

THE COLORING BOOK DIALECTIC:

An Interdisciplinary View of Art Criticism

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ABSTRACT

We each see the world through a different colored lens. There is no one single moment to portray, there is no one single perspective, and there is no one methodology of criticism. The thesis of the Modern paradigm is hierarchical, Euro-centric and restrictive, forcing art historians and critics to work as if within the lines of a coloring book. The anti-thesis of the Postmodern construct promotes diversity and a sociological perspective. A synthesis or inter-disciplinary approach can allow the totality of the art to inform the criticism and influence the institutions that continue to preach the Modernist approach.

Art today is still not viewed as an integral part of the education system in the United States, nor do journals or books publish art essays in non-art forums. Museums clearly define their mission in terms of a single discipline. There is little room in education, scholarship, or criticism for an interdisciplinary approach; cross-fertilization is discouraged in the institution.

In spite of it and because of it, we need to be inclusive, and to create a synthesis and harmony through a dialectic discussion.

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and like an organism; it cannot live separate from its intolerance in today's world, yet raise the individual spirit to take action. Plato noted that "...an aesthetic education is the only one that brings grace to the body and nobility to the mind because art can penetrate into the recesses of the soul". Art can evoke sympathy and dismay, outrage and sorrow, or in the midst of the insanity of the world, lead us to quiet contemplation. As critics we need to re-orient our society, to embrace the diversity, and to explicate that art can bring intuition and creativity to all aspects of life.

Keywords: Gelburd; Interdisciplinary, Criticism, Modern, Postmodern, Dialectic

