

美國當代藝術教育典範學者 Michael J. Parsons 的學術研究與治學精神之探究

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摘要

求學過程中能遇到成功的典範學者對學生而言，就好比在美術館裡遇到優秀的導覽員(docent)般幸運。在 *The Good Guide* 書中提到，稱職的導覽員就像令人著迷的花衣魔笛手，能帶領著觀眾輕鬆地進入新奇又迷人的藝術世界。M. J. Parsons 是我在藝術教育領域求學過程中印象很深的一位國際知名學者，筆者與其首次相遇是在大學求學時期的教科書中讀到他花費十年研究完成的審美論述著作，幸運的是後來參與其親自指導與帶領的美國暑期短期進修課程，這課程翻轉了教室中的學習，也點燃我對藝術教育更深的熱情與堅持。本文以 Edwards(1976)所提的導覽員來隱喻 Parsons 在藝術教育領域中的關鍵角色，並將文中提到導覽員所需之基本態度為綱要探討，從知識、熱忱及親和力三大部分來陳述。內容依序為：一、知識，從 Parsons 的學術養成背景、教學、研究與服務經歷，對其學術涵養與教學方式進行文獻分析，並論述其以十年時間所建構的「美感經驗的認知發展理論」。二、熱忱，就他在學術上研究的熱情所產出的主要研究計劃與方向作整理，蒐集他所指導的碩、博士論文，論述其學說造成的後續影響。三、親和力，Parsons 在學術上的地位崇高，但私底下卻是極具親和力的長者，此部分透過與其三位門生之訪談，用不同角度去發掘他另一種做人處事的面貌。本文先以「文獻分析法」蒐集 Parsons 的理論學說以及國內外研究的相關資料，梳理探討其學術養成背景及其學術論述對藝術教育的影響，從文獻中歸納並交互參照。並而以「深度訪談法」訪問在博士學位階段受教於 Parsons 的三位國內學者，探究學術成就外的教育典範風格以增加研究的完整性。

關鍵詞：藝術教育典範、導覽員特質、美感經驗認知發展

壹、前言

一、Parsons 教授與其導覽員特質

Edwards(1976)曾說稱職的導覽員，就像令人著迷的花衣魔笛手，能輕鬆地帶領觀眾進入新奇又迷人的世界，讓感官穿透未曾造訪的地方。這樣的導覽員需要具備三種基本態度：知識、熱忱及親和力(Edwards, 1976)。求學生涯中如能遇到Edwards在The Good Guide書裡所提的具備花衣魔笛手特質的老師，將我們帶入寶庫中學習就如同在美術館中遇見了完美導覽員般的幸運。導覽員是美術館的靈魂人物，其專業能力與持續學習的熱誠及親和力是不可或缺的元素。

McCoy(1989)認為導覽是資訊服務、指導服務、教育服務、宣傳服務，且具有探索性的服務。如此方能提供優質的導覽，帶領觀眾徜徉於藝術的世界並享受其中。美術館內擔任導覽員的人可能是館長、館員、義工、各級學校教師或藝術家本人等，他們具有豐富的展品知識，引導觀眾參觀美術館並傳遞與展品相關的訊息與論述。McCoy定義導覽員為：「一個博學的引導人物，特別指在美術館中引導觀眾並針對展覽提出解說論述的人」。

導覽是對展示品詮釋的過程，是富有挑戰性和激發潛力的工作，Parsons 在藝術教育領域中，成功地扮演這樣的角色。2002 年暑假，筆者參加了郭禎祥教授帶領的海外藝術教育參訪團，來到藝術教育領域中極富盛名的美國俄亥俄州立大學(Ohio State University)進行為期 31 天的課程，這趟參訪由 M. J. Parsons 教授親自帶領，研討統合當代藝術教育思潮等課程，包含理論講述與實際參觀活動，並以設計「藝術核心統整課程」作為學習成果最後的檢視與驗收，在課程最後一周進行小組分享發表。印象最深刻的是，Parsons 與學生的互動不僅止於課堂上，也在於生活中的小細節，學生們隨處都可以感受到來自這位慈祥學者的關心與愛護，他也常充當嚮導親自介紹當地文化特色讓學生得以更深入的瞭解，此次的學習除了開拓了我們的藝術教育視野，大師謙沖的身教更令人印象深刻，他帶領著一群來自台灣求知若渴的學生進入了這迷人的藝術教育領域。課程結束後陸續的接觸了 Parsons 更多的學術著作與論述，並受教於他指導過的 A 老師、B 老師及 C 老師三位學者。從他們在學術態度的嚴謹與熱情及對學生無私的付出，可感受到他們完全承襲了 Parsons 的學術基因

和花衣魔笛手的特質，不斷地帶給學生新的了解、新的洞察、新的熱忱和新的興趣。

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二、研究架構與研究方法

Edwards(1976)則把導覽員的性質定義為是資訊服務、指導服務、教育服務、娛樂服務、宣傳服務並具有探索性的服務。目的是爲了要給人們新的了解、洞察力、熱忱與興趣。本文將以所提的導覽員需要具備三種基本態度：知識、熱忱及親和力爲架構，分爲三大部分來梳理。知識部分：從Parsons的學術養成背景、教學、研究與服務經歷整理敘述，瞭解其學術涵養與教學方式，並將Parsons以將近十年的時間，訪談三百人對八件不同類型藝術品的觀感，所建構的「美感經驗的認知發展理論」納入此處。熱忱部分：就其在學術上研究的熱情所產出的主要理論學說作整理，分析晚近研究的主題與方向，蒐集其所指導的碩、博士論文，論述其學說造成的後續影響。親和力的部分：從三位受訪對象的訪談中瞭解更多Parsons的不同面向。

研究方法方面，知識與熱忱兩部分透過「文獻分析法」蒐集Parsons的理論學說以及國內外研究的相關資料，梳理探討其學術養成背景及其學術論述對藝術教育的影響，從文獻中歸納並交互參照。最後在親和力的部分以「深度訪談法」訪問三位在博士學位階段皆受教於Parsons的國內學者，擬探究學術成就外的教育典範風格，以增加研究的完整性。

受訪者分別爲：

受訪者 1：A 老師（於 1996-2000 年跟隨 Parsons 學習）

受訪者 2：B 老師（於 1998-2002 年跟隨 Parsons 學習）

受訪者 3：C 老師（於 1996-2004 年跟隨 Parsons 學習）

貳、本文

一、知識

(一) M. J. Parsons的學術養成背景

Parsons在學術研究上總是孜孜不倦，於美國伊利諾大學教育學院接受教育哲學的訓練，因爲具備哲學思考爲基礎使他不斷的思辨自己的研究，教學上也採用辯證法提問引導學生思考；加上在英國牛津大學修習英國文學，其豐富的文學涵養，在寫作演講時都能以易懂的字句讓讀者、聽衆精準地接收他想表

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達的論點。倫敦教育學院的兩年修業取得教師證，成為投身教育的轉捩點（以上學習經歷整理見表1）。

Parsons涉獵的知識及興趣非常廣泛，舉凡經濟、政治、環保、科技、社會文化相關議題都是他關注與學習的範疇，近幾年更對淵博的中華文化有濃厚的學習興趣。這些對於現實生活多方面的關注與理解，都是使其學術研究不斷與時俱進的關鍵之一。

表1 M. J. Parsons學習經歷

就讀學校	修習學位與系所	修習期間
伊利諾大學教育學院 College of Education, University of Illinois	教育哲學碩博士 M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Philosophy of Education	1963-1967
倫敦大學教育學院 Institute of Education, University of London	教師證 Certificate of Education	1958-1959
牛津大學 Brasenose College, Oxford University	英國文學學士（榮譽畢業生） B.A. in English Language and Literature, with Honours	1955-1958

(二)M.J. Parsons的教育專業經歷

Parsons在倫敦大學取得教師證之後，先在英國的Plymouth男子高中擔任中學教師四年，接著在伊利諾大學教育學院進修，擔任Broudy教授的助教四年，取得哲學博士學位，畢業後應聘到University of Utah教育學院擔任教職，在長達二十年服務期間，除了陸續升等為教授外，同時也擔任過教育學院的主任和副院長。直到1987年Parsons出版《我們如何理解藝術》(How we understand art)一書，不但驗證哲學家提出的美感規則並發展出美感發展五階段論。提供了教師、家長及社會大眾對於美育的推展有一套系統的理論依據，引發藝術教育界的注目。同年，Parsons以其紮實的研究與豐富的行政經驗，被OSU（俄亥俄州立大學）藝術教育研究所延攬擔任系主任，至此投身於藝術教育領域，在此處任教約20年，2006年後至今擔任伊利諾大學(University of Illinois)客座教授。

Parsons是位國際型的學者，曾多次接受不同大學的邀請，擔任海外客座教授，到過台灣、香港、加拿大、英國。在台灣與台灣師大美術系及彰化師大

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藝術教育所交流密切頻繁，近幾年定期擔任台灣暑假海外教師藝術教育參訪的指導教授。有關於他教育專業經歷條列如下：

- 伊利諾大學 客座教授榮譽教授（2006-迄今）
- 俄亥俄州立大學 藝術教育所教授(1987-2006)
- 香港教育學院 特聘顧問教授(2003-2004)
- 俄亥俄州立大學 藝術教育系主任(1987-1995)
- 猶他州立大學 教育學院副院長與主任(1979-1983)
- 猶他大學 兼職哲學系教授(1971-1987)
- 猶他州立大學 教育學院助理教授、副教授、教授(1967-70, 70-75, 75-87)
- 伊利諾大學 哈利·布勞迪教授之助教(1963-1967)
- 英國Plymouth男子高中教師(1959-1963)
- 一年的客座在加拿大英屬哥倫比亞大學、賓州大學、明尼蘇達大學、東北倫敦理工學院、香港教育學院、彰化師範大學

(三)耗時十年的審美認知發展理論

Parsons於1987年出版了《我們如何理解藝術》一書，其副標題為「以認知發展說明美感經驗」(A cognitive developmental account of aesthetic experience)，書中主要目的在建構一套「美感經驗的認知發展理論」。以近十年的時間，提出七個問題（見表2）訪談300人對八幅不同類型藝術品的觀感後進行質化研究撰寫出版，受試者身分包含了學齡前兒童到成人，以名畫之複製品為訪談的工具，採用「半開放性訪談法」的方式問答後進行質性研究，鼓勵受試者發表對藝術作品的認知藉以理解其美感經驗的發展探究美感經驗與藝術鑑賞的認知過程，建立「四向五階」的美術鑑賞能力發展理論模式。

「四向」包含研究的四個面向：(1)主題(subject matter)，(2)情感表現(emotional expression)，(3)媒材和形式(medium and form)，(4)判斷(judgment)；「五階」分別為五個審美能力的發展階段：偏愛(Favoritism)、美與寫實(beauty and realism)、表現(expressiveness)、風格和形式(Style and form)、自主判斷(autonomy)。此美感理論提出後，常被教育界引用並與Jean Piaget的認知發展心理學及Lawrence Kohlberg的道德發展理論相提並論，成為了解兒童學習的主要參考指標。

從Immanuel Kant美學論的三大哲學架構來看：美學論(aesthetic)探討自我的內在世界的認知，有別於Piaget的經驗認知，Kohlberg的道德認知，

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Parsons由美學論切入發展出自我內心的認知型式。此三者各自成為獨特的思想體系，因所討論的事物分屬三個不同世界與範疇：外觀世界、社會文化與價值、和自我的內在世界。也因如此這三個認知學派的分支同步發展，並相互應證。

表 2 Parsons 的七個訪談問題

對受試者進行訪談法的七個問題	四個主題
1.描述這幅畫給我聽。	「題材」(subject-matter)
2.這幅畫主題是什麼？這個主題好嗎？	
3.你看這幅畫有什麼感覺？	「情感表現」(expression)
4.這幅畫的顏色怎麼樣？顏色配得好不好？	「媒材、形式、風格」 (medium, form, style)
5.這幅畫的形式怎麼樣？畫的組織如何？	
6.這幅畫難畫嗎？難在那兒？什麼是最難的？	「判斷」(judgment)
7.這是一幅好畫嗎？為什麼？	

