion was confirmed by his reminder that Jesus was a carpenter, Peter a fisherman, and Paul a tentmaker. 7

Goldring further argued that as civilization progressed, home-making became an important constituent of the development of the Arts and Crafts. The home industries which developed and which involved every member of the family were vital to the acquisition of both skills and knowledge while the family home production (or cottage industry) ultimately led to a system of bartering in the community. With the increase of

---

4 Goldring, Speech. Although technically the "old historic school" was a mere 49 years old in 1953, Goldring's comments are indicative of the kind of mythical lore which had surrounded the school.

5 Goldring, Speech.

6 Goldring, Speech.

7 Goldring, Speech.
trade, craftsmen trained through apprenticeship programs in Medieval merchant and craft guilds became more important though "completely under their master's domination and control." In contrast, the machine age heralded massive changes with "mass production...eliminat[ing] the need for craftsmen, and...necessit[ating]...a large number of skilled workers, trained to do a job faithfully and well." Goldring enthusiastically concluded that the "skilled and competent worker is now respected." 

According to Goldring, the social and economic contributions made by technical workers were substantial. He underscored that in 1953, well over 60% of the population worked at skilled or semi-skilled trades as opposed to a mere 6-8% who were college trained. It is "the worker, the person of average ability, the one who tries to do his job as well as he can and lives an honest and honourable life, [who] is the backbone of our community and of our country." With the extension of this new addition to the school, Goldring deduced that "more young people...[will] be educated and trained to take responsible positions in the expanding industrial and business development of Canada."

An advocate of the doctrine that schooling was a preparation for life, Goldring asserted that technical education was part of a venerable tradition traced back to ancient times. Manual labour was duly transformed by Goldring into part of an honoured heritage of craftsmanship and labour, represented as a sanctified and noble act of the

---

8 Goldring, Speech.
9 Goldring, Speech.
10 Goldring, Speech.
11 Goldring, Speech.
moral exemplar. Jesus Christ Himself. Essentially, Goldring designated the contemporary technical student and worker as embodying the skills, experience, ambitions, and reverence of traditional craftsmen. Within this time-honoured pedigree, students were not members of a lower economic or social group, but were indispensable participants in the efficient workings of the community and the nation. 12

Goldring also validated CTS as the "old historic school" which conferred on students the grand tradition of noble craftsmanship. CTS, then known as the Toronto Technical School (hereafter TTS), was opened in Toronto in 1892 and charged with providing "training and education [to] artisans, mechanics, and workingmen in such subjects as may promote a knowledge of mechanical and manufacturing arts." 13 With amalgamation and centralization of various schools boards under the TBE in 1904, craftsmanship, art, and the discourse of noble labour became implicit notions in the pedagogy and practice of the Art Department at CTS for the next forty years.

Goldring's connection of craftsmanship, art, the nobility of labour, and technical training were not spurious pronouncements but represented the historical and cultural discourses which earlier shaped the social rationale for technical education in Ontario in the last decades of the nineteenth and early decades of the twentieth century. Importantly, it represents the importation and pervasive influence of the British Arts and

12 This popularly-perceived cultural dichotomy between schooling in the academic collegiates and the technical schools was also a source of discontent with many CTS students. In 1941, at the outbreak of World War II, the student newspaper The Vulcan used the opportunity to "get in a bit of personal revenge" against those who "thought that going to technical school was not...one of the highest levels a student could attain." During the current national emergency, contributor Kenneth Crockford pointed out "only technical schools could and did fill the breach." Kenneth Crockford. "The First Fifty Years." The Vulcan (1941): 9.

13 Ontario Bureau of Industries, Reports on Labour, Wages and Cost of Living, 1884-1889 (Toronto, 1893), 35.
Crafts Movement's social-aesthetic philosophy and pedagogical practices on Ontario's educational system. By the turn of the century, Arts and Crafts ideas had become prevalent topics of discussion at the annual conventions of the Ontario Educational Association (hereafter OEA). With the formation of the Manual Arts section at the OEA in 1905, Arts and Crafts ideas and particularly William Morris' views on aesthetics, design, and especially the Arts' relationship to craftsmanship, the worker, and society became dynamic discourses. Promoters of Arts and Crafts ideas in the schools increasingly embraced the Movement's social-aesthetic tenets arguing for a humanized approach to technical training—one which elevated the worker above the machine, ennobling his/her manual labour, and one which trained both the mental and manual faculties of workers—in essence the "whole person." For these promoters, art was integral to any notion of technical education as they perceived "imaginative work [as] the very blossom of civilization." 14 For promoters such as Ottawa Normal School art instructor Roy F. Fleming, these ideas set into a conceptual framework and curriculum would create a breed of technical students in which "every artist would be a workman, and every workman an artist." 15

While many Arts and Crafts advocates at the OEA perceived the worker as the resurrected artisan of old, many from the business and educational communities saw these ideas as effective in both bolstering moral character and producing respectable citizens—prosperous, happy and "useful" workers for Ontario's fledgling industrial

---


state. Over time, speakers championing the belief of the “efficient workman as a good-living citizen.” discursively constructed conceptions of the ideal virtuous work experience of the ideal citizen worker. He was preeminently conceived as a skilled craftsman (most reformers thought of the craftsman in male terms; for the sake of consistency, apart from sections of gender analysis, I use the male pronoun throughout this thesis); diligent and loyal, who took pride in his work and pleasure in his labour and recognized that his contribution was an important part of his communities social and moral bearings and his nation’s economic success.

An alarming and regulatory sub-text to much of this economically-charged rhetoric was seen when many reformers feared that massive job displacement and an inequitable distribution of wealth had generated wide-spread discontent among farmers, artisans, and labouring men and women. These reformers argued that laborious and unrewarded manual toil had forged “beasts of burden” who “if treated like gladiatorial slaves...we may expect gladiatorial revolts, strikes and debauchery.” Prompted by spiraling urbanization and industrial prosperity, both of which many social reformers believed to be responsible for the pervasive "social and moral degeneration" in society, the educational system was re-conceptualized by OEA members as an important medium from which to form a new morally and socially “ennobled” technically-trained labour force.

16 Susan Houston’s and Alison Prentice’s seminal book Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth Century Ontario (Toronto, 1988) and Bruce Curtis’ Building the Educational State (Toronto, 1988) have provided a model explanation of the “hidden curriculum” which aimed to inculcate religious morality and civic values among the school population.

17 A.O. Patterson, “Camp-Schools,” OEA (1903): 105.
These two competing discourses: with the aesthetic and labour-centered advocates on one side and the economic/citizen makers on the other came to a head in 1931 at CTS's Art Department and percolated through another generation thereafter. Arts and Crafts tenets of teaching clashed with interests from the business community when local stained-glass companies charged artist-teacher and department head Peter Haworth with unfair business practices for allegedly using student assistants, school supplies and property to produce stained glass work for his own private artistic commissions. The ensuing debate and negotiations emphasized the contradictory educational visions held by different stake-holders and perhaps more importantly highlighted the extent to which Arts and Crafts social-aesthetic philosophies were ingrained into the educational system and in the cultural subjectivities of its participants. Consequently, the educational system later headed by Director C.C. Goldring reconceptualized the role of technical education within a new context and time. In the end, the deliberations among these vested interests propelled Arts and Crafts tenets into a new and a vital forum.

The Arts and Crafts Movement

While Arts and Crafts social-aesthetic philosophies promoted various aspects of technical education, they were not strictly an educational discourse. In fact, Arts and Crafts ideas, as they became interpreted in Ontario, originated well beyond the confines of the educational system. The Arts and Crafts Movement, formed in England in the 1880s, was composed primarily of a group of architects, designers, and artists who sought to revive standards of design through an anti-machine ethic and a revival of
handicrafts. Defined principally by English theorists A.W. N. Pugin (1812-1852), John Ruskin (1819-1900), and William Morris (1834-1896), Arts and Crafts advocates reintegrated the notion of art and craft through a cultural restoration of skill and craftsmanship, and a set of design principles which dictated honesty in design, materials, and execution. Committed to social activism, many Arts and Crafts advocates believed that the production and display of beautiful objects was morally and socially significant and without hyperbole one of the most meaningful activities of human existence, indeed a veritable democratic right, and as such should be practiced not only in everyday social relations but that aesthetic decisions should be exercised in all aspects of life, particularly on broader questions of labour, education, and social policy.

In the changing social-political environment of the 1880s, Arts and Crafts ideas on architectural, domestic, and design reform easily converged with social reform notions on healthy living and the good life, incorporating such requisites as adequate sunlight, clean air, bathing facilities, and neighborhoods which invoked garden arrangements and country settings. Mark Girouard suggests that the 1870s and 1880s were a watershed for the more affluent and “progressive” middle classes who were “a class in search of an image.” Nurtured on the principles of Matthew Arnold’s “sweetness and light” with an increasing suspicion of conventional belief in religion, and imbued with a renewed creed of noblesse oblige, this progressive middle class “became devotees of the religion of beauty or the religion of enlightenment.”

---

18 Mark Girouard, Sweetness and Light: The Queen Anne Movement 1860-1900 (London, 1977). 4. This notion is evident in Julian Sturgis, Stephen Calinari (London, 1901), in which he describes the scene at the opening of the 1877 Grosvenor Gallery: “Indeed, in England at large a great deal of emotion which had been absorbed by religion was in need of a new object...[while] others...sought a substitute for the unknown God by spelling humanity with a capital letter. But
mate of art. In an effort to avoid social strife, art would socially re-organize the world for the better while the education system would disseminate and inculcate sound values to succeeding generations in all classes of society. By 1900, Arts and Crafts philosophies had influenced every conceivable art form including architecture, home decoration, the decorative and fine arts, urban, garden design and town planning, and children’s books, making them influential visual elements of the new social and domestic order.

The ideas which formed the substance of the Arts and Crafts Movement in the 1880s arose from a myriad of concerns which had originated as early as the 1840s. Many centered on industrialization and mechanization and the disfiguring of England’s environmental landscape leading to what reformers perceived as the erosion of human and aesthetic values. These sentiments were shared, in varying degrees, by critics, all of whom pointed to the crippling effects of “progress”—massive job shifts and displacements, the estrangement of the worker from meaningful work, an imbalance between the rural and urban centers, an unchecked building boom, an increasing gulf between the poor and working classes, the expanding commercialism of the middle classes, and the perceived loss of the “traditional English” community. This unhealthy and vile environment, critics reasoned, had a deterministic effect on all members of 

Art—art also with a capital letter—had at the moment the strongest attraction, the most alluring charm...and to live for Art seemed the best substitute available at the moment for a life of self sacrifice” (p. 68). See also J. Barzun, The Use and Abuse of Art (Princeton, 1974).

19 This notion of combating social agitation through culture and literacy was the underlying theme of Matthew Arnold’s Culture and Anarchy (London, 1868) and Sir Walter Besant’s 1882 utopian novel All Sorts and Conditions of Man (London, 1882). In The People's Palace and the Glasgow Green (Edinburgh, 1991), Elspeth King outlines how Besant’s characters in the novel are transformed through the power of aesthetic culture. For example, Dick the Radical was converted “from a fierce Republican” into an enthusiastic radical through dancing lessons. Singing lessons were then to change him into an ‘advanced liberal’, after which lessons in painting would change him into a ‘mere conservative’ with no political views at all” (p. 12).
society and the form and quality of their productions, as well as on their sense of spirit and beauty. The social and aesthetic degeneration spawned by new industrial mass-production techniques was dramatically exemplified in the overly Historicist style of many Victorian aesthetic and manufactured products, typically characterized by shoddy workmanship, insincere use of materials, inefficient forms, and elaborate and ostentatious displays of ornamentation. For many critics, manufactured goods and art works were corrupted through the conditions of their production processes: design, construction, materials, or maker became material evidence of England's gradual decline.20

Ruskin and Morris asserted that industrialization and mechanization in nineteenth century England had altered the definition, social relations, and practices of traditional work resulting in what Morris (following Marxist doctrine) called the "alienation of the worker." They maintained that mechanical processes of manufacturing which entailed only manual labour disempowered, degraded, and alienated the worker at the expense of the worker's creative thinking and judgement faculties. Ruskin's and Morris' emphasis on the division of labour in manufacturing production and the subsequent lack of control of the worker over his work and life was a central feature of the estrangement of the artist from the craftsman, the craftsman from his buyers, and importantly the relationship between art and society.21 For Ruskin and Morris, the fluid relationship

20 In The Idea of Decline in Western History (New York, 1997), Arthur Herman outlines the historical and cultural framework in which the idea of decline, progress, and degeneracy were debated in nineteenth century England. See particularly Chapter 8, "Welcoming Defeat. Arnold Toynbee."

21 In Consuming Angels: Advertising and Victorian Women (Toronto, 1994), Lori Anne Loeb has effectively described (and visually examined) the rise of a "hedonistic" material consumerism in the Victorian era which she attributes to the expanding middle classes' quest for democratic
between labour, life, and art was essential for the individual worker and his society.

In search of an alternate model of societal organization which did not privilege commercial and economic determinism over human values, Ruskin and later Morris focused on the pre-industrial middle ages and particularly on the Medieval craftsman who they conceived as the intellectual and spiritual archetype of the alienated Victorian worker. The cultural conditions and environment under which the Medieval craftsman undertook his production and conducted his life was far superior to that experienced by contemporary Victorian workers. Unlike his Victorian counterpart, the Medieval craftsman was a proficient artisan who had served as an apprentice before entering the trade, and who combined invention, learning, and skillful hand labour in the design and execution of all objects. Contrary to the experience of contemporary workers who were seen as subjugated to the will of the foreman and manager, the Medieval craftsman had an altogether different relationship to his work and to the process of his labour. He had control of his own tools, time, material, and production, and maintained aesthetic control over his wares, selling them directly to the public. In so doing, he was directly connected to the buyers of his goods and more importantly to his community. In this newly conceived relationship, the notion of craftsmanship and the process of hand production took on an almost exalted status and became a metaphor for a certain quality of life in which the craftsman’s ideal reigned above the decadence and discourses of progress of the industrial age. An idea which stressed process, senses and qualities above the finished product, craftsmanship was one of the key building blocks for a modern political,

egalitarianism through the acquisition of material goods. Her intriguing thesis provides an important comparative aspect to Arts and Crafts ideas.
economic, and social organization. 22

Arts and Crafts philosophies were also shaped in large part by the paradigm shift at the end of the eighteenth century to Romantic discourses which were based on ideas of individual freedom and self-expression. With the decline of monarchial institutions and the advent of liberal democratic theories, the individual was transformed from a subject to a sovereign and self-conscious citizen who expressed his "free will"—a master of his own fate, body, and mind. An individual's assertion of "self" was both an expression of individual freedom and the route by which transcendental and sublime realities could be best experienced. This was fundamental to a new concept of the artist and his role in society. Up until the end of the eighteenth century, artists were predominantly identified as Medieval craftsmen who were bolstered by tradition and experience—the hallmarks of their practice—who could conceivably undertake any artistic project requested of them. Meanwhile, art was defined through Romantic discourses as an original creation, produced by an individual gifted with genius—one understandably born (pre-destined), not culturally produced or taught—whose creation was primarily an object of aesthetic beauty separate from the artifacts of everyday life. 23 No longer constrained to produce for the patronage of church, state, or for the academies' delectations, artists saw their work as their sole ownership, thus demonstrating the maker's freedom to be exhibited


23 The idea that art is not made but created is one of the myths of modern art. See Genius: The History of an Idea, Penelope Murray (ed.) (Oxford, 1989). In "Deconstructing Genius: Paul de Man and the Critique of Romantic Ideology," Christopher Norris outlines how art was philosophically perceived as a utopian form of secular salvation (pp. 141-165).
and exchanged in the "free-market." 24

Armed with a contemporary sensibility and seeking a style and subject matter appropriate for the modern age, English Realist artists appealed reflexively to tradition and history. By the 1840s, a concentration on human beings, on individual emotion and character, and the exposition and revelation of everyday and common-place realities became emblematic motifs of social and economic wider concerns. 25 The visual representation of these ideas reconfigured the meaning of the Arts to appeal to an ever larger segment of population as it legitimated subjective and personal interpretations. This emphasis on the specific as opposed to the ideal is best captured in Blake's famous phrase "the world in a Grain of Sand" which for him was a way of locating the human being (the grain of sand) within the enormity of a new and increasingly complex world.

This constellation of forces was transported to Canada through a variety of cultural forms and networks and taken up with zealous fervor in Ontario in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Arts and Crafts ideas, deriving primarily from England and secondarily from the United States, were adopted in large part by English-Canadian adherents as a social-aesthetic alternative to the encroaching dehumanization of industrialization and urbanization and as a critique of the deterioration of art and design. These ideas emerged within the tightly woven aesthetic communities of British-born and

24 The artist's signature was both a claim to authorship and as a guarantee of authenticity for the buyer.

Anglo-philic patriots across Canada—from Halifax, Nova Scotia to Victoria, British Columbia—with the largest community in Toronto. At the height of its influence the Movement's social-aesthetic philosophies were embraced by a wide variety of people including artists, students of art, architects, social reformers, philanthropists, educators, manufacturers, industrialists, and politicians. These ideas were transmitted to the public in both urban and rural areas through handicraft exhibitions, lectures, teaching workshops, the socialist press, women's magazines, trade journals, and particularly in schools and universities. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, they were also discussed in regard to architecture, urban planning, social reform, art education, domestic art education for women, settlement house education, interior design, and industry.

The Movement's ideas in Canada were gendered. On the one hand, social-aesthetic ideas were championed by a small male intellectual and artistic elite who appropriated for themselves the mantle of spiritual and philosophical enlightenment through claims of "direct knowledge," while elite women, often as part of cultural organizations, became the standard-bearers of the Arts and Crafts Movement's educational and nationalist objectives. Ironically, it was groups such as the Women's Art Association of Canada

---

26 I use the term community here in its sociological sense to denote a network of relationships which is characterized by both conflict and consensus. These communities are bounded by geographical space and locales and are rigidly maintained through ideological precepts. Though removed in place and time, I have learned much about community, social relations, culture, and agency from such seminal studies as: David Sabeau's *Power in the Blood: Popular Culture & Village Discourse in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge, 1984); Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Cambridge, 1983); Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (New York, 1982); and Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Carnival in Romans* (New York, 1979).
(hereafter WAAC), along with its vast networks of "friends and affiliates" which were instrumental in promoting the handicrafts—and hence broader Arts and Crafts philosophies and practices—as "important national products" both for national revenue and for cultural and educational edification. Although the Arts and Crafts Movement in Canada clearly generated tremendous new opportunities for women to pursue professional art training and vocations in various craft, fine art, and design fields, it also demarcated individual crafts, production techniques, display and arts management along gender lines. Architecture, metal work, and printing were the traditional elite purview of men while the handicrafts such as china painting, embroidery, textiles, and lace making were ascribed to women. The WAAC reinforced and perpetuated the Arts and Crafts Movement's gendered ideals through its self-perception as "cultural educators" and "nation-builders." As Mary Ella Dignam, president of the WAAC argued: "What women can do to encourage and direct artistic taste and environment and to promote art and art industries upon a practical and worthy national basis is unlimited, and surely, if slowly, this is being realized." It is through these individual agents and groups that Arts and Crafts ideas were shaped as an educational discourse, incorporating both a critique of industrial organization and a promotion of these ideas as educational imperatives and economic requirements.

27 Although incorporated as the Woman’s Art Association after 1905 it was renamed without explanation the Women’s Art Association. For the sake of consistency I use the latter name throughout this paper.

28 Women’s Art Association of Canada, "President’s Memoranda of the Year’s Work and Progress," Annual Report, 1899, 6 (hereafter WAAC).

29 WAAC, Annual Report, 1899, p. 10.
The History of the Arts and Crafts Movement in Canada: Addressing Problems of Definition, Methodology, and Sources

This thesis focuses on the emergence, development, and influence of the British Arts and Crafts Movement to show how, why and in what contexts the social-aesthetic ideas and practices garnered a responsive following between 1880 and 1940. More specifically, it looks at how the Movement’s ideas and aesthetic practices—often radically transformed—became ingrained in Ontario’s artistic and educational systems and particularly within the art departments of newly established technical schools. As a case study, this thesis focuses on the Art Department at CTS (re-organized in 1914) in Toronto, to illustrate the application of the Movement’s ideas and their translation in the visual arts curriculum and pedagogy of individual artist-teachers. What were the contexts and the process under which the ideas and practices of the Arts and Crafts Movement arose, declined, and were re-invigorated over time? In the main, this study highlights how Arts and Crafts ideas were vital to the cultural production and contention of key social-aesthetic notions and how the ideas were used to shape certain aspects of social, educational, and economic policy in Ontario. This study argues that artistic discourses—encompassing a series of ideas, philosophies, and practices—were historically significant in both character and state-formation in educational contexts and were instrumental in meeting governmental and economic initiatives in the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

As well, this thesis outlines the intricate web of social and power relations at the turn-of-the-century Toronto, and charts how agents, groups, and community involvement were critical in the production of specific educational curriculum and
pedagogical approaches. Acknowledging history as a complex expanse, in which change and continuity operate simultaneously and contingencies are inevitable, how did ideas and practices serve to construct personal and collective identities and order social relations among men and women, artist-teachers and administrators, the educational system and special-interest groups, between theorists and their public, and between the past and the present? Understanding "those networks of intersecting and overlapping relationships in which everyone is enmeshed" is central to the argument in this work.30

This study does not propose to re-write the history of technical education in Ontario nor does it propose to chart a linear progression of art in the schools. Rather, it paints a series of vignettes of the shifting meanings of "art" and "education" and the correlation between the two at key historical junctions. Building on earlier studies, I am proposing to situate technical education within a series of contemporary debates and cultural movements that sought to connect the criticism of capitalist industrial society with the desire for an alternative to the dehumanization of labour. Art in this respect was not a mere topic of cultural appreciation but a critical component in the creation and development of technical education in Canada. Significantly, this is not "the" history of the Arts and Crafts Movement in Canada but a history self-consciously produced: selected, ordered, and interpreted to make sense of the voluminous interdisciplinary primary archival sources. Arts and Crafts ideas in Canada are also discussed within an institutional rhetoric of a dominant community which has, and continues, to shape and

authorize knowledge of Morris and the Arts and Crafts in Canada. 31

This study was undertaken within a contemporary Canadian Art Historical perspective in Ontario in response to the misconceived notion that since Arts and Crafts artistic works and artifacts—furniture, wallpaper, fabrics, metal work, etc. (the definitive products of the Movement)—were not located in Canada, Arts and Crafts ideas had no perceptible influence in Canada. Over the past decade, the supposed dearth of evidence has been become so accepted that it has seriously undermined historical and cultural research into the Arts and Crafts Movement in Canada. 32 In fact, critics have pointed to the seeming lack of published secondary sources on Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement in Canada and have argued speciously that it is reflective of the historical reality. 33 Perhaps most importantly, scholars’ acceptance of this “tale” of non-existence has allowed them to theorize in the absence of historical evidence to the detriment of the

31 I am speaking here of the significant cultural lobby of the William Morris Society of Canada (hereafter WMSC). Over the past fifteen years, through their monthly meetings, annual symposium, newsletters, tours, and principally through their connection to the parent society in England (est. 1955), the WMSC has exerted a powerful and authoritative vision of Morris and Arts and Crafts ideas in Canada. This has made me cognizant to the production of and forms by which knowledge is disseminated and legitimated, and the connections between academic and community narratives. On the early origins of the WMS (in England) and its Marxist connections, see Helen E. Roberts, “Commemorating William Morris: Robin Page Arnot and the Early History of the William Morris Society,” The Journal of the William Morris Society, vol. XI, no. 2 (Spring 1995): 33-37.

32 In the twenty-year history of the University Art Association of Canada’s (UAAC) annual conferences, only one session has been devoted to William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement. Held in November 1996 to mark the Centenary of Morris’ death, the session brought together researchers and artists interested in a variety of issues related to the Arts and Crafts Movement. At a “round table” discussion on the state of historical research into the Arts and Crafts Movement in Canada, participants debated the way in which inaccurate historical suppositions about the Movement resist re-examination.

33 This position was held by a number of participants at the round table discussion which took place at the UAAC conference in Montreal in 1996.
body of knowledge both nationally and internationally. 

An overview of secondary sources illustrates how the extent and significance of the Arts and Crafts Movement in Canada has been minimized by approaches which focus only on aesthetic and design features. The scant existing accounts of the Movement in Canada have been generally restricted to the visual arts, particularly the decorative arts, book printing, and architecture. In architectural studies, most of the emphasis has been placed on three well-known exponents of Arts and Crafts architectural ideas and practice: Eden Smith in Toronto (1858-1929), Percy Erskine Nobbs in Montreal (1875-1964), and Samuel Maclure in Vancouver (1860-1929). In addition to outlining the architect's oeuvre as artifacts of "art," while excluding all notions of labour these monographic studies glorify the individual architect as the sole figure involved in the building process. Perhaps most importantly there is little or no historical discussion 

34 For example, at the William Morris Centenary Conference held at Oxford University in June 1996, two papers (out of 60 presentations) on the conference schedule took up the issue of the influence of the Arts and Crafts Movement's philosophies and practices in Canada. Set back-to-back in the same session, the papers: "'Every Artist Would be a Workman and Every Workman and Artist': Morrisian and Arts and Crafts Ideas and Ideals at the Ontario Educational Association, 1900-1920," and "'The Seed Traveled so Far and Fell so Closely to the Ground': The Influence of William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement in Buffalo and Toronto at the Turn of the Century" argued antithetical positions. While one presenter suggested that the Arts and Crafts Movement had an estimable influence on Ontario's educational system, the other presenter "theorized" why Ontario, specifically Toronto, and unlike Buffalo, New York was untouched by the ideas of the Movement.


36 An exception in this genre is Patricia Spenser-Silver, Pugin's Builder: The Life and Work of George Myers (Hull, 1993).
of the social and cultural meaning of architecture as a reflection of a society's ideas, ambitions, and aspirations, or of the dialectical engagement between the architect and the larger community (except of course with the patron). Current scholarship on Smith in particular has expanded the boundaries of previous formalist discussions by focussing on meaning as opposed to production, especially in the way that the upper middle class understood Smith's representation of architecture as a form of "Englishness".  

Otherwise, scholarship on the Arts and Crafts Movement in Canada has centered around regional studies focussing on specific artists and collections, and especially individual art such as textiles, stained glass, and wood carving, published in tandem with museum or gallery exhibitions.  

When this overly object-oriented view is challenged, as it was thought to with the 1993 exhibition The Earthly Paradise: Arts and Crafts by William Morris and his Circle From Canadian Collections held at the Art Gallery of Ontario, the argument invariably remains within the same theoretical parameters. Focussing on Morris & Co.'s decorative artwork as found in Canadian public and private collections of furniture,  

---


39 The Earthly Paradise: Arts and Crafts by William Morris and his Circle From Canadian Collections (Toronto, 1993).
stained glass, ceramics, wallpaper, tapestries, illuminated books, and chintzes, the
exhibition hoped "to introduce Morris and his associates to a broader Canadian public and
dispel the myth that there is little or no Morris & Co. material of consequence in
Canada." 40 In addressing only the art object and to a lesser extent its cultural context,
neither Morris himself nor the Arts and Crafts tenets were seen within the broader
ccontext of Canadian social history, leading to flagrant disregard of primary historical
sources. How else can we account for Rosalind Pepall's unsubstantiated statement in
"Under the Spell of Morris: A Canadian Perspective" that "contemporary [historical]
accounts emphasized above all [Morris'] achievements as a designer and reformer of the
arts"? 41 Though Pepall is correct in her assertion that Morris was represented as a
designer and decorator in publications such as Quebec's Le Chercheur and Ontario's
Canadian Architect and Builder, 42 primary research beyond the artistic communities
would have revealed that contemporary accounts of Morris referred to him not only as
a decorator but as a socialist theorist, architectural preservationist, and educator.

A newly-released monograph entitled J.E.H. MacDonald: Designer focusses on the
graphic design career of Group of Seven member J.E.H. MacDonald who its authors

40 Ultimately, the exhibition's aim to provide a "holistic approach" was confined to aesthetic
objects. Many of the works featured in the exhibition arrived in Canada as recently as the 1980s
and therefore could have no historical influence.

41 Rosalind Pepall, "Under the Spell of Morris: A Canadian Perspective," Earthly Paradise,
p. 19. This contradicts then Art Gallery of Ontario (hereafter AGO) Director Glen Lowry's
statement in the same catalogue where he claims that Morris was "a man who exercised a
formative influence on artistic vision and education in the young Dominion of Canada" (p. vi). One
explanation for these inconsistencies is that the Earthly Paradise was the first major loan
exhibition in the newly expanded AGO and as such it had both an aesthetic and political agenda.
It had at the very least to represent (though obviously not document) Morris as a significant
influence on Ontario's cultural vision.

firmly declare as a disciple of William Morris and the ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement. The bulk of the book is devoted to stunning (in many cases colour) images of MacDonald’s graphic design, illustration, lettering, and applied art work which clearly illustrate his affiliation to Arts and Crafts aesthetic principles. Though Stacey and Bishop treat MacDonald and the Group of Seven hagiographically as the national art movement, the work draws out some interesting (though not substantially developed) links between the Group of Seven, Arts and Crafts ideas, and the influential Toronto based Arts and Letters Club. Crucially, missing from Stacey’s account is any mention of women’s involvement in the visual arts and agents from other contexts which promoted Arts and Crafts ideas. Despite such emerging work such as Stacey’s, Canadian Arts and Crafts studies have lagged behind considerably, where in England four decades of critical scholarly work on Morris and the Arts and Crafts has been undertaken, and at least


Perhaps most interestingly is the book’s Preface written by Dr. Michael Large, Coordinator of the Graphic Design Program, Sheridan College, Oakville, Ontario. Large underscores “William Morris’ revival of interest in fine printing and book design, marrying craftsmanship with high standards of typography and decorative illustration, was massively influential in North America and had a lasting impact on MacDonald, who interpreted Arts and Crafts decorative principles with Canadian motifs.” In the “Preface,” Large unites both the history of graphic design and modern professional training and calls for “an awareness of design as part of the Canadian visual culture...[one which] grant[s] students access to their heritage.” (p. x)

Calling for studies which highlight the work of “distinguished Canadian designers, illustrators, photographers and craftspeople,” Stacey suggests that “as it is unlikely that public sources of funding will be available in future to support this crucial line of scholarship, the sectors that materially benefit from the daily labours of these unsung makers will have to step into the breach.” (p. xii)

E.P. Thompson’s, *William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary* (London, 1955, revised. London, 1977), is generally heralded as the first critical analysis of Morris’ political and aesthetic beliefs. Although the book’s argument is littered with what Thompson later called his “Stalinist pieties,” it was a seminal work which did much to elevate scholarly representations of Morris from an old “fuddy duddy” to a rigorous Socialist critic. For an interesting discussion of Thompson’s ground-
two decades in the United States. 47

Making the Arts and Crafts Movement's ideas visible in Ontario also requires that we address the historiographical invisibility of women's organizational involvement in the Arts and their aesthetic and political agendas in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Examining the basis and extent of this historiographic exclusion, primarily observed in the discipline of Art History, is vital in that, as this thesis argues, it was these amateur and professional women practicing and promoting the Arts who were the real disseminators of Arts and Crafts ideas in the social reform, artistic, and educational communities. Bypassing "marginal" cultural groups and communities such as the WAAC ignores key historical processes which can explain what Art and Crafts ideas and practices succeeded and failed in Ontario. As well, framing women's involvement in the Arts as mere demonstrations of Victorian voluntarism, private and passive, and a leisured elite activity of no political significance, overlooks the complex historical reality


and trivializes historical agents' intentions. In this respect, I align myself with a current theoretical debate which argues that women's voluntarism and institution-building constituted a separate political culture based in part on a belief of women's moral superiority and their exclusion from male political structures. 48

Paula Baker has argued that in the late nineteenth century, middle class women sought to strengthen the assertion of the moral superiority position through collective action on behalf of the "home"—broadly defined as anywhere where women and children were found. 49 At the same time, Kathleen McCarthy argues, that these women "also carved out 'invisible careers' for themselves, pursuing distinctive forms of female entrepreneurship." 50 This debate allows us to analyze these structures and their agents

---

48 One of the first works to consider this thesis was Estelle Freedman's "Separatism as Strategy: Female Institution Building and American Feminism, 1870-1930," Feminist Studies, vol. 5, no. 3 (Fall 1979): 512-529. See also: Karen J. Blair, The Clubwomen as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914 (New York, 1980). Although essentially an American historiographical debate, it has been discussed in Canada in terms of women's power as nation and culture builders and their contributions to state-formation initiatives. Extremely useful to this study is Beverly Boutilier, "Gender, Organized Women and the Politics of Institution Building: Founding the Victorian Order of Nurses for Canada, 1893-1900," Ph.D. thesis, Carleton University Press, 1993. This debate is also connected to a debate in Canadian adult education circles which has challenged the "sites" of learning and particularly the gendered meanings of "work" and "labour." Michael Welton has outlined how home and school associations, Women's Institutes, cooperatives societies, and such organizations as the National Council of Women of Canada and its local branches, the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, and the YMCA were transformative learning sites and significant "of women's moral critique of emergent capitalist knowledge." Michael R. Welton (ed.), "Whose Stories Do We Celebrate?" Educating for a Brighter New Day: Women's Organizations as Learning Sites (Halifax, 1992), i. See also Michael R. Welton (ed.), Knowledge for the People: The Struggle for Adult Learning in English-Speaking Canada, 1828-1973 (Toronto, 1987).


from a wholly different perspective and to critically re-examine the founding rationale of many these organizations. Accordingly, this thesis will argue that the WAAC was not only one of the most important disseminators of the Arts and Crafts ideas in Canada but was in fact founded to promote those principles for what the WAAC considered to be Canada's cultural good.  

The Modernist narrative underwriting interpretations of the Arts and Crafts Movement in Canada is based in part on traditional notions of art work (object) viewed as being the proper and only study of the discipline of Art History. Taking as its point of origin the description and classification of objects, the canonical and empirical tradition of Western Art History focuses narrowly on such issues as authorship and dating of art works (including questions of authenticity), and formal matters of style, iconography, and material. It also strictly categorizes and periodizes "movements" by highlighting their major proponents, style, and their artistic work while the Movement's larger aesthetic or philosophical ideas are dealt with only in so far that it reveals individual or collective intentions and motivations. The ideas are considered only in the way that they affect the development of other artists or artistic groups. Seldom do cultural ideas and practices, such as production, reception, and consumption, take precedence over the object-based aesthetic.  

Perhaps most problematic is the premise that art is the "creative" expression of

---

51 By the same token, I want to highlight the "private" lives of male agents such as Political Economist James Mavor, Public School Superintendent James L. Hughes, and Architect Eden Smith for whom art and life were inseparable elements.

52 For the major methodological and theoretical perspectives of Art History, see: Eugene Kleinbauer, Modern Perspectives in Western Art: An Anthology of Twentieth-Century Writings on the Visual Arts (Toronto, 1989); and Michael Podro, The Critical Historians of Art (New Haven, 1982).
individual artists (assumed to be a white male) who faithfully reflect in their art work pre-existing social realities. Over the past decade, Marxist and Feminist historians of art have launched an all-out attack on the canon and its atheoretical foundation by questioning the "real" object of the study of the history of art: art or history? This involved theoretical debate was first presaged by John Onians in the prestigious and conservative English Art History journal in 1978 when he suggested that "somehow both words, 'art' and 'history' have a magnificence and potency about them that when thought of separately...sadly...lose as soon as they are coupled in the bed of 'art history.'" This is by no means only a question of disciplinary legitimization, but crucially one of definition, methodology, and interpretation of the historical past. While the parameters in which canonical art historians define their subjects of study require only limited methodological perspectives and few if any supporting sources, critically-minded historians of art and culture have instead used rigorous theoretical social and anthropological models which ground all artistic production in historical contexts, thus giving the art work (and other visual images) particular meanings with consideration of

53 John Onions, "Editorial," Art History, vol. 1, no. 2 (June 1978). Art historians now regularly declare their disciplinary position on the "art versus history" debate. The common assertion is that the history of art is not a sub-discipline of history. See: Ivan Gaskell, "History of Images," in Peter Burke (ed.), New Perspectives on Historical Writing (Pennsylvania, 1992), 169. See also Marcia Pointon's comments in "History of Art and the Undergraduate Syllabus: Is it a Discipline and how Should we Teach it?" in The New Art History. Randolph Starn suggests that Renaissance studies have always mediated "the frontier between history and art," in that they deal with the intersection of symbolic visual imagery and regimes of power (patronage). However, although patronage studies ask more penetrating questions of cultural concern, they are restricted to elite power brokers who in the Renaissance vied with artists for prestige and are but another example of artistic conception and vision. For a more absorbing analysis of consumption of visual images by popular culture, see Bob Scribner, For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation (Cambridge, 1981).
a dialectic of communication. Acknowledging the historical and cultural production and creation of "Art," "Taste," "Genius," and the "Avant-Garde," they have redefined the adage that "seeing is believing" to that of "believing is seeing."  

As a concept, history is central to this study both as theory and method. Firstly, it allows for a look at the appropriation of the past by agents and groups who sought to impose history as a form of social control and domination. History also discloses how images and practices support such notions as tradition, "our" heritage, and cultural continuity while down-playing political radicalism. On the other hand, history can be seen as a vital contributor in the development of new personal and collective identities, as seen in the last decade of the nineteen and early part of the twentieth century when Arts and Crafts agents in Ontario appealed to notions of history to reorganize the world in their particular vision.

While research into the Arts and Crafts Movement has been circumscribed within art historical disciplinary methods and theories as an aesthetic/object-oriented movement, historians of education, particularly those dealing with technical education and art education, have difficulty reconciling the historical relationship between discursive and


56 See for example Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger's The Invention of Tradition (Cambridge, 1983) in which they describe how notions of tradition have been used to create hegemony and ideological communities.
visual modes of cultural representation. Not well-versed in the histories of art or the cultural language of the social-aesthetic, they often overlook critical aspects of the relationship between art and education and particularly the different meanings inherent in each idea. One suspects that there is a residue of artistic prejudice whereby aesthetic concepts and ideas are seen through the filtered lenses of "C"ulture and "C"ivilization but which are dismissed as inconsequential determinants of social, economic, or political change. This limited focus has effectively separated the social from the aesthetic, lessening the Movement's historically significant cultural impact. These divergent perspectives have suffered from academic disciplinary boundaries which have encouraged research into micro-aspects of the Arts and Crafts ideas according to very specific paradigms. (See my later discussion on the WAAC and theoretical perspectives in the art education literature in Chapters 4 and 6.)