Parsons 根據以上七個問題的訪談的研究結果，以「美感判斷力」為核心，提出以下五個階段的發展模式美感發展的幾個階段：(1)主觀偏好(favoritism)：此時期尚未成為社會化的一分子，不能了解自己與他人的不同，幼稚園的兒童大都屬這階段；(2)美與寫實(beauty and realism)：鑑賞重點在於主題與寫實上，認為繪畫的主要目的是再現事物，追求物象的形似與通俗之美，關心「這幅畫到底在表達什麼」；(3)原創表現期(expressiveness)：鑑賞重點自外觀形象的寫實進入內在情感的表現，認為美術的目的在表現感情，愈能表達出強烈情感與經驗的作品愈是好作品；(4)形式與風格期(form and style)：視藝術為人類文化的產物，藉歷史脈絡衡量作品價值，可對作品形式、風格與媒材加以討論以修正主觀解釋之偏差；(5) 自主判斷(autonomy)：個人必須以傳統所建立的藝術作品意義作為個人判斷觀念和價值觀的基礎，但這些價值觀需不斷重新調整以適應當代之環境（見表 3）。

其各階段的年齡分佈並無明確分野與設限，認為美術鑑賞發展能力與個體年齡、學歷高低無正相關，唯有健全的藝術鑑賞教育方能促進美術鑑賞能力的發展。訪談中也提及：「Parsons 最為人熟知的美感認知階段，在設計與結論的部份都與當時的時代背景有關，雖然距離現在年代已久遠，但此研究的意義和價值性還是被大家所推崇。Parsons 自己認為不應該強調階段，所以他認為用“cluster of ideas”(不同類別的美感傾向)會比較適切」（訪 A 老師，2011）。

因此教學過程中教學者應對其教學對象之身心發展、美感認知發展與經驗有所了解，才能選擇適切的教材與教學法進行教學。

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表 3 Parsons 的美感發展五階段

美感判斷能力階段	鑑賞特徵
第一階段「主觀偏好」 (Favoritism)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.對欣賞的作品具有直覺性的愉悅(intuitive delight)完全主觀性的率真反應。 2.被顏色強烈的吸引(a strong attraction to color)。 3.繪畫題材產生自由聯想(a free wheeling associative response to subject matter)。 <p>例如：這是最喜歡的顏色我喜歡這隻狗因為我也有隻狗他看起來很像從天降下來的…</p>
第二階段「美與寫實」 (Beauty and Realism)	<p>此階段的兒童特別注意繪畫的題材，看畫時出現的行特徵如下：</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.能以客觀觀察代替主觀偏好，可區分「與繪畫有關的美感經驗」以及「與繪畫無關的經驗」。 2.認為繪畫的題材可以表現真實的事物。 3.特別對需要細心與耐心的寫實繪畫技巧趕到佩服。 <p>Parsons 提出「美、寫實與技巧」是這個階段進行美感判斷的客觀基礎。</p> <p>例如：看起來就像真的一樣、好像在亂塗我弟弟也是這樣畫。</p>
第三階段「原創表現」 (Expressiveness)	<p>欣賞者能透過作品感受原作者所想表達的，原作者是否成功的傳遞出主題本身的表現強度和趣味性(intensity and interest)成爲判斷優劣的主要依據。這個階段的發展，具有下列明顯的行爲特徵：</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.注重作品的表現勝於題材。 2.技巧的寫實不是目的，能表達深刻意涵才是目的。 3.「創新性」(creativity)、「原創性」(originality)和「感情的深度」(depth of feeling)是判斷一幅畫好壞的重要標準。 4.注重個人主觀的感情來欣賞藝術，因此對客觀判斷持懷疑的態度。 <p>例如：這件作品深深觸動我的內心。</p>
第四階段 「形式和風格」 (Form and style)	<p>此階段的發展將藝術視爲社會文化的產物，而非僅僅是個人的成就。必須由歷史脈絡來衡量作品的價值，並且其媒材、形式和風格可藉相互討論的過程，以彰顯它的特色，並修正主觀詮釋所造成的偏差。此階段的行爲發展具有下列的特徵：</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.主觀感情成分極少，欣賞注重媒材本身的客觀因素，例如肌理、色彩、形式、空間、關係。 2.由歷史傳統去瞭解藝術作品的社會、文化面向。 3.由形式和結構的分析，說明繪畫的意義及其結構上的合理性，使人由理性和客觀的角度進行美感判斷。

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第五階段 「自主判斷」 (autonomy)	在此階段必須要有自己的判斷力與價值觀，去分析觀看的作品所架構的意義是什麼？應了解價值會因歷史的改變而改變，同時重視個人和社會兩方面的判斷標準，但仍以個人的藝術觀為最後的依歸。
各階段標準沒有明確的年齡分野，而視個體對藝術作品的認知解讀進程，以當作哪個階段的發展判斷依據。	第四階段和第五階段最大的不同點，在於「形式風格」階段由於從某一歷史傳統去看風格，總以為其價值永恆不易，但是自律階段以開放的心態，採取相對觀點，以藝術是為達某一目的而創造的，故其風格往往具有時代性與地域性，未必永恆不變。

1987 年前的心理學派典發展理論中獨缺美學的領域，Parsons 提出美感發展五階段為美學發展提供了心理學依據，也常在藝術教育領域被引用論述。但 Parsons 的研究也有部分爭議，例如其研究僅以八幅西方精緻藝術作品為研究內容可能隱藏之文化偏見，常被後續研究提及，其他較受爭議大致如下：1. 取樣太少、範圍太小：300 多人都居住在美國鹽湖城一帶，多為長期接受西方教育的居民，文化、地域比較性不足。2. 研究方法之嚴謹度：訪談對象的抽樣未做好比例控制、面談過程也有瑕疵。3. 未對過去的審美研究進行深入探討：Parsons 只簡單描述幾個專家的論點，並未深入分析以及與自己的研究結果進行比對。4. 對美感發展的連續結構未提出強力立論：後三階段的能力似乎可前後交換，或互相重疊。

Parsons 的研究也影響了台灣藝術教育學者，崔光宙於 1992 年針對台灣 335 名學齡前兒童至成人為研究對象，以十幅中西方作品完成「美感判斷發展研究」，做文化上的評估及印證，並將結果列入當時尚在萌芽的本土心理學理論中，讓台灣的教育界的主流注意到了藝術教育理論的實證及客觀性。研究結果發現年齡及專業程度與鑑賞能力有關，但較小年齡則並不明顯（見表 4）。

表 4 崔光宙的美感發展五階段

美感判斷能力階段		鑑賞特徵
階段一	主觀偏好	美感判斷反映出個人主觀偏好，易將美感與其他情緒經驗（如：害怕、好玩、不喜歡）相混淆，不能區分。 以 1.自由聯想 2.陳述零碎 3.以顏色下判斷為判斷標準。
階段二	美與寫實	第二階段前期以 1.寫實標準 2.精細的技巧 3.有組織的陳述 4.拘泥規則為判斷標準。 第二階段後期表現已臻成熟呈現 1.明瞭藝術的特性 2.陳述感情的特徵。
階段三	原創表現	第三階段前期能提出較淺顯的內在感受，美感判斷能超越寫實的風格與技巧，能對繪畫語言做內在詮釋，發掘內在精神內涵。

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		以 1.表現自我 2.體驗深刻 3.感受精到為判斷標準。 第三階段後期具有內在成熟的詮釋能力。
階段四	形式風格	美感判斷超越個人內在主觀詮釋，將藝術品視為社會文化傳統產物，能客觀分享。 以 1.分享美學風格 2.分享形式構圖 3.分享藝術境界為判斷標準。
階段五	自律	美感判斷建立個人開放較無成見的標準，與社會文化既有的標準取得適當平衡點。 以 1.自律精神 2.相對主義 3.開放心胸為判斷標準。

繼崔光宙後，羅美蘭於 1993 年以 Parsons 及崔光宙的美感發展階段為基礎，在台北市立美術館以 1200 名美術館觀眾為研究對象進行實證研究，選取美術館展覽原作為研究內容，發展出五個美術鑑賞能力階段(見表 5)。研究中發現兒童因缺乏藝術鑑賞經驗，只能就具體題材的表現去探索其意義，因此兒童較喜歡以寫實具象的題材為主的藝術作品。發現年齡、教育程度、職業及專業程度與鑑賞能力相關。

表 5 羅美蘭的美感發展五階段

美術鑑賞能力階段	年齡分布	鑑賞特徵
階段一	主觀偏好期 4-8 歲	對主題產生無中生有的自由聯想。 逐一列舉作品，未能關注彼此間的關係。 喜歡豐富鮮明的色彩，不喜歡看不懂的畫。 以直覺的主觀偏好來判斷作品。 對所有的作品皆呈現喜悅之情。
階段二	視覺寫實期 9-15 歲為主， 可擴展到青少年至成人	關注主題的內容。 喜歡優美的主題。 崇拜富有耐心和細心的技巧。 抱持「寫實至上」的觀念。
階段三	情感表達期 從青少年到老年期	繪畫的意義由視覺寫實轉向內在情感的探索。 試圖捕捉繪畫表現的精髓，體驗情感內容。 以直覺的移情作用來達成鑑賞活動。 能以藝術家的心路歷程來考量繪畫表現性。 以創意獨特性和情感深度作為評斷繪畫的標準。
階段四	形式風格期 以具備美術專業人居多	以理性和客觀的角度進行美術鑑賞。 重視作品本身的質感、形式和風格。 由藝術史的觀點去瞭解作品的文化層面，分析

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			風格間的關係。 由形式和風格的術語來解釋繪畫的意義。 能作形式分析：探討整體的效果是否均衡、穩定，並能瞭解部分和整體的關係。
階段五	綜合判斷期	成人為主多為美術專業者	以開放的胸襟和相對觀念，從事美術鑑賞應用美術知識，融會自我意識評價美術作品。 以藝術史的觀點和自我圓熟的觀點作價值的探索。 經由全面的考量後，做綜合判斷。 於圓熟的判斷中，融入自己的創見。

歸納 Parsons、崔光宙及羅美蘭的研究，發現藝術品創作完成後經不斷的詮釋、欣賞和省思，往往能表現出原創者內心更豐富的精神內涵。從藝術創作或欣賞的歷程分析「美感判斷能力」是藝術創作及欣賞都需要的核心能力，因此「美感判斷」的研究也可說是藝術教育核心的基礎研究。

雖然 Parsons 的審美發展研究仍有部分爭議，「但如 Parsons 所言 much remains to be done，他希望後來的研究，能繼續加以修正或是提出不同看法」（訪 B 老師，2011）。因此審美發展的研究，不是企圖提出一統天下的理論，而是為提供更多的參考依據，其立意仍值得美術教師效法，理論也仍有教學實務上的應用價值。Parsons 曾說明審美發展研究的兩個目的：(1)當我們和別人談論藝術時，能幫助我們更瞭解彼此。(2)幫助教師、父母或任何人解讀孩子們的談話，讓彼此能更順利地溝通，讓「美感經驗」發展成為生活的事，及學習成長的一環。透過美感認知的探索，讓學童或社會大眾自己不但有審美的能力，同時也有解讀美的能力。站在教育的立場，學習 Parsons 的理論絕對能對教學工作和人際應對有所幫助。以研究的角度而言，同樣的審美發展應針對不同的地區和對象進行更深入的探索，以發展適合本地文化、教育等需求的理論。如陳瓊花已針對台灣地區的學生做過許多審美能力的研究，對如何發展藝術鑑賞教育以提升學生鑑賞能力提供了許多實用的基礎資料(陳瓊花，2000)。

二、熱忱

導覽員最令人感到興奮的就是具備激發他人學習特質，且本身也是充滿熱忱的學習者和自我教育者。

「Parsons 的學術生涯很長，但對知識與所有事物都不斷地保持好奇心，持續的學習、持續的關注。他與 Efland 於 2002 年合開了一門課程，是關於藝術認知…評量、課程統整…隱約可看到這些理論交互關連彼此牽動，也與當時關注的教育議題密切相關，從這些細節都能見到他不間斷學習的軌跡」（訪 A 老師，2011）。

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Parsons 在學術研究的呈現與教學的傳承具備導覽員的特質，從其學術經歷、長期進行研究的審美認知發展理論、以及訪談內容，處處都顯現其不斷研究學習的精神及帶動許多後續研究的影響力。由於 Parsons 對藝術教育的熱情，加上深厚的學術研究基石與豐富的行政經歷，讓他後來能順利的主導透過藝術改革教育方案(Transforming Education through Art Challenge, 簡稱 TETAC)，也由於 Parsons 對藝術教育長時間的持續關注與投入，以及對於各種不同議題如美術評量、創造力發展、全球化下的藝術教育、網路課程的涉獵，他不但能持續地更新專業能力，也能在教育潮流中扮演先鋒角色，發揮多元而廣泛的影響力。以下將針對 Parsons 在審美認知發展理論發表之後，仍持續熱心投入的各項研究分別敘述。

(一)主導TETAC（透過藝術改革教育專案）發展課程統整

1997 年 3 月，美國國家藝術教育協會(National Art Education Association, NAEA)選定了全美各地 35 個合作的學校參與 TETAC 計畫：

「TETAC…對於參與成員是很新的經驗，透過行動研究不斷的省思與討論，慢慢的對課程統整也越來越瞭解和深入。為了評估推行的成效，評量的議題也慢慢被發展，參與的老師，發揮整合的力量形成論述，演變成“Big idea”的課程。Parsons 參與其中也負責計畫的最後建議與檢討，認為在其中的摸索思考帶來了很多的進步，如何透過統整課程以藝術領域為核心結合其他學科與社會研究，都是可以再思考的問題。這樣的研究，引發了很多的課程省思影響擴及全美」（訪 A 老師，2011）。

TETAC 專案在 Parsons 任教之 OSU（俄亥俄州立大學）以密集實驗的方式和小學、國中和高中等不同層級的學校合作，主要目的有(1)提倡藝術在教育

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中的價值(2)培育各級學校中專業的藝術教師與行政人員(3)發展藝術教育理論(4)發展藝術教育課程；針對藝術課程的邊緣化問題，以提供師資訓練來建立更嚴謹的藝術課程，並透過全面性推廣藝術教育以及與其他科目協同教學，使學生了解藝術史及其對文化的貢獻。

TETAC 關注於以藝術教育為核心發展統整課程，認為藝術教育課程統整的意義為 (1)藉由讓學生在真實生活中學習進而瞭解藝術品的意義；(2)透過闡釋藝術品之意義過程，如藝術品的文化、時代、媒材、人等當作溝通的一部分；(3)藝術品可和心理狀態產生連結，又可在文化環境中瞭解藝術品而連結其他學科，促進學習的統整。因此主張在教學時，老師應當要學生思考事實背後所隱含的想法與意見，或是可能的論點，沒有這些基本問題就沒有焦點，就無法統整課程和進行深度的探索。五年研究計畫結束，大多學校已將藝術列為核心課程；同時透過各科教師致力於協同教學，使得學校教學氣氛大大改善；也激發教師將更多的創意教學技巧融入於課程中。以藝術教育為核心來統整課學科，可使學科變有趣，學習更有意義且提升創造力。藝術與人文是人類面對新世紀挑戰，邁向改革、機會與希望的主要因素，也是學習的工具，對兒童在認知發展、建立信心及動機有很好的作用。TETAC 專案所發展出的藝術核心統整，正是因應當代藝術教育所需要的強心針。

國內藝術教育界這幾年來與 Parsons 頻繁的學術接觸下，也汲取了同樣在 OSU 任教的 Sydney Walker 由 TETAC 發展出來的課程架構「以重要概念設計美術課程」(Designing Art Curriculum with Big Ideas)的養分，Walker 提出有效掌握「重要概念(big ideas)」、「課程原理(rationale)」、「關鍵觀念(key concepts)」和「主要的問題(essential questions)」，在各要素之間環環相扣的關係中釐清課程目標以發展教學活動與評量指標。藝術課程設計藉由這種「多面向」的理念，讓藝術的課程和其他學科相結合，提供系列且連貫的教學活動，學生也能學習到完整有效的藝術知識與技能。Walker (2001) 提出的課程主要強調三個重點：(1)課程的設計應以生活議題為基礎(2)藝術的創作與思考是建構藝術與人文課程之核心(3)提出發展課程基本架構的要領。不同於傳統的自我表現法，Walker 重視創造性啟發及人格培育，強調以知識為基礎完整而周詳的探索意義的本質及個人的體認與表達。Parsons 與 Walker，在課程設計的同時，不斷的省思「什麼樣的學習對學生最具意義與價值？」課程可以是延伸至學生生活周遭所見所聞，並從其中探索有意義的問題，激發學生能夠因應相關問題的社會行為。這就是 Parsons 所謂的「與社會脈動相呼應的教育

形式」，從學習觀察自身居住環境特色，發掘更多超越客觀的表象去瞭解深層文化、社會現象，包括人文的和景觀，以多元角度檢視自己的社區概念和文化認同。

Parsons (2003)肯定藝術教育在統整課程中扮演著重要且具有價值的角色，因為當代議題常超越了學科的界線，例如性別、環境、戰爭、社區等議題，需以不同觀點來統整論述。因藝術或視覺文化可以提供有利的方式去探索及解釋我們對社會及文化生活的瞭解，藝術品可以反應複雜的文化矛盾或表達出對議題的瞭解，更能夠將原本獨立且片段的知識和經驗連結起來，因此以藝術來統整會更有意義。他的熱誠也影響台灣藝術教師，陳建伶與鍾政岳分別於 2002 和 2003 年親自去美國參訪 TETAC 教學模式的經驗，回國後結合自己所在的地區進行以視覺藝術為核心的統整課程設計之教學研究。這樣的課程幫助學生建立宏觀的藝術視野，瞭解跨文化與多元文化，但必須以藝術創作為基礎，否則便失去了藝術教育的特色與主要的學習機會，教學現場的老師應鼓勵學生多描述思考藝術作品的理念，以啓迪更多學生的潛能。

(二)藝術教育與評量

近十年來，Parsons 對評量議題保持關注與熱忱，認為找出學生的評分標準對於教師來說是最大的困難，如果能克服對藝術評量的抗拒，去尋找更多元的評量方式對教學是很有助益的。Parsons (2004)認為透過評量可強化學生的學習，強調針對學習內容在評量前與學生充分討論說明評量規準。透過評量可以讓人看到藝術除了情感與技巧，同時也涉及思考活動，作品的品質高下，最重要的關鍵就在於思考的品質，Parsons 並強調老師必須學生的角度來看評量，設法瞭解學生如何看待評量。因有如此的洞見，Parsons 再學術研究上以及課程設計上均對評量有更深入的探索，從訪談中可知

「透過我的論文研究過程中，常與 Parsons 一起思考，如何汲取教育評量改革運動中的研究成果來作為思考藝術教育評量未來發展的參考和依據…Parsons 自 2001 年開設藝術教育評量的網路課程給在職教師，他的課程內容都是提出有關評量的核心問題，讓在職教師去實際檢視自己的教學現況解決教學問題。更重要的是透過課程幫助教師們從評量的角度重新反省藝術教育的價值、教學本質以及如何定義學生成就等等這些專業價值系統的建構和再解構」(訪 C 老師，2011)。

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Parsons 透過新的評量思維思考評量的哲學問題。他認為藝術創作與評量可以自然相容，透過評量能促進學生的美術學習，但是必須先瞭解學生的思考過程。除此之外有效的評量也可讓家長、校方及教育局相關的行政人員清楚知道學習成效(Parsons, 2004)。

(三)全球化下的藝術教育

在學生的眼中 Parsons 是視野很寬廣的學者，且對很多社會議題保持高度關注。B 老師提到「Parsons 不侷限於藝術教育，希望汲取各領域發展的優缺點作為改革藝術教育的參考，因此他對文化議題，教育改革，政治改革，國際情勢，經濟發展活動等等都很有興趣。雖然藝術教育是他治學的方向，但希望社會因教育精進而進步才是最終的目標」（訪 B 老師，2011）。筆者曾參與 Parsons 在 2009 年 11 月於彰化師範大學藝術教育研究所課程中的分享，討論的範圍涵蓋出口貿易、跨國越界的傳輸、疆界的省思。例如他拋出開放性的問題讓學生進一步思辯，舉出巴西的小鎮面臨人口外流的隱憂，卻透過傳統陶藝品及手工藝品來挽救這樣的例子來探討他們與外界的溝通方式，思索傳統生活與文化方式是否要保留？或是該適當的轉化？觀光客購買的物品是想像性的投射抑或另有其他的需要？另外也討論了香港藝術學院美術系學生所設計彩虹的大衛像圖案和非洲加納的傳統服飾。關於台灣的案例以九族文化村原住民歌舞的表演、以及彰化中山路上一棟大樓前矗立的一尊大衛像來討論，在討論過程中沒有給學生最終的標準答案，而是透過不同的圖像與現象，讓觀者去思考全球化會造成文化同質化或失去文化特色？使文化更加貧乏或是讓文化更多樣性、更加有意義？從容易忽略的細節點醒我們去思考，跨文化與文化認同的現象是如何產生與運作？開放性的討論邀請我們去發現全球化與教育的關連是什麼？進一步討論在教師在教育現場上可以做些什麼？

對於圖像原始的意義、轉化後的意義，觀者對作品意義的詮釋充滿了思辨的可能性。全球化下的今天，國與國之間的界線不再明確劃分，跨領域的合作更是為潮流，眾多社群在知識、文化、藝術、教育等面向的交流合作，讓思想互動與融合的情況更勝以往，我們應該學習 Parsons 的精神繼續保持開放且持續不斷的學習，去因應全球化下的改變。

(四)創造力與藝術教育

創造力也是目前全球最熱門議題之一，培養創意除了可刺激經濟發展和文化產業之外，也被期待用來解決與日常生活會面臨的問題。Parsons(2010)以

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「箱子與圍欄」(Boxes and corrals)比喻以往所認知的創意與修正後之間的差別，他認為「箱外」思考代表無拘無束的創造力，但「箱子」所代表的「規則」是應該有彈性、可做調整的，也就是採納有用的概念但必要時也可以拋開，創意就是在特定情形下決定可以遵循改變或忽略哪些規則以獲得最佳成果。

創造力出現在各個教育領域中，但 Parsons (2010)認為視覺藝術不同於數學或自然科學，並提出以下兩個觀點說明藝術教育適合用來培養創意 (1)大多數藝術規則直接來自媒材，而非抽象符號的呈現，但藝術媒材可直接體驗，是一場探索旅程，這些素材可以引發實驗動機，並直接反應效果。甚至可以鼓勵學生去試驗不同的表現方式；(2)所有學科中只有藝術以創意為該學科的本質，創意是一種過程，其他學科往往強調尋找問題的答案非過程本身。重視創意的原因，是因為創意有助於找到答案，而非看中創意本身的價值。但藝術家對於創作過程與結果同樣感興趣。所以 Parsons 相信這兩個原因使得藝術成為提昇兒童創意最直接的方式。也提出了在美術教育上激發創造力的教學方法，筆者整理如下：

- Step1**：讓學生製作有關真實生活問題的藝術品。一般常透過創作有關生態的藝術品來探討環保議題。學生在創作藝術品之前，應先研究相關問題、仔細觀察、蒐集相關資訊，再融合至自己的創作中。學生應該試驗不同的媒材，並思考這些媒材對於他們的創作計畫會帶來哪些好處與壞處。今天，藝術家有更多媒材可以選擇，包括裝置藝術、攝影與影像、數位藝術等，連兒童也可以運用這些媒材來創作。
- Step2**：提供學生團體合作的機會，讓他們分享不同觀點、草案、意見和製作藝術品，使其學會接受關於藝術與人生的各種不同觀點、方法與假設。思考觀賞者與團隊成員提出的不同詮釋方式。
- Step3**：可要求技巧較成熟的學生製作系列主題作品，使學生有更多時間學習運用其媒材和規則，發掘其中更多可能性。

上述 Parsons 提出在藝術教育上培養創意的的方法，可供老師培養學童學習解決問題的創意思考能力，並透過團體合作的訓練，讓學童在團體中建立良好的人際關係和增進團隊合作的能力。

(五)教師專業成長

博物館教育人員除了替參觀民衆提供終身學習的機會之外，也同時需要不斷地自我充實，在協助觀眾終身學習之際也尋找各種機會擴展自己的專業能

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力，隨著展覽檔期的替換自我成長，這樣的專業成長是雙向的。同樣地 Parsons 在自我精進外也同時耕耘於在職教師的專業成長。訪談中提到，「博班求學的時間因替系上研發網路在職碩士課程而成為其課程專案助理，協助 Parsons 將傳統課程改編成適合網路的即時互動性課程內容」（訪 C 老師，2011）。