Literature on the development of technical education and vocational training in Ontario is also fraught with disjunctive theoretical perspectives and limited methodological approaches. Especially troublesome is the restrictive way in which historians conceive of education as a strict form of schooling. Accordingly, few if any

---

57 Some historians have dealt laudably with a wide array of visual material and their cultural influence. For example, see: Michael Montias, Artists and Artisans in Delft, A Socio-Economic Study of the Seventeenth Century (Princeton, 1982); and Simon Schama, The Embarrassment of Riches: An interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age (New York, 1987).

58 In this vain, George Tait felt that he should apologize for Egerton Ryerson's preoccupation with art, stating that "Educators of the present day may feel a sense of astonishment in the fact that an individual of Dr. Ryerson's practical temperament should have interested himself in matters of purely aesthetic nature at a time when he was still struggling with basic problems of textbooks, finance, school accommodation, teacher training, and the controversial questions of Roman Catholic separate schools." Ironically, Tait was writing on the history of art education in Ontario. See George E. Tait, "A History of Art Education in the Elementary Schools of Ontario," Ed.D. thesis, University of Toronto, 1957, p. 15.
alternate contexts or participants are seen to influence educational policy outside of these pre-determined parameters. Although it is clear from the historical record that economic and labour interests played a large part in the creation and development of technical education in Ontario, it is often over-emphasized to the exclusion of all other discourses, agents, and agencies, particularly in relation to artistic philosophies and interests. Similarly, research on vocational training has explained changes in relation to the needs of the market economy and various philanthropic campaigns, but social-aesthetic discourses themselves have not been seen as playing a large part in the creation and development of technical education.

The trickle of scholarship on the history of technical education in Ontario has largely focused on the emergence of the TTS and top-down studies of the campaign for technical education and official concerns for training unskilled workers into an effective labour force. Technical education in Ontario (and similarly in Canada as a whole) has recently been enlarged to include research into women's vocational training and technical


education from the perspective of labour. Of notable importance to this study is Clifford Lloyd’s “John Seath and the Development of Vocational Education in Ontario 1890-1920.” Eschewing confining isolationism and ethnocentric perspectives, Lloyd outlines the ideas on culture technical education advocates such as John Seath borrowed from other nations, particularly England and the United States. Lloyd also focuses on the way many English-Canadian schooling officials brought with them consciously or unconsciously “curricula, methods and ideologies...[as] [o]ne tends to teach the way one was taught.” Lastly, he argues that World Fairs and Exhibitions were a vital source of mass-communication, disseminating everything from educational and social ideas to demonstrating new improvements in farm implements. Importantly for this study, Lloyd highlights Seath’s educational tour of Great Britain and his notion of craftsmanship which ultimately found its way into the 1911 Industrial Education Act which made “provision for the training in fine art and design; not just for professional artists, but for the development in various kinds of craftsmen of some aesthetic sense.”


This chapter looks at how early social-aesthetic reformers in England perceived the “monstrous” effects of industrialization on daily life and more specifically how these reformers construed “Art” and the revival of the handicrafts as the inevitable moral panacea for all social ills. Though critics A.W.N. Pugin, Henry Cole, and John Ruskin responded differently to the problems of social preservation, they all generally agreed that the present social-economic system needed to be transformed, be it for the good of the state, society, or individual.

Reformers such as Ruskin ultimately questioned historicism, the nature of the machine on the production of aesthetic objects, and the products' material and function. They decried the way the goods were produced in stages (the division of labour) leading to the erosion of individuality. As standards of design deteriorated, changing the form and condition of design required changing the training, education, and the working conditions of the designer/craftsman. Art, architecture, and design which did not pay heed to these critical aspects of process and production were dishonest; it was morally bankrupt and for Ruskin an example of the intellectual, artistic, and spiritual poverty of both the maker and the society in which he lived.

---

These ideas linking morality with design were disseminated widely through a rising tide of aestheticism which culminated in the English Aesthetic Movement between 1860-1895. Influenced primarily by the ideas and practices of Henry Cole, the artistic group called the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (hereafter PRB; see my discussion in the next chapter), and John Ruskin, the Movement emphasized art and the industrial production of "objects of virtue" for cultural and moral edification and as means to the material and "progressive" improvement of society. In their quest to popularize the machine and enshrine art, Aesthetes argued that the appreciation of beauty was to be valued above all wealth and often above all ethical considerations.

Many historians mark an historiographical shift between the Aesthetic Movement and the Arts and Crafts Movement at Ruskin's and Morris' disavowal of machine production and their emphasis on handwork and handicrafts as imbued with sound ethical tenets in the process of their production. This shift has severed the historical relationship between the two Movements, though in reality they were contemporaneous and shared much in ideology, style, and advocates—for example Walter Crane and William De Morgan seemed to move effortlessly between both Movements. This thesis argues that rather than being two divergent well-defined entities, the Movements represented a continuum of expression. By looking at their shared ideological features, especially their

---

2 Contemporary knowledge of the Aesthetic Movement was widespread on both sides of the Atlantic. See: William Hamilton, The Aesthetic Movement in England (London, 1882); and J.V. Falk, Art in the House (Boston, 1879).

notion that art and beauty are central to life, we can re-examine how wider
dissemination of Aesthetic and Arts and Crafts ideas, made possible by the rise of print
advertising and retailing, made materialism and moralism compatible and popular.4 The
connections between the two Movements makes clear why it was that Canadian
advocates saw no problem in their promotion of both Aesthetic and Arts and Crafts ideas
and how it was that they co-existed, as in the United States, "in school art after they had
ceased to function at the cutting edge of the larger art world." 5

This chapter serves as a vital preliminary background to the later development of
Arts and Crafts ideas and practices in Ontario. As well, this study situates Canadian
cultural events as part of a larger international phenomenon of the Arts and Crafts
Movement outside of England.

“A Crusade Against the Age”

One response to industrialization and its corollary effects in the early half of the
nineteenth century in England was to revive in word and image the Middle Ages,
replacing the "Barbaric Dark Age" as defined by Renaissance Humanists "with a shining
image of a Gothic [national] culture steeped in idealism, spirituality, heroism, and
adoration of women." Inspired by the Romantic Movement and fascinated with the

4 See Loeb’s discussion and visual analysis in Consuming Angels.

5 Mary Anne Stankiewicz, “From the Aesthetic Movement to the Arts and Crafts Movement,” Studies in Art Education, vol. 33, no. 3 (1992): 171. Stankiewicz has cogently argued that strict and ill-informed categorization in art education has created ineffective explanatory frameworks and simplified “either/or” interpretations of the past.
"historical" past, archaeology, and narrative historiography, the Victorians re-invented the pre-industrial (pre-capitalist) Medieval world as morally superior to the present world in every way, and saw in it a suitable model for reform of the socially dehumanizing excesses of nineteenth century Victorian society. Many Victorians agreed with social theorist Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) that the modern industrial world was in spiritual chaos because it reflected theories and methods of scientific rationalism which promoted an undo emphasis on the material and temporal world characterized by money, pleasure, power for its own sake, and especially unwarranted trust in machines. Social reformers pointed to industrialization, capitalism, and increasing bureaucratization of the national state as dehumanizing, eroding personal and moral freedom. To the Victorians, society's redemption and subsequent social harmony could be found in rarefying spiritual truths and eternal principles of obedience, reverence, veracity, sacrifice, the sacredness of work, and obligations of duty. By adhering to the values of virtue, courage, faith, and loyalty of the Medieval past, men and women would be spiritually and morally bolstered to withstand the uncertain challenges of the future. The historical past was in essence romanticized within Victorian norms and concepts.

Medievalism manifested its most enduring form in architecture and the visual arts, particularly in painting. Into the visual arts, painters introduced the literary tradition of the Arthurian legends. The knights of the historical Arthurian court personified chivalric attributes of virtue, self-sacrifice, compassion, and altruism. The Arthurian

---

revival and its cast of characters provided a set of topological cultural models for "proper" behavior and actions for its Victorian audience, especially for upper-class men. This chivalric code offered a remedy for the instability of modern society by dictating that the upper classes had a inherent responsibility to protect the lower classes socially and economically. 7 This Victorian ideology, promulgated in English political life by the Young England Movement and its leaders Lord John Manners and Benjamin Disraeli, sought to remodel society after communal Medieval models and make them not only didactic moral lessons from the past but expressions of contemporary national sentiment. 8

Thomas Carlyle’s widely read book On Heros and Hero Worship (1841) constructed the hero as an insightful visionary, "the living light-fountain which it is good and pleasant to be near." An example of word and conduct, Carlyle’s Hero was at once “a Poet, Prophet, King, [and] Priest.” 9 Aspiring artists such as the young Edward Burne-Jones, steeped in the visual culture and nourished by readings of Thomas Mallory and Walter Scott, claimed visionary episodes of the past. While walking along the Thames in


Oxford Burne-Jones recalled that

in my mind, pictures of old days, the abbey, the long precessions of the faithful, banners of the cross copes and croziers, gay knights and ladies by the river bank, hawking parties and all the pageantry of the golden age...it made me feel so wild and mad I had to throw stones into the water to the break the dream.  

With an ever-increasing concern for moral and social betterment, the farmer and especially the Medieval craftsman became potent images of the Hero who embodied honest toil, relative independence, and a simplified rural existence. The cultural image of the Medieval craftsman found particular form through the massive building program of the Gothic Revival which steeped Victorian cities and towns in Gothic raiment.

The "True Christian Architecture" of A.W.N. Pugin

Among the most influential participants of the architectural Gothic Revival was architect Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-1852). Pugin first came to public notice with the publication of his 1836 book Contrasts; Or a Parallel Between the Noble Edifices of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries and Similar Buildings of the Present Day; Showing the Present Decay of Taste Accompanied by Appropriate Text which design historian Jules Lubbock has rightly declared as "an architectural and social manifesto" of the greatest magnitude and a seminal text in the "Good Design

---

Movement."  

For Pugin (and later Ruskin), architecture could only be "good" if it came from a good society while "bad" architecture was derived from a degenerate society. Pugin conceived of a theocratic society shaped through the teachings, rituals, and traditions of the Catholic Church. For him, "Catholic England was merry England." The revival of archeological models was not for him a matter of taste or to be left to the mere whim of the architect or patron "but...it is most closely connected with the revival of the faith itself" expressing social and cultural values. Pugin and other Gothic proponents theorized that Medieval architecture embodied Christian values and the morality and spiritualism of those who created it. Precisely re-created in a built form, the Gothic style had the power to transform the values of the past into current relevance and critically revive sagging faith, restoring traditional social patterns. This emphasis on the revival of faith and architectural forms was similarly promoted by the Oxford Movement (later the Tractarians) in the Anglo-Catholic Church and its Anglican counterpart the Cambridge Camden Society, later known as the Ecclesiologists.

The faithful imitation of the Decorated or English Middle Pointed style of architecture—a style which pre-dated the fall of Catholicism in England at the hands of

---


13 Pugin, *Contrasts*, p. 52.

Henry VIII, the dissolution of the monasteries, and the advent of the Reformation—was, for Pugin, a visual invocation of the ideal state. Pugin considered sixteenth-century Renaissance as a period of spiritual and social deterioration arising from Henry VIII's conversion to Protestantism and the re-introduction of classical forms and motifs from the Italian Renaissance. In contrast, in the fourteenth century under the influence of Catholicism, England was spiritually and socially "healthy" because of the Gothic Style used by the Catholics which produced a social condition of "wellness," while the Neo-classical style used by Protestants generated and perpetuated "disease" and social unrest.

Pugin's belief that architecture and its physical surroundings could influence people's conduct is evocatively illustrated throughout his books. Two vignettes in *Contrasts*, which depict a town in 1440 and the "Sametown" in 1840 are particularly instructive. The vignettes suggest an alliance between moral/religious society and its physical environment. The ideal Catholic town of 1440 was contrasted with the physical destruction of the socio-religious depiction of the same town, now Protestant, in 1840. Church spires are either destroyed or vying for attention on the landscape of the industrialized urban site, while the once powerful and transcendent symbol of Catholicism is replaced by the new symbol of the modern world: the factory chimney. In the foreground of the 1840 vignette, moral and religious failure is also signified by the prison which reinforces the idea of social degradation. Pugin's social analysis made a direct connection between the seeming architectural purity of Medieval cathedrals and the monstrous effects of industrialism which he saw as remnants of aesthetic and

---

15 See Barbara Tuchman, *A Distant Mirror* (New York, 1978), in which she compares social problems in fourteenth century Europe with those of the twentieth century.
spiritual ugliness.

Pugin's environmental deterministic conceptions included not only architecture but its interior furnishings, right down to its humble utensils. All had the potential to shape the lives of the building's inhabitants through text, symbol, and design, and in one memorable instance, Pugin designed a plate produced by Minton & Co. which around the rim read "waste not want not." It was certainly a contemplative maxim which censured any gluttonous or indulgent behaviour. "Pugin perceived that any artefact, be it a building, a chair or a dinner plate, or even a ceramic garden bench could be made into an object lesson in how we should conduct our lives, both spelling out the lessons concerning the work that went into its construction and teaching us how we should behave when we use it." 16 Pugin was adamant that he was "a builder up of man's minds and ideas as well as of material edifices, building without teaching or explaining is useless." 17

Pugin's approach to design was an approach to life. His two "great rules" of design—purposefulness and truthfulness—adhered to a social and moral code which for him was the Catholic tradition. As well, to utilize his rules was socially responsible because these represented attributes which enticed users to particular modes of thinking and action similar to the effect of images of King Arthur and his court. Essentially the two rules stressed that

---


1. "there should be no features about a building which are not necessary for convenience, construction, or propriety...[T]he smallest detail should have meaning or serve a purpose"; and

2. "that truthfulness, to material, workmanship and construction were of paramount importance."

Purposefulness and truthfulness were the essence of sacramentalness. In regard to architecture, no part of the structure or decoration was extraneous as each element had its purpose and was expressed honestly. For example, the symbolic separation between the secular porch and nave, and the sacred chancel was marked by a simple molding or decorative features which also marked a load-bearing structural foundation. These symbolic sites (as well as confessionals) were visible from the exterior, turning the notion of sacramentalness inside out. Purposeful and useful placement of decoration was also stressed as, for example, hood moulds which were placed above windows and door arches in order to deflect water. Truthfulness to materials and methods was critical: Stone was to be used as stone, brick as brick, wood as wood, and plaster to be avoided at any cost.

As examples of false, dishonest, and shoddy workmanship which did not employ this two fundamental tenets, Pugin pointed to the Commissioners' churches built in haste under the State Church Building Act of 1818. Time and money eschewed workmanship, and detailed decorative facades hid glaring flaws from the human eye. Wood carving was replaced by pre-fabricated plaster, stone was used in visible areas while the cheaper brick was used overall in the structures, and decoration was hideously overdone to hide poorly constructed work. For Pugin this was a moral failing, which though it may fool some people, could not be concealed from God's penetrating gaze. In buildings and
furniture, the "hinges, locks, bolts, nails...concealed in modern designs [should be] rendered in pointed architecture rich and beautiful [in] decoration." 18 The very construction had to be clearly visible and open to inspection as deceptive imitations and falsity were not appropriate in the house of God.

Pugin's two great rules of truthfulness and purposefulness which were the basis of his social and architectural thesis had a profound influence on every architect and designer for a century to come by forging a new relationship between architecture and craft, and helped popularize the practicing architect as a craftsman. 19 The necessity to construct in form and theory every aspect of cultural life led to the re-definition of the architect as both artist and craftsman. Though branded a Medievalist, Pugin's notion of purposefulness and truthfulness, and their relation to decorum were strikingly modern. In this regard, Pugin, as one of the most the important promoters of the English Gothic Revival in Architecture, 20 must be seen along with Ruskin and Morris as one of the key figures in the early formation of the Arts and Crafts Movement's philosophy. That the Arts and Crafts Movement established formally at the 1888 Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society was led almost predominately by architects was no coincidence. Ruskin's dismissal of Pugin as "one of the smallest possible or conceivable architects" is more of

---

18 Pugin, True Principles, pp. 22, 25.

19 In the 1994 retrospective at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, Pugin was rightly situated by Paul Atterbury and Clive Wainwright as an important pre-cursor to Arts and Crafts philosophies and practices. Pugin: A Gothic Passion (New Haven, 1994). Pugin's incorporation as part of the origin of the Arts and Crafts Movement remains suspect by some contemporary purists.

a reflection of Ruskin's opposition to the "Heathen Papacy" and possibly his perception of Pugin as a rival architectural writer than to any specific artistic or technical issue. Pugin's contribution certainly did not go unnoticed in his own century. In 1888, at the Art Congress in Liverpool, Arts and Crafts architect J.D. Seeding suggested that "we should have no had no Morris, no Street, no Burges, no Shaw, no Webb, no Bodley, no Rossetti, no Burne-Jones, no Crane, but for Pugin."

Utilitarian Principles: Henry Cole and Design Reform at Mid-Century

By mid-century, questions of appropriateness and fitness, popular taste, mechanization, and the role of the artist/designer in society were discussed in design circles by a small clique of artists, designers, and educators led by a senior bureaucrat named Henry Cole. To improve design and raise popular taste, Henry Cole recommended, in fact practicing himself, a close collaboration between manufacturers and fine art artists. In 1847, Cole established Felix Summerly's Art Manufactures and set

---

21 In The Seven Lamps of Architecture 9th edition (New York, 1984) Ruskin makes reference to the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1848 and suggests that it is "a national crime upon which the deity would inflict special punishment." These passages were expunged from the 1880 edition of the book. Cited in Clark, The Gothic Revival, p. 197.

22 The Ecclesiologists who held Ruskin in even less esteem than Ruskin held Pugin consistently levied attacks of plagiarism against Ruskin, claiming that "Mr. Pugin himself might learn from Mr. Ruskin, had not (as is not implorable) Mr. Ruskin learnt it from him." Cited in Kristine Ottesen Garrigan, Ruskin on Architecture: His Thought and Influence (Wisconsin, 1973), 21. As early as 1837, Ruskin published a series of architectural essays in the Architectural Magazine under the pseudonym of Kata Pushon.

23 J.D. Seeding cited in Lionel Lambourne, Utopian Craftsmen: The Arts and Crafts Movement From the Cotswolds to Chicago (London, 1980), 27.

about commissioning from well-known artists' designs which were then sold to manufacturers. Although fruitful collaborations like that of Josiah Wedgwood, sculptor John Flaxman, and artist George Adams existed in the late eighteenth century, Cole's firm differed in the way in which it conceived of appropriate and purposeful ornament.\textsuperscript{25} Set out, though not without contradictions, in the pages of the \textit{Journal of Design and Manufacturers}, writers argued for naturalistic "appropriate ornament" as opposed to a haphazard array of motifs taken from an eclectic collection of trans-historical and transcultural sources from crib books. Simplicity was prized over complexity and flatness and conventionalized (almost geometric) design was preferred over illusionary perspective, particularly in wallpaper and carpets. For Cole and Journal editor Richard Redgrave, conventionalized ornament reflected the moral stature of the nation.

Advocates also argued that ornament should be symbolically and relationally appropriate to the function of the object under question. For example, a vase covered with flowers or a breadbasket with decorative motifs of wheat were appropriate whereas dinner plates painted with images of sunsets were distinctly inappropriate. Unlike critics such as Pugin and Ruskin, Cole and his group had a more forgiving attitude toward machines and mass-production as they were much more interested in the proper use of ornament than on its form. Where Pugin based his notions of purposefulness and truthfulness on moral and religious ground, Cole and his followers were influenced by the rise of philosophical and aesthetic empiricism.\textsuperscript{26} Cole distilled Pugin's notion of

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{25} Before closing Felix Summerly's \textit{Art Manufacturers} in 1848, Cole had brought together countless artists and manufacturers, commissioning work from all the notable artists of the day including William Dyce and Daniel MacClise.

\textsuperscript{26} See M.J. Cullen, \textit{The Statistical Movement in Early Victorian Britain} (London, 1975).
\end{footnotesize}
truthfulness of its moral bearings and reconceptualized it into “hard fact.” In Dickens’ *Hard Times*, Henry Cole is caricatured as the government officer who quizzes Mr. Gradgrind’s class on the principles of design.

You are to be in all things regulated and governed by fact. You must discard the word Fancy altogether. You don’t walk upon flowers in fact; you cannot be allowed to walk on flowers in carpets. You don’t find that foreign birds and butterflies come and perch upon your crockery. You must use, for all these purposed, combinations and modifications (in primary colors) of mathematical figures which are susceptible of proof and demonstration. This is a new discovery. This is fact. This is taste.²⁷

Cole’s ideas were shaped within the rise of the Aesthetic Movement, a product of the conspicuous consumption ethos of industrial capitalism. With the growth of the middle class and an increase in its standard of living, Victorians’ purchasing power increased commensurate with their expectations for comfort. The adoption of new mechanized processes, new materials, and expanded markets made manufactured luxury goods, previously out of the reach of the middle classes, abundantly available. Manufacturers quickly recognized the economic potential of encouraging emulation of the upper classes as the new standard of consumption. To fabricate social elevation, mass-produced and cheaper versions of scrolled furniture, ceramics, and metal-ware became popular. The reigning style of the time—French Rococo with its ornamental flights of fancy, illusionary construction, and particularly its aristocratic pretensions, lent itself readily to reproduction. Knock-offs became popular. Plaster casts replaced hand-crafted wood work, while painting techniques could make anything look as if it were something

infinitely better.

Perhaps most importantly the Aesthetic Movement embodied shifting societal values and ideals, class expectations, and materialist fantasies. The Victorian home and its assorted "paraphernalia of gentility" allowed Victorians to conspicuously express their status, wealth, and taste, whether real or imagined. From furniture to cutlery, every article within the home marked England's dramatic manufacturing development and its massive industrial growth. Words such as "comfort" and "elegance" were more than descriptive characteristics of an interior or a piece of furniture: They also embodied social and moral values. By the 1860s, a new breed of middle-class Victorians followed what historian Lori Ann Loeb called "hedonistic materialism," and in the last half of the nineteenth century, "the attainment of the social ideal was determined not only by the cultivation of culturally desirable habits, attitudes or virtues, but by the acquisition of material things as well...[W]ith new and unprecedented fervour, [the] middle classes embraced material goals." 28 Victorians pursued a process that art historian Linda Nochlin aptly called "social differentiation through refinement." 29

Design reform by Cole and other reformers found perhaps its greatest expression with the 1851 Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations held in London. With displays of mass-produced and one-of-a-kind pieces from around the world, the exhibition, the first of its kind, celebrated the machine age and industrial technology. Under manager Henry Cole and the discrete direction of the Cole group, the exhibition subtly illustrated the marriage of design and machine production, arguing that tastefully

28 Loeb, Consuming Angels, p. 4.

29 Linda Nochlin, Realism (London, 1971), 238.
designed mass-produced objects were capable of disseminating "good taste" to a wider public. 30 Though a popular success, critics bemoaned the domination of the Victorian Rococo Revival, the derivative origin of the products, and the general lack of standards in the work of all countries. 31 They objected to the lack of variety and pointed to manufacturers' use of crib books like Owen Jones' The Grammar of Ornament (1856) which illustrated a cornucopia of historical styles. Commentators criticized the very use of machines to produce most manufactured products and especially those deemed works of art. Even France, once arguably a paragon of taste, sponsored products devoid of "fitness and propriety." Popular furnishing and interior design stressed ostentatious surface structure and ornament rather than rational construction, leading The Times to proclaim that "it seems to us that the art manufacturing of the whole of Europe are thoroughly demoralized." 32

30 The Cole group, which constituted the design establishment at mid-century, included Matthew Digby Wyatt, R.N. Wornum, G. Semper, Owen Jones, and George Wallis.


32 Cited in David Crowley, Introduction to Victorian Style (London, 1990). 32. The exhibition had its defenders. Dr. W. Whewell wrote "we perceive that in advancing (from earlier ages of history) to our form of civilization we advance also to a more skillful, powerful, comprehensive and progressive form of art." (p. 32). In William Morris his Life and Work (New York, 1990) author Stephen Coote suggests that Morris' mother Emma took him to see the Great Exhibition though it is alleged that he sat outside and refused to enter on the grounds that he had heard that the exhibits were "wonderfully ugly" (p. 11.13).
The Politics of Education and Art: Training the Designer

The state of design and its economic implications to foreign trade and commerce were not lost on the British government or other vested interests. As early as 1835, a Select Committee of the House of Commons under Member of Parliament William Ewart was mandated to investigate the dismal state of England's goods, the subsequent rise of French imports, and the "best means of extending a knowledge of the "ARTS" [sic] and of the "PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN" [sic] among the people. The committee concluded that state-supported schools of art education in France made artistic design superior to that of the English and a leading force in world markets. They also noted that rapid industrialization had not brought artists and designers in close association in England with manufacturing interests but had in fact severed their relationship from commerce. As a result, the committee's voluminous Report of 1836 authorized the establishment of the Government School of Design under the directorship of artist William Dyce. To improve the design of machine-made goods through ornamental decoration and art education, the Report recommended establishing a school of art

---

33 Lubbock argues that economics and trade superiority were only a pretext for government involvement, believing that the real motive "was to reshape personal morality by implementing a kind of control over individual consumption." *The Tyranny of Taste*, p. 248.

34 In the late eighteenth century, with colonial conquests across the world, Britain economically lead in exports and manufacturing. Following the Napoleonic wars (1809-14) and the removal of the tariff barriers, British industry felt the threat of foreign competition. At the committee's investigations, members of the business community testified that manufactured goods were imported "exclusively from France...I have never found a good designer in England." See Clive Ashwin, *Art Education Documents and Policies 1768-1975* (London, 1975), 67.

35 High Art lobbyists such as artist Robert Haydon attempted to coerce the committee as they saw an opportunity to establish state-funded art schools for fine art artists based on the study of the antique and the human body. Lubbock, *The Tyranny of Taste*, p. 250.
distinct from the artistic academies 36 with a curriculum stressing not only "mere theoretical instruction, but the direct application of the arts to manufacturing." 37 The first "government school" was formed in 1837, situated in Somerset House, eventually becoming the head school under an amalgamation of provincial branch schools in what became known as the South Kensington Schools. 38 After his successful administration of the 1851 exhibition (which he regarded as a disappointment), Henry Cole was appointed head of the South Kensington Design Schools in 1852.

Cole was also involved in the formation of a number of key educational and cultural institutions, particularly the Royal College of Art, The Royal School of Needlework, Royal Albert Hall, the Public Records Office, and the Victoria and Albert Museum. Cole believed that museums as depositories of historical artefacts were vital as teaching tools. They were the finest examples produced in the past, which could encourage standards of industrial production and life could be improved. For Cole and his utilitarian circle, art


37 Ashwin, Documents, p. 10.

38 The British government supported art education at two of the county's Military academies, Woolwich and Sandhurst. Prior to the emergence of the Report, Parliament granted £1,600 to establish a Normal School of Art which had been specifically petitioned by the manufacturing workmen in the neighbourhood of Coventry. On the Kensington Schools of Design, see MacDonald, The History and Philosophy of Art Education; and Nicholas Pevsner, Academies of Art.
education and especially the idea of art for profit was seen as important to the economy, supporting their notions of national progress. Certainly, it could provide a practical skill for the ever-expanding lower middle-classes. Peter Stansky has suggested that “art education might even help to calm a populace that is showing signs of becoming unruly.” This wholesale class-based approach to art education became ingrained into the curriculum of the Kensington system and design schools.

In many ways, the formation of the Schools of Design was a reaction to the stalwart and elite Royal Academy of Art (hereafter RA; established 1769) which popularly defined notions of “Art” and “taste” in the late eighteenth century. Particularly influential was the Academy’s first president, Sir Joshua Reynolds’ biennial lectures Discourses. The question of whether an object was inherently beautiful in itself or it merely appeared beautiful to those with refined sensibilities and training invoked questions of democracy and social status. Although the Academy was under royal patronage but never under state-control, it did not have to comply with its original commitment to promote the arts of design and to provide free teaching—but in an age still dependent on aristocratic patronage, the RA acted as the gate-keeper to the artistic profession, excluding those who did not meet its criteria of gentility. This of course excluded women and men of the lower classes. Reformers were quick to compare the negative political and democratic

39 Peter Stansky, Redesigning the World: William Morris, the 1880s, and the Arts and Crafts, (Princeton, 1985), 23.

40 See Mo Dodson, “Taste and Virtue; or the Virtue of Taste,” in Jerry Palmer and Mo Dodson (eds.) Design and Aesthetics: A Reader (London, 1996), 94-109. J. Barrell has argued that Reynolds’s art had a public function as a political theory to promote civic humanism. Finally abandoned as a viable theory, art came to be seen as providing private pleasures to a select few. The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt (New Haven, 1986); and Painting and the Politics of Culture: New Essays on British Art 1700-1850 (Oxford, 1992).
implications in the association of elite/intellectual forms of art, particularly painting and sculpture, to the artisan approach based on materials/objects, but despite popular agitation, the RA was able to retain its elite definition of art for another century.

The schools of design meanwhile were restricted to training art masters to teach in design schools, and designers for the British manufacturing sector, and to teaching the technically "imitative" as opposed to the free-hand and "imaginative" method favoured by the RA. Critically, however, and to the disapproval of later Arts and Crafts advocates, the schools of design taught ornament and decoration to the exclusion of the form of the object at hand. In essence both institutions were suspect: The RA was perceived as elite while the design schools were considered too practically-oriented to more theoretical and aesthetic artists and social commentators. As Arts and Crafts reformers later argued, the design schools retained intact the standard of the division of labour by relegating workers to concentrate on producing only one segment of a product.

The Moral-Aesthetic Approach of John Ruskin’s "Joy in Labour"

Similar to Pugin before him, Ruskin conceived of a different model of society set within Victorian England in which production of art and labour improved the moral temper of society. 41 This would herald a new age for Britain which would once again

reassert her greatness through her art, a "visible sign of the virtue of the nation." Ruskin disagreed vehemently with design reformers such as Cole because their Utilitarian perspective and conventionalized ornament denied the role of the imagination. The very notion of a "school of design" was, according to Ruskin, a fallacy, as "drawing may be taught by tutors, but Design only by heaven." Ruskin believed that conventional ornament should be based on the study of nature, the human figure, judgement, and perception, not strictly on symmetry, series, and contrasts—the watchwords of the conventionalists. The decline of design standards represented a more deeply entrenched problem which involved society, economics, morality, and art. "[A]ll the training in the world would not lead to good design" if the surroundings were devoid of beauty.

For Ruskin, design reform extended beyond aesthetics, strengthening the individual's moral character and thus the character of society. Ruskin's works, The Seven Lamps of Architecture (1849) and the subsequent The Stones of Venice (1851-53) at once indictments and moral prescriptions, were polemical readers for reformers who advanced the political economy of design. They argued for a connection between economics, social policy, morality, and design. Ruskin's most influential treatise and a key work for later Arts and Crafts advocates was "The Nature of the Gothic," first published in 1853 as a

---


45 Ruskin's most strident social, economic, and political writings include Unto This Last (1860), Muneral Pulveris (1863), and Fors Clavigera (1871-1884).
chapter in *The Stones of Venice*. 46 Inspired by the Gothic Revival (albeit Venetian Gothic) in architecture, Ruskin’s central premise was that art has the power to transform society for the better. Similar to Pugin and the PRB before him, throughout the 1850s and 1860s, Ruskin’s notion of environmental determinism held that the “beautiful” permitted people to “see” and “do” good.

Ruskin came to the conclusion that religion and the social structure determined the style of the “beautiful” from studying Venice’s architecture which was created under the influence of Medieval religion. In the Middle Ages, art and architecture reflected the thoughtfulness and feeling of each worker, in contrast to the contemporary system which destroyed the worker’s pleasure in labour. Beauty was evident not only in the buildings’ style, but in the honest use of materials and approach to construction, and more importantly in the work process which demonstrated the “morality” and “wholeness of soul” of the men that produced it. The Gothic style with its imperfect irregularity exhibited the imperfect touch of humanity—the mark of the maker as opposed to the regularity of machine production, which he so detested. Ruskin theorized that the Gothic was not so much a style "but a process of work," 47 a traditional and "natural" manner of work destroyed by Classicism of the "Architecture of Aristocracy" in the eighteenth century. 48 Ruskin ultimately looked beyond the final product to define the moral relationship between style and the process of production. Ruskin described "craftsmanship" and "workmanship" not so much in terms of the estimation of the work


47 Ruskin, quoted in Thompson, *William Morris, Romantic to Revolutionary*, p. 100.

48 This is a term used by William Morris, quoted in Thompson’s *William Morris*, p. 100.
but in regard to the social, cultural, and political conditions of the workman. Ruskin asked: "Was it done with enjoyment?" "Was the carver happy while he was about it?" Clearly for Ruskin only a whole man could create art.

The "personal touch" was the ultimate act of virtue and artistic worth. Art represented the purest and most noble labour because it utilized all human faculties, combining both mental and manual labour and invoking the use of the head, hand, and heart. Ruskin elevated the status of the crafts (or lesser arts) because they combined mental and manual labour. By redefining the notion of "value" to encompass both the objective qualities in an object and the capacity of its possessor to use it, Ruskin changed the way goods were perceived in the marketplace and in the society at large. "What are you making"? and "how are you using it"? became much more important than focussing only on the final product.

Ruskin shunned toil by defining work as a union between art and labour. Again, Ruskin looked to the Middle Ages for the pre-industrial nobility and freedom of Medieval craftsman, the pure manner and quality of his work, and especially the joy expressed in his labour. This noble and life-enriching lifestyle was destroyed by the contemporary Victorian world with its promotion of industry, technology, and science, galvanized by the individual's pursuit of political and economic freedom, as opposed to the past traditional time-honoured construction methods and hand craftsmanship. To Ruskin, the undisputable social and moral ideal was embodied in Medieval craftsmanship.

According to Ruskin, work, a noble and ethical calling, was central to all human life. "It is only by labor that thought can be made healthy, and only by thought that labor can

---

be made happy, and the two cannot be separated without impunity. It would be well if all of us were good handicraftsmen in some kind, and the dishonour of manual labour done away with altogether."  

Work was inherently good, invoking morality in those who produced it. For example, looking upon Gothic monuments would in time transform the moral consciousness and inspire those users and makers around them so that "even the lowest workman [would] express his skill and his mind in his work."  

Separation of joy and labour, evident in the economic division of labour which degraded workers by turning them into automatons, was deceptive as it is "not, truly speaking, the labor that is divided; but the men...divided into mere segments of men—broken into small fragments and crumbs of life." Social disruption was due to the fact that men did not experience "pleasure in their work by which they make their bread, and therefore look to wealth as the only means of pleasure."  

An arbiter of Victorian taste, Ruskin often berated the English public for their seeming lack of visual literacy and taste in the belief that everyone was accountable for the production and encouragement of the beautiful and the morally truthful. He argued that since industrialization had severed communication between manufacturers and consumers, thus precluding any improvement of manufactured products, the consumers' responsibility was to purchase the best products available because sound purchasing decisions influenced the ultimate design and in some cases even the production process.


Ruskin's union of mental and manual labour, and his emphasis on craft—process and function—launched an "amateur" decorative arts revival in which all felt "called" to act on behalf of the "true and the beautiful."  

To practically fulfill his vision of the good society, properly ordered, Ruskin undertook a number of social experiments throughout the 1870s and 1880s. Sharing social theorist Thomas Carlyle's sacred ethics of work, God, and particularly obligations of duty, Ruskin suggested that stability in the Middle Ages was due to a social model based on patriarchal and familial relations. Instituting the chivalrous concept of noblesse oblige, Carlyle and Ruskin saw the upper classes and workers in a pseudo-feudal relationship. Beauty and industrial economics were incompatible. Society should be re-organized from a basis of profit and greed to promoting pleasure for everyone according to individual desires.

---

54 The ways in which domestic revival ideology impacted on women will be discussed later in this thesis.

55 The notion of the "good life" as the "human life" and the philosophical and material elements which constituted it are a construction of the nineteenth century, shaped around both aesthetic discourses and pro- and anti-industrial discussions. Yi-Fu Tuan in *The Good Life* (Madison, 1986) has described four essential elements which constitute the "good life": a special type of environment, a focus on activity (especially manual or physical labour), a purposeful life (with meaning and respected labour), and the ideal community and society. The "good life" consists of notions of stability, continuity, and tradition, growth and progress, simplicity and freedom, and internal truth. Significantly, Tuan's discussion of the "good life" has much in common with the Ruskinian Arts and Crafts philosophy and practices. For nostalgic vignettes of farm labourers and work, see Richard Jeffries, *The Toilers of the Field* (London, 1892).

56 On paternalism, see: David Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England* (New Brunswick, 1979); and E.P. Thompson, "Patricians and Plebs," *in Customs in Common* (New York, 1993), 16-96. See also Carlyle's and Ruskin's discussion of these issues in George Allan Cats (eds.), *The Correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and John Ruskin* (Stanford, 1982).

57 For Ruskin's discussion of industrial economics, see: "Unto this last" (1860); "Monera Pulverize" (1862); "Sesame and Lilies" (1865); "The Crown of the Wild Olive" (1866); "Ethics of the Dust" (1866); and "Time and Tide" (1867).
In 1871, Ruskin formed the Guild of St. George (originally called the St. George’s Company) and invited the public’s participation and financial support. In addition to the St. George’s fund which was established to solicit the funds from the English public, as the master, Ruskin bequeathed one-tenth of his possessions to the Guild. Ruskin’s rural recreation of the Medieval social system retained a hierarchy of masters, servants, and artisans, and if successful, as Ruskin hoped, the Guild could eventually alter the existing social and industrial system of nineteenth-century England. Because of lack of funds, however, the Guild of St. George was never formed, but the proposal succeeded in outlining a more practical utopian model for a democratic artistic community, reflecting Ruskin’s moral environmental dictum and collectivism expressed in his belief in the "good of the whole." It was the "simple life," defined by Ruskin under whose paternalistic direction the Guild theoretically fused the rural artisan community and the cloistered ideals of a religious order. Ruskin’s initiative would ultimately serve as an important precursor to later, more successful experiments in Guild formation, significantly inspiring the settlement house movement in the 1880s.