幫助教師的專業成長的部分一直是 Parsons 教學的熱情所在，透過在網路教學，他扮演思考討論的協商者，帶領在職教師建立網路專業成長團體，激發理論與實踐的對話，這也成了他近年來對於藝術教育的主要貢獻之一，「Parsons 認為在網路教學的歷程中，看到來自不同地區的教師面對的各種不同文化層面的教學問題，透過網路無遠弗界的優勢一起思考解決之道」（訪 C 老師，2011），網路教學讓他能將研究場域擴大到傳統教室以外的範圍，也加速藝術教育全球化的腳步。

Parsons 致力於終身學習與終身教育，有著源源不斷的思考創造力也熱愛學習中文和中國文化，且常保持一顆赤子之心和旺盛的好奇心專注於他的研究領域。「因著他的謙虛，倒空自己丟掉社會聲望的自我包袱，也隨時有推翻既有知識系統的準備，時時反思、批判自我認知」（訪 C 老師，2011）。這部分可以與 B 老師的訪談互為印證「Parsons 認為要勇於推翻自己的想法，但推翻想法前必須仔細判斷和追求證據。至於審美發展的階段論，他本人也希望後續筆者能加以修正或是提出不同看法」（訪 B 老師，2011）。

三、親和力

McCoy 認為導覽員像是美術館的主人，稱職的主人會自然流露出親切與和善的態度用最誠摯的心接待參觀的民眾，讓觀眾感到賓至如歸有愉快的美術館參觀經驗，引發學習以及再次參觀的動機。因此導覽應隨時考量觀眾的接收程度和需求調整導覽內容，具有多元角色的特質是極富挑戰性和激發潛力的工作。本文將藝術教育領域中的浩瀚知識比喻為美術館內的收藏，Parsons 成功的扮演展品與觀者的中間人以及館方代言人，激發觀眾學習並有效的溝通傳達作品內涵與觀眾對話，亦不斷地自我成長時時革新。依據 Hans-Georg Gadamer 的審美理解導覽者(Parsons)與觀眾(學生)的互動是一種「參與性理解」的對話，觀眾不是以觀察者的身份置身其中，而是積極主動地參與和介入，此外導覽者的親和力也是此一互動的重要媒介，因此本節擬透過訪談 Parsons 在 OSU 所指導的三位博士分類整理後，來呈現他具備親和力的教學特質。

(一)深入淺出的口語表達與言簡意賅的文字敘述

Parsons 的親和力也展現在其深入淺出的口語表達和文字敘述能力上，王教授便回憶到，Parsons 能夠將複雜的理論簡化為簡潔的語言和文字，並清楚地帶領學生思考，這也與其曾主修文學和哲學學位有關。

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「Parsons 可以把很深奧的學理用淺白的語言，將學者繁複的理論精髓描述出來，不管是演講或上課通常都不是理論性的論述，而是拋問題或例子，點出問題讓學生去思考…他的文字表達能力是十分清楚精準，這與他以前主修文學及哲學學位有密切相關」（訪 A 老師，2011）。

(二)聊天式卻充滿哲學思辨的對話

如同 Gadamer 對於藝術本質的探討強調審美理解的語言性，Parsons 與學生在討論的過程基本模式是對話和問答，審美主體與藝術本文間的對話創造了共同的語言，藝術作品的本質具有時間性、隨機性，藝術是與人的存在和自我理解相結合的；藝術好比遊戲，做亮了一個自由的天地。

「因為 Parsons 學語言文學的背景加上碩博士念教育哲學，他的上課方式較為類似辯證法，討論的議題與互動的過程，沒有絕對的答案，不以灌輸式的或以立即性的標準答案來進行教學。Parsons 每次來台演講內容都不盡相同，會不斷的加入新的發現與改變，反覆的思辨考量並盡量用清楚的方式做陳述，不停留在理論」（訪 A 老師，2011）。

「Parsons 認為活到老學到老，要有開放的心胸和批判的精神。做學問和研究要有自己的中心想法不隨波逐流，不該因人而異或任意變換研究主題」（訪 B 老師，2011）。

(三)嚴以律己謙和待人

Parsons 治學嚴謹自我要求極高，但在待人處事卻又謙遜溫和，是藝術教育界很重要的典範型人物。C 老師便提到：

「Parsons 讓我明白學術研究與待人處事息息相關，相較於其他多數國際知名的學者顯得平易近人，主要是因為他從不因過往累積的學術成就和名氣恃寵而驕，反而更加虛心學習他人優點。主持大型研究案的過程中，經

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常能贏得信任成為組織裡眾望所歸的核心價值整合人物，是大家心悅誠服的領導者」（訪 C 老師，2011）。

(四)無私幫助後進，永續傳承

A 老師是 Parsons 的指導學生，特別指出 Parsons 對學生的提攜是非常熱心且主動的：「Parsons 對於後進的幫助是很熱心的，常常聽到老師幫忙寫推薦信，或是跟學生討論選系選校，或是審稿給予論文建議，常會主動關心學生。」（訪 A 老師，2011）。

C 老師提到後來自己在指導學生時所遵循的價值指標都是來自於 Parsons 的指導模式：

「Parsons 對於所指導的學生要求極為嚴格，論文研究是逐句推敲討論，不允許任何文句意義模糊或含糊帶過，希望學生研究後是真正有收獲，而非僅為追求文憑而寫。見到學生優異的學習成果，不吝於給學生讚賞和精神鼓勵，努力發掘學生的潛力和特質，也為學生的成就發自內心的感到驕傲」（訪 C 老師，2011）。

身為指導者的 Parsons 與學生在研究過程中，同步經歷漫長的蛻變之路，也因如此彼此更能激盪出研究的火花繼續將熱情傳承下去。

(五)不斷精進樂於分享

Parsons 滿七十歲那年，跟 C 老師說他覺得自己的人生才正要開始，這就是他能夠不斷提升自己也能將熱情不停地延續給門生訣竅。

「Parsons 感覺到自己的學術創造力才累積到可以好好發揮的時候，七十歲前都是在為這個新的里程碑作準備。他喜歡與國際學者互動交流，提供系所研究資源與人分享，也時常邀請國際學者到家裡作客，希望可以讓系所成員認識不同文化背景的藝術教育面貌，默默地以己之力促進國際文化交流」（訪 C 老師，2011）。

Parsons 就像那優秀導覽員一樣，不僅對展覽內容熟悉，涉獵的知識更是包羅萬象。同時也了解觀眾的心理需求，保持親切專業的服務態度充分掌握導

覽的溝通模式不斷自我成長。如 Edwards 所說導覽是資訊服務、指導服務、教育服務、娛樂服務、宣傳服務、探索性的服務。目的給觀眾新的了解、新的洞察力、新的熱忱與新的興趣。Parsons 在藝術教育領域中就以這樣的精神全方位地無私給予，時刻蛻變成長也不斷追求革新。

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參、結論

本文以導覽員與觀眾的關係對應 Parsons 與學生，以美術館來隱喻藝術教育領域。檢視 McCoy(1989)在《美術館教育的導覽員》(*Docents in art museum education*)提到導覽員具備的完美特質，很多面向對應了 Parsons 的治學態度，例如 1.具有推動美術館熱忱；2.以展品為教學主體；3.能夠直接回應觀眾也同時做位好聽眾；4.能敏感的瞭解觀眾能力與學習需求；5.積極地使觀眾理解；6.提供機會讓觀眾練習；7.依觀眾的理解程度提供資訊；8.促進觀眾喜愛美術館經驗的角色；9.與觀眾用新的觀看角度共同學習；10.鼓勵觀眾發掘新意義，善用發問與提供多元訊息並引導討論。在 Parsons 身上學到的態度，可用在教學也可用在研究上，他的完美導覽以及美感經驗的認知發展理論，是「台上一分鐘台下十年功」勤奮治學的呈現。

文藝復興時代的法國作家 François Rabelais(1494-1553)曾說：「孩子不是一個等著被填滿的瓶子，而是被點燃的火焰」。Parsons 在很多人生命中扮演了花衣魔笛手的角色，不管是研究精神或是對學生的提攜，都以先鋒者的遠見與高度帶領大家進入了藝術教育領域。他不斷的跟隨時代脈動與時俱進，同時關注網路教學、全球化與多元文化的議題。如同孔子周遊列國般受邀至不同國家進行客座教學也是另一種翻轉教室的教學模式，良好的人際關係讓他能夠容易敞開心吸收不同筆者的發現，進而能提出更新的理論。除此之外總是對學生給予正面的肯定，激發研究過程的創意與熱情，並在各個階段給予適時的協助，都是很令人敬佩的。Parsons 的教學對象包含各階層的老師與來自世界各地的碩博士生，培育出許多對學術追求與教學研究和他一樣擁有同樣熱情的學者。正所謂典範樹立典範，生命影響生命！

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附錄一

Michael J. Parsons 在俄亥俄州立大學藝術教育研究所期間指導的碩、博士論文 (1995-2006)

作者姓名	論文題目	學位	年份
Hill, Phyllis Thelma P.	A case study exploring the development of The Jamaica Masters Online Project.	博士	2006
Kuo, Chien-Hua	A post-colonial critique of the representation of Taiwanese culture in children's picturebooks.	博士	2005
Chan, Wen-Chi	A case study of Grace Lin's picturebooks on Chinese themes: "Why couldn't Snow White be Chinese?"	碩士	2005
Menke, Katherine Ann	One teacher's search for meaning in the classroom.	碩士	2005
Buffington, Melanie L.	Using the Internet to develop students' critical thinking skills and build online communities of teachers: A review of research with implications for museum education.	博士	2004
Hsu, Karen Ching-Yi	Teaching and learning on-line in in-service art teacher education : The Ohio State University experience.	博士	2004
Cheng, Ming-Hsien	Culture and interpretation: A study of Taiwanese children's responses to visual images.	博士	2002

Cohen-Evron, Nurit	Beginning art teachers' negotiation of their beliefs and identity within the reality of the public schools.	博士	2001
Parrish, Mila	Discover dance CD-ROM for dance education: Digital improvisation and interactive multimedia.	博士	2000
Wang, Li-Yan	Teaching art in an age of technological change.	博士	2000
Hsu, Karen Ching-Yi	A study of Grant Wiggins' development in philosophy of educational assessment.	碩士	1999
Cohen-Evron, Nurit	Examination of the changes in beginning art teachers' beliefs during a process of curriculum development based on dialogue and reflection.	碩士	1999
Gooding Brown, Jane S.	Text, discourse, deconstruction and an exploration of self : A disruptive for postmodern art education.	博士	1997
Shumard, Sally L.	A Collaborative PDS Project About Computer Networking in Art Education.	博士	1995

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The Academic Accomplishments and Scholarly Spirits of An Exemplary American Art Educator, Michael J. Parsons

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Abstract

It is an excitement to meet a great well-known international scholar during one's academic journey, just like when you meet a great docent in art museum to guide you with professional knowledge and passion. In *The Good Guide*, a good docent is one with a magic flute whose music can lead the audience to enter a fantastic world of wonderment and amusement. To me, both scholarly and personally, professor Michael J. Parsons is a perfect model to illustrate this kind of excellent docent qualities in the academic world of art education. It is one's great fortune to meet a great professor who has such magical characteristics during academic journey. I first got to know him in academic literature and then become acquainted with him personally. Knowing such a great scholar has since intrigued my passion to study art education. This paper is a brief discussion on Parsons' academic accomplishments and scholarly spirits through the theory of great docent by Edwards (1976). Three characteristics of a great docent, proposed by Edwards, are: knowledge, passion, and affinity; these will be used to guide my discussion. The first part is discussion on his academic background, teachings, and research contributions. Also, his well-known theoretical contributions on constructing children's aesthetic understanding in ten years are discussed. The second part is on his passion in academic teaching. The

third part is on his affinity, which is illustrated through my three personal interviews with three of his disciples in Taiwan's academia. These three art educators were advised under Parsons during their graduate study at The Ohio State University. Text analysis of relevant art educational literature, and open-ended questionnaire and face-to-face interviews are the research methods used in this research paper.