---

59 Ruskin’s social and political philosophy is detailed in his other seminal work *Fors Clavigera: Letters to the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain*. Between 1871-78, Ruskin published 87 such letters and between 1880-1884 he published nine. His emphasis on the Protestant work ethic and his vehement opposition to capitalism made *Fors Clavigera* influential to socialists who shaped the English Labour Movement.
Ruskin undertook a number of other projects in the cause of social reformation. In 1874, while Slade Professor of Art at Oxford University, Ruskin conducted the Hincksey Road Experiment whereby his students set about constructing a road work supervised by Downes, Ruskin's head gardener. Writing to his friend Henry Acland, Ruskin outlined his intentions:

To show my Oxford drawing class my notion of what a country road should be...I want to level one or two bits...and sow the banks with wild flowers...and to let my pupils feel the pleasures of useful muscular work.  

Notably, among the diggers were the future political economist Arnold Toynbee and playwright, author, and infamous aesthete Oscar Wilde. While both men had a profound impact on Canadian cultural development, it was Wilde's 1882 lecture tour in North America which disseminated knowledge of aestheticism and the ideas of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Significantly, wide-spread claims of Wilde's plagiarism of Ruskin and Morris showed the extent to which Canadians were already aware of their writings.

---


Chapter 3

Fellowship is Life: William Morris and the Formation and Institutionalization of the Arts and Crafts Movement

*I believe that art has such sympathy with cheerful freedom, open-heartedness and reality, so much she sickens under selfishness and luxury, that she will not live thus isolated and exclusive...on such terms I do not wish her to live (William Morris)*

Greatly influenced by his social environment and the works of John Ruskin, William Morris—poet, writer, craftsman, designer, socialist, preservationist, and entrepreneur, renowned "on the four continents"—elaborated, expanded, and secularized the tenets and philosophies of the Arts and Crafts Movement. 

Morris' aesthetic production is legendary. Besides serving as the director, designer, and artisan for his design firm Morris & Co., his concern for the preservation of ancient buildings led him in 1877 to establish the influential Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (hereafter SPAB).

---


Morris was particularly respected for his published works, such as the seminal *The Earthly Paradise* (vol. I, 1868; vol. II, 1870); with Erik Magnusson, studies of the Icelandic language, history, and mythology: *The Saga of Gunnlæg Wormtongue and The Volsung Saga* (1869); and two socialist romances: *The Dream of John Ball* and *News from Nowhere*, the latter of which was a utopian vision of a socialist golden age. With little experience in the publishing field, in the last years of his life Morris founded the Kelmscott Press, helping to invigorate the printing press movement in England in the twentieth century. Morris re-integrated material, process, purpose, and aesthetic form of art work and goods. Architecture—"the moulding of the very face of the earth"—and history served as the essential starting points for his later socialist analysis of art, labour, and industrialism.

In this chapter, I focus on William Morris' contributions to the Arts and Crafts social-aesthetic philosophy and practices to see how and why the Movement was institutionalized in a series of guilds, fellowship societies, fraternal brotherhoods, and later trade schools and schools of art. I look particularly at Morris' political/aesthetic transformation and his final rejection of arts organizations and their artistic/political initiatives which sought to overturn the social structure and radically affect the nature of contemporary manufacturing. Morris' socialist radicalism and its connection to art and societal transformation is vital in understanding why Morris' and Ruskin's theories were

---

3 Page R. Arnot, *In William Morris: A Vindication* (London, 1934), 25. Arnot suggested that Morris' "revolutionary" socialist novels were translated into German and were circulating in Russia before the Russian Revolution in 1917.

inseparable in the minds of Canadian Arts and Crafts advocates who were uncomfortable with Morris' politics and vision of an non-classed society.

**Morris' Early Life**

William Morris was born in the village of Walthamstow, England at the beginning of the Victorian period in 1834. The eldest son of nine children, according to his sister Isabella Gilmore Morris had "a loving environment and an evangelical, religious upbringing." With the death of his father, the family was left in relative affluence due in part to shares the father acquired in the Devon Great Consols, Devonshire Copper Mines. In 1848, Morris' mother sent him to Marlborough College to begin his formal education. He would later write that Marlborough was

...[a] very rough school. As far as my instruction went, I think I may safely say I learned next to nothing there, for indeed next to nothing was taught; but the place is in very beautiful country, thickly scattered over with prehistoric monuments, and I set myself eagerly to studying these and everything else that had any history in it, and so perhaps learnt a good deal.  

Morris was dissatisfied with school, leading him to embark on architectural and historical tours of the surrounding countryside. He developed a critical but appreciative and discerning eye for architecture of all periods. In the 1870s and 1880s, when he began to argue for restoration as opposed to the destruction and rebuilding of "historic"

---


buildings, he spoke with an experience based on decades of "looking." Morris' love of the natural landscape, his life-long admiration for Gothic Architecture, and his disdain for formal education would figure prominently throughout his life.

"Fellowship is Life": The Oxford Years

In 1853, Morris entered Exeter College, Oxford University to prepare for a career as an Anglo-Catholic Cleric. The university was immersed in the high church moral reforms of the Oxford Movement (est. 1833) with its emphasis on ceremony, liturgy, and especially service to the poor. Morris was probably also aware of the Cambridge Camden Society (est. 1839; after 1841 the Ecclesiologists) which also aimed to renew the spirit and doctrine of the Anglican church. Both the Oxford Movement and Ecclesiologists made a direct connection between faith, exact architectural restoration, and morality. The Ecclesiologists were particularly successful in disseminating their model of the "proper church" and controlling the construction of unacceptable models. Inspecting churches for the "proper arrangement," members of the society followed one of two courses of action: (1) they wrote "publicly" of the errors perpetrated; or (2) they wrote "privately" to the architect pointing out his departure from the "true ecclesiological standard." The choice taken was based on the relationship the society had to the

---

7 In his paper "William Morris and the Oxford Society for the Promoting [the] Study of Gothic Architecture," Hans de Groot outlined recent research into Morris' architectural interest as a young student at Oxford which was spurred by the publication of John Ruskin's *The Stones of Venice.*

8 James F. White, *The Cambridge Movement.*
particular architect. Similar to Pugin, the Ecclesiologists encouraged the use of Medieval models to recreate the spirit of the traditional church. The society argued that “instead of new designs...real ancient designs, of acknowledged symmetry of proportions or beauty or detail should be selected for exact imitation in all their parts, arrangements and decorations.” 9 Morris’ early interest in the high-church movement was based on his love of historical Medieval architecture, though as Burne-Jones recalled “he hated the copying of ancient work as unfair to the old and stupid for the present, only good for inspiration and hope.” 10

While at Oxford, Morris met a circle of friends who shared his love of art and architecture, his code of high ideals, and initially similar career aspirations. Morris formed a particularly close friendship with Edward Burne-Jones. Together they read widely: Chaucer, Tennyson, Keats, Newman, and the social theory of Thomas Carlyle; and they created a fraternal quasi-religious “brotherhood” at Oxford which vowed to wage a “crusade and holy warfare, against the age.” 11

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the Palace of Art

In the late 1840s, Pugin’s and Cole’s insistence on doing away with superfluous and vacuous artistic expression was shared by a group of young aspiring artists known as the

9 “A Hint on Modern Church Architecture.” The Ecclesiologist. 1 (1842): 133.


Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (PRB). Declaring contemporary art as decadent and sentimentalist, the PRB vowed to reform the RA's standards and to purify art by adhering to what they considered as the most "truthful" models of art in history—those of the Quattrocento. It was not against Raphael that they rebelled but his "followers, men of lesser talent and inspiration [who] imitated...rules, and depreciated the beauty of his original achievements." According to the Brotherhood, the formulaic ideal of art practiced by the academicians of the RA concealed the truths of the visible world. While academicians stressed concepts of beauty, idealized representations, and the creativity of the imagination, the Brotherhood emphasized truths, facts, and exact imitation of the actual world. It also challenged the traditional hierarchies of subjects which placed monumental history paintings at the top and ended with genre scenes of everyday life at the bottom. Perhaps more importantly the Brotherhood argued that inspiration should come directly from nature, not from academic tradition. Accordingly, they outlined their aims as

1. [having] genuine ideas to express; 2. To study Nature attentively, so as to know how to express them; 3. To sympathize with what is direct and serious and heartfelt in previous art, to the exclusion of what is conventional and self-parading and learned by rote; and 4. and most indispensable of all, to produce thoroughly good pictures and statues. 14

---

12 Members of this original group were Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millias, Thomas Woolner, James Collinson, Frederick G. Stephens, and William Rossetti who served as the secretary and historian of the group. For the unofficial female members of the group, see: Jan Marsh and Pamela Gerrish Nunn, Women Artists and the Pre-Raphaelite Movement (London, 1989); and Jan Marsh, Elizabeth Siddal (London, 1995). Siddal was Rossetti's wife and model.

13 Mancoff, Arthurian Revival in Victorian Art, p. 138.

14 Cited in Mancoff, Arthurian Revival in Victorian Art, p. 138.
Focusing primarily on native literature, history, and themes from the Bible, the group was enthralled with John Ruskin's writing and particularly his messianic call of "Truth to Nature" in his 1843 book *Modern Painters*.

Go to nature in all singleness of heart; and walk with her laboursly [sic] and trustingly, having no other thoughts but how best to penetrate her meaning and remember her instruction; rejecting nothing, selecting nothing, and scorning nothing. \(^{15}\)

For members of the Brotherhood as for Ruskin, naturalistic depiction embodied a moral and religious imperative, stressing that artistic representations of nature should depict such virtues as truth, honesty, and sincerity with a high fidelity to the actual appearance of the object. This aestheticism was a benefit to society as a whole as it was through these physical depictions of beauty that the viewer could ascend into a higher moral and spiritual plane. Accordingly, the exact and minute representation of nature held religious connotations and sage counsel as each blade of grass and each incised leaf bore the mark of the great artist and his all-searching eye. Truth was not restricted to the natural world but also inherent in interior genre scenes. Perhaps the most evocative and one that received that most derision was PRB member John Everett Millias' *Christ in the House of his Father* (1849-50) which depicts a prophetic passage from Zechariah (13:6) where while working in his father's workshop Jesus is symbolically wounded in his left hand palm. All aspects of the work from the work tools to the animals were portrayed with the highest fidelity to "truthfulness." The image of the young Jesus and his family is not vague but modeled after actual friends and relatives of the Brotherhood. The hyper--

realistic rendering of the painting earned Millias a scathing attack from Charles Dickens who saw the painting as a portrayal of "hideous wry-necked blubbering boy....a woman [Mary] so horrible in her ugliness [that] she would stand out from the rest of the company as a monster in the vilest cabaret in France of the lowest Gin shop in England."16

Similar to Pugin, the Brotherhood conceived of a fundamental unity of the arts, particularly painting and poetry, which they deemed the "sister arts." As a manifesto on the nature and the aims of art, in January 1850 the PRB launched The Germ: Thoughts Toward Nature in Poetry, Literature, and Art. During its short life-span, the journal featured the work of Dante Gabrielle Rossetti, Christina Rossetti, and Coventry Patmore, and it served as a precursor to and an important influence on the later Oxford and Cambridge Magazine, a communal venture of William Morris and his friends, first appearing in 1856. Although attributed to both Oxford and Cambridge, the magazine was edited by William Fullford at Oxford with the majority of articles written by Morris and his intellectual circle. Though it too only lasted one year, it included poems, articles on art and architecture, and social criticism. The PRB's model of brotherhood, especially its collaboration on large projects, clearly provided a precedent for artists working together and it provided an early workshop for Morris to unite social unrest with aesthetic revolt.17

16 Charles Dickens, Household Words (15 June 1850), n.p.

In 1855, increasingly troubled with the social and economic reality beyond the serene walls of Oxford and in spiritual confusion, Morris and Burne-Jones abandoned their goal of becoming priests for a life of art. According to Burne-Jones, when Morris came into his fortune after his father died, he wanted to build a monastery, "a Palace of Art," which was to be inhabited by a quasi-monastic brotherhood dedicated to a life of simplicity, art, and study away from the sordidness of the outside world. Their eventful decision was recalled with Burne-Jones’ customary heroic language.

It was while walking on the Quay at Havre at night that we resolved definitely that we would begin a life of art, and put off our decision no longer—he [Morris] would be an architect and I a painter. It was a resolve only needing a final conclusion; we were bent on the road for the whole past year, and after that night’s talk we never hesitated more. That [was] the most memorable night of my life.

A letter to his mother Emma Shelton explaining his decision not to take holy orders betrays Morris’ urgency and his reading of Ruskin’s “The Nature of the Gothic” (1853), and “Edinburgh Lectures” (1854), works he later referred to as “very few necessary and inevitable utterances of this century.” He reassured his mother that it was for the best

---

18 Eugene D. Le Mire has pointed out that Morris did not turn his back on religion after leaving Oxford, as is commonly suggested, but may have not wanted to declare himself Extra Ecclesiam and sign Oxford’s 39 articles. See “The ‘First William Morris and the 39 Articles,’” Journal of the William Morris Society, vol. 7 (Spring 1987): 9-14.

19 Burne-Jones, cited in Christine Poulson, William Morris (London, 1989), 14. The phrase “Palace of Art” was taken from one of Tennyson’s first published poems (1832).

20 William Morris, in the Preface of the Kelmscott Press publication of The Nature of the Gothic (1892). In his first lecture the “Decorative Arts,” Morris suggested that “‘On the Nature of the Gothic, and the Office of the Workman therein,’ you will read at once the truest and the most eloquent words that can possibly be said on the subject. What I have to say upon it can scarcely be more than an echo of his words.” William Morris: News from Nowhere, p. 86.
...if I were not to follow this occupation I in truth know not what I should follow with any chance of success, or hope of happiness in my work, in this I am pretty confident I shall succeed, and make I hope a descent [sic] architect sooner or later; and you know too that in any work that one delights in, even the merest drudgery connected with it is delightful.  

Morris' and Burne-Jones' new emphasis on a life of art was in part influenced by the massive Gothic Revival building programme and the PRB's collective expression of a new moral seriousness in art. In 1851, while passing outside an Oxford shop, Morris and Burne-Jones saw John Everett Millias' painting The Return of the Dove Ark (1851) and were struck by its spiritual and aesthetic simplicity. Though the PRB had been initially treated with derision and contempt by the critics and their imagery compared to "artfully shaped and coloured pancakes," by 1851 they had garnered a modicum of respectability, securing the support of John Ruskin himself. Ruskin's letters to the London Times in 1851 (later published as pamphlets) "explaining" the group's aims went a long way to making the PRB acceptable, placing artistic expression on par with broad religious sentiment. Ruskin suggested that "Pre-Raphaelitism has but one principal...that of absolute...uncompromising truth in all that it does, obtained by working everything, down to the last minute detail, from nature and from nature only." 

In 1856, with a Pass Degree in hand, Morris entered the architectural offices of

---


22 Angus Reach, "Town Talk and Table Talk," Illustrated London News.

23 Letter from John Ruskin to the Editor of The Times, 13 May 1851. Cited in Linda Nochin, Realism and Tradition in Art, 1848-1900 (New Jersey, 1996), 118.
George Edmund Street (1824-1881), one of most important architects of the Gothic Revival. In Street’s offices, ideas were discussed, decisions made, and friendships forged, and it was here that Morris first met another life-long friend, collaborator and teacher Phillip Webb. In the same year, Burne-Jones, who after graduation had pursued a career in painting, introduced Morris to Dante Gabrielle Rossetti, a former member of the PRB (it disbanded in 1848) who encouraged Morris to quit architecture and take up painting. Morris wrote to his friend Cormwell Price that he was carrying on “six hours a day of drawing besides office work” and had doubts as to his painting abilities. Regardless of the work involved, Morris was content that “my work is the embodiment of dreams in one form or another.” Though Morris remained in apprenticeship for a mere nine months, he came to realize that architecture was the “mother of all the arts—the very moulding of the earth itself.” C.R. Lethaby, one of Phillip Webb’s architectural apprentices, once asked Webb why Morris left architecture. Webb replied: “...because he found he could not get into close contact with it; it had to be done at second hand.”

---

24 Significantly, Street is vital to the evolving history of the Arts and Crafts Movement as he trained every major architect connected with the Movement in the 1880s including J.D. Seeding and Norman Shaw.


Significantly, William Morris not only promoted the revival of the guild system in the nineteenth century, he also offered a model adaptable for use in contemporary workshop manufacturing. Morris re-enacted the "fraternal brotherhood" in the collaborative artistic decoration of his bridal home, Red House. 29 Designed by Philip Webb, Red House was an architectural conglomeration expressing Pugin's "true principles" of practical design, Ruskin's "ideological impetus of the poetic kind," G.E. Street's "Gothic revivalism," and William Butterfield's functional layout and plan. 30 The interior decoration was carried out by Morris and his wife Jane Burden, as well as Burne-Jones and his wife Georgina, Rossetti, Philip Webb, and Kate and Lucy Faulkner. Predominantly using the visual and literary theme of the Arthurian legends, the group designed, painted, and embroidered the entire house in a distinctly Medieval theme.

The literary aspect of the Arthurian legend, so prominent in Red House, was illustrated in Morris' early poetry, The Defense of Quenevere, and Other Poems (1858), and the Earthly Paradise: A Poem (1868-70). Morris, Rossetti, and Burne-Jones also employed the legend's visual imagery in the decoration of the Oxford Union Hall at Oxford University in 1856. 31 These fruitful endeavors reflected Morris' early belief that


guild arrangements based on fellowship were possible in contemporary artistic manufacturing. Red House presaged Morris' most important venture, the establishment in 1861 of his firm, Morris, Marshall Faulkner and Company in 1875, renamed Morris & Co. The firm was undoubtedly one of the most important decorating businesses in the nineteenth century, aiming to bridge the gap between "high art" and the "decorative arts." Advertised in the prospectus as "Fine Art Workmen in Painting, Carving, Furniture and the Metals," it was composed of Morris, Burne-Jones, Philip Webb, Rossetti, Charles Faulkner, and P.C. Marshall. 32 (See Appendix A.) The early work of the firm, leaning towards the ecclesiastical market in stained glass, furniture, and embroidery, was supported by several major commissions for St. James Palace (1866), Jesus College Chapel, Oxford (1866), and the Green Dinning Room at the Victoria and Albert Museum (1867). These works brought the firm substantial recognition. 33

Morris' sole ownership of the firm in 1875 started a period of intense production for Morris. Between 1876 and 1883, he designed 22 chintzes and 11 patterns for wallpapers, and with the help of Thomas Wardle experimented with dyeing using traditional (often lost) recipes. He also introduced the lost technique of high-warp weaving. Perhaps more


33 The company's publicity soared following the International Exhibition of 1862 where it won two Gold medals for the design of its booth and for the "artistic qualities of colour and design" in stained glass. Competing designers attempted to have them disqualified on the grounds that it was "old glass touched up." "International Exhibition of 1862. Reports by the Juries" (London, 1863): sec. 30, p. 3, sec. 34, p. 3. The Company's art products were also shown at the 1876 Philadelphia Exhibition, the Foreign Fair in Boston in 1883-84, and the Universal Exhibition in Paris in 1900. The Morris Exhibit at the Foreign Fair, Boston, 1883-84 (Boston, 1883); Kenneth Goodwin, "Morris & Co.'s Adelaide Patron," Art and Australia, 8 (March 1971): 342-5.
importantly, Morris introduced a new system of work which gave prominence to the worker and their process. With increasing financial success, in 1877 the firm relocated to fashionable Oxford Street in the heart of London. Morris wrote to friend Aglaia Corino how

...I should very much like to make the business quite a success, and it can't be unless I work at it myself. I must say though I don't call myself money greedy, a smash in that side would be a terrible nuisance; I have so many serious troubles, pleasures, and hopes and fears that I have not [sic] time on my hands to be ruined and get really poor: Above all things it would destroy my freedom of work which is a dear delight to me.  

By the 1880s, the firm had become the fashionable choice for a wide variety of aesthetic goods including stained glass, furniture, chintz, tapestries, and wallpaper.

Politics and Architecture: Morris in the 1870s

By the early 1870s, Morris was becoming increasingly aware of the plight of working class people in the changing social and political environment. His sympathy is captured most evocatively in his letters to friends. In a letter to Louisa McDonald Baldwin in March 1874, he discusses dissatisfaction with London and his longing for the

---


countryside.

Surely if people lived 500 hundred years instead of three score & ten they would find some better way of living than in such a sordid loathsome place: But now it seems to be nobody’s business to try to better things...but look, suppose people lived in little communities among gardens & green fields, so that you could be in the country in 5 minutes walk, & and had few wants; almost no furniture for instance, & no servants, & studies (the difficult) arts of enjoying life, & finding out what they really wanted; then I think one might hope civilization had really begun.37

Following Morris’ complete conversion to socialism in 1874, “civilization” would come to stand for everything that was wrong with England. In August, Morris wrote to Rosalind Frances Howard in apology for his argumentative behaviour during a previous visit. Morris’ suggestion of his own social and economic complicity in working class behaviour is marked by his increasingly socialist rhetoric.

I think to shut ones [sic] eyes to ugliness and vulgarity is wrong, even when they show themselves in people not unhuman; do you know when I see a poor devil drunk and brutal I always feel quite apart from my aesthetical perceptions...of shame as if I myself had some hand in it. Neither do I grudge the triumph that the modern mind finds in having made the world (or a small corner of it) quieter & less violent but I think that their blindness to beauty will draw down a kind of revenge one day...[P]erhaps the Gods are preparing troubles for the world again so that it may once again become beautiful & dramatic withal.38

Both letters subtly underscore Morris’ renunciation of one of Ruskin’s key theories.


Though Morris remained committed to an analysis of the nature of work and the need to transform it by any means possible, he did not abide by Ruskin's theory of work as a noble calling which expressed notions of virtue and industry. For Morris, work was a human activity which was implicit in the practical, social, and economic relations of production. Unlike Ruskin whose analysis began with the craftsman, Morris' critique questioned the human, social, and economic price of goods production. Morris' integration between art and politics was, however, inseparable from Ruskin's notion of joy in labour and especially the idea of craftsmanship: Both men maintained that the division of labour separated man from the ends and means of their product.

In 1876, enraged by what he saw as needless and destructive restoration of Tewkesbury Abbey by architect George Gilbert Scott, Morris established the influential SPAB. In a letter to the London Times, Morris argued that architecture was not mere bricks and stones but bore "witness to the development of men's ideas, to the continuity of history, and in so doing affords never-ceasing instruction, nay education, to the


40 Interestingly, this is a contemporary concern with the conditions in which Western products and luxury items are produced in third world countries

passing generations." 42 To protect England’s "living museums," 43 Morris called

for an association...to keep watch on old monuments, to protest against all “restoration” that means more than keeping out wind and weather, and, by all means literal and other to awaken a feeling that our ancient buildings are not mere ecclesiastical toys, but sacred monuments to the nation's growth and hope. 44

Architecture was part of history, an understanding crucial to Morris’ interpretation of the present by studying the past, believing that the hope for the future was found in past struggles. 45

In his many lectures for the SPAB, Morris discussed the relationship between the Medieval social conditions of handiwork and contemporary work in an increasingly mechanized industrial setting. Although living in a "rougher" environment, the Medieval craftsman was intellectually and spiritually superior to his Victorian counterpart. He worked for no master but the public, having control of his own tools, time, material, production, and aesthetic control of his wares, and selling them directly to the public for private consumption. His work expressed the conditions of his labour. Despite the hardship of his life, the craftsman found solace and pleasure in his aesthetic work. Pleasure was "rather that of conquering a good spell of work," 46 found in a worker who


combined his mental and manual faculties. The craftsman of the fourteenth century was "no priest-ridden, down-trodden savage, but a thoughtful and vigorous man...the guilds craftsmen led the sort of life in work and play that we should have expected from the art he [sic] produced." 47

For Morris, the fourteenth-century craft guilds held a supreme position. The introduction of the guilds in the Middle Ages were "a new and mighty force [which] began to germinate for the help of labour, the first signs of secular combination among free men, producers and distributors." 48 Once named "benefit societies" and "benefit clubs," the "guilds formed into entities that protected the freedom of commerce...in the height of their power there formed under them another set of guilds, whose object was the regulation and practice of the crafts in freedom from feudal exactions." 49

In Morris' time, however, artistic work—a significant part of a man's life—was threatened by the Industrial Revolution and the capitalist relations of production. Morris became painfully aware that the prime motivation of contemporary society was economic and commercial. For the opportunity to work, workers were often at the mercy of the foreman. They were subjected to the endless repetition of the machine which workers had "to follow day in, day out...and what thoughts [they have] must be given to something else than [their] work." 50 Separated from the entire production through a division of labour, workers were often not privy to what object they were making. Design

47 SPAB, 1884, p. 134.
48 SPAB, 1884, p. 131.
49 SPAB, 1884, p. 131.
50 SPAB, 1884, p. 141.
and ornamentation were sacrificed because workers were hampered with the "fact that [they have] to carry out his pattern neatly perhaps, but speedily certainly under the penalty of his livelihood being injured."  

The workers' living conditions were no better. Sustaining themselves and their families in the urban "sweltering dog holes," they were miles away from the fair fields of the country, a place they visited infrequently on day trips. 52 Morris believed that this "poor wretch," the individual worker, was unable to enjoy his labour and by extension his life as compared to his Medieval counterpart because of the degrading conditions of his work. In essence, compared to the Medieval craftsman, the workman of the great heinous machine age was a different labourer entirely. "Instead of all workmen being artists, as they once were, they were divided into workmen who were not artists, and artists who were not workmen." 53

Morris' Conversion to Socialism: Integrating Art, Socialism, and Education

In addition to his active work for the SPAB, his writing, administration and designing for the firm, Morris' dynamic synthesis of thought coupled with his political activism in the late 1870s helped propel his career as formidable and popular lecturer on art and


52 SPAB, 1884, p. 141.

53 SPAB, 1884, p. 145.
life. His first lecture in 1877, the "Lesser Arts," presented to the Trade Guilds of Learning, an organization founded to educate young carpenters, stone masons, and apprentices, was mostly attended by a small audience of Morris workers, clients, and friends. Morris reached a wider audience through the lecture's publication in the Architect in December 1877 and its availability in pamphlet form in 1878. 55 By 1882, Morris' extensive speaking engagements had produced a volume of lectures entitled the Hopes and Fears for Art and brought him ever-closer to his reductionist conclusion for the future of art.

Morris' most significant and scandalous lecture "Democracy and Art" 56 was delivered at Oxford University in November 1883, firmly declaring him as a convert to socialism. Held at University College with the masters from Keble, Merton, and University College in attendance and Ruskin presiding in the chair, Morris enraged his conservative audience by suggesting in his talk that art could not flourish under the current political structure. These were powerful indictments indeed from a man of Morris' stature—at the height of his fame as a poet, designer, and decorator and who only six years earlier had been offered the poet laureate at Oxford on the death of Tennyson. To add insult to injury, The Times reported that "at the close of his

54 In 1876, Morris joined popular agitation on the side of the Eastern Question Association, an organization dedicated to persuading the government against imperialist intervention in the Russo-Turkish war.

55 The lecture was printed in the Architect (8 December 1877) and produced as a pamphlet in 1878 entitled "Decorative Arts: Their Relation to Modern Life and Progress."

56 The lecture was re-named and published as "Art and Plutocracy" in 1884. See Ruskin's comments on the "significant change" of the title and especially Morris' understanding of the "excellence of work" being "in proportion to the joy of the workmen." The Art of England (Sunnyside, 1884), 228, 236.
address...Morris announced himself a member of a socialist society and appealed for funds for the objects of the society. The Master of the University then said to the effect that if he had announced this beforehand it was probable that the loan of the College-Hall would have been refused.” 57

After a decade of social observations and political analysis, and galvanized by reading Marx’s Capital, in 1883 Morris joined the Socialist Democratic Federation (hereafter SDF). As a member, he lectured widely until December of the next year when he came into opposition with the SDF’s leader H.R. Hyndman. Nine members seceded with Morris to form the Socialist League.58 Advocating the principles of “International Revolutionary Socialism,” the League rejected short-term reforms or palliative concessions for workers—the bone of contention for Morris—because it halted or delayed the social revolution, which Morris increasingly believed was inevitable, by creating a contented middle class. 59

Morris' socialist analysis of art and society became more exacting and radical. He argued that art would not survive under the current economic and social system or through the philanthropic and misconceived initiatives of an elite class. Subscribing to Marx's analysis of an alienated labour, Morris argued “that [transformation] could not be overcome voluntary by individuals, only by the a transformation of the relations of production” and the total eradication of the entire capitalist system. Eschewing any


58 Arguments concerning the breakup of the group may be found in the petition, Socialist League “To Socialists” (London, 1885). It is signed by Edward Aveling, Eleanor Marx Aveling, F.B. Bax, J. Lare, J.L. Mahon, and William Morris.

59 See the Policy of the League in Commonweal (9 June 1888).
existing relationship between politics, skills, and craftsmanship, Morris anarchically
came to believe that it was better to obliterate all art and to start again from the ground
up. 60 Morris' outline for revolutionary change is described in the section "How the
Change Came" in his 1892 book News from Nowhere, a utopian novel set 100 years into
the future. Morris depicts a decentralized society which is de-urbanized/semi-rural, and
where people live self-sufficiently "carrying on creative and restful lives." This visionary
society is marked by the complete disappearance of capitalism, commercialism, profit,
and any remnants of a formal educational system. 61

To change the social relations of production, Morris believed that the members of a
new industrial society must be educated in the Arts. Mistrustful of parliamentary reform.
Morris considered art under socialism as "a way of working" in a healthy society. 62
Stansky suggests that "there can be no question that this sort of moral concern with the
conditions of the labourer was an important factor in the growth of the labour party, and
that Ruskin and Morris were established shapers of that party." 63 Morris writes:

60 In the "Socialist Ideal of Art," Morris argued that socialism had its own aesthetic. Morris also
used theater as form of commentary. See for example Morris' 1887 play The Table Turned or
Nupkins Awakened: A Socialist Interlude. On theater as a form of social commentary in Canada
and its connection to the labour movement, see Sandra Souchotte, "Dramatization the Great
Issues: Workers' Theater in the Thirties," in Michael R. Welton (ed.), Knowledge for the People,
pp. 112-128. Based on his reading of Marx and Engel's rough notes, Purdue concludes that
Marxism offers a viable aesthetic. See his discussion "Ideology and Art Education," in Chapter
3.

61 See also the Preface to "Signs of Change" (London, 1888) The Collected Works of William
Morris, vol. 23, no. 2; and "Feudal England" (1887) Works, vol. 23, no. 58, where Morris talks
about the transformation of society.


63 Stansky, Redesigning the World, p. 33.
You cannot educate, or cannot civilize men, unless you can give them a share in art. Yes, and it is hard indeed as things go to give most men that share; for they do not miss or ask for it, and it is impossible as things are that they should either miss or ask for it. Nevertheless, everything has a beginning. 64

As an expert witness before the Royal Commission on Technical Instruction in 1882, Morris attempted to alter the institutional structures which impeded the practical training of the craftsman/worker. In his testimony, Morris advocated a comprehensive education which incorporated technical and aesthetic studies, as well as a general level of literacy as "everybody ought to be taught to draw just as much as everybody ought to be taught to read and write." 65 This training, antithetical to formal education by harking back to the old system of apprenticeship where the workman learned all aspects of his craft, was to be offered at various large centres of industry around the country.

Countering the effects of the division of labour, Morris suggested that artisans and designers be trained together to "practically be one." 66 The technician should know the work of the designer and the designer the work of the technician, especially in the use of the machine. 67 In contrast to Ruskin, Morris was not opposed to the use of the machine as long as it was used to relieve the workman from monotonous and repetitive procedures and did not replace handwork—what Morris called the artistic expression of life. Morris did not want the machine censured but the production and social relations


surrounding it. He suggested that schools be outfitted with the tools of the trade, for example looms and drawing boards, so that designers learn to weave and technicians learn to draw. This training was to be learned in "school as opposed to the factory as the latter was a too hurried environment." 68

Although not a believer in formal education, Morris considered apprenticeship training as an important education for workers. Indeed, Morris employed apprentices in his firm in London as well as at the "idyllic communal factory," Merton Abbey Tapestry Workshops. 69 At the workshops, apprentices were chosen for their initiative to learn rather than for any exceptional talent. They were introduced to a set of different manufacturing practices and mindsets which included traditional hand craftsmanship, the joys of manual labour, and communion with nature. At the 1893 Arts and Crafts Exhibition, Morris showed the work done by apprentices who had come to the firm "with no knowledge of drawing whatever, and have learnt every single thing under our training. And most beautifully they have done it!" 70


A promoter of life-long learning to "keep [the workmen's] mind fresh," Morris advocated the study of nature and of old examples as the foundation of the workman's education, reasoning that this type of training would also be "good" commercially as "beauty is a marketable quality...much in favour with the public...[which] would naturally raise the price of goods which had been devalued because of the division of labour which had cheapened and deteriorated them." Morris supported the exhibition of artifact collections of historical examples to be available in district museums, not as historical curiosities but for educational purposes and relevant to processes and production in local industries.

The Arts and Crafts Guilds: The Institutionalization of the Movement

Not until the formation of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society in 1888 (ACES) in

71 SPAB, 1884, p. 223.

72 William Morris, "Testimony Before the Royal Commission."


74 Still extant, since 1961 the ACES is known as the "Society of Designer-Craftsmen." For contemporary sources on the ACES, see: Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society Catalogue of the First [Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth] Exhibition (London, 1888 [1889, 1890, 1893, 1896]); and W. Morris, George Simmonds, Emery Walker, & T.J. Cobden-Sanderson, Arts and Crafts Essays, (Hammersmith, 1893); Recent studies on the ACES include: Linda Parry, Textiles of the Arts and Crafts Movement (London, 1988); and Peter Stansky, Redesigning the World. Stansky's study is
London were Arts and Crafts ideas ensconced into institutional form. The Society was one of a handful of organizations established in the 1880s and early 1900s by second generation Arts and Crafts disciples such as Walter Crane, Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo, William Richard Lethaby, and Charles Richard Ashbee. Patterned in theory after Ruskin's and especially Morris' ideal of Medieval guilds, the Century Guild (est. 1882), the Art Workers' Guild (est. 1884), the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society (est. 1888), the Clarion Guild of Handicraft (est. 1901), and the Guild of Handicraft (est. 1902), were "important vehicles of change." Although the guilds' organizational structure and aims differed according to their membership, they all retained fidelity to many of Morris' Arts and Crafts precepts concerning the social relations of production, in particular stressing a holistic approach to the production of aesthetic work, and co-operative and sympathetic labour among craftworkers.

Through these guilds, members and their audiences would experience the "joy in work, and hope in leisure." The Century Guild was a loosely-connected group of designers, artists, and architects who designed all facets of interior design dedicated to "rendering all branches of art...the sphere no longer of the tradesman but of the artist." 

the only comprehensive treatment of the guilds established in the 1880s.

75 Notably, although I focus on more well-known guilds, this model of social and aesthetic organization, often called "co-operative fellowship societies," was used by a variety of groups. For more information, see: Mary Bacon Ford, "The Art Socialists of London," Cosmopolitan, vol. 8 (December 1889): 185-90.

76 Stansky, Redesigning the World, p. 9.


78 Stansky, Redesigning the World, p. 75.
The Art Workers' Guild had a more strictly-defined aesthetic mandate: sponsoring lectures, holding demonstrations of techniques and style, and leading discussions by notable Arts and Crafts architects, designers, and artists such as J.D. Sedding, C.F.A. Voysey, A.H. Mackmurdo, C.R. Asbee, R.N. Shaw, art critic Roger Fry, and William Morris. C.R. Ashbee's Guild of Handicraft and Robert Blatchford's Clarion Guild of Handicraft were organized as rural artistic communities where members not only worked in traditional craft methods and materials but also participated in a morally and socially edifying life-style "which took craftsmen back to the land." More "extreme" members of the Guild of Handicraft, in their quest for the "simple life," identified with nudism and vegetarianism.

These guilds were vital constituents of the Arts and Crafts Movement, ensuring the longevity of the ideals of the Movement. Ironically, however, after his conversion to socialism, Morris became disillusioned with the guilds because he believed that only socialism ultimately supported his synthesis of art and labour, thus changing societal conditions and relations. Nevertheless, Morris tirelessly encouraged any organizations which furthered the cause of art, claiming that "the socialist claims art as a necessity of human life which society has no right to withhold from any one of [its] citizens." 

In time, Arts and Crafts disciples and members of these organizations ensconced the

---


model and practice of the guild in England's technical and industrial schools, and in many of the schools of art and design, particularly the Municipal School of Birmingham (est. 1883) which was the first school to incorporate Morris' principles. 82 Morris' principles were also incorporated into the curriculum at the Central School of Art and Design (est. 1896) under the directorship of W.R. Lethaby who introduced craft workshops, as well as at the Royal College of Art (hereafter RCA) under principal Walter Crane. The guild was an enduring and vibrant symbol of the Arts and Crafts Movement, surviving well into the twentieth century, and acting as an important model for art and design education departments and schools throughout England, Europe, and North America.

---

Chapter 4

The Emergence of Arts and Crafts Ideas in Ontario

Why, I have seen wallpaper which must lead a boy brought up under its influence to a career of crime; you should not have such incentives to lying about your drawing-rooms. (Oscar Wilde)

In the last decade of the nineteenth century, the British Arts and Crafts Movement's tenets and philosophies were taken up in Canada. They were adopted and disseminated by a series of artistic associations such as the WAAC, the Hamilton Arts and Crafts Association, and the Arts and Crafts Society of Canada. The Arts and Crafts discourse of these artistic associations was set within the period of Canada's economic urban and industrial transformation. Industrialization in Canada brought unemployment, de-

Although this thesis will only deal with the Arts and Crafts Movement in Ontario, and more specifically in Toronto, Vancouver and especially Victoria, British Columbia both had thriving Arts and Crafts communities. Local activities were organized by the Victoria Island Arts and Crafts Society (est. 1909) which presented lectures and exhibitions of interest to its members and to the public. One of the society's most influential members was Samuel Maclure (1860-1929), a native-born and self-trained architect (he spent only one year at the Spring Garden Institute, Philadelphia) whose work was featured in the American Arts and Crafts magazine, The Craftsman and the English magazine Studio. A direct connection to the Arts and Crafts Movement in England was transmitted by Maclure's draughtsman Cecil F. Fox who, prior to emigration to Canada in 1898, apprenticed with noted Arts and Crafts architect C.F.A. Voysey. For a pamphlet of the Victoria Island Arts and Crafts Society, see Christina Betts Johnson-Dean, "The Crease Family and the Arts in Victoria, British Columbia," M.A. thesis, University of Victoria, 1980. On Maclure and Arts and Crafts architecture in British Columbia, see: Janet Bingham, Samuel Maclure, Architect (Ganges, 1985); Martin Seeger, The Buildings of Samuel Maclure (Victoria, 1986). For a local social history see Terry Reksten, More English than English: A Very Social History of Victoria (Victoria, 1991).