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**Key words: Art education paradigm, Docent characteristics,
Aesthetic understanding development**

I. Introduction

1. Parsons' characteristics as a great academic docent

Edwards (1976) once said that a good docent is one with a magic flute whose music can lead the audience to enter a fantastic world of wonderment and amusement. Such a good docent possesses three kinds of characteristics: knowledge, passion, and affinity. Professor Michael J. Parsons to me is a perfect model to illustrate this kind of excellent docent qualities in the academic world of art education. It is one's great fortune to meet a great professor who has such magical music characteristics during academic journey. With his personal guidance and great research insights as the key to enlighten us academic beginners, we as museum audience get to understand the treasuries with profound impact. McCoy(1989)attributed docent profession as providing information service, guiding service, educational service, marketing service, and also exploring service. With such well-rounded services, docent profession then provides the museum audience a comprehensive museum visiting experience. Docent can be the curators, staff members, volunteers, schoolteachers, or artists themselves. They have in-depth knowledge about artifacts, art, and artworks, and provide contextual knowledge and experience for audience. McCoy defined a well-disciplined docent as one who can contribute to explain and encourage audience's thought-provoking learning activities.

Docent involves the process of introducing, explaining, and interpreting works of art. It is an inspiring and yet challenging work. Professor Parsons has been playing this role successfully for decades. In the summer of 2002, I attended the Ohio-State University-Art-Education-Summer-Study program that was a cross-university graduate foreign study trip made possible by professor Ann Kuo. During the 31 days at OSU, Parsons taught major contemporary art educational issues and had broadened our ordinary views about what art education encounters and embraces in our current society. The study program included in-class lectures and discussions, and field trips

to local schools and art museums. The final week was a group project titled *Integrated Art Curriculum with Big Ideas*, which encouraged students to apply theoretical ideas to reflect current relevant art educational issues and problems in Taiwan.

The most impressive of all in this learning experience to me was that Parsons was an intellectually inspiring scholar as well as a nice and friendly elder person who took care of students with detailed cares and sensitive concerns. He also showed us the American culture and enjoyed such cultural-exchange learning with us together. This foreign learning experience had not only expanded our view of art education, but also illustrated the modest and thoughtful quality of his personalities. Our admiration on his nice personalities, great academic mind, and passion for learning other cultures had made this a precious life-time learning experience for all of us, and consequently inspired our further passion to study more advanced art education issues and theories. After this study trip, I studied more on his publications and theories, and also took courses by his three OSU doctorate disciples from whom I found similar qualities on critical academic thinking and passion for educating others. I interviewed these three disciples, professor A, professor B, and professor C. They all demonstrated Parsons' academic ethics and good morals as an art education academia. They always try to evoke students' critical thinking and passionately guide students' problem solving in their intellectual journey.

2. Research methods

This paper will depart from Edwards' three docent characteristics as the way to organize discussion sections: knowledge, passion, and affinity. On knowledge, I will discuss Parsons' academic background, teaching, research and service, publications, and academic influences on the field. Moreover, his well-known ten-years survey research of cognitive development of aesthetic understanding is discussed. On passion, the development of his academic thinking on various topics and issues is illustrated, so are his

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contributions on advising master and doctorate studies. On affinity, the face-to-face interview of his three disciples is demonstrated.

The research method is to apply literature analysis to first layout Parsons' major theoretical works that illustrate his academic knowledge contributions to the field of art education and their profound influence on later researchers. Then, his affinity is demonstrated through my interviews with three of his disciples who are all university art education professors. This later part is especially of significance, because from the interview scripts, one can see his passionate spirits for educating others through art, which serves as good complimentary sources to understand him better as a person.

The interviewed respondents are:

Respondent 1 : Professor A (studied under Parsons from 1996 to 2000)

Respondent 2 : Professor B (studied under Parsons from 1998 to 2002)

Respondent 3 : Professor C (studied under Parsons from 1996 to 2004)

II. Research findings and discussion

1. Knowledge

(1) Parsons' academic background

Parsons has shown his continuation of passion on devoting his research efforts to various kinds of art educational issues and problems. His educational background in advanced philosophical training in University of Illinois has made him a critical thinker and philosopher as an art educator. His teaching to students has continued to emphasize on the importance of independent and reflective thinking. Teaching dialectically has dominated his method on interacting in class and in advising students. His education on English literature in younger age has also made him a great writer; his writing style has become distinctive among art educator researchers, which is sharp and powerful in words and perspectives. His obtainment of a teacher certification after two years study then provided him the turn to establish academic career in the educational field. (See table 1)

Parsons has shown interests on various kinds of subjects including economics, history, politics, globalization, environmental issues, technology, socio-cultural issues, etc. His research efforts have often illustrated close connections between art education and other subjects and disciplines. This is very unique, comparing with most art educators; it is very common that most art education researchers often limit their research perspectives within the worldview of art education. In his later years, Parsons has even begun learning Chinese, both language and culture, to continue his passion on learning different world languages.

Table 1 Parsons' educational background

School	Major and Degree	Duration
College of Education, University of Illinois	M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Philosophy of Education	1963-1967
Institute of Education, University of London	Certificate of Education	1958-1959
Brasenose College, Oxford University	B.A. in English Language and Literature, with Honours	1955-1958

(2) Parsons' educational background

After obtaining teacher certification from University of London, Parsons first taught at Plymouth High School for four years, and then began his advanced academic study in College of Education, University of Illinois, where he later became teaching assistant with professor Harry Broudy. After finishing his four years study and receiving his doctorate degree, he began university teaching at College of Education, where he stayed for twenty years of service and obtained his full professorship, and also served as chairperson and vice dean of College of Education. In 1987, Parsons published his well-known book, *How We Understand Art*, and has since become a dominant academic figure in the international field of art education research and practice. His theory of aesthetic understanding has helped teachers, parents, as well as art world to establish practical conceptual base on the discipline of teaching art. For such an outstanding performance on research, administration, and teaching, Parsons was then recruited to become the chairperson of Ohio State University's Department of Art

Education, which was ranked the best of its kind in US at the time. Since then, his academic research and career has devoted more fully into inquiries of art education. After twenty years at OSU and retired, he was invited to be research professor at University of Illinois in 2006 till present time.

Parsons is an international scholar who loves to travel cross borders for academic as well as cultural exchanges. His international fame has led him to many invitations from well-known international art education departments. He has visited and gave short-term teachings in countries including Taiwan, Hong Kong, Canada, England, etc. Especially he visited Taiwan very frequently from time to time to teach short courses to students of Taiwan Normal University and Chang Hwa University of Education. From 2000 to 2004, he helped to facilitate 31-days foreign study trips at OSU and had promoted multi-cultural experience for over one hundred teacher participants from Taiwan. Below is Parsons' educational and professional background:

- University of Illinois Research Professor (2006~present)
- Ohio State University Graduate Chairperson, Department of Art Education (1987-2006)
- Hong Kong Institute of Education Visiting Research Professor (2003-2004)
- Ohio State University Chairperson, Department of Art Education (1987-1995)
- University of Utah Vice Dean and Chairperson, College of Education (1979-1983)
- University of Utah Adjunct Professor, Department of Philosophy (1971-1987)
- University of Utah Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor, College of Education (1967-70, 70-75, 75-87)
- University of Illinois Research Assistant with Professor Harry Broudy (1963-1967)
- Plymouth High School, England Teacher (1959-1963)

- One-year visiting at University of British Columbia, Pennsylvania State University, University of Minnesota, Hong Kong Institute of Education, Chang-Hua University of Education (Taiwan).

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(3) Ten-years research on cognitive development of aesthetic understanding

In 1987, Parsons published the book *How we understand art: A cognitive developmental account of aesthetic experience*, and has since established his research authorities importance in the field of art education. For ten years of survey and interviews of children of different ages, he constructed a theoretical framework on children's aesthetic understanding and its cognitive developmental significance. With seven survey questions, he interviewed three hundred children as well as adults on their personal ideas and aesthetic judgments on eight contemporary artworks by well-known artists. Semi open-ended interview was conducted to encourage respondents to talk freely about their personal readings of the meaning and impact of artworks. The raw data was analyzed for their common significance to observe for an overarching guidance and underlying theoretical implications. A long-term qualitative research like this was not found yet in the field and thus it became a standard research method during 90s. It was later translated to various languages and had inspired further relevant research interests on such topics.

His concluding analysis was a generation of a cognitive aesthetic model of understanding with four dimensions and five stages; four dimensions are: 1) subject matter, 2) emotional expression, 3) medium and form, and 4) judgment; five stages are: 1) favoritism, 2) beauty and realism, 3) expressiveness, 4) style and form, and 5) autonomy. This breakthrough perspective on how people generate their aesthetic understanding soon became a standard theoretical framework to be explored and compared in regards to Jean Piaget's cognitive developmental theory and Lawrence Kohlberg's moral developmental theory. This book had pioneered the link between cognitive development and aesthetic understanding. It also became

the standard reference for researchers and teachers in both art education and early childhood education.

Comparing with Immanuel Kant's three frameworks of aesthetic theory, aesthetics involves self-understanding of one's inner world, which is different from Piaget's experience theory and Kohlberg's moral judgment. The inner self-understanding is a reflection of both one's cognitive development as well as reflection of one's visual experience. Parsons' theoretical framework made it possible to further investigating such inner self-understanding. Though distinctively different in purposes and viewpoints, these three different theoretical perspectives compliment each other. They embrace the worldviews, degrees of cognitive maturation, socio-cultural norms and values, and self-understanding of a person's experience of the physical world. This is why the topics of cognition always dominate the field of educational research. Parsons' cognitive framework later has established the ground base for art educators to design curriculum and assessment.

Table 2 Parsons' seven interview questions

Seven questions	Four dimensions
1. Please describe for me what you see.	
2. What is the subject matter of this painting? Is it good subject matter?	Subject-matter
3. What feelings do you have looking at this painting?	Expression
4. How are the colors of this painting? Are they good?	
5. What is the form of this painting? Is it well organized?	Medium, form, style
6. Is it hard to paint? What is hard and why?	
7. Is it a good painting? Why?	Judgment

Based on the above survey research, Parsons concluded the following five stages of developing aesthetic judgment: 1) favoritism, which refers to pre-socialization age's preference when one cannot yet recognize one's own difference from others, such as those of pre-school children; 2) beauty and realism, which refers to one's apparent preference on the subject matter and realistic degree of painted surface. People of this stage care more about the demonstration of realism and the impact of visual expression; 3) expressiveness, which refers to attention to artistic expression and emotion,

and how artworks emphasize the emotions of portrayed figures and objects, the stronger the emotion, the better the artworks; 4) form and style, which refers to one's recognition of artworks being products of humanities and cultural developments; and, the contextual and art historical meaning of an artwork is more important than the visual property of the artwork. Meaning dominates over medium, form, expression; and 5) autonomy, which refers to how one references art history traditions to make judgment about particular artwork, and artworks change meaning and significance accordingly across time changes. (See Table 3)

There was no distinct age significance across these five different stages of aesthetic judgment. The ability of making good and proper reading of artworks is not relevant to one's age difference and educational levels. A well-structured aesthetic education can help to develop and cultivate one's better reading and appreciation of artworks. Although this theoretical framework has established major grounds for art educators worldwide for decades, Parsons still see more room for further development to make this research results more responsive of contemporary changes. As shown in the interview with Professor A who told me that "Parsons' well-known aesthetic theory was responsive to the historical background of that time, although it was long time ago, its implication to the art educational research as a whole is still significant to the field. It will continue to serve as an exemplary work to our field when doing such long-term empirical study. The value of this ten-year research also rested on its ambition to contextualize cognitive development in aesthetic understanding. However, Parsons reflected that one should not focus too much on stage differences, but should focus on presenting "cluster of ideas" in different aesthetic dimensions of understanding" (Respondent A, interview, 2011). Therefore, when applying this cognitive aesthetic framework to teaching and learning art, students' personal and emotional development and socio-cultural background and experience should be taken into account altogether. For that, aesthetic understanding is total and complex reflection of so many dimensions simultaneously.