For an analysis of Ontario's industrialization (with particular emphasis on Toronto) and its relation to the development of an urban-industrial working class, see: Mariana Valverde, The Age of Light, Soap, and Water (Toronto, 1991, 1993); G. Kealey, Toronto Workers Respond to
skilling, and social instability. Government as well as the manufacturing and business communities understood the possibility of unifying art with industry to improve products, which in turn created a healthier and more vibrant economy in which labourers enjoyed an improved standard of living. Art became the handmaiden of industry as described by Eric Brown, the first director of the National Gallery of Canada, Ontario. "Art was inseparable from commerce because commerce is largely dependent upon design of every kind, which art only can supply." At a time when workers were beset with labour insecurity, the Arts and Crafts Movement's maxim of "joy in labour," and "nobility of the worker" became an extremely important philosophy.

As early as 1850, the Arts and Crafts Movement in English-Canada was preceded by Ruskinian and Puginian thought in church architecture, which along with the philosophy of the Ecclesiological Society, considered English Gothic as the "true Christian style of architecture." The doctrine of environmental determinism decreed that a Gothic-styled church transformed the moral character of those who worshiped inside. These ideas were introduced by English-born architects William Hay, Frederick Cumberland, and Joseph Connoly, and discussed in the immensely influential Ecclesiologist magazine. In English-

Industrial Capitalism (Toronto, 1980); G. Kealey and B. Palmer, Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labour in Ontario 1880-1900 (Toronto: 1987); and B. Palmer (ed.), The Character of Class Struggles (Toronto: 1986). In her study of the social purity movement, Valverde suggests that in the appeal to British traditions, advocates of the Movement attempted to "infuse 'foreigners' with the moral values of Tennyson and Ruskin" (p. 107). Kealey and Palmer also make a token references to Morris as a Socialist poet who they conceive as "immersed in a tradition of romantic rebellion, an effort to overcome the 'age of shoddy,'...with aspirations that linked all that was truly noble in the past with all that would be promising in the future" (p. 281). Kealey and Palmer's estimation of Morris is far too general and does not acknowledge his revolutionary stance after 1883.

4 Provincial Arts and Industrial Institute Papers, Eric Brown to the Secretary of the Provincial Arts and Industrial Institute (11 Nov. 1920). Public Archives of British Columbia.
Canada, Ecclesiological tracts on church building were also disseminated through the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.  

In Ontario William Hay, "a zealous and devoted Scottish Episcopalian" and a stanch believer in the Christian Gothic, echoed Pugin by suggesting that the "Gothic embodies Christian beliefs and was therefore a Christian style of architecture." Hay is credited by the Canadian Architect and Builder as having introduced here the revival of medieval architecture, which has already exerted an immense influence on the architecture of Great Britain and other portions of Western Europe. Possessed of a thorough knowledge of both the theoretical and practical parts of architecture, and having good taste, he soon acquired a large practice.

Hay was nourished on readings of Ruskin and George Edmund Street (Morris' old architectural master) whose advocation of coloured brick came to dominate Toronto's

---


7 "William Hay: Obituary," Canadian Architect and Builder, p. 11.
architectural face in the late nineteenth century. According to C.M. Pelham, by 1858 Toronto was the "city of churches...[At] a distance...[they] seem to bristle with spires, and in the streets they meet the eye at every angle," an image both Pugin and Ruskin would have looked upon proudly.

By the turn of the century, the acceptance and popularity of Arts and Crafts philosophies in Canada brought about a revival of indigenous and ethnic handicrafts.

---

8 Hay was aware of Street's article "On the Revival of the Ancient Style of Domestic Architecture," The Ecclesiologist (August 1853): 247-253. Both the English magazine The Builder and The Ecclesiologist were sold at Henry Rowsell's Toronto bookstore throughout the 1850s and 1860s. Rowsell's family connections brought even more knowledge of Pugin and Arts and Crafts ideas as he was Charles Barry's brother-in-law—the same Charles Barry who had worked with Pugin on the Parliament Buildings in London.

9 C.M. Pelham, History of Toronto & County of York, vol. 1 (Toronto, 1885), 308. In 1898, C.S. Clark suggested that "any young man commencing life in the city, and seeking advancement socially, financially, or otherwise, will find no habit that will produce such advantageous results as to become attendant at some church...to abstain from church going is almost enough to make him a social outlaw." Of Toronto the Good (Toronto, 1898), 58.

10 Particularly important to English influence on architecture in Ontario was the Queen Anne style, an offshoot of the Arts and Crafts Movement. As early as 1896, the English Studio Magazine suggested that it was in fact Philip Webb's Red House (1859), "...that wonderful red building which became the prototype of all the charming houses of the so-called 'Queen Anne' revival." For histories of the Queen Anne Style in England, see: Mark Girouard's, Sweetness and Light, and, Peter Davey's Arts and Crafts Architecture. For Canadian assessments of the Queen Anne style in architecture, see: Nicola Spasoff, The Dissemination of the Arts and Crafts Movement in Canada: Domestic Architecture in Kingston, Ontario, c. 1885-1925.” MA thesis, Queen's University, 1994; and, Leslie Maitland, The Queen Anne Revival Style in Canadian Architecture (Ottawa, 1990).

11 From the 1830s onwards, Ontario had a substantial craft industry which included furniture, pottery, glass, and textile production, and was sustained by immigrant craftsmen primarily from England, Ireland, and Wales. For more information, see Jeanne Hughes' brief but seminal work, "Craftsmen in Nineteenth Century Ontario," Everyday Life in Nineteenth Century Ontario, Proceedings of a Seminar Sponsored by the Ontario Museum Association (1978), 81-86. See also Peter Nicholas Moogk, "In the Darkness of the Basement: Craftsmens' Associations in Early French Canada." Canadian Historical Review, vol. 57 (December 1976): 399-439. Sean Cadigan presents an interesting argument (although chronologically earlier) to the changing dynamics of the artisan-turned-merchant in Newfoundland in "Artisans in a Merchant Town: St. John's, Newfoundland, 1775-1816," Canadian Historical Review, no. 4 (1993): 95-119.

For information on the furniture industry, see: Michael Bird, "Cabinetmaker and Weaver: Friedrich Ploether," Canadian Collector, vol. 15 (May-June 1980): 3-8; "When Furniture becomes
At the Twelfth Annual Members Exhibition (1900), the WAAC showed a wide variety of handicrafts including pottery, embroidery, weaving, rugmaking, lace making, silk painting, woodcarving, metal work, bookbinding, and leatherwork. The accompanying catalogue contextualized the show within a "revival of interest in handicrafts [which] has been quite marked of late in England and on the continent...Canada, once seemingly dormant...[showed] a beginning has been made." The Ontario Society of Artists held their first exhibition of Art and Applied Design a few months later, showing the work of male and female artists, publishers, and manufacturers. Included were examples of fabrics, furniture, decorative ornamentation, stained glass, book covers, murals, plaster


12 WAAC, Twelfth Annual Exhibition (Toronto, February 22-March 8, 1900), 1.
designs, architectural reliefs, ceramics, and domestic items. The Hamilton Arts and Crafts Association held its first exhibition in 1894 the same year of its establishment while the Arts and Crafts Society of Canada, founded in 1903 by George A. Reid and Mabel Adamson, and devoted to the "encouragement of original design and its individual expression," held its first exhibition in 1904 showing the work of close to 100 artists from the Toronto area.

By 1905, this fashionable revival of interest in the handicrafts prompted the WAAC to establish their Home Industries Department. In affiliation with the NCWC and the Women's Institute, the WAAC encouraged the revival of the handicrafts in Canada by exhibiting the work of their own members and selling ethnic and native handicrafts produced by women from across the country. In many cases, the WAAC went far beyond mere encouragement by buying supplies, making exhibition space available, and selling or buying the handicraft work of ethnic women at their Home Industries Department located in WAAC offices in Toronto. The WAAC started a loan fund for Russian

13 Ontario Society of Artists, Applied Art Exhibition: Catalogue 1900, held in Art Galleries, 165 King Street West, Toronto (Toronto, 1900). [Reprint, CIHM/ICMH Microfiche series no 08292.]

14 Arts and Crafts Society of Canada. Catalogue of the First Exhibition Held at the Galleries of the Ontario Society of Artists (Toronto, 7 April-23 April, 1904). Contrastingly, the more conservative Royal Canadian Academy of Art held its first exhibition of decorative arts in 1943, and only after urging from its members.

Doukhobor women to continue their ethnic handicrafts, the money used to obtain materials for spinning, weaving, and embroideries. It also encouraged native women of the Fraser, Columbia, and Queen Charlotte Islands to sell their native crafts of basketry, pottery, bead, and leather work. In 1906, the Montreal branch of the WAAC, itself highly effective in the promotion of handicrafts by logging the largest sales of any branch, seceded from the WAAC and re-organized as the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, establishing what two decades later would become known as the Handicraft Movement.


Art Critic and Professor of Aesthetics: Oscar Wilde’s Canadian Tour

Though the WAAC forged a strong philosophical bond with the Arts and Crafts Movement in the first two decades of the twentieth century, the source of many of these ideas originated largely with Oscar Wilde’s 1882 lecture in North America. Invited to tour North America by Richard D’Oyly Carte, the producer of the Gilbert and Sullivan’s operetta Patience which satirized the Aesthetic Movement, Wilde was advertised as the real-life representation of the character Reginald Bunthorne. Wilde’s arduous ten-month tour across the United States covered over 100 cities, where he delivered over 125 lectures, was followed by insulting press corps, met with riotous behaviour from audiences (particularly university students), and suffered through scores of laughter at his expense. The “Apostle of Aestheticism,” as he was often dubbed by the press, toured the Maritimes, Quebec, and Ontario the entire month of May and part of October 1882 in which he dispensed his own evangelistic brand of “Aestheticism.”

More important than his witty repartee, his flamboyant ensembles, and his theatrical

---

18 The best source for Oscar Wilde in Canada is still Kevin O’Brien’s Oscar Wilde in Canada. My analysis of Wilde’s lectures in Canada are drawn primarily from O’Brien’s reconstructed texts contained in Oscar Wilde in Canada. See also Kevin O’Brien “The House Beautiful: A Reconstruction of Oscar Wilde’s American Lecture,” Victorian Studies 17 (June 1974): 395-418.

19 O’Brien, Oscar Wilde in Canada, p. 31.

stagings, is what Wilde actually said in his lectures—a factor overlooked by most contemporary scholars. With himself as the Movement’s spiritual creator, Wilde fused the ideas and theories from the Aesthetic and Arts and Crafts Movements to create a composite of English artistic culture. A close reading of his Canadian lectures, “The English Renaissance,” “The Decorative Arts,” and “The House Beautiful,” reveals that Wilde borrowed substantially from the works of John Ruskin and particularly William Morris, though without citing either of them directly. 21 Interestingly, in his lecture the “Decorative Arts”, Wilde suggests that several young men from Oxford joined him in this Movement, one of whom was “trying to revive the lost art of tapestry.” 22 Subtle mentions of Morris’ writings and aesthetic practice, and Ruskin’s theories, 23 did not escape the discerning ear of Wilde’s audiences who often wrote to the newspapers to set


23 Wilde borrowed liberally from Morris’ “Making the Best of It,” “The Lesser Arts,” and the “Art for the People.” O’Brien points out he “rejected their high seriousness” (p. 27). It is interesting to compare Wilde’s lecture tour in the Maritimes with that of Walter Smith, Supervisor of Drawing of Boston schools, and advocate of the South Kensington system, Smith also lectured throughout the Maritimes (in many cases in the same cities), preceding Wilde by several months. A comparative essay, yet to be undertaken, would add much to our knowledge of aesthetic culture in Canada. In this regard, also to be studied must be Matthew Arnold’s trip to Canada in 1884 especially in regard to his aesthetic agenda’s.
the record straight and mock his insolence of the revered philosophers. 24 Plagiarization aside, Wilde’s theories were vital in the popularization of the evolving story of the Arts and Crafts ideas in several regions of Canada. 25

When analyzing the content of Wilde’s Canadian lectures in their social-historical context, the little-known element of British and American aesthetic and moral reform influences in many English-Canadian communities in the last two decades of the nineteenth century need to be highlighted. In particular, the early emergence of Ruskin’s and Morris’ ideas in Canada, the substance of which formed the later Arts and Crafts Movement, cannot be ignored. The WAAC’s philosophical precepts of encouraging a high standard of design, craftsmanship, and artistic cooperation were based on established Arts and Crafts principles. Acting as a “guild,” the WAAC became one of the most important disseminator’s of Arts and Crafts social-aesthetic philosophies in Ontario and crucial to the Movement’s expanding influence in Ontario at the turn of the century in such areas as manual arts and technical education, university art education, and social and urban reform. In 1895, Mary Dignam appealed to the WAAC and National Council of Women of Canada members for “a more general interest in all matters pertaining to

---

24 For contemporary accounts of Wilde’s visit to Toronto and particularly the “knowledge” of Aesthetic and Arts and Crafts principles, see: Toronto Globe (May 25, 26 1882):3.6; Toronto World (26 May 1882); and Grip, vol. XIX, no. 4 (10 June 1882). Critical commentary was especially rampant in Montreal. See for example: “Oscar Wilde in Montreal,” Montreal Daily News (15 May 1882): 8; and “The Philosophers,” Montreal Daily Witness (15, 17 May): 4, 2. See also Donald Jones’ colourful though non-referenced account of Wilde’s trip to Toronto in Fifty Tales of Toronto (Toronto, 1992): 72-77.

25 Wilde’s exclusion from the Canadian Arts and Crafts historical narrative is based on cyclical biographical view of Wilde in the literature which regards his writings and his activities prior to 1890 as inconsequential. The dissemination of Arts and Crafts ideas in the Canadian context is far more important than arguing against Wilde’s imitative Aestheticism of “arts for arts sake” or his witty and often shocking repartee. I agree with O’Brien that the “content of [Wilde’s]...lectures [have] been pretty well ignored.” O’Brien, Oscar Wilde in Canada, p. 22.
art...[and] making the "True" and "Beautiful" part of our daily lives. Clearly, she was invoking the philosophy of the Aesthetic and Arts and Crafts Movement. 26

"What Art Should We Devote Ourselves in This Country?": Wilde’s Lectures

Wilde’s most evocative lecture, the "Decorative Arts," united women, the decorative arts, and nation building. Despite some repetition among his lectures, several recurring themes appear. Undergirding all the lectures is the notion that art is central to life, the very necessity of human happiness. According to Wilde, art is the “beauty of life,” 27 not done by the artist as a distinct province realm but “concerned primarily with...life itself.” 28 The decorative arts—the arts of a democratic nation—prevailed above all others forms of art. It was the “art which will hallow the vessels of everyday life, exerting its influence in the simplest form [of] humblest homes...art made by the hands of the people and for the benefit of the people.” 29 Stating Morris’ most often cited dictum, Wilde argued that there was no distinction between the “beautiful and the useful”; and as a result, the humble objects of daily life were inherently noble.

Wilde reasoned that “from the desire of women to beautify their households that

26 WAAC, Annual Report (1895), 5.

27 This lecture was given by Morris in Birmingham in 1880 under the title “Labour and Pleasure, versus Labour and Sorrow, an Address at Birmingham,” published by Cund Bros. (1880). It was included as “The Beauty of Life” in Hopes and Fears for Art in London by Ellis & White (1882).


decorative art has always received its impulse and encouragement."  

Decorative arts produced in the home reverberated to the artistic world "by beautifying the things around you, you may be certain that other arts will follow in the course of time." Women were best suited to the task of "even [painting] little wreaths of lead or vine traced around the margins of cups" because of their natural instincts, fineness of work, delicacy of hand, and generally noble character.  

Crucially, in his lecture "The House Beautiful," Wilde suggested that the decorative arts flourished when women are "highly honoured...and occupied a high social position. He reasoned "it...[was] the mission of the women of [the]...country to revive art into [an] honest, healthy life."  

In Ruskinian terms, Wilde conceived of the decorative arts not as completed actual products but as objects exhibiting two different qualities of expression: They reflected the value the workman placed on his work; and the pleasure he took in making beautiful things. "Good art" thus was not as much a formal or monetary estimation but a moral one which reflected the vitality and process of the workman's heart and hand.  

In an age of increasing mechanization, hand labour (and other forms of manual labour) and the nostalgic longing for the older methods of craftsmanship must be exalted, making the "human hand (an imperfect mark)...the most beautiful and delicate piece of mechanism in the world."  

Like Ruskin, Wilde equated good art with good people: "...if you have

---

30 Oscar Wilde, "The House Beautiful." The following citations were included in a special version of "The House Beautiful" which was presented in San Francisco and Toronto.


32 Oscar Wilde, "The House Beautiful (special lecture delivered in San Francisco and Toronto).


34 Oscar Wilde, "The House Beautiful." p. 164.
commonplace work, you must have commonplace workmen; but really good designs will produce thoroughly good workmen as beautiful at the moment and for all time."  

A further distinction was made between healthy (noble) art that "realizes [the] beauty of the age in which we live" and a dead (ignoble) art which was "obliged to go back in servile imitation to the romantic ages for its themes."  

Railing against dishonest workmanship and materials, and inappropriate design, which he alleged "was an unpunished crime" committed by artisans "who no longer love their work," Wilde preferred no art at all rather than "bad art."  

Wilde pleaded for the ennoblement, support, and encouragement of the handicraftsmen in society. Offering his own analysis and prescriptive on aesthetic progress in North America, Wilde claimed that "...the great difficulty that stands in the ways of your artistic development is not the lack of interest in art, nor a lack of love for art, but you do not honour the handicraftsmen sufficiently...[All] art must begin with the handicraftsmen, and [you] must reinstate him to into his rightful position."  

Insisting on a closer connection between the makers and users, Wilde advocated the elimination of the middleman (or salesman in retail), thus promoting direct negotiation between the craftsmen and his buyer. This act bound maker and user in artistic sympathy and in the larger project of nation-building, as together they would "understand the requirements

---


36 Oscar Wilde, "The Decorative Arts," p. 156.

37 Wilde was especially indignant about young ladies painting moonlit scenes upon dinner plates and sunsets on plates—he advised that these should be saved for the wall. Oscar Wilde, "The Decorative Arts," p. 158.

of...[the] state.” 39 Besides merely revering the handicraftsmen and his labours, Wilde suggested that the proper surroundings were essential in the creation of the beautiful. Such surroundings put craftsmen in contemplation and observance of “living things...and so your houses and streets should be living schools of art where your workman may see beautiful forms as he goes to his work in the morning and returns to his home at eventide.” 40 In this artistically-conducive environment, the workmen would be free to create the true and beautiful.

In all his lectures, Wilde advocated the establishment of schools of art connected to museums of decorative art, and the wide-spread teaching of art and design particularly to children. School age children were extremely susceptible to artistic influence and hence could be moulded into "pretty much what their surroundings make them." 41 The proper aesthetic surroundings were morally ennobling, character-forming and could tame a boys' "wild nature," while the degenerate environment would lead them to debauchery, perversions, and a life of crime.

How can we expect them, then, to tell the truth if everything about them is telling lies, like the paper in the hall declaring itself marble? Why, I have seen wallpaper which must lead a boy brought up under its influence to a career of crime; you should not have such incentives to sin lying about your drawing-rooms...we want children to grow up in England in the simple atmosphere of all fair things so that they will love what is beautiful and good, and hate what is evil and ugly, long before they know the reason why. If you go into a house where everything is coarse and you find the


40 On environmental pollution as a deterrent to healthy living, Wilde commented that "sickly or idle or melancholy people don't do much in art."

common cups chipped and the saucers cracked, it will often be because the children have an utter contempt for them, but if everything is daintily and delicate, you teach them practically what beauty is, and gentleness and refinement of manner are unconsciously acquired. 42

Disenchanted with what he called the "false education" of the educational system, Wilde gave credence to a practical instruction based on a traditional apprenticeship model and direct one-to-one contact between student and teacher. An early training in art, particularly hand-laboured crafts, had the capacity to develop the child's soul. For "the most practical schools of morals in the world, the best educator is true art; it never lies, never misleads, and never corrupts, for all good art is founded on honesty, sincerity and truth." With a workshop in every school, "you would soon raise up a race of handicraftsmen who would transform the force of the country." 43 With a home-grown talent, Wilde urged his audiences to forgo foreign markets and to concentrate on their own creations and to represent those things which delight them and give them pleasure. Wilde made mention of the abundant natural resources of North America—an incentive to wood carving, and affirmed to his listeners that "you have here the primary elements of a great artistic movement." 44

According to Wilde, art's egalitarian democracy had the power to transform class relations. At the very least the establishment of schools and museums of art created opportunities where men of refinement could come into contact with the craftsmen. The depiction of these men of refinement "who cover the world with a network of iron and

42 Oscar Wilde, "The Decorative Arts," p. 162.

43 Oscar Wilde, "The Decorative Arts," p. 163.

the kingdom of industry would do much to reconcile the workman with his lot, and end the strife and bridge the now widening chasm between capital and labor." Though clearly not critical of existing power relations, Wilde argued that "Art...will become part of the new history of the world and part of the brotherhood of man...[For] national hatreds are always strongest where culture is lowest."45

The "Decorating Craze" in Canada and its American Connections

In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, elite and middle class women in Ontario were swept up in a "decorating craze," particularly the vogue for home decoration and china-painting which had earlier seized Anglo-Victorian women in England and the United States. The sheer exuberance of this aesthetic mania was perhaps best captured by Mary Ella Dignam (1860-1938), founding member and longtime president of the WAAC, who noted in 1900 that

for nearly ten years decoration ran riot, everything was hand-painted there was no restraint, and it has been said that this madness was not altogether confined to Canada, but was prevalent in England and elsewhere. The homely industries of former days gave way to scarfs, banners, panels, screens and mirrors, painted with festoons and wreaths of flowers, or with figures, landscapes, birds, and butterflies and all manner of things that crawl and creep; even the kitchen utensils did not escape—pots, pans, rollingpins [sic] and milk stools were decorated for parlour ornaments. 46


46 Mary Ella Dignam, "Art, Handicraft, Music, and the Drama," in Women of Canada: Their Life and Work (Chapter VIII), National Council of Women of Canada (Ottawa: 1900), 125. This booklet was prepared for the 1900 Paris Exhibition and divided into distinct sections, written by notable women, which outlined women's "history [and]...achievements" in a variety of fields and
Over the past several years, historiographical studies have charted the cultural link between the WAAC, its various branches and hybrids, and the social-aesthetic philosophies of the British Arts and Crafts Movement. Though historians have attributed the Association’s formation to the structural and discriminatory practices of a patriarchal art world and to a lesser extent late nineteenth century women’s voluntarism, they have paid little attention to the emergence of Aestheticism as illustrated in the “decorating craze,” particularly the vogue for home decoration and china-painting in the decade preceding the Association’s formation.

At the time of Wilde’s 1882 trip, Canadian Aestheticism was in full swing. Though there is no defined Aesthetic Movement per se, scholar Elizabeth Collard has outlined that the importation and popularity of aesthetic wares—particularly art pottery—were available in Canada even west of Winnipeg. As well, Montreal Fine Art Dealers William Scott & Son also had a strong influence on English-Canadian Victorian taste by promoting the work of noted potter William De Morgan (1839-1897).

The evidence suggests that the early formation of the WAAC owes much to cultural events and to similar organizations already formed in the United States. According to Dignam, the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia was a “great event...[where] many Canadians saw for the first time, not only the art treasures of the Old World, but

endeavors including: charities and reform, education, church work, trades and industries, and immigration. O’Brien suggests that “after Wilde left [Canadian Aesthetes] retained their interest in Aestheticism. The craze of the hour—china plaque painting took—took firm hold in Canada, as women everywhere took lessons in hand painting” (p. 71).

For a description of china painting and how it evolved from the 1860s on, see especially Chapter XXVI (p. 155) in Elizabeth Collard, Nineteenth-Century Pottery and Porcelain in Canada, (Toronto, 1967).

the results of a hundred years' growth in the new." 49 Along with submissions from Canadian artists, the Ontario Department of Education sent an educational exhibit, suggesting early educationists' interest in aesthetic pursuits. In addition to examples of aesthetic, arts and crafts, and colonial revival decorative arts and interiors, middle-class Americans and Canadians saw for the first time a display of Morris & Co. wallpapers manufactured by Jeffrey & Co. 50 Following the exposition, the ideals of the beautiful were embraced enthusiastically in the art pottery movement begun by women, expressed in a series of books and magazines dedicated to its dissemination. 51

49 Dignam, Women of Canada, p. 214. In the late 1870s, Williams enrolled at the newly-established New York Art Students' League where she studied with painters Kenyon Cox (1856-1919) and William Merritt Chase (1849-1916). In 1886, after a tour of Europe, Dignam joined the faculty of Associated Artists School of Art and Design (AAS), founded in 1884 by Miss E.K. Westmacott. This small art school, staffed almost entirely by women, aimed to educate women in the handicrafts and give a "thorough and practical instruction in designs for carpets, oilcloths, stained glass, wallpaper, prints, and textile fabrics for manufacture; also instruction in...interior decoration...embroidery...carving and modeling, metal-beating, ceramics, etc." When Westmacott became ill in 1887, Dignam took charge of the school, becoming president in 1889. The success of the AAS was due to the "the decorating craze" which Dignam, seeing a cornucopia of aesthetic interests, described as a virtual "riot."

50 As early as 1871, elite patrons had access to Morris & Co. non-commissioned products through J.M. Burnstead and Co. In 1883, Elliott and Buckley of New York became Morris & Co.'s authorized agents. Boris, Art and Labor. Moss and Winkler argue in Victorian Interiors that in the years after the Centennial exhibition, Americans increasingly turned away from French wallpaper designs to English. "William Morris's designs were the most critically acclaimed" (p. 141). English taste-maker Charles Eastlake praised Morris' designs and urged his readers to purchase them.

51 See: Decorator and Furnisher, New York (1882-1898); The Ladies' Home Journal (1883); The Ladies Home Companion (1886); House Beautiful (1896); House and Garden (1901); Joanna Wissinger and Mark Seelen, Arts and Crafts Pottery and Ceramics, (London: 1994), 8; Clarence Cook, The House Beautiful (1881); and Constance Cary Harrison, Woman's Handiwork in Modern Homes (1882).
In Defence of the "True and the Beautiful": The Women's Art Association of Canada

The "decorating craze" of the 1880s was, according to Dignam, an important catalyst which generated opportunities for women to undertake an "earnest, studious, and continuous effort...to educate and enlarge their artistic perceptions."

The WAAC, incorporated in Toronto in 1892 (still extant), was a formal product of this new earnest and studious aesthetic environment. It was the first national organization for women and women artists interested in the promotion and production of art in Canada, and by 1900 its rural and urban affiliates spanned across Canada. Through an aggressive self-promotional artistic programme of exhibitions, lectures, and workshops, the WAAC provided an "artistic haven." both spiritually and practically, where women could meet as a "mutual helpful society [and]...kindle and keep alive the artistic impulse of the country, to stimulate worthy artistic production, and by united effort to attain as women a worthy place in the Art of our country."

By 1899, the WAAC were directly influenced by the philosophies and practices of the English Arts and Crafts Movement. As a delegate to the World Congress of Women in

---


London, England, Mary Ella Dignam came into contact with the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society which pledged its assistance “towards any movement to hold an exhibition of handicrafts, or for the establishment of any craft in particular by the Association.” The WAAC fervently embraced the production and promotion of handicrafts as “important national products” both for economic revenue and for cultural and educational edification. The Association considered artistic production and a widespread appreciation of both handicrafts and fine arts as essential for any progressive civilization and as a vital contributor to a nation’s economic prosperity. The preservation of traditional handicrafts (and methods)—”the “ageless” and “fundamental” crafts of all nations”—reflected a nation’s historical past and the virtue of its pioneer and native women who displayed excellence in “...carding, spinning, dyeing...weaving...[and] the production of the “homespuns,” which have become so fashionable of late.” Women’s domestic culture—the source of a Canadian “artistic spirit”—became a vibrant metaphor for the nation, the “origin and development of beautiful, artistic forms...[being] a reliable test of...[the] progress of a civilization...[coinciding] with the very growth of the

---

55 WAAC, Annual Report (1899), 6. Dignam was in England to attend the International Congress of Women where she read a paper entitled “Purity in Art and its Influence on the Well-Being of the Nations.” In 1900, Dignam reported in the Annual Report that over the past year the Association had built a small library which contained “works on the History of Art...and the works of such men as Ruskin, Hammerton, Taine, Moore, [and] Morris.” It also subscribed to important Arts and Crafts magazines such as the English International Studio, the American Craftsman, and Keramic Studio. WAAC, Annual Report (1900, 1914), 8, 26.

56 The WAAC continued to encourage and support its members’ endeavours in the fine arts, particularly painting, and Dignam rightly boasted that every major Canadian women artist was a member of the Association.

The WAAC promoted and financially supported ethnic and native traditional handicrafts in part as way to provide employment for "housebound women" and to furnish domestic skills and moral values to those in poorer communities. Accordingly, at the Twelfth Annual Member's Exhibition (1900), the WAAC showed a large selection of handicrafts produced by members including works of pottery, china painting, embroidery, weaving, rug making, lace making, silk painting, metal work, bookbinding and leatherwork. By 1901 the influence of Morris' and Arts and Crafts ideas were being remarked upon in the periodical press.

Over the next two decades, Arts and Crafts ideas permeated the WAAC social-aesthetic mandate in the belief that the "advance of art in the community [and]...through the good of the whole, the individual attains the greatest benefit." Accordingly, the WAAC crusaded to stimulate aesthetic changes in several facets of life, including the outlay of streets and parks, the increased appreciation of art and architecture, and particularly the improvement of design and art education in the schools. After 1899, the Association's aims were changing, clearly evident in Dignam's yearly presidential

60 For an interesting in-depth description of the 1900 Exhibition of Arts and Handicrafts see Heather Haskins "Bending the Rules," pp. 55-80.
61 "Canadian Art," Canadian Architect and Builder, vol. 14, no. 1 (October 1901): 177-178. The anonymous author suggests that "Canadian artists fall into line in all new movements...an interest in art is being markedly advanced by the development of the Arts and Crafts Movement directly inspired by William Morris."
address where Dignam's once-staid term "women artists" was substituted for "women workers", "craftswomen" and full-fledged "Arts and Crafts workers." Dignam began to consider Canada's expanding art industries as a possible vocation or profession into "which a woman might enter seriously." At the dawn of a new century and beset with a new missionary zeal, Dignam called upon WAAC members to "renew their efforts to struggle for truth and sincerity of expression in all the environment of our daily lives against the commercialism and crudity of the age." 64

Marginalization of the WAAC: Re-Empowering the Amateur

Stressing the obscure historical, social, and economic contexts of an art object, as well as the contributions of various agents and their associations (specifically those associations with a female membership), recent studies have attempted to redress the lack of attention given women artists and their historical associations. However, research has erringly side-stepped the WAAC's social, moral, and economic agendas. Void of substantial analysis, Maria Tippett included a brief history of the WAAC in her review of women artists in Canada, suggesting that the WAAC was simply "a vehicle through which its members could publicize their work across Canada and, through their participation in international fairs and expositions, around the world." 65 While a

63 Mary Ella Dignam, "Arts, Handicrafts, Music and the Drama," p. 213.

64 WAAC, Annual Report (1898).

65 Maria Tippett, By A Lady: Celebrating Three Centuries of Art by Canadian Women, (Toronto, 1992), 40. See also M. Tippett, Making Culture: English-Canadian Institutions and the Arts before the Massey Commission, (Toronto, 1990).
comprehensive history by Alison Thompson in her 1988 M.A. thesis accurately sets the WAAC revival of the handicrafts as part of the Arts and Crafts Movement, she fails to generally consider the larger context of Canadian social history.  

Scholarly studies on the WAAC have relegated the association to a marginal status or even worse, as an "elite social club of non-professional artists...[who] practised `mutual help and improvement' through lectures and exhibitions for women interested in the arts." The association's critics, however, were quick to point out that the WAAC "was not comparable to the professional [male] organizations." Documentary evidence in fact suggests that the WAAC's "uptown club atmosphere" replete with tea room, galleries, and weekly Twilight Musicales was a deliberate attempt to "attract...many to take a deeper interest in the work of the artist, as shown in the galleries, and of the musicians." The marginalization of the WAAC as an elite upper class association who philanthropically supported their less fortunate sisters is clearly misleading. A preliminary look at the WAAC membership shows that at least two women worked as teachers of art. Maude McLaren, teacher of free drawing in the evenings at CTS in 1915 and 1916 also appears as a convener of the "Life modeling" Club at the Toronto branch of the WAAC in 1919, while Annie Wrenshall of the WAAC Kingston branch was listed

---

66 Alison Thompson. "The Women's Art Association of Canada."

67 Dennis Reid's A Concise History of Canadian Painting (Toronto, 1988), 254. Reid merely refers to the WAAC as host to a two-man show in 1944 for artists Jack Bush and Ronald York Wilson.


69 Farr and Luckyj, From Women's Eyes, p. 3.

70 Florence Deeks. "Historical Sketch of the Women's Art Association of Canada" (Toronto, 1912), 7.
as an evening teacher of "Art," as well as at CTS. She had previously taught miniature painting and ceramics at the Kingston Art School. The WAAC considered handicrafts as a source of employment for house-bound women, especially those in isolated rural districts. These "clever craftswomen...were enriching the national product through skilled work in the homes."  

The WAAC was not perpetuating a mentality of separate spheres but acknowledging the contemporary reality of women's lives.

The WAAC was not a passive association but as members of the NCWC, and the local Council of Women (est. 1893), WAAC members were actively involved in women's suffrage debates at the turn of the century. The questions of interest at the local and international NCWC meetings went beyond "women's" and "aesthetic" subjects. The WAAC delegates present at the second annual meeting of the NCWC in 1895, for example, reported that "many questions of interest [were] discussed during the following days...Manual and Technical Education, sanitary work, representation of women on boards of philanthropic institutions, length of working hours for women and children in factories, applied design, national art, music, and literature."  

The WAAC was clearly a vital constituent of Toronto's artistic communities. It not only embraced Arts and Crafts tenets and philosophies but it also initiated its own aesthetic practices such as "Open Studio Day," a significant event in the development of interest in art and Arts and Crafts ideals in Toronto. Popular and extremely well attended, Open Studio Day was held once a month and brought WAAC members as well

---

72 WAAC, Annual Report (1895), 23. WAAC members were representatives at the meetings of the NCWC and its affiliated associations, reporting proceedings to the WAAC membership in the Annual Reports.
as the public to the studios and the homes of artists such as Lucius O'Brien, first
president of the RCA, E. Wyley Grier, and artists George Agnew Reid, Mary Heister Reid,
Sidney Strickland Tully, Robert Gagen, J.W. Beatty, and F.H. Brigden. In 1899, Jean
Grant remarked how "it is indeed a delightful privilege to visit these rooms, where there
is so much beauty and where we become acquainted with a profession which is
becoming more recognized in the city." These visits provided the public with their first
glimpse into an Arts and Crafts interior environment: the studio and the home. In a 1901
article on George Agnew Reid, Margaret Fairburn recalled a visit to Reid's Wychwood
Park home and studio:

In all his work, as in his own surroundings in studio and home, the artist
expresses that sense of the fitness of things for their use, of sincerity and
solidity in build, and of simplicity of design, which taken together makes
for true hand harmony in the outward life...This art of theirs neither began
in, nor ended with, their pictures, but lent its brightness to common
things, adorning and cultivating the daily household life...the artists has
poeticized in nearly every case the home life with its joy and sorrows.

---

73 See "In the Studio's of Toronto's Best known Artists," Toronto World, (2 April 1911).

74 Jean Grant, Saturday Night (1899).

75 Wychwood Park (still extant) was designed as an artist's community on a piece of land
purchased by artist Marmaduke Mathews (1837-1913). It was the home of G. A. Reid who moved
there in 1905, building his own Arts and Crafts home complete with inglenook and decorative
murals. On artists' colonies, see Michael Jacobs, The Good and Simple Life: Artist Colonies in

76 Margaret L. Fairbairn, "The Art of George A. Reid," The Canadian Magazine, XXII, no. 1
Chapter 5

Against the Commercialism and Crudity of the Age: Disseminating the Ideal

_Social progress may take a direction quite different from that imagined by either of them, but none the less, the society of the future will owe much to their idealism_ (James Mavor on John Ruskin and William Morris, 1922) ¹

Between 1896 and 1925, William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement became a popular topic of interest with professors and students at the University of Toronto. Morris was written about in articles in the university press, in academic books and biographies, as part of the curriculum, in theses, and especially in lectures on and off campus. ² He was discussed by a prestigious group of academics at the university including Political Economist James Mavor, Professor of Greek Classics John Charles Robertson, and Pelham Edgar Professor of English Literature at Victoria College. To Edgar, Morris was a man of letters of the highest literary prominence while for Robertson, the Classicist, Morris’ social criticism, as delineated in his 1891 novel _News from Nowhere_, served as an effective commentary on the ancient Greek world as portrayed in Plato’s _Republic_. Notably, it was through Mavor’s “remembrances” that Morris would transcend the realm of myth to reality and be transformed from a friend

¹ James Mavor, _My Windows on the Street of the World_ (Toronto, 1923), 195.

² Rev. Canon A. Armstrong wrote an M.A. thesis (University of Toronto) on Ruskin in 1905 entitled “Ruskin as a Religious Teacher” in which he discussed Ruskin “bringing the knowledge of God’s will into the minutest details of our lives” (p. 1). Judy Mills and Irene Dombra, _University of Toronto Doctoral Theses, 1897-1967_ (Toronto, 1968). Morris, Rossetti’s, and Ruskin’s poetry were also included in _Representative Poetry Mainly of the XVII and the XIX Centuries_ (Toronto, 1915) which was edited by English Professors W.J. Alexander and W.H. Clawson. Alexander was Armstrong’s thesis supervisor. Robin Harris, _English Studies at Toronto: A History_ (Toronto, 1987), 64-65.
and comrade to a rebellious—yet wealthy—revolutionary socialist who was politically naive and aesthetically lacking in his perception of natural beauty(!). Though Edgar, Robertson, and Mavor all offered wholly diverse representations of Morris to suit their own particular interests and agendas, they were united in the study of the essential Morris: the artist, the poet, and the socialist.

Since knowledge of Morris and the Movement's aesthetic philosophies had been steadily on the rise in architectural and artistic circles in the last decades of the nineteenth century, these scholars' dissemination of the "academic Morris" was mediated through a cultural interaction with social-aesthetic interests on and off campus. Through their writings and especially their public lectures, all three academics were brought into closer contact with agents and groups in the community who themselves intellectually adhered to and practised Arts and Crafts social-aesthetic ideas. Significantly, most of the community groups interested in Morris and involved in the practice of Arts and Crafts philosophies were women's cultural organizations such as the Toronto branch of the WAAC, the local branch of the NCWC, and the Ladies League of School Art. Sympathetic matters often brought these various agents and groups into collective action: For example, when Mavor's federal initiatives to settle the Russian Doukhobors succeeded in 1899, the WAAC and the NCWC stepped in to socially acculturate and economically support Doukhobor women by selling their ethnic handicrafts. Though these social relations were characterized by gender divisions (male

---

"Morris' popularity increased with the publication of a several key biographies written shortly after Morris death, particularly Aymer Vallance's *William Morris: His Art, His Writing, and His Public Life* (London, 1897); and J.W. MacKail's *The Life of William Morris* (London, 1899). What becomes enshrined as Morris' life and practice is garnered particularly from MacKail's text and only punctuated by Mavor's personal recitations."
intellectualism and female skilled practice), and class and ethnic inequities, these women's groups were integral in shaping and institutionalizing the evolving Morris and Arts and Crafts discourse.

I begin with a discussion of James Mavor focusing particularly on his dissemination of the Arts and Crafts Movement's social-aesthetic ideas in Toronto over the span of his 33-year residency. An examination of artistic activities, beliefs, and values is crucial to understanding Mavor holistically while specifying the ways in which the Arts and Crafts Movement's rhetoric was transformed within local cultural traditions. How did the Movement re-organize the meanings of aesthetic culture to correspond to various state-forming ambitions? In doing that, I want to contest the popularly-held notion that Mavor's promotion of Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement was always a positive invocation of Morris or the Movement's ideals. Rather, I will argue that Mavor often used his knowledge of aesthetics, socialism, and his friendship with William Morris to further his own self-identity as an aesthetic "seer" and an impeachable authority on political economy. Personal motivations aside, Mavor was able to forge essential links between the university and the larger artistic communities and make the Movement's ideals readily applicable to the Canadian context and relevant to many facets of Canadian life. Mavor's interest was crucial to shaping debates on citizenship, patriotism, and the "good society."

---

4 For contemporary works which advance this position, see Rachel Grover's James Mavor and His World: An Exhibition of Books and Papers Selected from the James Mavor Collection (Toronto, 1975), and particularly Rosalind Pepall's "Under the Spell of Morris," in The Earthly Paradise: Arts and Crafts by William Morris and his Circle from Canadian Collections.
James Mavor’s Contribution to the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement

From the time of his arrival in Toronto in 1892 until his death in 1925, James Mavor (b. 1854) was a critical disseminator of cultural knowledge on the social-aesthetic philosophies and practices of the English Arts and Crafts Movement. Although Mavor was not solely responsible for introducing these ideas in Toronto, his intimate knowledge of the Movement’s aesthetic ideals, its historical lineage, and particularly his self-described friendship with the Movement’s figure-head William Morris, were critical to the Movement’s wider recognition in Toronto. Following Morris’ death in England in 1896, Mavor’s first-hand knowledge made him a celebrated authority on the Movement and its key participants. With the publication of his memoirs in 1923 in which he devoted an entire chapter to William Morris, Mavor became widely acknowledged by Toronto’s elite as the pre-eminent embodiment of the English Arts and Crafts Movement, solidifying his reputation as the man who knew William Morris.\(^5\)

Although Mavor came to Toronto in 1892 to assume the chair of Political Economy at the University of Toronto, the state of “Culture in Canada” was always foremost in his mind.\(^6\) Arriving in the fall of 1892, Mavor’s lackluster perception of Toronto’s genteel activities and institutions is evident in his journals in which he recorded that “Culture seems a kind of craze in Canada. What they mean by it is perhaps hazy even to


themselves; but they undoubtedly have a yearning for something which is not specie [money].” 7 Capitalizing on this “cultural yearning,” in addition to his academic and professional responsibilities, over the next two decades Mavor fashioned himself as an aesthetic theorist, art historian, connoisseur, and a patron of the arts (including literature and drama). 8 He became involved in every aspect of Toronto’s cultural and educational edification including the founding of the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Royal Ontario Museum, and the city beautification initiatives of the Guild of Civic Art. 9 Mavor lectured and wrote extensively on the civic and mass educational and national potential of art in a number of important arts periodicals including The Year Book of Canadian Art, and the Canadian Magazine, and even collaborated with Lady Aberdeen, wife of Canada’s Governor-General (1893–1898), to edit a book on the costumes worn at the Victorian Era Ball given in Toronto in 1897 in honour of Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee. 10 James Mavor’s

7 “Journals.” James Mavor Papers, University of Toronto, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library (hereafter TFRBL) Ms. Coll. 119.

8 Mavor was a member of the Round Table Literary Club and was also instrumental in promoting writers like Ernest Thompson and Marjorie Pickethall.

9 David Kimmel argues that the formation of public art institutions at the turn of the century was accomplished only after the “new bourgeois hegemony” of wealthy professionals and “merchant princes” financially supported these endeavours. “Toronto Gets a Gallery: The Origins and Development of the City’s Permanent Public Art Museum,” Ontario History, vol. LXXXIV, no. 3 (September 1992).

cultural and educational influence was so profound that when his daughter, actress, theater director and producer Dora Mavor Moore, wanted to secure an auditorium in the basement of the Royal Ontario Museum to put on a play in the 1930s, she stressed in no uncertain terms the financial, political, and practical support given by her father decades earlier as the basis of her application. ¹¹ Rachel Grover has pointed out that when Charles Currely, the first director of the Royal Ontario Museum returned to Toronto from his trip to Egypt laden with precious antiquities it was “members of the Mavor family [who] laid out” the articles for an exhibition in the West Hall of University College. ¹²

Ironically, though Mavor was a pivotal and well-regarded cultural authority by members of Toronto’s social-aesthetic communities, his “bohemian” lifestyle was less than popular with many of his academic colleagues at the university. As early as 1895, Mavor, the last foreign chair appointed at Toronto, was embroiled in a controversial student strike which resulted in questions over the authenticity of his credentials or rather lack of them (he was granted an honorary Ph.D. from the university in 1912), his rambling and often non-relevant lecture style, and his general academic (un)suitability. ¹³ The level of antagonism expressed toward Mavor may be gleaned in the 1916


¹² Rachel Grover, James Mavor and his World, p. 4.

¹³ For a brief description of the series of events which led up to the student strike, see Burke, Seeking the Highest Good. An expanded analysis may be found in the “The Report of the Commissioners on the Discipline in the University of Toronto” (Toronto, 1895). See also James Reaney’s play, The Dismissal or Twisted Beards & Tangled Whiskers (Toronto, 1978), produced on the University of Toronto’s 150th anniversary in which Mavor as Professor McQuaid is unflatteringly characterized.
biographical entry in Bridle’s *Sons of Canada*.\(^{14}\) Essentially a defence of Mavor’s academic reputation, Bridle attempts to refute “the less erudite and more envious university men [who regard Mavor as] an enigma of unrelated knowledges,” \(^{15}\) citing “strained relations” which often existed between him and other academics on and off campus. According to Ian Drummond, a historian of the Political Economy Department, Mavor’s brash and outspoken manner “quickly…[made him] an important figure—and a rather unpleasant one—in the University and in the city of Toronto.” \(^{16}\) His contentious attitude can be explained in part by his early evaluation of Toronto as a colonial outpost and its inhabitants especially its governing officials as minor players of limited intellectual capacities. “It would be too much,” Mavor suggested in his journals, “to expect any men of really first-rate powers in the position of a statesman in a province of a colony.” \(^{17}\) Mavor hurled similar insults at the university administration and professoriate. Of President Loudon, Mavor recorded that he

is a very quiet man, reported to have a huge knowledge of university affairs. Type—highly domesticated; library—meagre to common; said he could not keep it in order because children made ducks and drakes of it. Obviously true. Children were quite right for nothing else could be made of it. \(^{18}\)

It is notable that in the preface to his Memoirs, Mavor still refers to Toronto as the “New

\(^{14}\) Bridle, *Sons of Canada* (Toronto, 1916), 87-93.

\(^{15}\) Bridle, *Sons of Canada*, p. 88.

\(^{16}\) Ian M. Drummond, *Political Economy at the University of Toronto, 1888-1982* (Toronto, 1983).

\(^{17}\) Cited in Grover, *James Mavor and his World*, p. 3.

\(^{18}\) Cited in Grover, *James Mavor and his World*, p. 4.
World." Though many of these conflicts are rooted in university politics and individual social relations, it is notable that Mavor's detractors consistently fed this notion of "academic unsuitability"—a pronouncement heavily influenced by the professor's unpopularity—by accentuating his dual interests in what *Saturday Night Magazine* termed "Bohemia and Collegia." Character attacks on Mavor frequently centred around his "picturesque qualities": his unkempt appearance, aesthetic attire, eccentric speech, and actions in pursuit of art in Toronto. Ironically, similar arguments were also used by Mavor's supporters. Maurice Hutton, a professor of Classics and a friend of Mavor's, defended the professor's reputation, arguing that he was "more obviously a 'Professor' by right of character, by right of multifarious knowledge, even by right of bearing and beard, of coiffure and costume, than any of his tame colleagues." 

Socialism, Art, and William Morris: Mavor's Arts and Crafts Connections

By the late 1880s in Glasgow, Mavor had forged an eclectic career for himself as a teacher, journal editor, and political and social activist. Retaining an interest in both humanistic and scientific concerns, Mavor simultaneously edited the short-lived art journal the *Scottish Art Review* (1888) and the more technologically-oriented

---


20 *Saturday Night*, (7 November 1925), n.p. Graduate Files, University of Toronto Archives (hereafter UTA).


22 *The Scottish Art Review* was published monthly from June 1888 to December 1889.
magazine Industries. He also worked on behalf of the poor and the working classes with the Kyrle Society and was a founding member of the Glasgow Workingmen's Dwellings Company which strove to provide cheap and sanitary housing for the working classes.

At the time of his academic appointment to Toronto in the summer of 1892, Mavor held a dual teaching appointment as Professor of Political Economy and Statistics at St. Mungo's College, an affiliate of the University of Glasgow, and as a lecturer of Political Economy in the extension program at both Edinburgh and Glasgow universities. As well, he lectured at the Glasgow Athenaeum and delivered courses on science to various organizations for working men. Remarkably, in a relatively brief period of time and without the benefit of an academic degree, Mavor garnered a reputation through his immense network of friends and acquaintances as a leading authority on forms of social, labour, and industrial organization.\(^{23}\) In fact, on recommending Mavor to the post in Toronto, his predecessor W.J. Ashley suggested that he was "among the top ten or twelve most distinguished English Economists."\(^{24}\)

Mavor's diverse interests and activities brought him into contact with an eclectic assortment of friends and associates including inventors (such as Sir William Thompson, later Lord Kelvin), social philosophers (Edward Caird among others), and socialists and artists of all persuasions including George Bernard Shaw,\(^{25}\) Sidney and Beatrice Webb,

\(^{23}\) One of Mavor's early studies was The Railway Strike (1891).

\(^{24}\) Edward Blake, B72-0013/001(12), W.J. Ashley to G.W. Ross, 31 August 1892. University board member Edward Blake in England that summer was asked by then Minister of Education George William Ross to help him look for a possible replacement. Edward Blake, B72-0013/(11). G.W. Ross to Edward Blake, 30 June 1892; B72-0013/001(12). G.W. Ross to Edward Blake, 22 July and 8 August 1892. UTA.

\(^{25}\) Shaw even used his name for the fictional character of Candida's husband in his play Candida. See James Mavor Moore, "Why 'James Mavor' Morell?" The Shaw Review, vol. XXIII, no. 2 (May
Bruce J. Glazier, Walter Crane, Emery Walker and of course, William Morris. Mavor first met Morris in December 1884 when the latter went to Edinburgh to lecture on behalf of the SDF in which Mavor was a member of the Glasgow branch.  

It was by all accounts an explosive and decisive meeting which saw Morris resign and along with ten executive members re-organize themselves as the Socialist League.  

Expelled from the SDF Council in Glasgow, Mavor signed the Socialist League Manifesto and took a seat on the executive in January 1885. In March, the Socialist League issued a manifesto denouncing English incursions into the Sudan. Angered by the substance of the manifesto and the fact that his name was signed to the document without his permission, Mavor complained to Morris. Though Morris blamed the regrettable oversight on “haste,” within days he replied once again with a lengthier formal response on behalf of the Provincial Council of the Socialist League in which he systematically countered each of Mavor’s criticisms of the document. Of these series of events Mavor recorded in his memoirs that “I allowed the affair to pass; but I gradually ceased to interest myself in the League, although I maintained the warmest friendly relations with Morris until his

1980).


Letter from William Morris to James Mavor, 23 March 1885; Letter from William Morris to James Mavor, 26 March 1996. Norman Kelvin, The Collected Letters of William Morris, vol. 2. Originals of these letters are found in the James Mavor Papers, University of Toronto, TFRBL.
Despite Mavor's dissatisfaction with the Socialist League, surviving letters between the two men indicate that Mavor continued to arrange lectures for Morris at the League and at the Glasgow School of Art as late as 1889.  

Mavor and Morris corresponded well into the late 1880s and probably saw one another at least annually at Glasgow branch meetings until 1889 when the League began to break up under the strain of competing political visions. Even after Morris' death in 1896, Mavor retained his connections to the Arts and Crafts Movement through Morris' inner circle which included Walter Crane, Emery Walker, and May Morris. Through their letters, these friends kept Mavor abreast of social-aesthetic events and each other's activities. When necessary, they called on Mavor for his help to provide an introduction or make enquiries on their behalf or, as in the case of May Morris, to help make arrangements for her 1910 lecture tour to Toronto and Montreal. A close study of Mavor's voluminous correspondence with an eye to establishing social relations reveals that Mavor was indeed party to a great deal of information. With these details Mavor could—and usually did—boast to the whereabouts of George Bernard Shaw in May 1894 (on his way to Florence, Italy with Walker), the publication of the long awaited 24-volume set of the *Collected Works of William Morris* edited by his daughter May, and the sad notice of the death of Jane Morris. Mavor's incessant name-dropping was noted by Professor of Political Economy Vincent Bladen who remembered him as a "poseur" and

---


30 Between February 10-12th 1889, Morris delivered three lectures: On February 10th, Morris gave a lecture entitled "The Society of the Future"; on February 11th, he presented "Gothic Architecture" at the Corporation Galleries, Glasgow; on the 12th he gave "Arts and Crafts" at the Glasgow School of Art.
"a collector of personalities." Mavor's need to be included is probably best captured in an anecdote related by Mavor's grandson Mavor Moore who recounts a stormy night at the Arts and Letters Club. On this particular inclement night, Mavor and five other members drew the lots to see who would stay and sleep on the club's six existing beds. Moore suggests that "when the others retired, Mavor was missing. He reappeared two hours later, soaked to the skin, with the explanation: "I went home to get my pyjamas."

Toronto's Arts and Crafts Communities

Arts and Crafts reformers were also involved in the Urban Reform Movement which derived from the American "City Beautiful Movement" and the English "Garden City Movement." Both Movements stressed the beautification of the city through the construction of parks, stately sculpture, refined buildings, and plentiful, simply constructed, and aesthetic housing. The urgency for urban renewal was captured in a series of 1884 editorials in Toronto's The News entitled "Toronto by Gaslight," which

---


32 Cited in Moore, Re-Inventing Myself, p. 6.

stressed the "ravages of industrial capitalism." 34 The editorials underscored the social degeneration and the plight of the poor, and called into question the "delusion...that the masses of the people have been largely benefited by the enormous industrial expansion of the age." 35 One particular initiative came from the Toronto Guild of Civic Art which was formed to supervise civic art and town planning to maintain the city's beauty spots. The Guild, headed by Arts and Crafts promoters James Mavor, Henry M. Pellatt, George Agnew Reid, and Byron Edmund Walker, was incorporated into the City Planning Ways and Means Committee to study questions of sanitation and transportation and to deal with purely aesthetic problems. 36

The Arts and Crafts Movement's tenets and philosophies extended beyond the confines of the artistic communities. The Movement emphasized environmental determinism, and with the goal to better the living conditions of people, it was incorporated into the larger urban social reform movement in English-Canada at the turn of the century.

St. Thomas' Anglican church on Huron Street, Toronto (still extant) exemplifies the


36 James Mavor, Notes on the Objects of the Toronto Guild of Civic Art and on the Exhibition of Prints and Mural Paintings with Condensed Catalogue (Toronto, 1898). By 1907, the Guild had come under criticism for doing "nothing tangible for art in Toronto, except the so-called mural decorations on the wall of the City Hall," The Canadian Magazine, 6 (October 1907): 515. Mavor, Reid, and Walker were also involved in the establishment of the Art Museum of Toronto in 1900 (now the Art Gallery of Ontario). See David Kimmel, "Toronto Gets a Gallery: The Origins and Development of the City's Permanent Public Art Museum."
connection between the Arts and Crafts Movement and spirituality. Built in 1892 by noted Anglo-Catholic and Arts and Crafts architect Eden Smith (1859-1949), the church illustrates the Arts and Crafts creed of honesty and simplicity of form, and the use of local material in the English vernacular style. Parishioners such as Eden Smith would disseminate and transform spiritual and architectural values into the larger community.

Mavor’s Remembrances of Morris

Within a decade of his arrival, James Mavor had become an established and respected member of Toronto’s arts community. Increasingly recognized as an authority on art, less than five years after his arrival, Mavor, was entreated by J. Castelli to write an article for his Canadian Encyclopaedia entitled “The Progress of Art in Canada.” Mavor was in esteemed company: Castelli had contracted noted artists Robert Harris, president of the Royal Canadian Academy, to write on painting in Lower Canada, and Hamilton McCarthy to review sculpture. Mavor also wrote reviews of exhibitions and articles championing the work of artistic groups like the Canadian Art Club (est. 1909) and specific artists such as Horatio Walker, Edmund Morris, and particularly Homer Watson whom he compared

---

37 On St. Thomas’ Anglican Church, see Household of God: A Parish History of St. Thomas Church, Toronto (Toronto, 1993).


39 Letter from J. Castelli to James Mavor, 31 September 1897; Letter from J. Castelli to James Mavor, 10 May 1898.
to John Constable "but with a decided Canadian accent." Mavor supported artists by commissioning their art work and also by putting them in touch with other possible art patrons. Mavor Moore has suggested that his motives in this regard were often more altruistic than aesthetic and that these and other excesses—especially his fondness for books—were sometimes funded "out of his wife’s housekeeping allowance," keeping the family in genteel poverty.

Through artistic and social networks, Mavor came into contact with the leading lights of Toronto’s thriving Arts and Crafts community. As early as 1895, Mavor became acquainted with artist and educator George Agnew Reid through their membership in the Guild of Civic Art and especially through Reid’s and the Ontario Society of Artists’ initiatives to establish an art gallery and museum in Toronto. Mavor also knew Mabel Adamson (née Cawthra) and gave her her first commission (several orders followed), by ordering a metal work piece which she had perfected under noted Arts and Crafts artist C.R. Ashbee at his Guild of Handicraft, in Chipping Camden, Gloustershire. Adamson went on to form the decorating firm of W. & E. Thornton-Smith and Co. which similar to Morris & Co. specialized in every aspect of interior decoration.

40 "Art and Artists Described at Exhibition," Globe, 17 March 1911, Clipping Files, UTA. James Mavor, "The Canadian Art Club," News, 10 March 1909, Graduate Files, UTA.

41 Mavor Moore, Reinventing Myself, p. 13.

42 On Mabel Adamson, see Sandra Gwyn, The Private Capital (Toronto, 1984).

43 In 1904, Adamson and Reid founded the Arts and Crafts Society of Canada and hosted their first exhibition of Arts and Crafts. See "Arts and Crafts Society of Canada," Catalogue of the First Exhibition Held at the Galleries of the Ontario Society of Artists (Toronto, 7 April-23 April, 1904). A letter to Frank Johnson at The Guild of Handicraft Trust in Chipping Camden provided no information of Adamson spending anytime at the Guild though several Canadian artists were listed in residence during the same period. Interviews with Anthony Adamson, Mable’s surviving son, were declined due to his failing health.
friendly with a host of other Arts and Crafts notables in Toronto including architect Eden Smith who in 1908 produced plans for a house for the Mavor's and James L. Hughes, Superintendent of Schools and a noted Ruskinian, who agitated for the inclusion of art and manual arts subjects in Toronto public schools. Hughes was particularly instrumental in helping shape Mavor's reputation as an authority on art by inviting him to talk in front of women's groups, educational arts events such as the 1898 Conference on School Art, and at private events, one even at the home of Chester Massey.

Whether Mavor lectured informally at home after the midnight-hour in his pseudo-salon at 8 University Crescent or more formally at an invited venue, he invariably talked about art.\textsuperscript{44} After Morris' death in 1896, and with increasing interest in the Arts and Crafts Movement with questions about the relationship between art and societal reform, Mavor became a sought-after speaker with local women's cultural groups: the WAAC, the local branch of the NCWC, the Ladies' League of School Art, and the Woman's Literary Society of University College. Between 1897 and 1915, Mavor lectured on his "Personal Reminiscences of William Morris," \textsuperscript{45}—a talk he gave several times—on the

\textsuperscript{44} In November 1896, Mavor spoke on the topic of "Free Trade and Protection to the Women's Enfranchisement Association" at the request of James L. Hughes who wrote "on behalf of a good many women in Toronto." J.L. Hughes to James Mavor, 6 November 1896. In 1904, Mavor lectured on "some subject of current public interest" to The Empire Club of Canada. Mavor Papers, TFRBL.

\textsuperscript{45} Letter from Margaret J. Hemstead to James Mavor, 5 March 1897. This lecture was presented to the Women's Art Association in January 1896. It was also given in November 1908 to the Women's Literary Society (Victoria College). Letter from Alice McLean to James Mavor, 5 November 1908; Letter from Mrs. McLauglin to James Mavor 17 November 1908. Mavor Papers, TFRBL.
value of school art, 46 on "Art in the Home," 47 and "...on the general uplifting value of art." 48 Mavor also became a regular speaker at the WAA's formal art lecture series and a notable interpreter of style, technique, and content at local art exhibitions. Although not always explicitly, in his lectures Mavor affirmed his belief, and validated his audiences', that social and moral regeneration was possible through the aesthetic reform initiatives of an enlightened and educated elite.

Given Mavor's dedicated promotion of Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement in Toronto, it is interesting to note Mavor's denigration of Morris in his memoirs. I would suggest that this reversal from friend to foe is vital to understanding how three decades of unflattering aesthetic characterizations and academic put-downs affected Mavor. By attacking Morris and his ideas on art and socialism, it is probable that Mavor was attempting to solidify his own supremacy in Toronto's social-aesthetic communities and perhaps more significantly reaffirm his status as a knowledgeable and respected political economist. It is notable that though he discussed both Ruskin and Morris in his memoirs, Mavor only attacked Morris. By the 1920s, the writings of both Ruskin and Morris were well-known in many English-Canadian communities, but I suspect that Morris' revolutionary socialist beliefs and particularly his emphasis on the need for change in the

46 Presented at the 1898 Conference on School Art hosted by the Ladies League of School Art. Letter from Mrs. E. Cok to James Mavor, 12 November 1898. Mavor Papers, TFRBL.

47 The Lecture "Art in the Home" was presented to the Toronto branch of the NCWC at the request of the James L. Hughes on behalf of his wife Ada Marean who was chair. Letter from James L. Hughes to James Mavor, 28 March 1899. Mavor Papers, TFRBL.

48 This was a request from James L. Hughes to lecture at the home of Chester Massey. 31 March 1911, n.t. In 1910, Vincent Massey wrote a short piece entitled "The College Room," for the university's magazine The Arbor in which he proposed suggestions on interior design by both Ruskin and Morris. "William Morris's biographer says that [Morris] measured a table's usefulness by twinning his feet about its leg—and he was a powerful man." vol. III, no. 5 (March 1912): 13.
social and economic relations of production made him more vulnerable to attack. This led one reviewer to suggest (correctly) that “while [Mavor was] not acquainted with John Ruskin, by his own two-fold interest in art and economics, he shows that he follows the line of thought projected by the original thinker. His intimacy with Morris still further attests his sympathy with the trend towards Socialism inherent in Ruskinism [sic].” 49

A close reading of Mavor’s chapter on Morris reveals that his criticisms of Morris’ ideas, and Ruskin’s to a lesser extent, were often ill-founded. In this unstructured and rambling section, Mavor consistently recorded the wrong dates for events, and related conversations and communications which never occurred. Perhaps more importantly, Mavor represented Morris in “a state of chronic Pugnacity,” 50 and as a defiant and wealthy socialist who was apt to be critical and judgmental of friends and opponents alike. Though these are certainly character traits borne by Morris, the extent to which Mavor harps on them and the evidence he uses to support these assertions must be brought into question.

Several notable examples illustrate the problems inherent in this text, particularly the issue of Mavor’s alleged intimacy with Morris. In one passage, Mavor recalls a conversation he had with Morris who apparently uttered “Sometimes Rossetti was an angel; and sometimes he was a damned scoundrel.” 51 Mavor suggests that this comment illustrates “curt and incomplete judgements” of Morris’ one-time friend and

49 P.R. “Talk About Books: Professor Mavor Has Written his Memories,” Mail (3 November 1925), Graduate Files, UTA.


51 Mavor, Windows, p. 201.
business partner, Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Though there is some doubt as to whether this conversation actually took place, it clearly indicates a different relationship with Morris than Mavor leads us to believe. An intimate of Morris' would have been aware that this statement was not perhaps without cause but was made in regard to Rossetti's long-term affair with Morris' wife Jane, a situation which effectively estranged the Morris'. A similar discontinuity occurs with Mavor's recollection of an afternoon in London with Morris. We are told that on one occasion while passing outside of the Houses of Parliament, Morris disparagingly remarked "Ere long there will be a dung heap in that pile." As there is no evidence that Morris and Mavor ever met in London, this statement is probably drawn—consciously or unconsciously—from another source. Most likely it is from Morris' 1891 utopian novel *News From Nowhere* or in the weekly serial version which appeared in the Socialist League journal *Commonweal* between January and October 1890, both of which sources were well-known to Mavor.

The last point I would like to deal with is Mavor's assertion that Morris was "deficient in appreciation of natural beauty." This statement is based on a particular conversation between the two men which took place in Scotland were Morris was unimpressed with the local scenery and especially one particular specimen—a lone Scots pine. Offended, Mavor relates the following exchange:

Pointing to a Scots Pine that stood alone on the brow of a hill, well rooted but finding the strong south-west gales almost more than enough for its sturdy frame:

---


William Morris: "Look at that. It is ugly. It gives a bad line."
James Mavor. "Well! Well! Tell me of some scene which you think really beautiful."
William Morris. "The view of London from Richmond Hill. That is real beauty."

Morris’ concern for the environment and his affinity for the pastoral landscape and village life were vital constituents of his philosophy and permeated all aspects of his work including his aesthetic design and decoration, his work with the SPAB and his writings on art and socialism. If Mavor could not have been unaware of this aspect of Morris’ philosophy and practice, why did he deliberately misrepresent him? I suggest that Mavor orchestrated this narrative for his own ends. The lone pine in a rugged terrain blowing at the mercy of the elements had by the 1920s in Ontario become a familiar symbolic image in the work of the Group of Seven artists with whom Mavor was acquainted through the Toronto Arts and Letters Club. Eager to be at the centre of artistic happenings, Mavor’s account of his own virulent defence of the lone Scots pine may have been a way to situate himself within the artistic milieu of the Group and secure his status as an aesthetic educator to Toronto’s elite.

James Mavor’s promotion of the Arts and Crafts Movement, although not always positive, was vital to the Movement’s cultural integration in Toronto. Clearly though, Toronto agents did not embrace the Movement’s social-aesthetic ideas and practices in their entirety but selected those which facilitated their own particular agendas. To this end, ideas such as “joy in labour” and the “godliness of manual labour” became crucial notions in the social organization of an emerging industrial workforce in Ontario and in various urban and social reform initiatives. But in a broader and less manipulative sense, the Arts and Crafts Movement instilled an increasing awareness of the importance of
aesthetics in daily life and as a crucial constituent of both character and state-formation. Mavor passed on his beliefs of the value of art in daily life to his own family including his daughter Dora Mavor Moore and his grandson Mavor Moore. An actress and leading force behind the formation of independent theater in Toronto, she was as her son Mavor Moore notes, "making theater for others what it had been for her: a way of life into the art of life...she was out to lift society." 54 Likewise his grandson, an accomplished dramatist and essayist and part director of the Canada Council, Mavor Moore has suggested that like Mavor he too was influenced by the "yearning for something which is not specie." 55 By the 1940s, this notion of art as central to life became incorporated into a series of debates which argued that a unified "high" culture based on shared aesthetic codes and values was essential to nationalist ambitions of a democratic society and to the development of a distinct Canadian identity.

Academic Musings on William Morris and Plato at the University of Toronto

Similar interest in Arts and Crafts philosophies was also evident on campus, where knowledge about Ruskin, Morris, the Arts and Crafts Movement, and English Art was not restricted to deliberations among the professoriate but was disseminated by the university press and its student writers. 56 Particularly influential in this sphere of

54 Moore, Reinventing Myself, p. 4.

55 Moore, Reinventing Myself, p. 4.

56 Though an official Art Department did not exist at the university until 1933, suggestions about the importance of art had been put forward by such artists as J.W.L. Forster who cited John Ruskin's Slade Professorship at Oxford as evidence of the importance of the need for a Chair in Aesthetics. For Forster "Art and Aesthetics [are] fundamentals to the better modes of life."
exchange was Victoria College's student journal *Acta Victoriana* (1878) which featured articles on such topics as Holman Hunt and the Pre-Raphaelite Movement, John Ruskin, Elbert Hubbard and the Roycrofters in upstate New York, and of course William Morris. Particularly interesting was Pelham Edgar's 1904 article "William Morris, Poet, Artist, and Socialist," in which the English professor, clearly believing that Morris poetry suffered at the expense of his other ventures, pointed out that "[Morris'] Socialism although not of the vulgar type...and the supervision of his business stood in the way of his poetry." Edgar added: "Even Morris could not achieve the impossible feat of preaching a revolutionary propaganda upon dismal street corners, [and] attend...to the artistic detail of a rapidly increasing business, while at the same time preserving the

---


57 Founded in 1878, *Acta Victoriana* related the monthly "doings" of its students, faculty, and alumni, and discussed issues concerning the wider university community and society including religious, missionary, and social action concerns, sports and travel, and questions dealing with literary, scientific, and artistic interest. The journal was run by a ten-member student editorial board, overseen by an Faculty Advisory Board which consisted of C.C. James and Professor Pelham Edgar. *Acta Victoriana 1878-1990: An Index with a Subject Authority* (Toronto, 1990). On Edgar, see his autobiography, *Across My Path* (Toronto, 1952).

finesse of mind which the exercise of the poetic faculty demands." 59

Discussions of Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement's philosophies on and off campus coincided with the advent of British idealist social reform and concerns about rampant industrialization and poverty, and their relationship to character-formation, morality, and citizenship. 60 Conceptualized principally in the work of social-critic John Ruskin, Philosopher T.H. Green, and economist Arnold Toynbee, idealist theories merged with the older tradition of *noblesse oblige* to reorganize English society around bonds of community, fellowship, education, and a shared sense of citizenship through social service. Crucial to these discussions was the relationship between art and societal reform and the ways in which artistic production could be used to morally, and economically "elevate" the lives of the poor and the working classes and aesthetically ennoble all members of society. These ideas found practical form in the educational programmes of settlement homes 61 and women's cultural voluntary organizations, in the manual arts curricular in the public school system, and perhaps most importantly, in the formation of technical education in Ontario in the early decades of the twentieth century.


60 On the emergence of the "Idealistic ethic" at the University of Toronto, see Sara Z. Burke, *Seeking the Highest Good: Social Service and Gender at the University of Toronto, 1888-1937* (Toronto, 1996).

61 For a Canadian example of settlement homes and the way they incorporated Arts and Crafts ideas in their practices, see: Cathy L. James, "Gender, Class and Ethnicity in the Organization of Neighbourhood and Nations: The Role of Toronto Settlement Houses in the Formation of the Canadian State, 1900-1914," Ph.D. thesis, University of Toronto, 1996.
John Charles Robertson's essay "The Social Ideals of Plato and William Morris" first presented as a conference paper to the Ontario Educational Association (OEA) annual conference in 1898 and revised for publication is ripe for analysis. This essay is relatively unknown but best exemplifies the sort of ambivalent dialogue which characterized discussions of Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement in Ontario. In this section, I want to emphasize particularly those aspects of Morris and Arts and Crafts philosophies which were adopted by Toronto advocates and illustrate how those ideas found currency in a variety of social, economic, and political debates, pivotal as they were in the organization of the modern industrial state. By taking a mostly intellectual approach, I want to explore the extent to which Morrisian and Arts and Crafts philosophies and practises were discussed outside of architectural and artistic circles in Toronto between 1896-1925 and dispel the currently held notion that Morris was known chiefly known as "an artist and a designer." This is antithetical to strict art historical object-based theories which presuppose that the existence of artifacts necessarily imply cultural transmission and homogenous sanction in the community, an approach that often masks gender and class inequities and makes short shrift of social-historical contexts and local and regional cultural traditions.

John Charles Robertson was a formidable presence at the university and in the

---

62 John Charles Robertson, Mixed Company (Toronto, 1939), 56-79.

classical community of scholars and students. Born in Goderich, Ontario in 1864 (d. 1956), Robertson was a prestigious gold medal graduate of the University of Toronto's Honours Classic Course (1883) and a post-graduate of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. Returning to Canada in 1887, Robertson secured consecutive teaching and administrative appointments in Ontario's secondary school system, first as a Classical Master at Owen Sound Collegiate and finally as Head Master (or principal) of the Toronto Junction High School (now Humberside Collegiate). For Robertson, as for many young men of his class and educational rank, teaching in the school system was only a stepping stone to executive positions in the educational or government bureaucracy or in more prestigious university faculty posts. With great fanfare and self-congratulatory commentary from his new employers in 1894, Robertson was appointed a lecturer in Greek at Victoria College, a position he held until his retirement as Professor Emeritus in 1932.

In 1939, J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd. of Canada published John Charles Robertson's *Mixed Company*, an eclectic collection of papers delivered during the span of his thirty-eight year academic career, following its author's wishes to make scholastic writings available to a lay reading audience. Compiled as an emeritus project, *Mixed Company* followed on the heels of Robertson's *The Story of Greece and Rome. The Growth and Their Legacy to Our Western World*, which he co-authored with his son H. Grant

---

64 A Group of Classical Graduates, *Honour Classics in the University of Toronto* (Toronto, 1929).
65 In 1938, the university conferred an honorary degree of doctor of laws on Robertson.
66 David and Sheila Latham's, *An Annotated Critical Bibliography of William Morris* cites the 1940 edition of *Mixed Company*, listing it as an English publication although its author and publisher were Canadian and was it only printed in England (at The Temple Press Letchworth).
Robertson, himself a professor of classics at University College. 67 In varying degrees, both books examine contemporary meanings of Greece and Rome and highlight the ancient culture’s spiritual, intellectual, and material endowments to the modern world. The Toronto Star reported that it was an “ancient story...[which] becomes as interesting as the front page of a good newspaper.” 68

Though seven of the ten chapters in Mixed Company reflected Robertson’s life-long fascination with the Ancient Greek world, 69 three chapters stood out by their sheer incongruity and contemporaneous context. Of the three, “The Social Ideals of Plato and William Morris,” originally written as a conference presentation for the Classical section of the OEA in 1898, is the most evocative. In this 23-page essay, Robertson contrasted Morris—“one of the most interesting characters of the Victorian period”—with that “noble Greek” Plato and showed how their theories of the ideal life, as illustrated respectively in the Republic and News from Nowhere, were influenced by each man’s individual perspective and historical context. 70

Though Robertson outlined how Plato’s and Morris’ ideal shared certain fundamental similarities—especially their notions of community and co-operative fellowship—the


68 “Easy History.” Toronto Star, 18 February 1928. Graduate Records, A73-0026-381, UTA.

69 These essays include: “The Athenians and Socrates,” “Some Greek Prejudices,” “Plato’s Ban Upon Poetry,” “Plato and Job,” “Christ and Greek Thought,” “The Growth of Legends,” and “Demosthenes and the German Emperor.”

70 Robertson, Mixed Company, p. 56. Robertson cited the Longmans Green and Co. reprint version of Morris’ News from Nowhere. It was originally serialized weekly in the Socialist League journal Commonweal between 11 January and 4 October 1890, and eventually published in 1890 in Boston by Roberts Brothers, and by Reeves and Turner in England in 1891.
substantial body of the text discusses their "significant differences." Plato's ideal society, Robertson argued, was based on an efficient and stable social system which was led by a naturally pre-ordained elite governing (or guardian) class of men who combined public service and moral leadership. Trained through "careful discipline" and a strictly supervised course in literary, philosophical, and musical studies, this guardian class possessed "the intellectual insight into truth which is the highest and rarest power with which man is endowed," producing the most accomplished of its class the philosopher-kings. 71 Plato reasoned that the most eminently sought-after ideal in Greek society was the life of the mind—a combination of moral goodness and spiritual vision only for the most accomplished of this guardian class. To the rest of the male citizenry remained the task of "doing the best of one's ability that one thing which nature had made him most capable of doing." 72 Going against your own pre-determined position in life or giving your attention to a multitude of interests and activities were both "ineffective service...[and] a weakness of character." 73 Robertson concluded that "only by wisely guided co-operation can men make the best of life, and only by doing one thing well can each one properly co-operate" in the working of the state. 74

Against this background, the fragility of Morris' democratic and inclusive social theory was already a forgone conclusion: From the first paragraph, Robertson considered Morris "a man of singularly varied interests and of manifold gifts...far inferior to that

71 Robertson, Mixed Company, pp. 58-59.
72 Robertson, Mixed Company, p. 59.
73 Robertson, Mixed Company, p. 59.
74 Robertson, Mixed Company, p. 60.
Noble Greek.” In arguing against Morris’ vision of society, Robertson did not strictly adhere to *News From Nowhere* but utilized Morris’ writings on art, poetry, and articles written about him in the English art press. Robertson criticized Morris for not recognizing “those innate and ineradicable differences between man and man...that necessary division of classes based on inborn capabilities and, therefore of function.” He also took issue with Morris’ assertion that slavery and the exclusive privileges of a ruling class was the ultimate downfall of ancient Greece. The “total absence of any form of government...[and] the complete license [of each individual]...to do exactly what work he pleases and to do it as he pleases” in *News From Nowhere* struck Robertson as anarchy, not as socialism. Invalidating Morris’ government of and by the people, Robertson was partial to Plato’s model of a paternalistic and centralized enlightened government which regulated for the better every aspect of its citizens’ lives.