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Table 3 Five Stage Aesthetic Development by Parsons

Aesthetic Understanding Stage	Characteristic Responses
Stage One: Favoritism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Showed intuitive delight and simplistic response. 2. Have a strong attraction to color. 3. Have a free wheeling associative response to subject matter. <p>I.e.: "It's my favorite color!" "I like it because of the dog." "It looks like a big pickle coming down from the sky..." "I don't believe in bad paintings."</p>
Stage Two: Beauty and Realism	<p>Pay special attention to subject matter and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is able to tell the difference objectively and avoid personal preference. Is able to distinguish between their aesthetic experience from relevant and non-relevant from paintings. 2. Believe in portraying realistic objects in real life. 3. Pay special admiration to detailed rendering paintings and realistic. <p>Parsons described that "beauty, realism, and rendering skills" are the criteria for making aesthetic judgment at this stage.</p> <p>I.e.: "It's gross! It's really ugly! It's really just scribbling. My little brother could do that."</p>
Stage Three: Expressiveness	<p>Is able to understand what artist tried to represent; make judgment based on how effective the artist was in creating the emotions and feelings including intensity and interest. This stage shows the following distinctive responses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Value more on expressiveness than subject matter. 2. Recognize the effect of expression more than realistic rendering skills. 3. Held creativity, originality, and depth of feeling as the criteria for good or bad art. 4. Emphasize on personal subjective response in valuing art instead of being objective. <p>i.e.: "That really grabs me!"</p>
Stage Four: Form and style	<p>Able to see art as the product of cultural expression, not just personal product. Therefore, historical contexts and background are needed for good aesthetic judgment to be concluded and is able to discuss media, forms, and styles as references, and modify for more objective perspectives.</p> <p>This stage shows the following distinctive responses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Less subjective comments, and is able to evaluate the objective relationship between media, forms, colors, textures, and spatial compositions, etc.

	<p>2. Able to understand the cultural and historical contexts of artworks.</p> <p>3. Able to analyze formalistic and compositional features, and explain artist's underlying meanings, and make proper and rational aesthetic judgment.</p>	<p>The Academic Accomplishments and Scholarly Spirits of An Exemplary American Art Educator, Michael J. Parsons</p>
<p>Stage Five: Autonomy</p>	<p>Able to show individual judging priorities and aesthetic preferences and propose meanings and values of artworks. View both individual and societal criteria as equally important, but prefer holding personal opinions as final conclusive standpoints.</p>	
<p>There is no distinctive age difference in different stages. The stages are described based on how individual read artworks and how they discuss their responses.</p>	<p>Stage four and stage five is different in formalist style attributions. People are able to situate artworks formalistically and historically in accordance with artistic traditions, but understand that artistic value can change over time, therefore they are more open-minded to make aesthetic judgment that speaks to historical trends and regional features.</p>	

(*This is summarized from his original book by the researcher for discussion in this paper).

Before 1987 when cognitive psychology began dominating the research field, aesthetic understanding was missing, and it was Parsons whose research offered better insights for the broader community of psychological research. His research also directed people's attention to art education as a growing academic research discipline. Psychological development and influences of one's cognitive learning also got more attention within the field of school art education. Just like well-known people often attract more criticism than others, Parsons' research was not without being challenged from the research point of view. For example, the eight paintings being discussed on the interview were considered by others as too narrow in selection and not representative enough of different artistic cultures other than modernist paintings. The limitation of selected paintings on discussing different aesthetic cultures can be an issue. Other debates centered on the rather small sampling, and demographic limitations (most of the three hundred respondents lived in the salt lake city area who shared similar western cultural background). Many people proposed that this would downplay the applicability of the theoretical framework to other cultural situations. Also, the respondent selection process seemed not based on

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proper sampling procedure, and the interviewing process not well organized enough. In addition, Parsons didn't provide comprehensive review of previous aesthetic theories and to compare it with his own research. One would want to see how he situates his own research in the context of long tradition of human's aesthetic understanding. Neither did he offer comparative perspectives regarding the different characteristics of different stage development. Are they replaceable to one another, or are they independent to one another? After the book was published, no further research followed to answer many key aesthetic developmental questions generated that brought people's attention.

Nevertheless, criticism didn't decrease the book's influence on art educator's thinking, especially to those in Taiwan who were eager to explore theoretical framework for practical curricular application. Kuang-Chou Tsui conducted similar research in light of Parsons' book in 1992. He used ten artworks from both western and eastern cultures with 335 respondents from pre-school ages to adults. Tsui's attempt was to investigate whether cultural difference and factor played important role in such research. His research brought more awareness about cognitive aesthetic development to Taiwan's educational research. His findings indicated that age and artistic proficiency were highly related to one's aesthetic understanding, but it was not apparent with pre-school children. (See Table 4)

Table 4 Five Stage Aesthetic Development proposed by Kuang-Chou Tsui

Aesthetic Understanding Stages		Characteristic Responses
Stage 1	Preference	Aesthetic preference reflects personal likings; subjects are confused their feelings with fear, playfulness, and dislike. They made judgment based on freewill thinking, fragmented ideas, or colors as criteria.
Stage 2	Beauty and Realism	1. Pre-stage preference is based on realistic degree, delicate qualities, compositional factors, and rigid visual principles. 2. Post-stage preference gained more mature insights which indicates better understanding of visual characteristics and affective expression.
Stage 3	Expressiveness	3. Pre-stage preference indicates more inner feelings

		and responses. Aesthetic judgment can surpass realistic form and style; subject is able to describe the expressiveness of artwork and the inner emotional and spiritual implications. Use expressiveness, visual impacts, and effectiveness as judging criteria. Post-stage indicate more mature ability in interpretation.
Stage 4	Form and Style	Aesthetic judgment surpasses personal feelings; subject sees artwork as reflection of broader Socio-cultural tradition, and is able to see from others' perspectives. Use style-in formativeness, form-in formativeness, and visual-effect-in formativeness as judging criteria.
Stage 5	Autonomy	Aesthetic judgment is more open-minded, not limited to personal preference. Subject tries to situate his/her understanding to broader socio-cultural contexts and offer balanced viewpoints. Use autonomy, relativism, and open-mindedness as judging criteria.

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After Tsui's research, Professor Mei-Lan Lo of Taiwan Normal University in 1993 conducted similar research to follow up and continued the investigation on aesthetic development. This empirical study took place in Taipei Art Museum with 1200 museum visitors, and the artworks were selected from the ongoing exhibitions. The results led to a five-stage aesthetic understanding. (Table 5). The findings indicated that children's limited artistic experience prevented them from being able to describe artworks in proficiency. Therefore, they could only focus on the meaning of the subject matter, which made them prefer more on realistic and readable works. The overall conclusion indicated that age, education, profession, artistic proficiency was all related to aesthetic understanding.

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Table 5 Five Stage Aesthetic Development proposed by Mei-Lan Lo

Aesthetic Understanding Stages		Age	Characteristic Responses
Stage 1	Subjective Preference	Age 4-8	Freelance imagination without direct relativeness to artwork's subject matter. Unable to see the relationship between series of artworks. Prefer high contrast colors; dislike artworks, which they couldn't understand. Use intuitive judgment as criteria. Show general likeness to all artworks.
Stage 2	Visual and Realistic Preference	Age 9-15 Teenager-adult	Being attentive to subject matter. Like pretty subject matter. Admire detailed and delicate visual presentation. Favor "realism is best."
Stage 3	Affective and Expressive	Teenager-elderly	Search for inner emotion instead of visual representativeness as the meaning of artwork. Try to capture the essential spirit of artwork and its emotional implication. Base affective transformation on intuitiveness as main judgment response. Able to take artist's role to judge the expressiveness of artwork. Use emotional uniqueness and creativity as judging criteria.
Stage 4	Stylistic Judgment	Artistically-proficient group	Use rationality and objectiveness as judging criteria. Emphasize on visual quality, form, and style. Understand artwork's historical dimensions and cultural implication, and is able to discuss stylistic content. Interpret meaning based on form and style. Able to analyze in comprehensive manner on total representativeness, partial balancing, and overall stableness.
Stage 5	Holistic Judgment	Adult, Artistically-proficient group	Able to describe and judge artwork with open-minded attitude and self-awareness. Able to integrate self-knowledge with broader implications of artwork. Able to offer mature and complicated insights that based on art history and aesthetic values. Able to offer holistic views and judgment that reflects both personal creative ideas and historical understanding.

In conclusion, these three researchers' findings indicated that aesthetic discussion and exploration on artworks was a way to further exemplify artistic implications of both artist and artwork. The artistic richness of artwork could not be appreciated without the viewers' cultural participation. Developing one's ability in making good aesthetic judgments is important both in art-making activities and art appreciation education. This is why aesthetic developmental research is an important domain of research in art education. We need to gain more insights as to how to cultivate one's ability to read artworks in culturally informative process. Therefore, this kind of research will continue to play central role in art educational literature.

Although Parsons' aesthetic framework has evoked more questions than giving answers, as he himself said once, "much remains to be done; more research is anticipated to offer more suggestions, modifications, and reconsiderations" (Respondent B, interview, 2011). Thus, developing a conceptual aesthetic framework should not be seen as providing a definite answer or solution as an universal guide in art education. Rather, it is to be considered as a broader perspective for teacher and research's further reference. More practical curricular application should be seen as more important than strictly following the underlying theoretical framework. Parsons once described why it is important to conduct research on aesthetic development. First of all, when we talk about art, we gain more understanding into each other's personal as well as cultural background. Secondly, it helps us teachers and parents to gain better understanding of children and students' way of articulating themselves and the world around them. It is from such cultural discussion and reflections that more communication among different people will then take place. In all, it is important to emphasize aesthetic education as part of the art education curriculum. Through such aesthetic education, students are not only able to express themselves through artworks, but also to be able to communicate with others through cultural explorations. From this standpoint, learning about Parsons' aesthetic research will make one more aware of different perspectives and how cognitive development in aesthetics determines one's

cultural understanding. From the researcher's point of view, any aesthetic understanding-related research should take into account the cultural difference of the subjects and make conclusion that is responsive to related cultural heritages and characteristics. Professor Jo Chiung-Hua Chen at Taiwan Normal University has conducted many field researches on such topics and has offered many valuable curricular suggestions and applications to improve aesthetic education (Chen, 2000).

2. Passion

One of the most important characteristics of a good docent is his/her ability to evoke and encourage people to think differently. He/she is also one who loves to learn and self-educative.

“Parsons has long academic career and he continued to show great interest and passion for learning, he never stop learning and being curious about new developments both inside and outside educational field. This can be shown in his new inputs on graduate curriculum at OSU. In 2002, he partnered with Professor Arthur Efland to offer a new advanced graduate course on cognition and art education. It was about cognitive development in art and how it affected assessment and curriculum integration. These art educational issues are correlated and responsive to the broader contemporary art educational development. From this we can see how Parsons continued to introduce his new thinking and learning about art education to his graduate students” (Respondent A, interview, 2011).

Parsons has displayed important docent characteristics on both his research contributions and academic teaching. From his research efforts, one can see his long-term devotion on conducting research, which took time-consuming energy and strong beliefs in finding theoretical validity on human behaviours. Even though he finished the aesthetic book long time ago, he expressed open-minded attitude to fellow researchers for offering diverse perspectives. He has always welcomed more challenges from other

researchers to his previous research. Because of his well-known contributions in art education research, he was invited to conduct the well-known large-scale art educational curriculum reform project called *TETAC* (Transforming Education through Art Challenge). This internationally known research project was a part of the bigger educational movement in the United States to promote for revolutionary educational change during the late 90s. During his leadership to guide the project with a team of university professors and k-12 art teachers, Parsons showed his ambition and ability to integrate major curricular issues and topics to be experimented in the project. Topics included art assessment, creativity, globalization, distance online learning, etc. The project later became a standard school reform art project to be referenced frequently. We can see how his professional ability has pioneered and also expanded to different subject matter area every few years, and continued to integrate new learning to enrich his academic career. This has made him a leading academic figure in guiding and shaping the directions of contemporary and future art educational research. His profound impact to the field of art education is without a question. Below are discussions on the major research areas that Parsons has explored and flourished since his previous major research on aesthetic development.

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(1) Promoting the TETAC (Transforming Education Through the Arts Challenge)

In March of 1997, National Art Education Association (NAEA) selected thirty-five schools to participate in a national-wide school reform project, called Transforming Education through Art Challenge (TETAC).

“TETAC was a new idea to all participating member schools... They applied the framework of action research and experimented new teaching philosophy and strategies to classrooms. They recorded the changing process and reflected on issues and problems in groups. Teachers began to see how integration could improve school curriculum. Qualitative assessment of student learning becomes an important topic. As a result, the collective research efforts in teaching discourse were to become important

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guidelines for integrated art curriculum, which called “Art Making Curriculum with Big Ideas.” Parsons was responsible for the final project evaluation and offered his keen observations and suggestions for this art curriculum reform project. His insights later brought more and more art educators to consider the implication and significance of integrated curriculum with other subject areas of learning. It was a way to build dialogues between art and other school disciplines, and promote more conceptual bridges for students. Integrated movement in art education was largely because of the TETAC experiment whose results were often cited in international literature” (Respondent A. interview, 2011).