In his conclusion, Robertson dichotomized the ideal society as essentially materialistic in Morris’ case and spiritualist in Plato’s. Robertson argued that for Morris, “human welfare...[was] very much a matter of physical conditions...and in this present life...he dwells on the...beauty of material things, not of high thought, but of skillful handiwork.” A vision of the ideal always ends in death, Robertson claimed. Plato on the other hand, “sees through and beyond all sensual beauty [in] a spiritual vision of better things—life is merely a preparation for another fuller existence” where the soul realizes

75 Robertson, *Mixed Company*, p. 56.

Robertson may have read the review of *News from Nowhere* in the Toronto *Week* (27 March 1891), 272-3.


78 Robertson, *Mixed Company*, p. 73.
its own immortality. 79 While "[Morris] looks only at earth, and calls it heaven; [Plato]...seeks to bring heaven into touch with the earth." 80

Robertson’s attention to the ancient Greek’s spiritualism and morality remained a consistent theme in his work and was perhaps best formulated in a paper he gave in 1928 to the Victoria College Classical Club as a rebuttal to his colleague Maurice Hutton’s paper on the limitations of Greek morality. Calling Hutton’s conclusions “sweeping and untrue,” Robertson challenged “the conventional idea [that the Greeks] were more clever than moral, while the Englishman was stupid, but exceedingly moral.” 81 Robertson’s belief that morality and spiritualism far exceed mere cleverness was conceived in the midst of the earnest evangelicalism at Victoria College and was debated in educational circles in the advent of empirical science over religion in the late nineteenth century.

Clearly, Morris’ vision of the ideal society was at odds with Plato’s spiritual idealism and Robertson’s own theory of social organization in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Toronto. Robertson whole-heartedly accepted Plato’s notion of an elite guardian class of men who were inherently pre-ordained to contribute to the public good by assuming their rightful positions of authority in various institutions of the state (government, education, the church, law, and business). The men most suited to the important task of leading and serving as moral exemplars, Robertson contended, were

---

79 Robertson, *Mixed Company*, p. 75.

80 Robertson, *Mixed Company*, p. 78.

81 “Athenians and English Contrasted in Merit,” *Varsity*, 28 February 1928. Graduate Records, A73-0026-381, UTA.
the Classical or Liberal Arts university graduates. By the turn of the century, the study of the Classics, identified as a masculine and elite imperative, and as the "soul...of the Arts [curriculum] in the university," came to define the "gentleman." This specially-gifted caste of men, intrinsically privileged from birth, dedicated their lives "[to] the service of God and State." Interestingly, clear intellectual traditions and values underlay Robertson's connection of the way Plato speaks of the training of the guardian class and the way students in the Honours Classic course were taught at the University of Toronto during the time Robertson was an undergraduate and during his career as a teacher after 1894. By criticizing Morris' democratic and equalitarian vision of a world co-operatively governed by makers as opposed to thinkers, Robertson advocated the divine ordering of his own society, the pre-eminent and continuing value of the classical curriculum, and the life of the mind as the highest form of human achievement.

Robertson's comparative discussion of Plato's elite thinkers and Morris' mass of makers was part of an on-going debate on vocationalism at the OEA. This ultimately impacted on questions of manual arts education, technical training, and role of the educational system in industrial prosperity. As I argue in the next chapter, Morrisian and Arts and Crafts philosophies were well-known and increasingly discussed at the OEA's Manual Arts section in the early decades of the twentieth century. Eschewing Morris' dislike of formal educational structures, Morrisian advocates at the OEA consistently argued for a form of educational training which united the individual's mental and

---

82 Honour Classics in the University of Toronto. p. 58. See for example R.D. Gidney and W. Millar, Professional Gentlemen: The Professions in Nineteenth-Century Ontario (Toronto, 1995) in which they analyze how the acquisition of a liberal education was a socially (and culturally) constituted ranking.
manual capacities and elevated art and craft work to the legitimacy of other curriculum offerings. Significantly, advocates more often justified their approach towards training of the “whole individual” not on Morris’ socialist tenets but on Ruskin’s ethical and evangelical notion of handwork as a noble expression of one’s humanity. Consequently, critics like Robertson could argue that a natural division of thinkers and makers was in no way a hierarchal or unequal social arrangement but a rational and moral ordering based on the virtuous exercise of all work—whether mental or manual.

With the legislation of the Industrial Education Act in 1911, and with Ontario’s expanding industrial and manufacturing sectors, this debate was the cultural foundation of vocational training agendas in Ontario. It can be argued that if Morris’ vision of society, as illustrated in News From Nowhere, was of little or no consequence—that it did not stir up popular working class passions—these critics perhaps would not have opposed it so vehemently. I suggest rather that Morris’ ideal of society, diluted and transformed somewhat in the Canadian context, was read by many critics as a threatening message of revolutionary change to the existing social, political, and economic order.
Chapter 6

Art in Education

The art movement begun by William Morris in the application of art to the requirements of daily life, has born its fruits in Canada in the number of schools teaching the practical arts. The new technical school in Ottawa, under Miss Marion Living and an able staff of teachers, has for several years been giving instruction in designing and various handicrafts; Miss Phillip's work in Montreal is somewhat along the same line, and also the work done under Mr. Gustav Hahn in the Ontario School of Design and the Toronto Technical School...(The arts and crafts is not an idle term. (Margaret L. Fairbairn)  

In this chapter, I argue that William Morris' beliefs are imbedded into the very fabric of Ontario's educational system. Indeed, Morris' and the social-aesthetic ideas of the Arts and Crafts Movement became the ideological engine of the philosophical, institutional, and curricular change in Ontario's early technical education policy. With the introduction of The Industrial Education Act in 1911, Ontario centralized and financed a province-wide system of technical training. 2 Many of the socio-economic arguments and cultural justifications written into the Act are included in addresses and papers at the Ontario Educational Association by some of the leading yet perhaps less-known advocates of the Movement including most Provincial Directors and Inspectors of technical education, faculty from teacher training institutions, and principals, teachers, and artist-teachers


2 Statutes of Ontario. 1911. The Statute was drafted following discussions at a Royal Commission on Industrial Training (Canada. Royal Commission on Industrial Training and Technical Education. Ottawa. 1911) and more substantially from John Seath's Education for Industrial Purposes: A Report (Toronto. 1911). Although revised in 1912, the Act was not superseded until the Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act in 1960.
from technical schools across Ontario. I highlight the role and contribution "made from below" by individual agents (such as teachers and artists) who disseminated these ideas from within and outside the educational communities and the way intellectual ideas found form in social theory and curriculum formation.

Notably, I have amalgamated discussions of manual arts, technical education, and industrial education into the larger debate at the OEA on the value of art education and the role of schools in society. For Arts and Crafts advocates, kindergarten "play," manual arts and art education, and technical and industrial education were all part of a continuous process of self and societal fulfilment. Understood in this way, discussions at the OEA expose the multitude of ways in which Arts and Crafts ideas had become part of the cultural and social parlance of elite reformers. In general, I emphasize the Morrisian discourse evident at the OEA which was not an isolated phenomenon but represented only one facet of how the British Arts and Crafts Movement's tenets transformed the Canadian cultural landscape.

I begin with a brief look at some of the historiographical problems found in the art education literature, followed by an overview of the development of Toronto technical education in institutional form. I then look at the OEA, and its impact on educational

---

3 The 1960s brought a resurgence of interest in Morrisian ideas in the school system. Robin Tanner argued that the re-introduction of crafts would teach children "cooperation, organization, fairness, and an important sense of self-worth—just as Morris had proclaimed." "William Morris and a Primary School," Times Literary Supplement, 12 (November 1965): 1022-23.

4 L.W. Barclay's definition of the different terms was generally accepted: "Industrial education means, besides a cultural training, instruction in the principles and some practical acquaintance with the methods which underlie a particular group of allied trades or professions as training in woodwork or housecraft for girls. Vocational or technical education means when a large proportion of the time is given to a specific calling, as bookbinding, or dressmaking." L.W. Barclay, "Art Education," OEA (1912), 375.
policy and how the Arts and Crafts Movement, conducive to educational and social policy, facilitated the introduction of technical education. What was the OEA's mandate, membership, and influence on educational policy? Considering the ways in which Morris, Ruskin, and Arts and Crafts social-aesthetic ideas were discussed at the OEA both inside and outside the Manual Arts section, how and why was the Morrisian discourse incorporated into a new practical curriculum to support character and state formation in Ontario?

Historiographical Problems

Though scholars have made token references to Morrisian and Arts and Crafts ideas in the development of schools, they have often misread the Movement's national origins and failed to specify its actual constitution. B. Anne Wood has suggested erroneously that "by the turn of the century, the American Arts and Crafts Movement had introduced a new cultural emphasis." ⁵ Seeking to define the "failure" of the Ontario Department of Education's 1904 "art" program which replaced "drawing," Wood grounds her argument in an art education curriculum outcome approach narrowly citing educational authorities,

---

materials, and objectives from the United States, particularly Massachusetts. As such, she constructs a restricted study on "schooling" which fails to consider the broader meanings and implications of education within its cultural and social context. Wood's work highlights problematically the extent to which Canadian art education scholars have identified with American "progressive" art education initiatives and strict notions of schooling.

In her discussion of artist-teacher Hortense M. Gordon and her career at the Hamilton Technical and Art School, D. Grace Inglis outlines how in the first two decades Gordon's early "interest in decorating china and glass...was conversant with William Morris and his work in England [which] was exerting considerable influence." Inglis cites the American Arts and Crafts Movement and particularly the Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts and its exhibition as a powerful influence on Hamilton and Gordon in the period between 1900-1918. As discussed in the previous chapter, Arts and Crafts


7 This rather myopic historiographical perspective has been furthered entrenched by professional links between Canadian and American scholars of art education who organize under the rubric of the National Art Education Association. The accommodations made at the expense of Canadian art education is glaringly illustrated in the book Framing the Past. Though the book aims to include a balance of articles from both Canada and the United States, the Preface written by Foster Wygant refers only to the history of the discipline and profession of art education in the United States, and asks almost as an afterthought: "Is the process quite different seen historically in Canada or Britain?"


ideas did in fact arrive second-hand from the United States but the extent to which this predominated has been overplayed by these authors to the exclusion of all local and regional historical factors. For example, organizations such as the Ottawa and Hamilton branch of the WAAC and the Hamilton Arts and Crafts Association formed in the early 1890s were pivotal in instilling in their members (and the surrounding community) the ideas and practices of the British Arts and Crafts Movement as early as the 1890s.

The only study solely devoted to art and aesthetic practices in TBE schools, Rebecca Sisler's *Art For Enlightenment: A History of Art in Toronto* is a disappointing official history intended as a catalogue to accompany a 1993 exhibition. 10 *Art for Enlightenment* neglects any real contextual analysis because it decontextualizes “Art” and fails to take into account larger cultural, social, and historical events and trends. Sisler downplays the scope and extent of the Arts and Crafts Movement social-aesthetic ideals in Ontario and their specific role in education. She fragments the aesthetic ideas into small manageable chunks, introducing them in different chapters as independent phenomena. In her discussion of the school beautification movement in Chapter 2, Sisler points to John Ruskin as the cultural proponent of mural art in the schools, the murals intending to express idyllic pastoral themes. Yet, she fails to connect Ruskin’s belief in environmental determinism as a concept implicit in both manual arts education and later in the teaching of applied decorative art. By excluding actual art instruction and its history, Sisler creates an uneven narrative which is selectively biased against the actual historical record. 11

---


11 For further analysis of *Art for Enlightenment*, see my review in *Historical Studies in Education* vol. 7, no. 2 (Fall 1995): 263-266.
The Institutional Development of Technical Education in Ontario

The Arts and Crafts discourse, already so prevalent in community women's groups, artistic associations, university colloquia, and various reform initiatives, piqued the interest of OEA members and lecturers, and was a vital constituent in the creation and development of Manual Arts and Technical Education in Ontario. Before explicating the Arts and Crafts roots of industrial and technical education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, what institutional form did technical education take? As early as 1888, the Association of Stationary Engineers petitioned the Toronto City Council to establish a school for technical training. After much political maneuvering, allegations of diverted funds, and a physical relocation from St. Lawrence Hall to the Athletic Club Building on College Street (now the Stewart Building), the TTS opened in 1892. The school was under the centralized administration of the seventeen-member Technical School Board, the composition of which reflected myriad interests: Five members were from the municipal council, including the Mayor of Toronto; five members represented the Toronto Trades and Labour Council; four members where from the city council; two members came from the Association of Stationary Engineers; two members were from the Architectural Guild of Toronto (Architects Association); and the committee also included two educators and one manufacturer.

The TTS's mandate was to provide "training and education [to] artisans, mechanics,

---

and working men in such subjects as may promote a knowledge of mechanical and manufacturing arts." 13 In its inaugural year, the TTS offered only a night school curriculum that included mathematics, chemistry, mechanics, descriptive geometry, physics, and mechanical drawing. 14 With escalating enrolments reflecting a demand for technical education, in the 1902-03 school year the TTS offered classes for "two classes of people and scholars—day classes during the usual school hours, and night classes for artisans, workingmen and others." 15 The school's direction changed dramatically in 1904 with the amalgamation of the Technical School Board, the High School Board, and the Public School Board into the present TBE. The school's name was changed accordingly to the Toronto Technical High School (TTHS) to reflect its new educational affiliation. 16

This more centralized and streamlined bureaucratic structure of technical education in Toronto endorsed by industrial/manufacturing interests was matched by the government's commitment to the importance of technical education in general. In its journal Industrial Canada (1900), the CMA pointed to what it saw as the inseparable relationship between technical education, labour, and the Canadian economy, suggesting that "if our manufactures have in their factories a class of labour more intelligent and skilled than can be produced in other industrial centers of the world, the manufacturing

13 Ontario Bureau of Industries, Reports on labour, Wages and Cost of Living, 1884-1889, (Toronto, 1893), 35.

14 Domestic Science for girls and women was added in 1896.


16 By 1904-05, the school's calendar reported that the TTHS was staffed by 35 teachers in the day school and 43 in the night school, catering to an estimated 2,200 students. See Honora M. Cochrane, Centennial Story of the Board of Education for the City of Toronto (Toronto, 1950).
establishments in Canada will be able to more than hold their own in the race for commercial supremacy."  

By 1906, the CMA lobbied the federal government to establish a Royal Commission to make recommendations to establish a more wide-spread system of technical education in Ontario. Fully supported by a Federal Royal Commission on Industrial Training, in 1909 Superintendent of Education John Seath was charged with thoroughly surveying technical education systems in Europe and the United States. Seath's final report recommended a provincially-regulated grant of 3 million dollars over three years to develop technical education. Seath acknowledged that "owing to the decadence of the apprenticeship system, no organized means of training the workman now exists in connection with the trades and other industries." He duly tabled his report Education for Industrial Purposes (1911) in which he proposed a system of technical education which would, in essence, foster "a closer connection between...schools and the activities of life." In 1911, the Industrial Education Act placed the TTHS under the management of the Advisory Industrial Committee of the TBE, composed of six members from the TBE, six members from labour, three employers, and three employees. The AIC appointed Dr. A.C. McKay (1911-1926) as Principal of the TTHS and drafted plans to construct a new building more befitted to the task of technical education.

17 n.a., Industrial Canada, (July 1912): 12.
18 For a description of Seath's tour of educational institutions in Europe, see Lloyd "John Seath and the Development of Vocational Education in Ontario 1890-1920." (See particularly chapters 4-6.)
19 Canada, Royal Commission on Industrial Training and Technical Education. (Ottawa, 1911).
In 1912, with its new day principal, the TTHS's curriculum was divided into two branches: technical and commercial. The commercial section under principal Robert Eldon (1907-1911) was moved to a new location and aptly named the Central High School of Commerce. Night schools at Humberside High School and Riverdale High School now sent students for their last two years to TTHS, where they received their diplomas.

Seath made substantial provision for art as an integral component of technical education, recommending the formation of a department of art and design at TTHS. He claimed that "such a department cannot be efficient if it does not give due prominence to the artistic side [and] be auxiliary to the industries." 21 With this act, Seath broadened the scope of technical education to include not only labour and economics but art. By this time, art had become the handmaiden of industry, a relationship referred to in respectable terms by Eric Brown, the first director of the National Gallery of Canada. Brown suggested that art was inseparable from commerce, because commerce is largely dependent upon design of every kind, which art only can supply." 22

Seath's recommendations led directly to the re-organization of technical education at CTS in Toronto in 1913. Seath conceived a system of technical education which addressed business, government, and labour's requirements in the social rhetoric of the Arts and Crafts Movement.


\[22\] Provincial Arts and Industrial Institute Papers, Eric Brown to the Secretary of the Provincial Arts and Industrial Institute (11 November 1920). Public Archives of British Columbia.
The Ontario Educational Association: "The Interchange of Ideas and Kindly Intercourse"  

Founded in 1861 as "The Teachers' Association of Ontario," the OEA was endorsed by the province's educational bureaucracy and its Chief Superintendent Dr. Egerton Ryerson. The annual retrospective of the OEA's activities was a convention which was conceived by its organizers as an opportunity were teachers could advance their knowledge and skills and reaffirm their moral mission through new pedagogies and ideas, discussion of texts and educational mandates, and significantly through contact with the province's educational elite. By the 1890s, the OEA's membership and male leadership was exclusively dominated by ministers of education, government officials, university presidents, professors, high-ranking inspectors, and constituent interests from various cultural, religious, and business circles. Over time these diverse stake-holders


24 The OEA's numerous name changes reflect its leadership's changing conception of the organization's role and mandate. Originally known as "The Teachers' Association of Ontario" (1861), it was re-named "The Ontario Teachers' Association" (1873), then "The Ontario Association for the Advancement of Education" (1881), and finally the "Ontario Educational Association" (1893). For the sake of clarity, I use OEA throughout this chapter.


26 The list of presidents discloses two interesting facts: First, the exclusivity of male and early clerical domination (until 1901); and the propensity of university degree-holding presidents.
fashioned the association into a commanding lobby group intent on influencing educational and cultural policy in Ontario. Addresses presented at the OEA were often integral statements of forthcoming policy introduced by the Minister of Education or other high-ranking bureaucrats. Key pieces of future legislation and grievances were also debated at the OEA by different sections and sent as resolutions back to the Department of Education.  

The success of the OEA in swaying policy was noticed by Deputy Minister of Education John Millar, when he suggested that the OEA “has had far more influence in indicating, or determining the educational policy of the country, than what has been done...[in] Parliament.”

The conferences were also important annual social events to be "seen at." Along with members of the educational establishment, they were attended by a wide cross-section of Toronto Society. "Members of the political, religious and economic elite also often attended the meetings and lectures...and added their subtle, but strong influence to the events." Social connections with the OEA are evident in an 1888 conference resolution which conferred the Association's "appreciation" to a Toronto lawyer and his wife "for the entertainment [given] the association at an evening garden party.”

By 1894, the association conference was organized into six main departments: College and High School, Public School, Kindergarten, Training School, Inspectors, and Trustees. Examples of subject sections within these departments were Modern

---

27 For example, in 1912, members of the Manual Arts section used this established method to lodge a unanimous "protest" with the Department of Education against the quality of paper used in Public and High School blank drawings books. Minutes, Manual Arts Section, OEA (1912): 65.

28 Millar cited in Guillett, In the Cause of Education, p. 131.

29 Smaller, Teachers' Protective Associations, p. 148.
Language, Natural Science, Classics, Mathematics, Physics, and Model schools. These diverse departments created a dilemma. Guillet comments that "It is apparent that but few addresses were heard by the membership as a whole, the greater number being for specialists in one or other of the fields." 30 In a statement exuding educational elitism Guillet rationalized that "few of the association's members were so well educated that they could appreciate the finer points of a number of such subjects, but undoubtedly benefit accrued to the specialists in their respective fields." 31 This specialization was possibly aggravated by the association's new policy of paying their lecturers, when beginning in 1893, they were recompensed for their talks and their travel expenses. Financially supporting travel to the conference may have been intended to increase the participation of teachers but in reality it supported a forum for the "expert" speaker, more often found in the university than in the public schools.

Re-defining the National Landscape of Work and Society: Training, Morality, and the Responsibilities of Citizenship

The history of any association such as the OEA is the history of the thoughts and activities of people, but it does not transcend history, ideology, society, or spacial and temporal contexts. To analyze associations and organizations such as the OEA, we must be sensitive to its internal hierarchy, marginalization of radicalism, contradictory elements of progressivism and traditionalism, and balancing of theory and practice. Membership in an association is not a vacuous experience. It is undertaken by human

30 Guillet, In the Cause of Education, p. 151.
31 Guillet, In the Cause of Education, p. 151.
agents whose lives are enveloped in a material world. At various points these agents become embroiled in the connective tissues of history and change, fusing, reforming and reconstituting it.

By the turn of the century, on what one commentator called "the eve of a great social revolution" 32 OEA members concerned with social reform increasingly questioned the role of "modern" education, training, and the role of the individual within the new organization of industrial society. Lamenting crass mercantilism, unbounded self-interest, and a growing rift between different classes of students, speakers at the OEA defined the aim of education broadly as "the production of good citizens...of character and high moral purpose...[living] in harmony with their environment and their neighbours." 33 These educational reformers believed that educating the individual student morally elevated the larger social community and vice versa. A morally sound citizen living in a moral society was for many the expression of "a perfect social organization." 34 J. W. Robertson argued that a student was "first a member of a family...[then a] member of a community, a member of a nation, and [finally] a member of humanity." 35 Social reformers believed that through character building in the schools, they would create a patriotic citizenry which would be "upright in business, unpurchaseable voters...[who] will love Canada, its rulers, its institutions, [and its]

33 Alex McQueen, "The Influence of the School on National Life," OEA (1893): 162-63.
Speakers at the OEA championed the belief of the “efficient workman as a good-living citizen,” imagining the ideal virtuous work experience of the ideal citizen worker in Ontario’s industrial state. An alarming and regulatory sub-text to many of these discussions, however, was that clearly, many reformers feared that mercantilism and an inequitable distribution of wealth was generating widespread discontent among farmers, artisans, and labouring men and women. Laborious and unrewarded manual toil forged “beasts of burden” who “if treated like gladiatorial slaves...we may expect gladiatorial revolts, strikes and debauchery.” To ensure the safety and prosperity of the state, reformers stressed the need for an education beginning in kindergarten which would instill habits of obedience, authority, and respect for the law. Significantly, they promoted a curriculum which “ennobled manual work...and taught the dignity of honest labour.”

OEA speakers such as George Locke, Chief Librarian of Public Libraries, were cognizant of the entrenched positions of rival educational camps at the OEA and their

36 J.G. Elliott, “Citizenship Making, the Mission of the School,” OEA (1904): 302, 303. For the connections between citizenship and industry, see Henry Codman Potter, The Citizen and his Relation to the Industrial Situation (New Haven, 1911).

37 For an early discussion on the links between education, character, and national development, see Alex McQueen, “The Influence of School on National Life,” OEA (1893): 162-163.

38 A.O. Patterson, “Camp-Schools,” OEA (1903): 105.


discussions on education and citizenship. 41 “Education is a process, not a state. It begins with birth and continues until death. We are influenced by all we meet, and we, in turn, influence all with which we have to do.” 42 Discussing the need for technical and industrial education (he treated both terms synonymously) in the schools, Locke outlined how different classes had wholly different demands. Criticizing current positions within the debate, he delineated “‘the Liberal extremist’” position in education: “’We will first train men, then workers.’ This fails in that we have forgotten that man’s work is a part of the man. On the other hand, ‘the practical extremist’ says: ‘We will train workers and then train men,’ forgetting that in actual practice the boy will not wait for us to get through the process of training him as a man.” 43 Locke was equally disturbed by the directives of manufacturing interests at the expense of students. Many manufacturers “look upon this movement as a means of giving them apprentices without the trouble of training them, operatives who will be content to carry out the mere daily work in an almost automatic manner.” 44 On the contrary, “[i]t is the development of initiative and independence,” not mere efficiency which is necessary in technical education. 45 Though Locke still clung to the notion that the production of efficient citizens was pivotal to the workings of the state, he opted for a citizen who was “self-sufficient, independent, and social...who know[s] something beyond their own work and who could make a living at

some other work should it be necessary." George H. Locke's formulation of the technical worker invoked one of Morris' most esteemed principles that centred on the need for an education that produced a union between mental and manual labour.

William Morris: Poet, Artist, and Social Reformer at the OEA

At the turn of the century in Toronto, William Morris and Arts and Crafts ideas became popular topics of discussion with educators at the annual conventions of the OEA. With the formation of the Manual Arts section at the OEA in 1905, William Morris' views on aesthetics, design, and especially the arts' relationship to craftsmanship, the worker, and society became dynamic discourses aimed at bolstering moral character and producing respectable citizens—prosperous, happy, and "useful" workers for Ontario's fledgling industrial state. In the wake of societal, industrial, and urban transformation and the decline of the apprenticeship system, the new technical worker became an important part of Canada's economic policy, and according to Canadian Arts and Crafts advocates, the resurrected artisan of old. Over time, artisanal procedures and production became defining features of the technical education rhetoric and curriculum. Speakers at the Manual Arts section like Roy F. Fleming, Art Instructor at Ottawa's Normal School, increasingly identified with Morris' dictum that "every artist would be a workman, and every workman an artist."

As part of the technical training curriculum, Morrisian educational tenets preceded

---


the Industrial Education Act. Courses in clay modeling, wood carving, freehand drawing, design, and architecture were taught as early as 1904 at the TTHS by well-known artists such as Gustav and Emmanuel Hahn. Over the next 20 years, concerted efforts were made to hire artists from English institutions like the RCA in London to teach art and craft courses at the technical school. One notable exponent secured through the RCA worked for a brief period for Morris & Co. under J.H. Dearle (see my elaborated discussion in Chapter 7) while another, J.G. Graham, was trained by Arts and Crafts disciple Walter Crane. The connection between Morrisian ideas and technical education in Ontario was not lost on contemporary writers such as Margaret L. Fairbairn who stated in her review of Canadian art in 1901, that “the art movement begun by William Morris in the application of art to the requirements of daily life...has born its fruits in Canada in the number of schools teaching the practical arts.” 48 Fairbairn cited the Ottawa Technical School, the Ontario School of Design, and the TTS as institutions which taught Arts and Crafts principles of design. (The latter two are still extant today and known as the Ontario College of Art and CTS respectively.)

With Arts and Crafts precepts commonly debated in their relationship to industrial/labour market needs in Ontario, the possibility of organizing a Manual Arts section at the OEA was proposed in 1897 by James L. Hughes, Inspector of Schools (1874-1913) and a noted Ruskinian. 49 A well known advocate of the kindergarten,


49 Two vastly different biographies have been written on Hughes. See: Bruce Carter, “James L. Hughes and the Gospel of Education: A Study of the Work and Thought of a Nineteenth Century Canadian Educator,” Ed.D. thesis, University of Toronto, 1966; and Lorne Pierce, Fifty Years of Public Service (Toronto, 1924). Carter points out existing correspondence between Pierce and Hughes clearly shows Hughes’ obsession with his self-image. Both works exclude Hughes
manual training, nature study, and art in the schools, Hughes argued that "the true aim of manual training is not to teach how to make a living, but how to live; not to make articles, but to make men and women." Although Hughes never served in any executive capacity with the Manual Arts section after its formation in 1905, without his enthusiastic support and his educational prominence at the OEA, the section may have taken longer to form and perhaps looked much differently.

In 1905, the OEA's annual convention offerings were ordered into 15 strict divisions: six departments representing educational divisions such as the Kindergarten, the Public School, and the College and High School; and nine sections which were organized around specific disciplinary divisions such as the Modern Language, Classical, Mathematics, and History sections. The Manual Arts section joined newer sections such the Hygiene and Home Science as "recognized" courses of study of educational and pedagogical significance. Interestingly, proponents first introduced the section as the "Manual Training and Art Section"—and indication that art and manual labour were educational bedfellows at this time—and optimistically petitioned the OEA to become officially a department under its first president Jessie Semple, Director of Art for Toronto Public Schools. Perhaps to lend support and prestige to their application as a department rather than a section, members named A.H. Leake Provincial Inspector of Technical Education, as chair and honorary president of the Manual Arts Section. Though they settled on the

---

cultural endeavors and his and aesthetic and social ideology. A more comprehensive biography is clearly required.

50 Hughes, cited in Carter, "James L. Hughes and the Gospel of Education," p. 306. Believing that art was integral to all facets of manual training, Hughes introduced art as part of the curriculum in 1886, and appointed Jessie Semple Director of Art for Toronto schools.
Manual Arts section, in 1909 questions were raised as to whether the name comprehensively represented the activities of all members, especially those teaching courses in fine art. Although a move to change the name to the Manual and Fine Arts section was voted down in 1910, by 1920 the name was changed to the Technical and Manual Arts section. The section’s new president was listed as Alfred Howell, a British-born sculptor trained at the RCA in London who was now Director of Art at Toronto’s CTS (see my discussion of the formation of CTS’s Art Department in the next chapter).

The most notable lecture delivered at the inaugural session of the Manual Arts section in 1905 was George Agnew Reid’s paper “The Arts and Crafts.” One of the leading lights of Toronto’s Arts and Crafts community Reid traced the historical development of art and its relation to craft with particular reference “to the revival led by William Morris and his associates.” Reid’s paper capsulized many of Morris’ key concepts and terms, especially the relationship among work, the craftsman, and the machine. 51 Describing craft as the “Arts of workmanship,” he noted that the great virtue of the [Arts and Crafts] Movement was “the desire to, first...consider the design of everything as being of the highest importance, and then, that making should give the workman pleasure.” 52 Reid observed that though hand-work was encouraged, Morris did not necessarily abhor the use of the machine but welcomed its use wherever mere tedious work, void of creativity, was required of the worker. In the forthcoming aesthetic awakening brought on by the crafts revival, the necessity for good art would create a need “for the artist and the craftsman relegating the machine and its processes to its


proper sphere.” 53

Inviting artist and educator George Reid to give the inaugural address was significant. His presence at the OEA indicated widespread knowledge of the Arts and Crafts Movement in Ontario and the ways in which agents from the social-aesthetic communities created ardent links within the educational establishment. By 1905, George Reid had become a pivotal force in Toronto’s social-aesthetic communities and was recognized as one of the key figures behind the formation of most Arts and Crafts-spirited organizations including the Society of Mural Decorators (1894-1897), the Guild of Civic Art (1898), the Central League of School Art (1896), and the Arts and Crafts Society of Canada (1903). In a series of articles, Reid appealed to Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement by arguing for a morally-aesthetic art, a utilitarian approach to handcrafted design both practical and beautiful. 54

At the OEA, discussions about William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement centered on the multi-faceted Morris, clearly supporting George Reid’s assertion that “Morris’ name...has now become a household word.” 55 Morris was discussed as a poet of the new romantic revival, 56 as an artist and designer who led the resurgence of the Arts and Crafts in England, and according to one speaker, “as one of the most charming


writers," with his visionary utopia in *News from Nowhere.*

With barely a specific reference to him, Morris' aesthetic theories and practices were often embodied tacitly in addresses delivered at the OEA. Papers such as W.L. Richardson's "The Essential Principles of Home Furnishing," which paraphrased Morris' fundamental design principles of utility, simplicity, and beauty were unmistakable in their distinctive aesthetic language and phraseology. Other speakers such as Clara E. Elliott, an instructor from the Hamilton Normal School, were much less subtle. In her paper "The Teaching of House Decoration," she cited Morris' dictum directly, about "having nothing in [your] homes which you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful." Meanwhile, Roy Fleming, a champion of that "English representative of the Arts and Crafts," sounds like Morris himself when he explains:

> To work at the arts and crafts is to me a pleasure. Time alone limits my efforts. I would like to be an artistic carpenter, an architect, an interior decorator, a sculptor, a potter, a worker in metals, an illustrator of literature, an illuminator and binder of artistic books, a maker of advertisements, [and] a tailor.

In 1912, Professor L.W. Barclay delivered a talk to the trustees section simply titled "Art Education," in which he discussed Ontario's new educational spirit and the fusion of various matters of perennial interest in which the ancient and the modern world throw light each upon the other. See my analysis of this work in Chapter 5.

---

57 J.C. Robertson, "The Social Ideals of Plato and William Morris," OEA (1898). This address was revised by Robertson and included as part of a series of essays entitled *Mixed Company* (Toronto, 1939), in which he focussed primarily on "various matters of perennial interest in which the ancient and the modern world throw light each upon the other." See my analysis of this work in Chapter 5.


between industry and art. He cited Technical or Manual Arts Education as the most fundamental new movement. Barclay asked "Why should our children be taught in the public school to saw boards straight, to build houses, to make furniture, to mould clay, to work in fabrics, to do weaving in textiles, to learn moulding of iron and the beating of brass...what means this revolutionary addition to our public and high school curriculum"? Barclay rejected prevailing arguments that art was not a significant moulder of the future citizen; that it makes boys effeminate and the girls fussy; and perhaps most importantly that art was for the idle rich and not for those of the democratic middle class. In a general rebuttal, Barclay cited American educational and artistic authorities like Henry Turner Bailey, Miss Warner, and Kenyon Cox, through a series of quotes which were reminiscent of Arts and Crafts principles: Beauty as the manifestation of triumphant life; art as..."the best way of doing things"; "Art as pleasure and joy;" and, "making some useful thing beautiful." Barclay provided a brief historical survey, culled in large part from Morris' lectures to the SPAB to outline how art and industry had been inextricably tied since the Middle Ages. Barclay's synopsis united the guild system, the independent craftsman, and the knowledgeable community consumer into a happy symbiotic relationship. He contrasted the upper and lower classes as possessors "of a love of splendor and the workmen who maintained a love of art and simple beauty. Their works give evidence of this faith.

64 Prof. L.W. Barclay, "Art Education," p. 378.
William Morris said, "There was no such things in those days as a piece of ugly handicraft." 65 Citing England's Cathedral—the workmen's gift to the future—as the vestiges of this true craftsmanship, he lamented that "commercialism and jealousies" had severed art from industry in the Middle Ages. However, he was rejoiced that they were "at the dawn of a more real influence of Art on labour...May the Art of the Fourteenth Century live again in Canada's workmen." 66

Barclay also discussed the divine nature of work, particularly hand-work, as a noble and Godly expression, eliciting pleasure in the worker. In 1912, he recited a short piece of prose written by William Chandler Smith of Boston from the perspective of a piece of art:

I am only a piece of work. After I leave your hands you many never see me again. People looking at me, however, will see you and, so far as they are concerned, I'll be you. Put into me your best so that I may speak to all who see me and tell them of the Master workman who wrought me. Say to them through me, "I know what good work is." If I am well done, I will get into good company and up the standard. If I am shabby and poorly made, I will get into bad company. Then show through me your joy in what you do, so that I may go the way of all good work, announcing wherever I go that I stand for a workmen that needeth not be ashamed. 67

Although for a much different purpose, at the OEA, the notion of "pleasure in work" is evident well into the 1930s. In "What Industry Looks for in its Employees," W.E. Weaver, 65

---

65 Prof. L.W. Barclay, "Art Education," p. 380. Before concluding his lecture, Barclay was sure to mention Ruskin and particularly his Oxford Lectures.


Works Manager for Davenport Works (a subsidiary of Canadian General Electric) lectured on the type of workers most coveted by industry. He related an anecdote in which an inspector in a stone quarry asked one of the men chipping stone what he was doing. His reply was to the effect that he was chipping stone. A little further along as second man was asked the same question. His reply was that he was earning 60¢ an hour. Still further along in the quarry an older work was chipping stone carefully and continuously, and seemed obviously proud of his work. The same question was addressed to him; his reply was that he was helping build the cathedral uptown.

Weaver concluded that “industry is looking for the type of employee who is desirous to build the cathedral.”

The importance of art to life was also discussed at the OEA by Alfred Howell, head of the Art Department at CTS. In “How We May Improve Our Art Education,” Howell suggested that art was not a frill “but had an intimate relation to every phase of living.” Howell firmly identified himself as an artist who believes that things should be “useful and beautiful,” and for every-day use “everything should be artistic—even our kitchenware.”

---

68 W.E. Weaver, “What Industry Looks for in its Employees,” OEA (1935): n.p. Weaver was also a member of the Canadian Manufacturers’ Association (Toronto branch) and employer-representative on the TBE’s Advisory Vocational Committee which oversaw technical education.


70 Alfred Howell, “How We May Improve Our Art Education,” OEA (1919): n.p. As this volume of lectures has been lost, I cite the discussion of Howell’s paper from the OEA Minutes. Also present from CTS was J.G. Graham, a teacher who trained at the RCA under Walter Crane. Graham became an instructor at the WAAC and headed the Arts and Crafts guild. This educational exchange was in part arranged by the wife of CTS principal A.C. McKay. Eleanor McKay had been a long-standing member of the WAAC and held various executive positions.

Additionally, discussions of Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement at the OEA were inseparable from those of John Ruskin. As artist and educator George Agnew Reid noted in 1905:

While Morris was the typical leader and originator, no mention of the movement of which he was the head, heart, and soul, would be complete without the noting of the influence of Ruskin, whose writings on art proceeded the work of Morris, and in some measure accompanied it.  

Ruskinian thought at the OEA was not only pervasive but statistically the most frequently quoted. There are numerous references to Ruskin’s ideas on art and nature, art teaching, the role of art leagues in the schools, and art in the home. The most consistent themes evident in the addresses from inside and outside the Manual Arts section though, are Ruskin’s notion of “environmental determinism” which suggested that the natural environment and material surroundings were capable of determining moral character.