TETAC project included different levels of participating schools in K-12, and aimed at 1) raising awareness of art education in schools, 2) helping to promote professional development for art teachers and administrators, 3) developing practical theory for art educational application, and 4) designing art curriculum. This project was a response to the diminishing role that art played in school education during industrial and scientific revolution of contemporary society. Art as a school subject was marginalized during the 80s and 90s. This project raised attention of school administrators and parents about the importance of art learning in school. With the well-planned reform guidance and ambitious goals of TETAC, school officials got to see how art can be integrated with other subjects and how it offered unique opportunity for students to learn about cultures and humanities, which other subjects can't do.

TETAC pioneered on exploring how art can be integrated into daily school curriculum, and how art made student better understand humanities and cultural traditions. The essential goals of integrative education were to 1) offer authentic curriculum problems for students to learn from daily life experience and recognize what role art plays in humanities; 2) help students to learn to communicate with others through exploring and interpreting the cultures, histories, media, people that reflected from the meanings of artworks; 3) help to build connection between artwork and one's

social/cultural awareness and understanding, and enrich this kind of understanding through integrating with other subjects of learning. The underlying teaching strategy was to encourage students for problem solving and solution finding, instead of only learning fragmented bits of subject knowledge. Students should learn to develop viewpoints and understand the significance of overarching ideas, not just passive information seekers. Integrated curriculum led students to investigate deeper problems beyond surface or isolated facts of information.

After five year, TETAC had helped participating schools to make art an important subject of learning with encouraging and rewarding educational outcomes. Most schools raised the role of art learning in school curriculum. It also encouraged collaborative teaching, which also improved the conventional isolated school culture among teacher with different subjects. Integrated curriculum successfully placed the students as the key factor to construct what to learn and how to learn. Student took more active roles in learning process. On the teacher's side, more creative teaching approaches were encouraged to compliment curriculum process. Higher student interests were found because students were the main person to determine how to learn. The result was more student creativity and active participation. Art and humanities are important tools, which help people to face the challenges of new centuries. To promote social changes, explore more opportunities, and build hopes for a better world to come, one needs to know human being's purpose and values, which are found in art and cultural heritages. It also helped to enrich children's conceptual development and promote higher learning motives. TETAC was indeed a recall for renaissance of cultural awareness and understanding in conventional school education, which was often dominated by science.

Parsons' frequent visits to Taiwan's universities helped to introduce another art education curriculum theory that was developed by his colleague at OSU, professor Sydney Walker. The theoretical framework was derived from their experience from TETAC and was called *Designing Art Curriculum with Big Ideas*. Walker proposed four key curriculum designing elements

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including big ideas, rationale, key concepts, and essential questions. It was to formulate curriculum problems and learning process during art project. It was able to break different disciplinary boundaries for knowledge building and content-exploration. Walker (2001) emphasized three important curriculum essentials: 1) curriculum topics should focus on important life issues and problems, 2) art making and thinking should play important role in constructing humanities curriculum, 3) offer basic curriculum development guidelines. Unlike conventional product-oriented art learning, Walker rather emphasized more on developing students' cultural understanding and awareness of self-character. Art learning should be a product of students' self-exploration and thoughtful demonstration of how they situate themselves in the contemporary society through creating artworks. Both Parsons and Walker have continued to investigate "what kind of art learning is most valuable to students?" in their curriculum design. Curriculum should be closely related and responsive to students' cognitive, affective, and socio-cultural development. This is what he called "a form of education that echoes social development." Students should learn to observe the social conditions around their daily life and be able to understand broader implications and meanings, which will then enable their community/cultural awareness and identity.

Parsons (2003) confirmed the important role of art in integrated curriculum, for that exploring contemporary life issues is more responsive to our life, which break different disciplinary boundaries. The issues can include such important contemporary development such as gender issues, environmental concerns, war and geopolitical disputes, and community problems, etc. For that art and visual culture are products of close observations on socio-cultural phenomenon. For instance, art can speak to the cultural and ethnic struggles that most people face today. Deeper level of critical understanding becomes possible when students weave together bits of information and experience. Art is a very useful weaving factor to embrace such kind of conceptual adventure.

Parsons' research on curriculum experiment has encouraged many school art teachers to change their conventional teaching approach. For example, Chien-Ling Chen and Cheng-Yue Chung (in 2002 and 2003 respectively) who visited OSU and learned about TETAC project did their own version of integrated art curriculum after they came back from OSU. They both reaffirmed the impact of integrated art curriculum on promoting deeper student thinking and knowledge construction. They also found that art making should play primary role in the curriculum otherwise the purpose to make art will lose. They proposed that students should spend more time to articulate their art making, which is not found in conventional art teaching. Critical thinking and problem finding are both key elements in integrated art curriculum, which solicits more student potentials and active participation.

(2) Assessment and evaluation in art education

For the past ten years, Parsons has begun focusing more on the assessment issues. It was his response to the standardized testing movement in the American public education on accountability issue. He has found that it is difficult for most art teachers to conduct proper assessment on student learning and outcomes. The criteria for art assessment are somewhat a mystery to most art teachers and art students. Most art teachers are reluctant to make clear to others about what rubric they base on when doing art assessment. Parsons tried to solve this problem. Parsons (2004) stated that through good assessment art teachers could enhance student learning by making the criteria clear and obvious. With good assessment content and approach, students are able to see not only the visual representation of art making product, but also the thinking behind the visual forms and compositions. They can learn to assess themselves on their artistic thinking. Using thinking as a criterion to assessment, art teachers can convey to students that a good artwork should be good in its meaning making and standpoint taking. Parsons emphasized that assessment is itself an educative process and that teachers must teach students how to conduct good self-assessment as well. For this reason, he has often stressed to

establish well-thought plan of assessment in both his research process and curriculum design. This is obvious from the following interview script:

“Through advising my thesis on school reform and art assessment, Parsons and I often sat together to discuss and reflect how us art educators can learn from the broader accountability movement in the US. How art assessment should modify itself to raise the quality of art education? In 2001, Parsons spent a lot of time to establish relevant literature to offer a new course in art assessment for a group of distance learning practicing art teachers. His course made art teachers think some essential issues regarding art assessment that they rarely thought of before. Assessment should be used to monitor and reflect both student learning and teacher effort. Assessment should also genuinely improve, modify, and validate the process and validity of art education. It is not just giving final grade on student works. The act to define student outcomes is of central value to continue to construct and improve quality and strength of art education” (Respondent C, interview script, 2011).

As a great educational philosopher, Parsons made more teachers to reflect art assessment's philosophical questions, which caused them to seek deeper meaning and the role that assessment should really play in art classroom. He proposed that good assessment can guide student learning and should reflect the art learning and making process which makes it multi-dimensional in perspectives and considerations. In addition, good assessment plan and content will help school administrators and parents to better understand student outcomes (Parsons, 2004).

(3) Globalization and art education

In the eyes of his students, Parsons has in-depth visions on various subjects as an academia that always keeps him informed on important social issues and developments. Respondent B mentioned that “Parsons' concerns are not limited to art education only, he studied and observed broader

national phenomenon and developments as the background sources for improving future art education, such as cultural developments, educational reform, political reforms, international trends, economic developments, etc. Although art education is his way of making educational difference, his ultimate goal is to seek for better social conditions and progress.” (Respondent B, interview script, 2011)

In November of 2009, I attended Parsons' lecture at Department of Art Education, Chang-Hua University of Education. He talked about broader topics on socio-cultural trends, including world trades, cross-border communications and conflicts. For example, he raised the questions of solving some social problems for students to contemplate about: take small town's population outward moves in Brazil for an example, how far preserving art traditions can go to save losing population and diminishing township identity? Should art traditions transform in response to contemporary social changes? What should be preserved and what should be abandoned? What is being reflected when tourists buy art and crafts in relation to their idea about the local culture? In addition, Parsons showed many artworks from different cultural roots, including the design works on colorful David statue by students at art department of Hong Kong Institute of Education, and traditional textile works from Ghana, the indigenous dance performance by Taiwan's primitive tribes, and a David statue that stands in front of a modern building in Chang-Hua city. During discussion, he didn't offer any straightforward answer to us, but raised series of questions regarding the socio-cultural changes brought by globalization. What is lost and what is preserved under the globalization trend? Is homogenization unavoidable by globalization? What does it mean when multiplicity in cultural diversity was replaced by economic concerns and priorities? He then brought us to consider cross-cultural implications of defining and building one's ethnic and cultural identities. The ultimate question for us art educators is how we react and relate our teaching to the trend and impact of globalization. What can teachers do to make students better informed and make good judgment on cultural phenomenon. From reading artworks of

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diverse cultures, one can see how original meanings have transformed through different socio-cultural contexts, and viewer's perspective changes accordingly. This is an important practice of thinking in art curriculum, which evokes students to become a better cultural reader. In all, Parsons' rich and wide perspectives shown from his lecture indicated that one should open up art curriculum for deeper socio-cultural examination of students' life experience and larger global trends. The wave of globalization has broken national and cultural boundaries and diverse ideas are mixed together. Such rich contexts should be included in art teaching and learning. Thus, we should learn from Parsons on integrating socio-cultural developments in art education if we are to educate culturally sensitive students under the overwhelming globalization transformation.

(4) Creativity and art education

Creativity is among the popular topics in educational world today, because it is seen as the deciding factor for better problem-solving ability and improved educational outcome. Parsons (2010) used “boxes and corrals” as analogy to explain a new way to understand what creativity is and how it can be applied to education. Think outside of boxes referred to thinking freely without boundaries, however, the concept of “boxes” implies that there are certain rules and criteria which can serve to guide one's thinking activity. The rules and criteria can be flexible and adjustable for better results. Creativity is such an activity that can both respond to rules and criteria but also can redefine and break them anytime when necessary.

Although creativity is highly valued across all disciplines of learning in school education, Parsons (2010) thought that it should be defined differently and embrace different dimensions than in other disciplines such as mathematics or science. The way art cultivates creativity is different than what is done in other subject areas. He proposed two standpoints to support art education's special role in fostering creativity. First, most artistic formalism is derived from media but not abstract symbolic representation, which can be manipulated to explore and experiment with abstract notions

and content. Art media and forms are flexible and elastic in nature to represent thoughts. Students can develop their creative thinking in such process. Secondly, of all disciplines, only art exists in creative nature, and art is both a process and product of creative endeavor. This is distinctively different from other disciplines of knowledge where there is a right-or-wrong answer. To most other subjects of learning in school, the one-and-only good answer or the final product is the ultimate goal. What is most valuable of fostering creativity in education is to help students obtain better problem-finding and solving abilities, but certainly not the raising high creativity index itself. Artists are often interested in both process and product of creativity, if not value the former more than the later. Parsons advocated art's phenomenal potentials in fostering creativity and offered how art educators should do to achieve this goal. His teaching strategies are described in the following:

Step1: Guide students to make art that directly speaks and responds to their real life experience. For example, when exploring about environmental issues, students can make art that speaks to ecological topics. Before adopting proper artistic media to create, students should make proposal, which is a blueprint of what problems they will investigate, and how they will present their conclusion in artistic approach. Students should apply different art media and consider the effect and results which different media bring; like the contemporary artists today who always manipulate different media at the same time to present different perspectives, such as installations, video and photography, digital art, etc. Students can also adopt such wide diversity of art media in classroom to enrich the whole creative process.

Step2: Offer students more collaborative learn opportunities where they can share their ideas, drafts, insights with others during art-making process. They will be able to learn and reflect different perspectives and become more thoughtful and creative in making wise assumptions and interpreting artworks with critical minds.

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Step3: When students' art-making skills are more mature, teachers can ask them to create series of artworks to play with different possibilities under same topics and do more experiments with multiple angles of thinking.

Parsons' proposal of fostering creativity in art education, which discussed above are very practical in classroom and curriculum application. The primary goal is to provide better learning platform to educate students' problem-finding and solving abilities. Collaborative learning, continuous dialogues, and communications between one another is important during this educational situation.