One of the most compelling Arts and Crafts social-aesthetic discussions at the OEA

---


73 This is in contrast to Edwin C. Guillet’s suggestion that Matthew Arnold “the poet,” was the most often mentioned educator in the association’s history. He cites university professor Hilda Neatby’s estimation of Arnold’s theories that “More thought and literary culture...were much preferable to a diploma on teaching methods; for elementary schools should be a civilizing and refining influence, not factories grading their products by the ‘How many can we pass’” (p. xix). Guillet’s quotation from Hilda Neatby’s So Little for the Mind (Toronto, 1953) a diatribe on the decline of the classical curriculum in schools, is revealing in that it exposes a contemporary resurgence of interest in a new “Cultural civilizing” curriculum. These issues were debated at the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (1949-1951) at which Neatby was an influential commissioner. Throughout the commission hearings, Neatby and chair Vincent Massey transformed Arnold from an Victorian to one “startlingly modern.” Hilda Neatby, A Temperate Dispute (Toronto, 1954), 39. For an interesting account of the Royal Commissions aims, activities, and participants, see Paul Litt, The Muses the Masses and the Massey Commission (Toronto, 1992).
connected the home and the neighbourhood as inculcating important values in the child. Clara Elliott for instance argued that the teaching of house decoration was not only crucial to students but to the children who inhabited its rooms. "Surround the child with a beautiful home and splendid pictures, and they will undoubtedly have an influence on his thoughts, his character, and his work." The cultivation of the eye and by extension the heart, a sort of visual osmosis, was to be supported by parental and community involvement. Even Ruskin’s authorial eye was shaped by his father who “stood [Ruskin] before some of the world’s greatest masterpieces for hours at a time that he might imbibe some of their beauty, and we all know the love and the appreciation for art and for the beautiful in everything which this early training fostered.” Elliott’s argument of the need for the teaching of decoration appealed to the newly-released report by John Seath, *Industrial Education*. She noted particularly Seath’s discussion of English Garden Cities and how they had been shaped by the various Craftsmen Schools. She concluded that the artistic nature of these surroundings, interior and exterior, clearly illustrated the value of teaching house decoration.

The notion that physical surroundings were critical to a child’s well-being was also shared by the school art leagues, forerunners of the home and school associations which were formed in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Directed by James L.

---

74 See also Ada M. Hughes short speech entitled "Relationship of Home and Education," *OEA* (1904): 257 in which she suggests that with the decline in home industries, children lost their connection to "process."


77 A listing of the Art Leagues that became Home and School Associations are listed in the OEA Minutes (1919): 55-60. Interestingly, the Leagues are listed in the elite Toronto Blue Books (the
Hughes, Superintendent of Schools, the schools adhered to Ruskin’s idealist dictum that “to teach taste is to form character.” In 1898, with popular assent from students, teachers, and parents, Hughes founded the Central League of School Art. The League originated with the Rosedale League of Art under the tutelage of Rosedale public school Principal Amelina Sims. 78 Hughes and Sims envisioned a project which would inspire children and harmonize Ruskin’s notion that “beautiful art” was the product of “people who have beautiful things about them.”79 In her 1898 annual address, Mary Ella Dignam, president of the WAAC, noted that “the Art Leagues in connection with the Public Schools are fast becoming universal in Toronto[,] at least....the members of Association in Toronto have entered heartily into the organization and work of these Leagues.” 80

An ideal opportunity to bring art into the classroom was realized in 1901 with the construction of a new kindergarten class at Rosedale Public School. Artist J.W. Beatty was chosen to execute three monumental murals which would inspire and cultivate young minds and hearts. After a decade of delays due to financial problems, the project

78 Amelia Sims and Jessie Semple were part of the eight women who in 1885 formed the Lady Teachers’ Association of Toronto (after 1892 called the Women Teachers Association of Toronto). See: Harriet Johnston, Jessie P. Semple, and A.A. Gray, “Report of The Original Members on the Formation and Early Days of the Association,” The Story of the Women Teachers Association of Toronto (Toronto, 1932); and Alison Prentice, “Themes in the Early History of the Women Teachers’ Association of Toronto,” in Paula Bourne (ed.) Women’s Paid and Unpaid Work (Toronto), 97-121.

79 Ruskin, Works, xvi, p. 338.

was finally completed in 1910.\textsuperscript{81}

The Central League of School Art was part of a larger movement which began in England in 1883. The English Art in the Schools Association was headed first by a president and vice-president, the inestimable John Ruskin and School Inspector Matthew Arnold respectively. The Association oversaw the selection, distribution and exhibition of art in London's Public Schools. Although some original work was commissioned, many of the art work in the schools were copies of prints, photographs, and lithographs.\textsuperscript{82}

Significantly, the Central League of School Art was not a vacuous educational experiment but a product of the like-minded aesthetes/representatives/members from educational establishment and the cultural community: the WAAC, the Ontario Society of Artists, and the Central School of Art and Design, chaired by George Agnew Reid who believed that the League was indeed dedicated to making public schools "more artistic environments for the students if we wish to have a people of taste who will create tasteful things." \textsuperscript{83}

The ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement were disseminated throughout the educational sector by agents involved in a network of aesthetic, social, and cultural alliances, coming together in common ideals and values regarding the importance of art

\textsuperscript{81} In 1917, the Toronto \textit{Star} dubbed the work entitled \textit{Spring, Summer, and Fall in the Don Valley} one of the most beautiful schoolrooms in Canada.

\textsuperscript{82} Ruskin's Art in the Schools Association also found a congenial public in the United States. One of the first school art leagues was established by the Chicago Public School Board in 1893. Eileen Boris has noted that by 1903, public school art societies existed in at least twenty American cities. See Eileen Boris, \textit{Art and Labor}, particularly Chapter Five "Schooling Taste: Art and Manual Training in the Public Schools." pp. 82-98.

\textsuperscript{83} WAAC, \textit{Annual Report}, (1899), 8. From the very beginning of the Leagues, the WAAC promoted art in the public schools. Superintendent Hughes also gave a lecture on the aims of the League in 1898.
as an indispensable and re-affirming part of daily life. By looking at addresses and papers presented at the OEA conferences during the first two decades of the twentieth century, it is clear that the social-aesthetic theories of William Morris, John Ruskin, and the Arts and the Crafts Movement played an important part in constructing an educational discourse on art, work, and labour. Prompted by spiraling urbanization and industrial prosperity, both of which many social reformers believed to be responsible for the pervasive "social and moral degeneration" in society, the educational system was re-conceptualized by OEA members to be an important medium from which to form a new morally and socially “ennobled” technically-trained labour force.

In time, the social-aesthetic ideas of the Arts and Crafts Movement became a potent classed and gendered force of character formation in Ontario’s public and technical schools. As a prelude to technical training, Manual Arts education attempted to instill in students the moral and noble experience inherent in working with their hearts and hands. There were distinctions in the curriculum of course; Girls were taught domestic science, sewing, and interior decorating, while boys were taught carpentry and metal work. By the time students reached the Technical school they were fully versed in the beliefs of a “dignified and noble labour force,” taking their ascribed place within the national economic plan. A cultural movement which attempted to restore the “dignity of human life” in the midst of industrial transformation became a servant to Canada’s economic policy.
Chapter 7

Conclusion

I have the pleasure to inform you that he [Haworth] worked under my guidance and example for several months and had the advantage of seeing the best possible stained glass produced here...His work showed so much promise that I do not hesitate to recommend him to you for carrying out the work you have in contemplation.

(J.H. Dearle, Artistic Director, Morris & Co. Ltd, 1925)

By the 1930s, the "guild" ideal at CTS was coming apart. This is illustrated in a case study involving artist-teacher and later Head of the Art Department Peter Haworth who was alleged to be using student assistants (as well as school supplies and facilities) to undertake his own, private stained-glass commissions. The ensuing debate reflected the contradictory discourses which accompanied Arts and Crafts ideas and practices in Ontario during the previous 40 years. In so doing, this debate highlighted the role of the TBE and its Industrial Vocational Committee (after 1928 named the Advisory Vocational Committee) in negotiating among contradictory educational visions and community pressure groups.

In this concluding chapter, I analyze the debate as it was played out with its particular set of characters, their stated intentions and clandestine motivations, to see the limits of Arts and Crafts procedures in departments and schools of art and the restrictions imposed on artists-teachers. While looking at the long-term implications of

---

1 Letter from J.H. Dearle, Morris& Co Ltd to Miss A.C. Wright, 15 November 1925, "Testimonials," 1911-1926, Haworth Papers, Ms. Coll. 5033, Queen's University Archives (hereafter QUA).
the Haworth debate, I focus at length on Peter Haworth in an attempt to go beyond the narrow artistic confines in which his life has been written.

Paul Duval's exhibition catalogue Glorious Visions (1985) remains the only biographical text of Haworth's professional life in England and later in Canada. The catalogue is brief, however, and strictly centered on Haworth's massive stained glass production, which Duval correctly surmised "remain(ed) virtually unknown." Responses to the Glorious Visions exhibition from Haworth's long-time friends confirm Duval's assertion and further exposes Haworth's stained glass production in the schools as a clandestine operation in the early days. Duval's work is indispensable to researchers because, as Haworth's former studio assistant, he was in a position to observe intimately Haworth's process of work. Duval also interviewed Haworth and his wife Zema for the catalogue, filling in the little-known details of his early art education and professional training in England. Significantly, Duval charts an artistic lineage backwards from Haworth to his stained glass teacher Robert Anning Bell and to "masters" such as Burne-Jones and William Morris whose influence, Duval categorically states, is "found in many of the windows Haworth was later to create in Canada. Their [Burne-Jones' and Morris'] example provided him with a sound base of craftsmanship from which to later develop.

---

2 Duval's catalogue must certainly be read in light of the aims and objects of the exhibition and particularly the Haworth's implicit participation. The Haworths partially underwrote financially the Glorious Visions catalogue.

3 Letter from Louise Comfort to Kenneth Saltmarche, 13 May 1985; Letter from Caven Aitken to Peter and Bobs Haworth, 19 July 1985, Haworth Papers, QUA. A friend of the Haworth's, Kenneth Saltmarche, was director of the Art Gallery of Windsor, Ontario and was a major impetus in organizing the exhibition. See also Kay Kritzwiser, "Haworth's Secret Life in Stained Glass," The Globe and Mail, 22 June 1985, Entertainment 9.
his own more personal works."  

Notably, Duval does not mention that Haworth was closer to Morris than traditionally thought: In fact, Haworth spent several months working for Morris & Co., Ltd. under the direction of J.H. Dearle—a man hand-picked by William Morris himself and trained as an apprentice. Dearle eventually succeeded him as Artistic Director of the firm. In contrast to Duval's oversight, in job applications Haworth was quick to point to his "appointment for 6 months as assistant manager to the firm of Wm. Morris and Company at their Merton Abbey works...[where] I gained valuable knowledge of the production of the famous Morris tapestries, textiles woven fabrics, stained glass and other artistic crafts under the direction of Mr. Dearle the Artistic Director and manager." Haworth also noted that "I also executed some designs for them." Though J.H. Dearle's name appears as a referee for Haworth for several artistic/academic positions, regrettably, only one letter in the Haworth Papers is from Dearle, written in 1925, in response to a prospective Canadian client seeking an artistic reference from the famous firm. This points to the fact that Haworth was citing Dearle—and by extension Morris & Co.—as

---


6 Peter Haworth, "Application for the Appointment of Assistant Secretary at the Royal Society," 31 December 1919. Haworth related his experience at Morris & Co. in his application for the position of Head Master at the School of Art, Salisbury. Haworth also included his experience at Morris & Co. under the "Professional Qualification" section in his "Application for the Specialists Certificate" n.d. Job Applications, Hiring, Haworth Papers, QUA.
a reference well into the 1920s.  

In light of this direct connection to Morris and the British Arts and Crafts Movement, I delve into the process by which the search for the "appropriate" candidate to fill the position of art teacher at CTS—later to be filled by Haworth—was conducted. How were Haworth's skills and artistic experiences valued by his employers in Toronto? The search for the candidate discloses by what method and, more importantly, the reasons why Arts and Crafts philosophies and practices continued to be imported into Canada as late as the 1920s.

The Hiring at Toronto

Peter Haworth was born in 1889 and raised in Oswaltwistle, Lancashire, England. Though his father, a cattle trader, was initially dismayed that his son wanted to pursue a career in art, he stood steadfastly by him "as long as he could prove he could 'better himself.'" After a brief period at the Accrington School of Art, Haworth enrolled at the Manchester School of Art in 1911 where he studied until 1913. In 1914, Haworth was accepted into the prestigious Royal College of Art in London. With the outbreak of war in 1914, Haworth enlisted in the Lancashire Fusiliers. After three years in France fighting in the trenches and later as a balloonist with the Royal Flying Corps, Haworth


9 Duval, *Glorious Visions*, p. 11.
returned to the RCA to resume his art studies with the aid of "Higher Education of Ex-Service Students" awards to finance the remainder of his education. At the College, Haworth transferred to the design department to study under its head stained glass artist Robert Anning Bell who introduced students to the works of William Morris and Burne-Jones. Versed in painting, stained glass, architecture, and sculpture, Haworth graduated in 1921 as an Associate of the Royal College of Art (ARCA).

Peter Haworth's most staunch supporters, instrumental in his appointment at CTS in Toronto in 1923, were his former teacher Robert Anning Bell, William Rothenstein (principal of the RCA), and Alexander Charles McKay, principal of CTS (1911-1926) and later Director of Technical Education. Complimentary endorsements by his teachers as a "student of great promise...hardworking [sic]...and [embodying] the valuable gift of initiative so necessary to gain the confidence and respect of pupils," and "a distinguished student of design...[whose] character...is most reliable and influential," made Haworth an attractive choice for the position in Toronto. 10

In the fall of 1922, while employed as a temporary Head Master at the Salisbury School of Art, a position to which he had been appointed in September, a letter arrived from A.C. McKay in Toronto informing Haworth that his name was put forward for the position as an Assistant Teacher of Design and Craft work at the CTS. McKay related to

10 Robert Anning Bell (n.d.), "Testimonial on Behalf of Peter Haworth"; W. Rothenstein, "Testimonial for Peter Haworth," 21 July 1922. Haworth had two advantages in his application for employment: He was relatively mature to other candidates—he was 33 years old when he took on the position at CTS—and he had a distinguished and decorated military career for which he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for valour in 1918. When applying for positions, Haworth always included "war testimonials" from his commanding officers. Such a reference from Lt. Colonel Hugh L. Meyler accompanied several of Haworth's applications. Meyler "recommended Haworth for employment in any post where a knowledge of men with power of organizing and attention to details are essentials." Lt. Colonel Hugh L. Meyler, "Testimonial on Behalf of Peter Haworth," 31 December 1919, Testimonials, Haworth Papers, QUA.
Haworth how in July of that year he had written to Principal Rothenstein at the RCA asking him “to suggest the name of suitable teachers for this important position in the Central Technical School.” McKay continued “in view of the fact that two of our most capable teachers of Art in the City of Toronto, Mr. Alfred Howell and Mr. John Chester came to us from the Royal College of Art under similar circumstances [as Haworth], I had no hesitation in recommending our Committee to accept the Principal’s nomination.” Haworth received notice that his appointment was ratified on 8 December 1922. Before accepting the position, however, Haworth wrote to McKay inquiring into several matters of importance: salary increases, relocation expenses, possibilities for promotion, and the amount of time allocated to teaching duties and other school activities. In systematic fashion, McKay answered each of Haworth’s queries, throughout suggesting that “if you are as capable as I think you are, your salary will soon be increased.” McKay once again stressed the connection with the RCA and its esteemed representatives at CTS, Alfred

11 Letter from A.C. McKay to Peter Haworth, 29 November 1922, Haworth Papers, QUA.

12 Letter from A.C. McKay to Peter Haworth 29 November 1922. Rothenstein’s reply arrived on November 2nd. Haworth Papers, QUA.

13 Letter from W.W. Pearse to Peter Haworth, 8 December 1922, Haworth Papers, QUA.

14 Letter from A.C. McKay to Peter Haworth, 3 January 1923, Haworth Papers, QUA. In 1922, Haworth tried to sue the military for a pension claiming injuries suffered during his military service which made him incapable of work. Though the petition was granted and retirement paid for 18 months, the award was rejected on review on the grounds that “Haworth’s disability is neither attributable to nor aggravated by his military service, but is the result of the accident which occurred while he was on leave and not on military service.” This judgement was handed down on 9 November 1922, several weeks before he received a letter from A.C. McKay informing him about the job in Toronto. Curiously, days after receiving the job offer from McKay, Haworth sent out an application for a position for the post of Principal Teacher at the School of Art, Norwich. In light of these events and Haworth’s December 8th letter to McKay, it begs the question of whether Haworth accepted the position because he needed money to support himself and his prospective bride (they were married on 27 February 1923). Reassured by McKay’s certainty of promotion, perhaps Haworth felt that he could more easily advance in the Canadian educational system than in England.
Howell and John Chester. McKay firmly advised Haworth that "the chances for promotion are excellent...the best men available will secure excellent positions." In a postscript, McKay added "cable and come immediately." 15 Perhaps as a further incentive, McKay cabled Haworth: "Sail soon, bring bride, salary starts sailing day." 16

Since no other applicants were seriously considered for the position, it was clearly expected from the beginning that Haworth would in short time succeed Alfred Howell as head of the Department at CTS. A letter from William C. Noxon, Agent General for the Ontario stationed in London, reveals the privilege accorded Haworth’s education, his well-regarded referees, Anning Bell and Rothenstein, and perhaps more importantly his English heritage. 17 Noxon enclosed three letters of introduction for Haworth, an impressive list indeed: one to Robert Falconer, President of the University of Toronto; one to Reverend Dr. H.J. Cody, Church of England Clergyman (he succeeded Falconer as President of the University of Toronto in 1932); and one to Alfred Brown who was to facilitate Haworth’s introduction to the stained glass trade in Toronto. 18

15 Letter from A.C. McKay to Peter Haworth, 3 January 1923, Haworth Papers, QUA.
16 Cable from A.C. McKay to Peter Haworth, n.d., Haworth Papers, QUA.
18 Letter from W. C. Noxon to Peter Haworth, 21 February 1923, "Testimonials 1911-1926," Haworth Papers, QUA. Interestingly, appealing to English authorities for knowledge of the right candidate was the same approach used by Presidents Falconer and Cody when they initiated the search for an English male candidate to fill the newly created position of the Fine Arts Chair at Toronto. As early as 1929, Robert Falconer wrote to Lawrence Binyon at the Department of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum, and A.M. Hind, Slade Professor of Art at Oxford (a position once held by Ruskin), enquiring about a young man suitable to undertake the task of heading the Fine Art Department. Inquiries were also made to W.G. Constable of the famed Courtauld Institute of Art in London, and to other notable authorities at the Victoria and Albert Museum, the University of Liverpool, and the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Discussed for the position of the Chair, though perhaps not seriously, were Kenneth Clark, Nicholas Pevsner, Walter Friedlander, and Erwin Panofksy. The gender, racial, and funding implications of the search for
The Early Formation of the Art Department

In many ways, Haworth followed the path of his predecessor artist Alfred Howell who had studied at the RCA (1909-1913), in some cases with the same instructors. Howell was promoted by McKay to Toronto in 1914 to head the newly re-organized Art Department. Howell was assisted by senior teachers, in particular John Chester, a

the Chair from 1929 through to the appointment of John Alford in 1934 clearly deserve a study of their own and one I hope to pursue at a later time. Letter from Lawrence Binyon to Robert Falconer, 11 February 1929; Frederick Keppel to Robert Falconer, 14 April 1931; W.G. Constable to Dr. Cody, 18 June 1934; W.G. Constable to Professor John Orr, 2 March 1934; and “University of Toronto Fine Art Chair,” Graduate Files. A68-0007/169/03/0, UTA.

In order to re-construct the early staff membership of the Art Department, I have also consulted several official but unpublished histories written in 1965 by members of the Art Department staff. This document, produced on the department’s fifty year anniversary, sets out to “briefly sketch some of the personal traits of the people who created this Department.” Its rhetoric and the context and time of its writing suggest a great deal more. The authors of these documents attempted to situate themselves in the historical fabric of Canadian art, to reinforce the department’s artistic continuity and tradition. Most importantly, the authors wanted to create an artistic lineage, being quick to point out how the Art Department’s “imaginative programme of art education...became the pattern for many which were later established throughout the province.” n.a. “The Art Department, 1915-1965,” Central Technical School Art Department, ca. 1965, p. 5.

To supplement this source, from the Toronto Board of Education Handbooks I compiled a list of all artist-teachers (both in the day and night school) who taught in the Art Department from 1904-1965. These handbooks are an important historiographic source in that they list the name of the teachers by gender, school, and subjects taught. The handbooks include: years of service, degrees held, rank, and salary, and specifically in regards to artist-teachers, they list artistic credentials and in some cases professional artistic affiliations.

For information on Alfred Howell see: National Gallery of Canada Artists Files; “Local Sculptor Wins War Memorial Prize,” Toronto Star 27 December 1922; “25,000 War Memorial for Oshawa.” Toronto Telegram 19 February 1924; and “A Beautiful War Memorial,” Saturday Night, 5 November 1927. Interestingly, Dawson F. Kennedy, a teacher in the Art Department, followed Haworth’s educational path. Born in Peterborough, Ontario, he studied at CTS under Howell and Howarth. Upon completion he enrolled at the RCA where he studied with W. Rothenstein and E.W. Tristam. His wife Kateleen Cooley, who later taught weaving and crafts in the department (1932-1936), was also a graduate of the RCA and a student of Rothenstein and Tristam. According to the “Art Department,” Haworth encouraged Kennedy to go to the RCA for advanced training. It gave Kennedy, “a feeling for tradition and the rich heritage of the past.” “The Art Department, p. 10. Information on the Kennedys was found in the National Gallery of Canada Artist Files.
weaver from Burnely, England, who was also a graduate of the RCA, Carmen M. Maynard, and Francis Simpson. The authors of the "Art Department" recounted how "our first Principals chose men for the art department whose experience touched upon all levels of art [consequently]...the department had something of the atelier atmosphere, that is its artist-teachers, students and community saw themselves as an "art school."  

The "benevolent dictator with the soul of a prophet," A.C. McKay was considered the leading force behind the formation and development of the Art Department.

[McKay] saw education in terms of people rather than blue prints and courses of study. He looked upon the Art Teachers primarily as artists and was anxious that they should do some of their own work at school so that the students could see how the job was actually done. He encouraged Mr. Howell to gather a staff of practicing artists around him. In those days we put quality before qualifications; pedagogical indoctrination came later.  

Peter Haworth: Artist, Teacher, and Stained Glass Craftsman

In 1923, Haworth and his new wife Zema ("Bobs") Cogill (1900-1988) arrived in Toronto to assume his position as the new teacher of Art at CTS. As McKay clearly  

---

21 Chester left CTS in 1922 to become Supervisor of Art in the public schools.

22 n.a. "The Art Department, 1915-1965." Central Technical School Art Department, ca. 1965. p. 5. With the building of CTS in 1914, the Art Department was given spacious accommodations. "an impressive forecast of the place that the authorities expected art education to occupy in the future" (p. 5).


24 Though it is clear that the Haworths worked jointly on many artistic and intellectual projects and were teaching colleagues at CTS, they were both influential in their own particular fields. Space does not permit me to elaborate on "Bobs" Haworth's contribution to the pottery field and
expected, Haworth quickly ascended through the ranks of CTS's Art Department, becoming head in 1928. Until his retirement in 1955, Haworth carried on consecutive careers as a teacher, administrator, painter, stained glass artist, and noted and respected authority on Art. 25 Once in Toronto, Haworth kept high profile and prestigious company in Canadian artistic circles. "[Within] a year of his arrival, Peter had become friends with Lawren Harris and most of the (other members of the) Group of Seven." 26 This is reflected in the Haworths' extensive address book of friends and acquaintances which included names from the world of art and culture, business, and the educational establishment. Besides Group of Seven members like Harris, Casson, Lismer, and A.Y. Jackson, 27 the book also lists such well-known figures as Mrs. and Mr. Jack Bush, art historian Marius Barbeau, sculptor Barbara Hepworth (with whom the Haworths were

especially her role as president of the Canadian Guild of Potters.

25 Given the emphasis of this study on Haworth’s stained glass, I have purposefully downplayed his painting career. For contemporary reviews of Haworth’s solo painting exhibitions at the Roberts Gallery in Toronto, see: Hugh Thompson, “Gentle Nature Art,” Toronto Daily Star, 6 (February 1959); and Gail Sabiston, “Stylized Abstracts by Haworth,” Toronto Globe and Mail (18 February 1961).


27 Haworth and Jackson had a life-long friendship and artistic working relationship. Jackson even elicited Haworth’s help in supporting his case against the new owner of the Studio Building in Toronto, Gordon McNamara, who was trying to force him out of the place in which he had lived for 35 years. A series of correspondence between the two parties was to sent to Haworth by Jackson as a record of the “truth” on the belief that “Gordon is a social snob who cannot afford to lose face in art circles.” A.Y. Jackson to Peter Haworth, 20 December 1954, Haworth Papers, QUA. Since McNamara was a friend of the Haworths, Jackson felt that the Haworths could exert some social pressure on his behalf. Although outside the purview of this dissertation, the ensuing correspondence goes beyond a dispute between tenant and landlord, suggestive of a larger debate on art and historical lineage. On A.Y. Jackson, see: A Painter’s Country: The Autobiography of A.Y. Jackson (Toronto, 1958); and O.J. Firestone, The Other A.Y. Jackson: Memoir (Toronto, 1978). The most current social-historical analysis of the Group of Seven is Charles C. Hill’s Group of Seven: Art For a Nation (Toronto, 1995).
classmates at the RCA), Mrs. and Mr. Alan Eaton, Mrs. and Mr. George Gooderham, Dr. and Mrs. C. Goldring, and Dr. and Mrs. C.D. Gaitskell. The inclusion of wives indicates both a sense of formality and the social nature in which relationships were forged and maintained within this elite cultural world. Childless and with the advantage of fixed educational salaries and substantial commissions from their extensive artistic projects, the Haworths enjoyed a lifestyle befitting the elite circles in which they traveled. These social networks are vital in that it is these friends which either commissioned or recommended Haworth’s stained glass artistry. By hiring Haworth, they were in fact engaging one of their own.

Many relationships were also forged in the ranks and service of professional artistic societies. In addition to membership in the Ontario Society of Artists (member, 1933; president, 1954), in the Royal Canadian Academy of Art (he was made an Academician in Painting in 1955), the Canadian Group of Painters (member, 1938), and the Canadian Society for Painters in Watercolours (serving as president in 1934-37), Haworth was

28 This list was alphabetized and neatly typed with over 200 names. “Address List,” (n.d.), Haworth Papers, QUA.

25 The Haworths were long considered part of the artistic establishment. Their biographies are included in issues of the Canadian Who’s Who beginning in 1953. The Haworths were also members of The Social Register of Canada Association. Membership card, The Social Register of Canada Association, #4657, Haworth Papers.

30 In this regard, I believe that Bobs’ membership in such women’s groups as the Heliconian Club of Toronto (elected a member of the art section in 1931) was significant in that it was the women’s committees of many churches which were responsible for looking after the interior decoration. In the majority of cases this also included the stained glass. Similarly, membership in the Rosedale Ratepayers Association, the Royal Canadian Yacht Club (Bobs became a life member in 1975), and the Toronto Lawn Tennis Club (the Haworths were members since 1928) went a long way in establishing the couple’s artistic personae and securing them artistic commissions particularly in stained glass. Letter from Edith Turnbull to Zema Haworth, 19 June 1931. Rosedale Ratepayers Association File; Royal Canadian Yacht Club., 1975-88 File, Toronto Lawn Tennis Club, 1953-1982 File, Haworth Papers, QUA.
elected a member of the Royal Society in 1957 and in the same year made an honourary member of the Guild of Art and Crafts of the WAAC in recognition of his past service.  

In 1953, he was also awarded a medal in commemoration of Queen Elizabeth's coronation, and was routinely called on by the National Gallery of Canada's director Eric Brown to judge and participate in juried exhibitions in Canada and England, for example the 1938 exhibition "A Century of Canadian Art," held at the Tate Gallery in London. The Haworths pursued artistic initiatives that would often put them in the centre of major "career-making" events such as the opportunity during the Second World War to serve as war artists recording Canadian military maneuvers on the West Coast.

Among Haworth's impressive achievements, he was perhaps best known as a dynamic teacher. During his 32-year career at CTS and his appointment as an Instructor in Design and Drawing (1939-1947) at the University of Toronto's Department of Fine Arts, he came in contact with thousand of students. In her daily radio broadcast for CFRB in 1948 on "issues of art and life," Kate Aitken related the following story:

---

31 Letter n.n. to Peter Haworth, 21 January n.y.; Letter from Fred Finley, Royal Canadian Academy of Art to Peter Haworth, 11 December Secretary of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts Manufacturers & Commerce, London, 13 May 1957, Haworth Papers, QUA.

32 "Buckingham Palace Medal on Her Majesty's Coronation," 2 June 1953.

33 Eric Brown, National Gallery of Canada to Peter Haworth, 5 August 1938; Eric Brown to Peter Haworth, 30 August 1943. "National Gallery of Canada File." Haworth Papers. QUA. See also A Century of Canadian Art (catalogue) (Ottawa, 1938), 17.

34 Palette, "B.C. Coast At War Depicted by Noted, Toronto Artists," Vancouver Province, (20 January, 1944): 17. Interestingly, Peter's National Department of Defense Card which gave him admission "to all RCAF units, Western Air Command" listed him only as "Director of Art, University of Toronto." Peter Haworth, National Department of Defense Card, 9 July 1943-December 31, 1943, Haworth Papers, QUA.
Last week when I was talking to one of the newspaper men [sic] who buys more art than any publication in Canada—here's what he had to say about Peter Haworth. "He trains the best artists that Canada produces. Believe me, when anyone who comes into our office and says I took my training at Central Tech with Peter Haworth—I reach of his portfolio and say—'Kid, let me see your work.'"35

Haworth was an exacting teacher who had a paternalistic master/apprentice relationship with his students which extended beyond the confines of the school. One particular incident with a student illustrates the nature of these relationships and more importantly the value Haworth placed on the characteristics of dependability, responsibility, and obligation. Clearly, he was not just training artists but artists of a certain moral character who were to be exemplars in the broader community. In 1949, Haworth made a small loan to a student to help him relocate to Ottawa so that he could undertake an apprenticeship program at the Royal Canadian Mint under the resident

---

35 "Your Tamblyn Broadcast with Kate Aitken," CFRB, 2 November, 1948, transcript, Haworth Papers, QUA. CTS's vibrant department and its curriculum and staff was popularly recognized as, one prospective student suggested, "equal to and superior...to that of OCA [Ontario College of Art]." Letter from Robert Green to Peter Haworth, 25 May 1950. A former student enrolled at the Chicago Institute of Art even suggested that "somehow the Art Institute down here just isn't the same. I am probably prejudiced but I like ours far more. If they put a few Haworth's [sic] and [Louise and Charles] Comfort's [sic] up I may like it better." Letter from Patricia Corson to Peter and Zema Haworth, 25 October 1947, Haworth Papers, QUA.

The prominence of the Art Department and Haworth's influence on and sensitivity to artist/craftsmen can be discerned in a letter from a silversmith, who having escaped the siege of Budapest, arrived in Georgetown, Ontario, to stay with his brother. On the advice of Mrs. Majorie Elliot, a friend of the Haworths, the craftsman wrote Peter Haworth outlining how "...during the siege of my native city I lost all my belongings, among them my tools and materials which I used for my craft. I could not purchase them anymore and I could not start over again." Given his dismal financial situation, he pleads with Haworth to allow him to attend the ceramic classes for one or two months free of charge. If acts of artistic generosity such as this were known to the educational authorities, they turned a blind eye. Haworth's prominence in artistic and educational circles and the high visibility of the department internationally meant that any contrary discussions of policy would have either been withheld from Haworth or at least discussed privately behind closed doors. Letter from Beer to Peter Haworth, 7 February 1949, Haworth Papers. Beer's first name is not provided.
master W.C. Ronson. When the student failed to repay, Haworth wrote to the student inquiring as to the delay:

I have realized this year that you still have much to learn. One thing is that to accept help from someone else involves you in certain obligations. You will understand how much easier it would be for me to continue to say nothin, [sic] but to feel disappointed in you, than to write this letter and offer you advice which may prove in the long run to be worth more to you than the twenty-five dollars I lent. 36

When the student failed once again to respond, Haworth elicited the support of Principal G.M. Gore of CTS. In June 1949, Principal Gore wrote to W.C. Ronson at the Mint outlining the problem and imploring him to “encourage” the repayment of the loan. 37 In one of the last communications, Haworth confesses to Ronson that “…I am completely baffled by [the student’s] attitude and quite concerned about his moral responsibility in this matter... It is the first time a student of ours in whom I had such faith has let me down...we had such faith in this young man.” 38 An envelope from the student with a postal order for twenty-five dollars and the discharged IOU eventually arrived in November 1949. 39

Artist-teachers in the Art Department benefitted from Haworth’s comfortable manner and his support of their artistic endeavours. Teaching and artistic practice went hand-in-hand. As Doris McCarthy suggests, "I always knew I was a good teacher and I was happy

36 Letter from Peter Haworth to Myron Cook, 11 May 1949, Haworth Papers, QUA.

37 Letter from G.M. Gore to W.C. Ronson, 24 June 1949; Letter from W.C. Ronson to Peter Haworth, 7 October 1949, Haworth Papers, QUA.

38 Letter from Peter Haworth to W.C. Ronson, 12 October, 1949, Haworth Papers, QUA.

39 Letter from Peter Haworth to W.C. Ronson, 21 November 1949, Haworth Papers, QUA.
teaching...I didn't feel justified in teaching unless I was also a practising artist. I don't think you should teach something you are not doing." 40 Peter Haworth, whom McCarthy described as "an autocrat," was granted "unusual freedom in choosing his staff." He regularly hired artists and "hoped that they could teach." He often fought with the Board, "[convincing] authorities that an effective teacher must also be a practising artist...Peter encouraged his teachers to exhibit in the juried shows." Although he fought for the right to hire artists, Haworth understood what certification implied within the school system, advising McCarthy to take the teacher training course and get certified "then [she] could be taken on staff and paid an annual salary instead of wages by the half-day." (McCarthy promptly enrolled at the Ontario Training College for Technical Teachers in Hamilton where her practicum teacher was Hortense Gordon.) 41

Peter Haworth was largely responsible for the emergence and steady rise of women artist-teachers in the Art Department, as well as the increase in their artistic production while teaching. In 1932, eight teachers were employed in the day school: Director Peter Haworth, Charles Goldhammer, Elizabeth Wyn-Wood, Edna Jutton, Dawson Kennedy, Noreen Masters, Tom Roberts, and Doris McCarthy. Five of the eight were practising artists: Haworth and Kennedy with a A.R.C.A. (Associate of the RCA, London), Goldhammer, Wyn-Wood, and McCarthy with an A.O.C.A. (Associate of the Ontario College of Art). Norren Masters was a graduate of the Art Department at CTS who was hired by Haworth as a permanent staff member.


Stained glass, its history, and the process of its production was one of Haworth’s principal courses at CTS. Existing course notes and lecture outlines reveals a systematic exploration of the functional, technical, and historical aspects of the craft (see Figure 1). Haworth structured the course so that technical discussions were enhanced by discussions of the past and the present. In these classes, he used the traditional pedagogical method of the RCA to teach by example. Haworth took students through the process of drawing and its translation into a full-size charcoal cartoon. Template patterns from the cartoon were then used to cut the pre-selected coloured glass to fit in their proper placement. Once the etching and final details were applied, the windows were assembled and leaded. Though seemingly straightforward, the use of the diamond cutters, the cut glass scattered about, and particularly the leading substance made the process hazardous. The project was on view for the entire class, executed from start to finish, using the best possible materials and techniques. This gave Haworth control over production while students had the opportunity to participate in making an actual work. “[There] are gray haired former students who got their first glimpse of the Fine Arts tradition by helping Peter Haworth to rule borders around the cartoons for stained glass which he occasionally brought to school.” 42

According to the outline in class 8 on “Modern Tendencies Revival,” Haworth discussed the stained glass work of William Morris (and almost undoubtedly the work of Burne-Jones and Anning Bell) and we can assume that Haworth iterated his artistic connection to Morris & Co. In the remainder of the course, Haworth discussed Morris, the importation of glass into Canada, the quality of glass available in Canada, and the

42 “The Art Department,” p. 5.
Figure 1

Peter Haworth
"Lectures in the History of Art"
Stained Glass Course Outline (n.d)

(source: "History of Art Lectures." Haworth Papers. 4/9)

Class 1. Introduction

2. What Stained Glass is

3. Practical Function (not the pictorial)

4. Spiritual—function

5. Materials—Class—Pot Flash

6. Practice of Craft
   Glass Cutting, painting
   Leads—Yellow Stain

7. Describe commission
   Subject templates
   Saddle bars cartoons
   Cut line selection of glass
   Assembling painting firing
   Leading cementing

8. Modern tendencies revival
   Morris

9. Importation of Glass in this country
   Canopy work
   Use of cross leads silhouette [sic]
   Lighter glass painting in line

10. Position in this country
    Light—inferiority complex
    Importation

11. Catalogue Figures
    Domestic Windows very bad

12. Canadian motifs
quality of domestically-produced stained glass and the use of stock catalogue figures, both of which he deemed "very bad." As Haworth suggested in one of his History of Art lectures:

I do feel a great responsibility towards the young people who are being trained in art today. I am anxious that artistic integrity be maintained, that experimentation be carried on, in order to equip the artists with a simple philosophy of Art based on knowledge of the past, so that he may create from the experience of today, using present day life and motifs to enrich our modern development, imparting to it a national flavour, the result of our mode of thinking, and living in Canada today. 43

Haworth's sympathy with Morrisian and Arts and Crafts principles was conspicuous in many of his lectures. In "The Place of Decoration in Everyday Life," Haworth, sounding very much like Morris, outlined how "love of beauty and the desire to create it is a primal instinct in man." 44 Echoing Ruskin's environmental determinist philosophy, Haworth added that "beauty expressed in our surroundings...becomes part of our life and personality." 45 Most of his talk was dedicated to decoration of the "home" which he conceived as one of the "most complete and ample opportunities for self-expression." 46 Haworth corroborated Morris' and Ruskin's notion of beauty and particularly of function

42 Peter Haworth, "Modern Art for the Public," History of Art Lectures, Haworth Papers, QUA. This lecture was originally delivered to a Hamilton audience (n.d.).

44 Haworth used his lectures on art interchangeably in CTS, University of Toronto, and popular speaking engagements. In fact, in his lecture "Modern Art for the Public," Haworth likened man's desire to create and possess beauty to the biological "appetite for food, drink or rest...[It was] just as important to man's realization of himself" (p. 2).