(5) Profession development in art education

Museum educators are often keen lifelong learners themselves, and they always continue to attend different professional developments and trainings. The museum exhibitions can involve wide ranges of topics, which make museum educators and docents more opportunities to learn new ideas. Self-initiated learning is a common phenomenon in such profession. Parsons has displayed same characteristic in his academic career. Consequently, this characteristic makes him very interested in teacher's professional development as well. During interview, respondent C talked about this: "Parsons' special interest and passion for improving teacher's professional development opportunities made him took a revolutionary lead to facilitate an online master's degree program in 2001 which was not found elsewhere in US. He spent a lot of time trying to convert traditional graduate seminar course to online version to reach practicing art teachers who eager to learn but unable to come to university campus in person. This was also his response to utilize the broader rapid development on online learning technology during the 2000s. (Respondent C, interview script, 2011)

Helping art teachers to continue to learn as they teach at schools was always in Parsons' mind. Through the convenience of online distance learning platform, he can reach the art teacher practitioners in real-time and help art teachers to contemplate what art educational problems they face in

daily teaching. In online learning classroom, he played the role of a mentor who listened well to art teachers' professional struggles and accomplishments. He fostered deeper thinking for art teachers to re-consider art educational issues and student learning. He had successfully built a productive online learning community for the participating teachers. Thanks to online program, he was able to encourage two-way dialogues and communications between theory and practice. This was one of his major academic accomplishments in recent decade for art education. "Parsons loved the online classroom where true and real-time dialogues are made possible among art teachers who come from different cultural backgrounds and communities of schools. This kind of online learning process really demonstrated the real issues and problems that art education faces today. It was a very educative experience for all of us to be able to exchange professional ideas about curriculum, assessment, and learning with such diversity of teacher voices. He also valued the collaborative problem solving and brainstorming process of the art teachers in the online community. The online classrooms helped to break the boundaries of space and time, and helped to foster globalization exchanges among art teachers" (Respondent C, interview script, 2011).

Parsons has been devoting himself to lifelong learning and education, and continues to be a leading mind in the art education academia. He is a good role model for art educators and researchers in his passion for research on learning and teaching. He has also developed passion to learn about Chinese language and culture, and always kept a creative and curious mind to discover new ideas about art education. "Parsons has never been overwhelmed by his academic fame, but always very modest about his personal accomplishments and also is ready to overrule his own past assumptions and ideas to reflect his new understandings. He has been critical even to his own contributions which is why people don't see any sign of arrogance in his personality" (Respondent C, interview script, 2011). This is reaffirmed in Respondent B's interview: "Parsons thinks that researcher should be ready to overrule his own assumption if he finds things in different

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perspectives, but the overrule should be based on careful examination with sound evidence. About the stages of aesthetic development, he has always hoped to see other challenges to modify or compliment his previous research and welcomed different opinions” (Respondent B, interview script, 2011).

3. Affinity

McCoy referred docent as the host of museum, and good host will play proper role with friendly and sensitive manner in hosting the visitors to make them feel welcomed during the whole visiting process. Good museum visiting experience will promote future museum trips. Therefore, docent is a job with high professional skills and it is full of challenges and thought-provoking activities. It requires docent's multiple social abilities to fulfill diverse roles and respond to diverse visitors' needs. If the great tradition and abundant literature of art education was the museum collections, and Parsons was to play the model docent to guide visitors to learn about the treasures, we would see the visitors learn a lot to cultivate their critical and creative thinking. He is good at promoting meaningful dialogues between artworks and visitors, and build valuable learning experience for them. According to Hans-Georg Gadamer's aesthetic dialogue theory, docent (Parsons) and the visitors (students) participate in exchange dialogues to build communication. Visitors are not isolated social bodies but are active in creating meanings for artworks, and docent's social response is a key to foster the visitors' active participation. The following section will discuss Parsons' personal characteristic that has resonated with the good docent qualities described above. These are extracts from interviews with three of his doctorate disciples as demonstration.

(1) Direct language with deep implications and brief-yet-clear conversational style

Parsons' affinity also shows from his language style. Respondent A reflected about her experience: “Parsons can make complicated terms readable to students and use simple words to convey complex meanings. The clarity of his thinking maybe related to his educational training which

made him especially aware of the proper use of words to make precise communication.”

“Both in public speeches and in-class lectures, he always uses daily language vocabularies to convey philosophical and complicated theories. He often used questions and analogies to explain complex situations. Fostering students to think through questions was his main seminar-leading style.... his words are precise and right to the point which may partly due to his educational backgrounds in literature and philosophy” (Respondent A, interview script, 2011).

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(2) Philosophical dialogues in daily conversations

As Gadamer stressed the importance of dialectic aesthetic discourse in building understanding, Parsons too has adopted dialectic conversational style to facilitate quality thinking during interaction with students. The main subject of aesthetic value emerges from artworks and artistic contexts through language communication. Art is closely related to time in essence, and displays its flexibility in creating meanings to justify human existence and self-definition. Art exists only to serve human purpose and life journey.

“Because of his educational background in English literature and philosophical training, he often used dialectic method in class. There was no absolute way of perceiving ideas, often time more questions were generated in class than offering answers. Every time he came to Taiwan for short-term visits and teaching, he always prepared new materials in the basis of previous topics, which demonstrated his continual quest for new meanings. He was not satisfied with theories only, but tried to examine real-life problems with different theoretical perspectives” (Respondent A, interview script, 2011).

“Because of his open-mindedness in learning and life in general, he has kept his focus on what he thinks are important, and remained as a critical

thinker for educational and socio-cultural observations. He especially told students not to follow fancy research trends without examination but to keep focus on those research topics that really speak to their minds and values” (Respondent B, interview script, 2011).

(3) His hard-on-self-and-easy-on-others personality

Parsons has high self-expectation on doing quality research. However, his way of dealing with people is always with nice gesture and thoughtful consideration for others' benefits. This is an important role model behavior for young art educators to follow:

“Parsons' personal style has made me realized that doing academic research and getting along with people are both important. Unlike other well-known international scholars who may have certain sense of feeling their own importance in mind, Parsons does not act like that at all. He is really nice as a person to everyone. He doesn't take his own career fame and accomplishment as personal bets to seek higher returns or paybacks. No any bit of arrogance is found in his way of dealing with people from all backgrounds. His great personality and sensitivity is the reason why he is often the leader in managing large-scale projects. People admire and welcome his leadership and he is always a good listener to all people” (Respondent C, interview script, 2011).

(4) Promoting young scholars without profits in consideration

Respondent A was Parsons' advisee, and she mentioned that Parsons helped students whenever they needed him with great sensitivity and caring. “He wrote recommendation letters very often for students and fellow young scholars to help people move forward in career. He cared about students and young scholars in ways that make people appreciative of his warm heart and friendship” (Respondent A, interview script, 2011).

Respondent C mentioned that she advised her graduate students the same way that Parsons advised her. She said:

“Parsons was strict in examining students' research. He would carefully check every sentence and paragraph in a research paper or thesis/dissertation. He taught students to be highly critical and reflective of their own research and writing. He hoped for students to really learn some important lessons from doing research, not just carelessly submitting papers for grades or thesis for graduation. When he saw students' hard work and improvements, he would not hesitate to give oral praise and encouragement. He spent a lot of time to discuss with students on their personal strengths, abilities, and potentials; and he was very happy and feel proud whenever he sees students' high performance and academic accomplishment” (Respondent C, interview script, 2011).

(5) Always learning to improve himself and loves to sharing

When Parsons turned to his seventy, he said that he felt his life has just begun, and he was ready to move forward with more interesting life learning to come. This is why he can keep offering us renewing ideas and up-to-date perspectives.

“Parsons said that after becoming seventy-years-old, he felt his decade-long research experience has prepared him for a real good start for his next level of learning and teaching. Before seventy, everything was a preparation for this new era. He has also continued to involve in cross-cultural exchanges with international scholars. He was a great host or many international art educators to promote academic exchange and resources-sharing” (Respondent C, interview script, 2011).

As a great docent, Parsons is not only very knowledgeable to museum treasuries and collections, he also understands student needs well and is

sensitive to guide them in creating meaningful and valuable learning process. He has demonstrated what Edwards has prescribed about quality docent's characteristics: providing information, guiding learning, offering educative learning, and promoting thinking. He has enabled student learning with new insights and passed on his passion for learning to students. His is a great role model, or a great academic leader, in defining what one can be done enormously to change people's lives in art education.

III. Conclusion

This discussion is to apply docent-visitor relationship to explain Parsons' academic contribution to the field of art education. Examining from McCoy's (1989) descriptions about quality docent characteristics in *Docents in art museum education*, a lot of dimensions echoes Parsons' academic contributions and personalities. For example, 1) must has passion for promoting art, 2) promote and utilize museum collection as resources for learning, 3) able to listen to and respond well to visitors and audience, 4) is able to understand visitors' needs and background, 5) actively respond to promote visitor's understanding, 6) is able to provide learning opportunities for everyone, 7) is able to offer relevant information for further understanding, 8) is able to advocate museum experience among visitors, 9) is able to take visitors' standpoints for collaborative learning, 10) is able to encourage visitors to define new meaning or alternative perspectives for themselves. What we have learned from Parsons can be applied in our research work as well as art teaching. He has shown us how to be good docent and his performance is resulted from hard work for decades. As the old saying, "ten minutes of brilliant performance on-stage, ten years of hard work off-stage," his attitude about learning and art education can be a standard example for us to follow.

The famous French writer François Rabelais (1494-1553) once said, "A child is not a vase to be filled, but a fire to be lit." Parsons has been serving as the matches to lighten up students and people's learning quest. He has been playing magic flute to enrich people's lives, and fire up their passion for

learning and improving. Whether it is about passing on theories and knowledge of art education to students, or modeling good research attitudes, he has provided clear vision and insightful perspectives for us to follow. His passionate self-learning and improving has continued to enrich his contributions to the field. His vision also embraces greater societal issue such as online learning technology, globalization, and multiculturalism. He has been invited to international universities for exchange visiting and teach a rather global audience of art educators. His great personality has made him a popular and well-respected international scholar. Moreover, his passion for teaching and inspiring students is admirable. Teaching people how to think can really make people's life different; after all, we are what and whom we think. Parsons has also passed on his good academic advising style to his advisees of many countries and has passed on good traditions on conducting good research. It is so-called one exemplary paradigm generates another, and one life inspires another.

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Appendix 1

List of master's thesis's and doctorate dissertations under Michael J. Parsons' advising during 1995-2006 at Ohio State University

Author	Title of Thesis/dissertation	Degree	Year
Hill, Phyllis Thelma P.	A case study exploring the development of The Jamaica Masters Online Project.	Ph.D.	2006
Kuo, Chien-Hua	A post-colonial critique of the representation of Taiwanese culture in children's picturebooks.	Ph.D.	2005
Chan, Wen-Chi	A case study of Grace Lin's picturebooks on Chinese themes : "Why couldn't Snow White be Chinese?"	Master	2005
Menke, Katherine Ann	One teacher's search for meaning in the classroom.	Master	2005
Buffington, Melanie L.	Using the Internet to develop students' critical thinking skills and build online communities of teachers: A review of research with implications for museum education.	Ph.D.	2004
Hsu, Karen Ching-Yi	Teaching and learning on-line in in-service art teacher education: The Ohio State University experience.	Ph.D.	2004

Cheng, Ming-Hsien	Culture and interpretation : A study of Taiwanese children's responses to visual images.	Ph.D.	2002
Cohen-Evron, Nurit	Beginning art teachers' negotiation of their beliefs and identity within the reality of the public schools.	Ph.D.	2001
Parrish, Mila	Discover dance CD-ROM for dance education : Digital improvisation and interactive multimedia.	Ph.D.	2000
Wang, Li-Yan	Teaching art in an age of technological change.	Ph.D.	2000
Hsu, Karen Ching-Yi	A study of Grant Wiggins' development in philosophy of educational assessment.	Master	1999
Cohen-Evron, Nurit	Examination of the changes in beginning art teachers' beliefs during a process of curriculum development based on dialogue and reflection.	Master	1999
Gooding Brown, Jane S.	Text, discourse, deconstruction and an exploration of self : A disruptive for postmodern art education.	Ph.D.	1997
Shumard, Sally L.	A Collaborative PDS Project About Computer Networking in Art Education.	Ph.D.	1995

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