45 Peter Haworth, "The Place of Decoration in Everyday Life," Lectures History of Art, Haworth Papers, QUA.

in regard to interior design claiming that: "The room must fulfill its function. Every object in it must be there because it has a purpose. We do not have rooms just to rush and pile something into them, but because we see some things in certain places to make the room fulfill its function." 47

In "Regional Taste and Aesthetics in the Allied Arts," Haworth bemoaned the deplorable lack of taste, especially by contemporary manufacturers and industrialists. 48 In a tone reminiscent of Ruskin, he would provocatively ask: "What is being done to educate the buyers?" For Haworth, design was "the common denominator of all the Arts. It is timeless and placeless." Connecting the past and the future, the "creative artist, whether professional, amateur or student, should normally apply his design sense to his environment. This was normal practice in the middle ages and we must work in the idiom of today." Haworth reasoned that modernist reductionist approaches seemed to have taken decoration to an extreme. "In the Victorian era schemes of decoration were choked with ornamentation. Walls, ceilings, drapes, upholstery, carpets and furniture were ornately carved with intricate but rather coarse motifs. Now we have gone to the opposite extreme of no decoration." 49 When decoration was used for "cheap commercialism," its only function was to "prostitute...the Craftsman's talent." Haworth tried to dispel the notion that crafts were the mere purview of the "hobby people who knit at this or that." For example, "ceramics has been a noble art...enjoying a well

47 Peter Haworth, "The Place of Decoration in Everyday Life," p. 3.

48 Peter Haworth, "Regional Taste and Aesthetics in the Allied Arts," Lectures History of Art, Haworth Papers, QUA.

49 Peter Haworth, "Regional Taste and Aesthetics in the Allied Arts," p. 4.
deserved revival...in Toronto in particular..., capable of holding its own in the international field.” Pointing to the plethora of native and ethnic cultures in Canada, each with their own unique traditional handicrafts and “picturesque manual arts,” Haworth noted that this was the essence from which to “build up a living decorative art.” In conclusion, he noted that it was the “craftsmen...in the past, even more than the Writer, [who] reflected the culture of his times...the mode of life of the people, and above all the mood and aspirations of the people.”

Controversy at Central Technical School, 1931: The First Incident

It is surprising that Haworth, over the years an accomplished artist, teacher, and craftsman, who had many friends in high places, holding high ethical standards, and being an exemplary role model, was involved in a somewhat vitriolic and involved controversy which checkered an otherwise stellar career. On 24 February 1939, a letter was received by Dr. Charles Goldring, Director of Education at the TBE, from the Luxfer Prism Company. On behalf of three Toronto stained-glass firms, the letter alleged that the "oppression" experienced in the stained glass industry "over the last several years is due to one of your Art teachers [who] is also selling stained windows. As he is a good salesman he is cutting into the very limited field of our endeavor and enriching himself without having the cost of keeping up an establishment." The complaint included

50 Peter Haworth, “Regional Taste and Aesthetics in the Allied Arts,” p. 4.
51 The other two firms were the N.T. Lyon Glass Co. Ltd. and Robert McCausland Ltd.
52 Letter from Luxfer Prism Co. Ltd. Letter to Dr. Charles Goldring, 24 February 1939, TBERMA.
ethical and artistic issues. The firms pointed out that

he is getting a large salary paid by the tax payers of this City and then
competing with them, and practically hindering them from making a decent
living and certainly from being able to pay their taxes...He has more or less
of his work done by others so that he is really not the designer of the
windows.  

In conclusion, the firms appealed to Dr. Goldring explaining that "during this period of
very limited business it is a crying shame to have to face competition of this kind...we
therefore request that he be instructed to cease his operations in the stained glass
business." The artist-teacher in question was Peter Haworth, then Director of Art at
CTS.

On the surface, the letter may be literally interpreted as an expression of the
economic desperation of a number of stained glass firms, and in fact, of the threat of
insolvency faced by the entire stained glass industry in pre-war Toronto. The letter
also reflected the dismal situation that confronted all the visual arts in Ontario, and along
with the ensuing textual debate, it unveiled an enigmatic and absorbing narrative which
touched on education, art, labour, economics, and issues of professionalization.

Notably, a perusal of Haworth's prodigious stained glass production suggests that the

53 Letter from Luxfer Prism Co. to Dr. Charles Goldring, 1939.

54 Letter from Luxfer Prism Co. to Dr. Charles Goldring, 1939.

55 For contemporary comments on the stained glass industry in Ontario, see: S. Jones, "Stained
Glass and Canadian Art," *Canadian Architect and Builder*, 1 no. 2 (Feb. 1888): 7-8; "Canadian
Women in Stained Glass," *Stained Glass*, 36, no. 2 (Summer 1941): 50-52; Yvonne Williams,
(Spring 1944): 21-24; and Alvyn J. Austin, "Toronto Stained Glass Windows," *Canadian Antiques
concern of the Luxfer Prism Company and other stained glass firms was genuine (see Appendix B). Haworth completed his first major stained glass commission for the Swindon Secondary School in England prior to his arrival in Canada in February, 1923. In Canada, one of his first commissions was the war memorial window for the Ontario College of Agriculture at Guelph, now the University of Guelph. By the late 1960s, Haworth had completed over 50 commissions in Toronto and Montreal, and in various buildings from New Brunswick to British Columbia. Many of these commissions, such as the one for Melrose Church 56 in Hamilton and the Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto, were executed over an extended period, and in conjunction with his church commissions, Haworth undertook a large number of institutional projects such as the windows in University College and Sigmund Samuel Library at the University of Toronto. 57

The original complaint from the firms in 1931 was a reaction to the over 16 important commissions by Haworth. At a meeting in February 1931, the firms' representatives addressed the Advisory Vocational Committee with several points of contention (only to be restated eight years later). The latter two points highlighted the links between the educational and business communities:

6) Cooperation in the training of stained glass apprentices between the school and

56 Upon completion of the work, the congregation of the Melrose produced a small book describing the project and the biblical iconography of the windows. Stressing the educative value of the windows, Rev. Mutch relates in the Introduction that a “Professor from a theological college, after conducting services in Melrose remarked: 'You hardly need sermons with all those beautiful windows.’” See Rev. John Mutch, The Windows of Melrose United Church (Hamilton, 1956), 4.

57 This ongoing list has been compiled from the Peter and Bobs Coghill Haworth Papers in the possession of Queen's University Archives, Kingston, Ontario. For more information on Haworth's stained glass work, see Paul Duval, Glorious Visions.
the industry is not as harmonious as desired; and

7) That pupils [who] obtain positions in this industry are not fitted for the trade unless they are further trained by the firm engaging them." 58

The meeting concluded with the committee referring the matter to the chair Dr. A. C. McKay who subsequently presented his Report at the May 1931 meeting. Containing accounts from both Peter Haworth and the stained glass firms, the arguments centred on the "professionalization" of the stained glass industry. Haworth countered the main allegation that he did not pay taxes, and pointed out that "the making of stained glass windows provides work for glass painters, glaziers and installers, and there is very little doubt that my overhead in this connection exceeds that of the firms doing similar work." 58 He also contended that "my lectures reflect my personal opinion and ideal for the future of stained glass in Canada, and I have not at any time in my lectures or to the students, disparaged the work of any of the firms represented by any of the delegates."

58

These statements testify to an underlying discourse which, contrary to suggestions from both sides, conveyed personal antagonisms. The part of the Report from the firms which iterated previous complaints about Haworth and his encroachment into the private stained glass market suggested that by attacking Haworth the firms were implicitly criticizing the TBE and technical education in general. The firms charged that "primarily

58 Advisory Vocational Committee Minutes, 24 February 1931, TBERMA (hereafter AVC Minutes). The firms originally presented a seven-point memorandum which detailed their grievances. At the meeting with the AVC committee, only the points which actually dealt with the school facilities, students, and issue of public moneys were raised. "Competition by Art Teacher," 9 March 1931, Haworth Papers, QUA.

59 AVC Minutes, 10 May 1931, TBERMA.

60 AVC Minutes, 10 May 1931.
we complain that no effort has yet been made to co-operate with the various firms engaged in this branch of Art Work," underscored that: "The most convincing proof that the Technical schools have failed to co-operate is that no attempt has yet been made to know the needs of the local stained glass studios...No call of inspection or enquiry has ever been made. No students from Technical schools have been found suitable for employment." To counter this dismal situation, one firm, they argue, instituted its own training classes. In conclusion, the firms emphatically denounced "a school management which permits a salary to be paid from public funds, ostensibly for the purpose of training help for our own and allied craft, but which is in effect merely a subsidy to encourage competition." The meeting closed with a decision to have McKay, Principal Kirkland of CTS, Peter Haworth, and the firms' representatives "confer with a view to disposing of this matter in an amicable, satisfactory and co-operative manner."

Perceiving little definitive action from the TBE, the Canadian Manufacturing Association wrote to the AVC "protesting the extending of such privileges to members of the teaching staff." In response to alleged questions of impropriety, Pringle and London, identifying themselves as the manufacturers of Haworth's stained glass windows, wrote to the AVC committee to correct the inference that Haworth had an interest in the firm. Concerned that the competing firms were branding them historically

61 AVC Minutes, 10 May 1931.
62 AVC Minutes, 10 May 1931.
63 AVC Minutes, 10 May 1931.
64 AVC Minutes, 10 May 1931.
65 AVC Minutes, 28 April 1931.
inconsequential, Pringle and London stated:

We may add that this firm is an old established one, operating on a similar basis to other competing firms, and has been since 1912 under its present constitution. Before that, the senior partner, Mr. Pringle, had owned one-half interest in the firm of Faircloth & Co. who made and painted the windows for Massey Hall and Victoria College as far back as 1895. 66

The AVC struck its own sub-committee, producing a report which was released in May. Dr. McKay was charged with discussing the substantive contents of this report with the parties concerned to elicit their "viewpoints." 67 The 1931 AVC report read:

In our consideration of the matter we have endeavored to recognize and preserve the rights of teachers engaged in the field of creative art, as well as the interests of firms or persons engaged in the manufacture or construction of goods of which art and design form a part. In our opinion both ought to be free to pursue their own interests without conflict, trespass or injury to each other, and with this thought in mind, your Committee suggests the setting up for an ethical standard for the guidance of teachers and members of staffs in schools within the jurisdiction of the Advisory Vocational Committee, rather than the adoption of a definite expression of the creative instincts of said teachers and staff members. 68

For the "preservation of goodwill for the schools and the school system throughout the

66 Letter from Pringle and London to S. J. McMaster, 18 May 1931, Haworth Papers, QUA.

67 Notably at the 26 May 1931 meeting, a similar "after work activities" complaint was brought against a Mr. R.M. Proudfoot, a teacher from Western High School of Commerce. On behalf of a number of city ratepayers, a Mr. Pattullo charged that Mr. Proudfoot, a teacher, was conducting a tourist camp near his residence, "in view of him being employed by the Board of Education." When the TBE did not reply to Mr. Pattullo, he sought support from Mayor W. J. Stewart who in September duly notified the TBE with the request from one of his constituents. The matter was closed when the committee replied that "the teacher in question was endeavoring to comply with their wishes expressed to him following a similar protest in June, 1930, as to withdrawal of direct interest in the conduct of the camp" (n.p.).

68 AVC Minutes, 2 May 1931, TBERMA.
community," the report stopped short of any conclusive policy, relying instead on vague notions of co-operation and support.

Perhaps anticipating that the matter had not been resolved, letters of support for Haworth continued to arrive. For example, Pastor M.J. Oliver of Holy Rosary Church wrote how he approached Haworth to supervise a window in the church as "none of the other Toronto firms will do the window without supervision...If you do not undertake to supervise the work, it will be done by Hardman & Co., of Birmingham, England and Anthony of New York will supervise it." 69 The TBE thought, for the time being, the Haworth matter was closed.

1939: The Recurring Complaint

Disappointed with the results of the 1931 complaint and fueled by Haworth's steadily increasing stained glass work, the firms once again lodged a grievance with the TBE against Haworth. The debate was launched by the letter of complaint against Haworth of 24 February 1939 from the Luxfer Prism Company; it brought a deluge of responses on behalf of Peter Haworth and the practicing artist as teacher in the school system. While the firms essentially restated the same concerns as in 1931, by this time Haworth had cultivated an influential support network. 70

On May 8th, A. Maude Cawthra wrote to Haworth at his request outlining the criteria

69 Letter from M.J. Oliver to Peter Haworth, 3 June 1931, Haworth Papers, QUA. It is unclear whether Haworth solicited this particular letter.

70 It is clear from letters and notes found in the Haworth Papers that Peter Haworth came to meetings organized with a strategic plan to address the firms' accusations.
by which he was granted the commission for the Jubilee window of King George V. 71 She recounted that "the design and sketch was approved of by King George and Queen Mary at which they were tremendously pleased...[with Haworth's] "knowledge" of Heraldry, robes of royalty, clergy, etc. secured him the commission...otherwise it would have been executed in England and certainly not by any of the commercial firms of Toronto." This speaks directly to one of the allegations made by the stained glass firms—that the commission would have gone to a local company if Haworth had not entered the competition.

For Toronto patrons, bestowing a stained glass commission was not inconsequential. A craftsman's skill, stylistic artistry, artistic lineage, and stellar references from the English art establishment were all equally vital in a recommendation. Haworth's reputation as the craftsman of choice was bolstered as early as 1925 when Miss A.C. Wright approached Haworth to design a stained glass window. Since he was relatively unknown at the point, he supplied Miss Wright with the names of notable referees to whom she could contact for professional and character enquiries. Miss Wright wrote and received replies from the Registrar of the RCA on behalf of Principal Rothestein who was absent from the College due to illness, from Richard Anning Bell, and F.S.A. Tristam of the Department of Design of the RCA. Tristam was particularly enthusiastic about Haworth's abilities, declaring that "...I am glad to be able to say that he is not only capable of carrying the work through successfully, but I am confident he will give you a window of considerable artistic merit. He is a most able man and a talented artist and

71 Letter from A. Maude Cawthra to Peter Haworth, 8 May 1939, Peter Haworth File, TBERMA.
72 Letter from A. Maude Cawthra to Peter Haworth, 8 May 1939.
I quite expect that when he left England he would have a successful firm in Canada.”  

Lastly, J.H. Dearle, Artistic Director of Morris & Co. Ltd. wrote the following estimation of Haworth's competency:

...I have the pleasure to inform you that [Haworth] worked under my guidance and example for several months and had the advantage of seeing some of the best possible stained glass produced here. He resumed his studies at the Royal College of Art and as visitor to the college I may say that the Diploma he gained there was well merited and his [work] showed so much promise that I do not hesitate to recommend him to you for carrying [sic] out the work you have in contemplation.

The letters addressed to Miss Wright were all found in the Haworth Papers; it is probable that Haworth asked her for the copies for future enquires and to show prospective clients. In this respect, Miss Wright's name and status in the community became part of the standard by which other patrons evaluated Haworth's artistic worth. As I noted in Chapter Four, denominational and intra-congregational rivalries had been a consistent feature of religious social politics in Ontario since the 1850s. Hiring the architect, the craftsmen, and builders of the day reflected the rising social and economic fortune of English-Canadian Protestant denominations, while bestowing a stained glass window signaled one's affluent and "moral" prominence within the congregation.

Pringle and London wrote once again on Haworth's behalf. The company's lobbying

---

73 Letter from H.L. Wellington, Registrar, RCA to Miss A.C. Wright, 18 November 1925; Letter from W. Tristam to Miss A.C. Wright, 18 November 1925, Haworth Papers, QUA.

74 Letter from J.H. Dearle, Morris and Co. Ltd to Miss A.C. Wright, 15 November 1925, "Testimonials," 1911-1926, Haworth Papers, QUA.

75 Letter from George G. London (Pringle and London) to C.R. Conquergood, 11 May 1939, Peter Haworth File, TBERMA.
strategy was somewhat different from the Luxfer Prism Company. Instead of dealing with the formal requirements of petition characteristic of the TBE, Pringle and London wrote directly to a TBE trustee, C. R. Conquergood, President of the Canada Printing Ink Company. This was ultimately more effective because C.R. Conquergood was a member of the TBE’s AVC which acted as the Technical and Vocational Schools’ Management Committee. A letter to the Director of Education would almost certainly be directed to this committee.

George G. London wrote on behalf of the Pringle and London Co. to "protest strongly" the actions of their competitors whose allegations "interferes with our business and would deprive us of the work handed to us by Mr. Haworth. The action proposed by our competitors would seriously hamper our business and thus jeopardize the earnings of our employees." London emphatically stated in support of Haworth’s work with stained glass that "we Pringle and London, Hobbs Glass Company, and Miss Yvonne Williams, an independent artist doing quite a lot of work, are not objecting." 76

The debate broadened to include A.Y. Jackson, then President of the Canadian Group of Painters, whose comments incorporate yet another facet of this argument, that is, the "nature" of the artist in the school system. In a letter addressed to Haworth, Jackson acknowledged the "old question of whether those engaged in the profession of teaching should be debarred from accepting Commissions or doing work of a commercial nature while not engaged in their educational work." 77 He offered his "authoritative artistic" counsel by explaining "that one may reasonably object if the teacher on salary was

76 Letter from George G. London (Pringle and London) to C.R. Conquergood, 11 May 1939.
77 Letter from A. Y. Jackson to Peter Haworth, 12 May 1939, Peter Haworth File, TBERMA.
bidding for work at below industry prices." On the other hand, the question of "quality" prompted him to ask "[whether] the public [should] be denied the services of outstanding artists because they are teachers. Then you are in danger of lowering the whole standard of arts and crafts [and] the teaching profession too." 78 He suggested that "teachers who cease to create soon cease to inspire their students. Those who would regulate and restrict the artist in the school would have purely selfish motives in consideration." 79

John Alford, Professor of Fine Art at the University of Toronto, concurred. In a letter to Haworth, his experience as an "educator" led him to believe that

"from an educational point of view it is most desirable that the teachers in art departments and art schools should be practicing professionals, as well as theoretical instructors, and in many cases of which I have knowledge, this is a positive condition of employment in the schools." 80

Furthermore Alford added, "the circumstances governing this desirability are closely analogous to those of the architectural and medical profession." 81

Frances Loring, Secretary of the Sculptor's Society of Canada wrote to record its protest against the firms' accusations. Loring definitively suggested that this was not an issue of competition. "The field of a firm that supplies commercial windows of which they sell duplicates can not be considered in the class with the work of an artist who

---

78 Letter from A. Y. Jackson to Peter Haworth, 12 May 1939.
79 Letter from A. Y. Jackson to Peter Haworth, 12 May 1939.
80 Letter from John Alford to Peter Haworth, 11 May 1939. Peter Haworth File, TBERMA.
81 Letter from John Alford to Peter Haworth, 11 May 1939.
makes an individual design." 82 Stressing the need for practicing artists in the schools, Loring closed her letter by "hoping that the issue is purely one of misunderstanding of the status of the commercial stained glass firms and that of the creative artist." 83 This latter point illustrates the way in which Arts and Crafts philosophies had differentiated between commercial endeavors and the art industries. The evidence suggests that these letters were solicited by Haworth and used as "expert" educational and artistic testimony in his defense with the TBE's AVC. The letters also allude to an orchestrated strategy by all involved to participate and be "heard" in the debate.

Ultimately, the TBE was compelled to deal with the matter. In response to the complaint concerning the acceptance of contracts for stained glass windows, a meeting took place 26 April 1939. In attendance were school trustees Conquergood and Butt, the Superintendent of Schools, the Assistant Secretary, T.E. Lyon (The N.T. Lyon Glass Co. Ltd.), T. Ewan, Manager of Luxfer Prism Co. Ltd., A.J. McCausland, President of Robert McCausland Ltd., and Peter Howarth, "teacher of art." 84 Trustee Conquergood attempted to have the two parties reach a mutually satisfactory "amicable solution" by delegating a sub-committee to review the issue. Unable to pass his motion because of lack of quorum, the members present agreed to hear the views of both sides. The firms' representatives iterated their accusations of unfair competition but were quick to point out that these accusations were in no way personal. Instead, they were "against the

---

82 Letter from Frances Loring to Peter Haworth, 11 May 1939, Haworth Papers, QUA.

83 Letter from Frances Loring to Peter Haworth, 11 May 1939.

84 AVC Minutes, 26 April 1939, TBERMA.
system which permits a competition of such a nature to exist." 85 The representatives pointed out that they were not arguing against Haworth's right to design windows but rather his "acceptance of contracts which he designed, and then subcontracted the mechanical work to others." 86 Haworth remained firm in his position "that he did not at any time solicit business...[and] was only interested in the projects which come to him without solicitation." 87 He also stated that any commissions were undertaken during his own time and "without the use of any school equipment." 88 Haworth reminded the meeting that the question had been dealt with in 1931 and that it had been also agreed by the TBE at the time of his appointment that he "would be permitted to carry on his work." 89 an artistic freedom similarly enjoyed by artist-teachers in England and Canada.

In a three-page biographical document clearly intended for the TBE's AVC, Haworth stated that if he continued his artistic work, "my efficiency would be enhanced...and it was further pointed out that my predecessor, Alfred Howell, had made quite a name for himself as a sculptor engaged in large commissions for war memorials." 90 Clearly

85 AVC Minutes, 26 April 1939.
86 AVC Minutes, 26 April 1939.
87 AVC Minutes, 26 April 1939.
88 AVC Minutes, 26 April 1939.
89 AVC Minutes, 26 April 1939.

90 "Peter Haworth Biography," n.d., Peter Haworth File, TBERMA. Haworth's argument in this case was somewhat flawed. In 1925, as head of the Art Department, Howell had also come under attack by the Ontario Association of Memorial Craftsmen who objected to his competing for war memorials to its members' common detriment. Howell's reply that he was competing only by invitation and the work was strictly done outside of school seems to have diffused the incident. This episode with which Haworth was undoubtedly familiar may have given him hope that later allegations brought against him would be swiftly resolved. "Defends Expenditure of Technical Schools," Toronto Mail (27 June 1925).
frustrated, Haworth wrote to C.R. Conquergood: "I feel that my poor efforts have been exaggerated out of all proportion in this connection. I do not wish, however, that my individuality should be sunk into that of a firm. First of all, I am a teacher of Art."  

On 11 May 1939, the AVC committee made the following policy resolutions governing the "renumerative [sic] activities of teachers other than teaching activities." 

a) That the Board of Education go on record as disapproving of the practice of its employees earning money at part-time work that is not performed with the approval of the Board or the Department of Education. The board's desire is that teachers should spend their spare time at occupations or activities designed to improve their ability and enhance their worth as teachers, instead of doing extra work for the purpose of earning additional money.

b) That the wish of the board is that, from September 1st to June 30th of each year, principals and teachers refrain from doing work that would bring them into competition with people other than teachers, when such work would be in the nature of full-time employment for these people, or their sole, or chief, means of earning a living.

c) That any summer work carried on by principals or teachers during July and August must not be carried over into the school year so as to absorb the energy or time of any teacher to such a degree as to impair his efficiency as a teacher.

d) that the attention of principals and teachers be directed to By-law No. 134, Section (2), which states that teachers shall devote themselves exclusively to their school work during school hours.

Four days later the AVC committee met again. The organization of the meetings, the absenteeism, and the consistent deferral suggests that the committee may have now deemed the issue inconsequential or perhaps too politically volatile for any definitive

91 Letter from Peter Haworth to C.R. Conquergood, 12 May 1939, Haworth Papers, QUA.
92 AVC Minutes, 11 May 1939, TBERMA.
93 AVC Minutes, 11 May 1939.
resolution. At the outset of the meeting, Trustee Conquergood informed the assembled that the chair "would be unable to attend owing to the calling of a special meeting of the civil committee on arrangements for the Royal Visit." 94 After yet another cursory overview of the Minutes for the benefit of AVC representatives (Woollon and Bourlier) who were absent from the previous meeting, consideration was once again deferred until after the Royal Visit. During this brief discussion, Woollon merely expressed his opinion that Haworth is encouraging the development of industry and industrial art by designing windows. Arrangements were made to have the various letters sent to representatives of the AVC for discussion at yet another meeting sometime in the future. 95

Four months later, the AVC met again, this time under Chairman Woollon. A list of teachers were introduced who "engaged in after-school activities, other than educational, for financial gain." 96 Ten artist-teachers from CTS, Northern Vocational, Western Technical-Commerce, and Central High School of Commerce were included on this list. The information was compiled by a circular which asked the following question:

a) Do you now carry on, or have you during the past year carried on, for remuneration, any occupation or after-school activity not in harmony with the policy outlined by the Board? Answer "Yes" or "No."

b) If your answer is affirmative, please indicate the nature of such extra employment. 97

94 AVC Minutes, 15 May 1939.
95 AVC Minutes, 15 May 1939.
96 AVC Minutes, 15 June 1939.
97 AVC Minutes, 15 June 1939.
The Board's conclusive policy was read by the secretary: "That the Board of Education go on record as disapproving of the practice of its employees earning money at part-time extra work that is not performed with the approval of the Board of Education." 98 The Board's directive was swift and inclusive. A motion directed that all teachers named on the list "except those engaged in cultural pursuits cease all activities immediately." 99 It was further recommended that a special committee appointed by the Board be struck, having extensive powers to grant or deny applications from teachers to carry on such work.

This new and powerful AVC sub-committee was directed "to consider the specific case of Mr. Haworth." 100 On 14 September 1939, a carefully-worded statement, vague at best, revealed no specific resolution to the Haworth controversy: "It was decided that the firms in question be now informed of the policy established by the Board of Education governing after school activities of teachers and concurred in by the Committee." 101 No mention was made of any specific censuring against Peter Haworth, and Haworth continued to produce stained glass for private patrons.

In 1949, stained glass artist F.S. J. Hollister wrote a letter to Dr. C.C. Goldring "to bring to his attention the matter of teachers engaging in business to the common

98 AVC Minutes, 15 June 1939.


100 AVC Minutes, 15 June 1939, TBERMA.

101 AVC Minutes, 14 September 1939, TBERMA.
detriment." He asked to be granted an appointment to deal with question. Though Hollister had retained a relatively low profile in the 1931 and 1939 allegations, letters to Haworth in 1934 reveal that he was in fact coercing Haworth to join him in a formal business partnership. He suggested to Haworth that "you and I could do much better work with greater remuneration to each of us and to all concerned in its production without any interference with your duties or interests as a teacher, on the contrary enhancing all that, as well as engendering greater public interest and appreciation."

In a letter to a friend, Haworth annoyingly replied:

No, I have never worked for or sold designs to McCausland's and one short time I spoke to Mr. McC, I shouldn’t think he noticed me enough to remember my name. This used to be one of Mr. Hollister's pet phobias, which makes me surprised that it is McCausland's not he who are bringing it up. The whole charge of incompetent teaching is added as an afterthought—because their old complaint that M. Haworth could "underwrite them because he used tech pupils and equipment to carry out his orders," is no longer true (if it ever was.) Well, I hope there will be a happy ending. I was a little annoyed because I didn't see why my name...had to be dragged into it at all.

Weary of the unceasing assaults on his reputation, manipulative advances, and eager to pursue his art work, in 1954, Peter Haworth resigned his position as head of the Art Department. As one friend noted "...I expect retirement for you will be only a matter of ceasing work under some authority which will leave you free to fill your time with the

\[\text{References}\]

102 Letter from F.S.J. Hollister to C.C. Goldring, 24 March 1949, Haworth Papers, QUA.

103 Letter from F.S.J. Hollister to Peter Haworth, 4 December 1934, Haworth Papers, QUA.

104 Letter from Peter Haworth to Norah (last name not provided, n.d.).

105 Haworth was replaced as head of the Art Department by Charles Goldhammer, a graduate of the Ontario College of Art and a protege of Arthur Lismer.
work you choose to do.” 106 Yet, years of strain were apparent on his face. A letter from his brother Joseph observing a photograph of Peter in Saturday Night magazine led him to suggest that “Your hair...[is] white and you look like you mean business.”107

Significantly, the board’s conclusive, albeit unsatisfying, decision in regards to Haworth had a profound influence on a series of contemporary intellectual debates which argued that a unified “high” culture was critical to nationalist ambitions of a democratic society and to the development of a distinct Canadian identity. These debates were played out in the establishment of new organizations and assemblies such as the Ontario Association of Teachers of Art (1941), later re-organized provincially and renamed the Canadian Society for Education Through Art (still extant); the 1941 Conference of Canadian Artists in Kingston, Ontario which led to the formation of the Federation of Canadian Artists (1941); the Canadian Arts Council (1945); and finally, the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences (1949-1952). Many of these organizations were headed by art historians, artist-teachers, practicing artists and educators from across the educational sector and hence were not only influenced by these debates but in fact helped shape them. These elite and middle class agents argued that art was an essential component of life and artists were integral members of society. Not surprisingly, Peter Haworth, A.Y. Jackson, John Alford, and Frances Loring were all vital members of these organizations, helping to gather support, plan arts policy, and mount public relations efforts to advertise the indispensable

106 Letter from Hilda (no last name provided) to Peter and Bobs Haworth, 8 December 1955, Haworth Papers, QUA.
107 Letter from Joseph Haworth to Peter Haworth, 11 December 1952, Haworth Papers, QUA.
contributions of artists.

Reflecting on 50 years of activity, the Art Department at CTS saw Haworth as "[representing] continuity and tradition...he came from the same heartland of [Alfred] Howell and [John] Chester." 108

If we can be said to have had an institutional creed it has been this: That we consider high standards of visible technique to be the norm but the true victory is within. Aesthetic awareness, honesty in vision and interpretation, taste, genius...and simple good workmanship...these are the qualities we command. Our students come to accept them naturally and would be ashamed to be judged by any others. 109

Indeed, as the author(s) of the "Art Department" pointed out, "Institutions create people, just as surely as people create institutions."

Appendix A

Prospectus of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Company, Fine Art Workmen in Painting, Carving and Furniture and the Metals (1861)

The growth of Decorative Art in this country, owing to the efforts of English Architects, has now reached a point at which it seems desirable that Artists of reputation should devote their time to it. Although no doubt particular instances of success may be cited, still it must be generally felt that attempts of this kind hitherto have been crude and fragmentary. Up to this point, the want of that artistic supervision, which alone can bring about harmony between the various parts of a successful work, has been increased by the necessarily excessive outlay, consequent on taking one individual artist from his pictorial labours.

The Artists whose names appear above hope by association to do away with this difficulty. Having among their number men of varied qualifications, they will be able to undertake any species of decoration, mural or otherwise, from pictures, properly so called, down to the consideration of the smallest work susceptible of art beauty. It is anticipated that by such cooperation, the largest amount of what is essentially the artist's work, along with his constant supervision, will be secured at the smallest possible expense, while the work done must necessarily be of a much more complete order, than if any artist were incidentally employed in the usual manner.

These artists having for many years been deeply attached to the study of the Decorative Arts for all times and countries, have felt more than most people the want of some one place, where they could either obtain or get produced work of a genuine and beautiful character. They have therefore now established themselves as a firm, for the production, by themselves and under supervision, of:

I. Mural Decoration, either in Pictures or in Pattern Work, or merely in the arrangement of Colours, as applied to dwelling-houses, churches, or public buildings.

II. Carving generally, as applied to Architecture.

III. Stained Glass, especially with reference to its harmony with Mural Decoration.

IV. Metal Work in all its branches, including Jewellery.

V. Furniture, either depending for its beauty on its own design, on the application of materials hitherto overlooked, on its conjunction with Figure and Pattern Painting. Under this head is included Embroidery of all kinds, Stamped Leather, and ornamental work in other such materials, besides every article necessary for domestic use.

It is only necessary to state further, that work of all the above classes will be estimated for, and executed in a business-like manner; and it is believed that good decoration, involving rather the luxury of taste than the luxury of costliness will be found to be much less expensive than is generally supposed.
Appendix B

Peter Haworth's Stained Glass Commissions, 1921-1968

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Commission</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1921-23</td>
<td>Swindon and North Wilts Secondary School</td>
<td>Swindon, England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925-57</td>
<td>Bishop Strachan School</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925-60, 1977</td>
<td>St. Timothy</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926-30</td>
<td>St. Mary Magdalene Church</td>
<td>Picton, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926-47</td>
<td>Appleby College</td>
<td>Oakville, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927, 1930-35</td>
<td>Christ Church</td>
<td>Toronto (Deer Park), Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927, 1939-40</td>
<td>St. Aidan's Church</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927-28</td>
<td>Lakefield School</td>
<td>Lakefield, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928-30</td>
<td>First Baptist Church</td>
<td>Ottawa, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928-30</td>
<td>St. John's Church</td>
<td>Ancaster, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928-29</td>
<td>Presbyterian Church</td>
<td>Kitchener, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928-43</td>
<td>commission not stipulated</td>
<td>Montreal, Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Kent McClain Ltd.</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929-34</td>
<td>Birk's Building</td>
<td>Calgary, Alberta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929-40</td>
<td>St. Paul's Church</td>
<td>Philipsburgh, Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929-60</td>
<td>St. Andrew's Presbyterian</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-40</td>
<td>Timothy Eaton Memorial Church</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932-40</td>
<td>Brant Avenue Church</td>
<td>Brantford, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932-34</td>
<td>St. Thomas Church</td>
<td>St. Catharines, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928-30</td>
<td>McMaster University</td>
<td>Hamilton, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933-64</td>
<td>Melrose United Church</td>
<td>Hamilton, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934-42</td>
<td>St. George's Cathedral</td>
<td>Kingston, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935-36</td>
<td>St. Jame's Cathedral</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>commission not stipulated</td>
<td>Welland, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936-60</td>
<td>St. Philip's Church</td>
<td>Montreal, Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937-46</td>
<td>Grace Church on the Hill</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Peter Haworth's Stained Glass Commissions, 1921-1968 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Commission</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1939-41, 1957-59</td>
<td>Erskine and American United Church</td>
<td>Montreal, Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Castle &amp; Son Ltd.</td>
<td>Montreal, Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942-69</td>
<td>Yorkminster Baptist Church</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943-45, 1955-72</td>
<td>Holy Blossom Temple</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-66, 1966-67</td>
<td>McNab Presbyterian Church</td>
<td>Hamilton, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946-47</td>
<td>Trinity United Church</td>
<td>Napanee, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946-47</td>
<td>St. Anne's Church</td>
<td>Richmond, Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946-66</td>
<td>Deer Park United Church</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>St. Andrew's Church</td>
<td>Ottawa, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947-48</td>
<td>Humewood House Association</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947-60</td>
<td>St. Andrew's United Church</td>
<td>Montreal (Westmount), Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>St. David's Church</td>
<td>St. John, New Brunswick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948-49, 1956</td>
<td>St. James the Apostle</td>
<td>Montreal, Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948-56</td>
<td>Sunnybrook Hospital Chapel</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949-50</td>
<td>YMCA/YWCA</td>
<td>Montreal, Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-52</td>
<td>St. Mark's Church</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-56</td>
<td>St. George's Church</td>
<td>Islington, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951-53</td>
<td>St. Clement's Church</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>St. Thomas Church</td>
<td>Montreal, Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952-53</td>
<td>Dominion Douglas Church</td>
<td>Montreal, Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952-61</td>
<td>Christ Church</td>
<td>Glen Miller, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Sigmund Samuels Library, University of Toronto</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Queen Mary Road United Church</td>
<td>Hampstead, Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954-64</td>
<td>Mount Royal United Church</td>
<td>Montreal, Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955-56</td>
<td>Canadian Legion Building</td>
<td>Montreal, Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957-58</td>
<td>Rosedale Presbyterian Church</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Peter Haworth's Stained Glass Commissions, 1921-1968 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Commission</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1963-64</td>
<td>Cambridge Street United Church</td>
<td>Lindsay, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963-64</td>
<td>Bond Street United Church</td>
<td>Lindsay, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965-68</td>
<td>St. Paul’s</td>
<td>Hamilton, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no date</td>
<td>First United</td>
<td>Port Credit, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no date</td>
<td>Murray Street Baptist Church</td>
<td>Peterborough, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no date</td>
<td>Ontario Agricultural College</td>
<td>Guelph, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no date</td>
<td>University College</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no date</td>
<td>West Point Grey Presbyterian</td>
<td>Vancouver, British Columbia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Select Bibliography

I. Primary Documents

A. Printed Sources

"The Academy Exhibition," *Canadian Magazine* X, no. 6 (April 1898).


Fairbairn, Margaret L. "A Decade of Canadian Art." *Canadian Magazine* (July 1901).


Grant, Jean. *Saturday Night* (1899).


Industrial Canada VII, no. 8 (March 1907): 645.


Pugin, A.W.N. Contrasts: Or a Parallel Between the Nobel Edifices of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries and Similar Buildings of the Present Day; Showing the Present Decay of Taste Accompanied by Appropriate Text. London: Privately Printed, 1836, 1841.


_____ Fors Clavigera; Letters to the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain. New York: Lovell, Coryell, 1900.


Toronto Board of Education Records, Museums, and Archives. Advisory Industrial Committee Report. 1923.


B. Manuscript Sources

Provincial Archives of British Columbia. Provincial Arts and Industrial Institute Papers. Letter from Eric Brown to the Secretary of the Provincial Arts and Industrial Institute. 11 Nov. 1920.

Queen's University Archives, Kingston, Ontario. Peter and Bobs Coghill Haworth Papers. MS5033

Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto, Ontario. James Mavor Papers. MS119.

Toronto Board of Education Records, Museums, and Archives. Advisory Vocational Committee Minutes, 1931, 1939.

Toronto Board of Education Records, Museums, and Archives. Historical Files: Central Technical School.


Toronto Board of Education Records, Museums, and Archives. Historical Files: Peter Haworth File.

University of Toronto Archives: Graduate Files:
A73-0026-275-13 A.C. McKay
A73-0026-392-91 W.H. Rutherford
A73-0026-111-83 C.D. Gaitskell
A73-0026-120-51 C.C. Goldring
A73-0026-133-33 Dorothy Haines Hoover
A73-0026-411-68 Eleanor M. Shepherd Thompson
A73-0026-004-26 John G. Alford
A73-0026-381-99 John Charles Robertson
II. Secondary Sources

A. Books


Ontario Society for Education Through Art Papers. Toronto: Faculty of Education, University of Toronto.


"In the Studio's of Toronto's Best known Artists," *Toronto World* (2 April 1911).


B. Articles


C. Unpublished Material and Theses

Ambrose, Linda M. "What are the Good of those Meetings Anyway? Explaining the Early Popularity of the Ontario Women's Institutes." Revised draft of a paper presented at the Ontario Women's History Network (OWHN) Conference in Guelph, October 1993.


