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Nurturing The Aesthetic: Learning to Care for the Environment in a Waldorf School

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*Nurturing The Aesthetic:
Learning to Care for the Environment in a Waldorf School*

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NURTURING THE AESTHETIC:
LEARNING TO CARE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT IN A WALDORF SCHOOL

By

Melissa A. Grella

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements of

Doctor of Philosophy

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at

Antioch University New England

(2015)

For my beloved Kyle,

our fluffy, black cat, Haiku, and our silver friend, Grigio.

I couldn't have done this without your love and support. I love you all eternally.



"Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all" -Aristotle

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to explore the aesthetic foundation of the Waldorf pedagogy in order to understand how art and aesthetic experiences may develop care toward the environment. A form of humanistic education developed by Rudolf Steiner in the early twentieth century, Waldorf education is a learning model envisioned as a framework for moral education. Waldorf education is known for its intentional use of art and aesthetic experience as well as its focus on developmentally appropriate curriculum and teaching methods.

As in other forms of holistic education, Waldorf educators focus on the head, heart and hand of every child, which they call the thinking, feeling and willing realms. However, it is the feeling realm which makes Waldorf unique. In Waldorf, the feeling life of the child – the affective domain – is included in all aspects of the educational process. Waldorf educators believe that it is the feeling realm where care is nurtured, and that for a child to fully learn – to move over the threshold from knowledge into action – a child needs to care about what is being learned. With this in mind, it is through art and aesthetic experience where Waldorf teachers touch the affective realm of their students – infusing feeling in order to connect them emotionally, experientially, and imaginatively to the content being presented.

Through art and aesthetic experiences in Waldorf classes, are students indeed developing care and does that care extend to the environment? How are the students affected by the teacher's methods? What is the students' concept of care? Is there a connection between the students' concept of care and how they learn?

In order to explore these questions in depth, I conducted a qualitative case study with an Early Childhood Center (ECC)-12th grade Waldorf School. Throughout the study, I conducted classroom observations and interviews with teachers and students collecting data that helped

depict students' concept of care, as well as explored possible linkages to students' learning of care through the teacher's use of art and aesthetics. When analyzing this data, I found that Waldorf Education has the capacity to promote care for the environment through morality, empathy, and appreciation. These three related and overlapping categories work together through aesthetic experience to form the foundation of such care.

My specific interest in conducting this study was how it may relate both theoretically and practically to the field of environmental education (EE). The intersection of John Dewey's aesthetic experience and Nel Noddings' ethic of care formed the basis for the study's theoretical framework. Theoretical contributions include further understanding the development of care in educational settings, and specifically how art and aesthetic experiences may be included in the field of EE. Practical contributions include new ways to present and integrate EE in both formal and non-formal settings to the child participant, as well as considering the importance of developmentally appropriate curriculum. In addition, the study may help develop the environmental educator's role in nurturing care toward the environment. Furthermore, I hope that this research will act as a bridge of communication between the cultures of Waldorf education and EE, and possibly with other educational settings.

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PROLOGUE

I first met James Tweedie and Judy Huntley in the fall of 1999 during my first semester as a graduate student with the Audubon Expedition Institute (AEI). My learning community stayed with the couple for four days at their home in Pincher Creek, a small community in southwestern Alberta, Canada. During that time, we learned about the region known as the Whaleback and their years of work saving it from oil and gas developers. Over the course of our stay, James and Judy shared how their lives turned upside down when they founded the non-profit organization whose mission was to restore and protect the region, launching their new careers as environmental activists. They found themselves embroiled in an uphill battle, pitting them and their small non-profit against pro oil and gas figures. They waged letter-writing campaigns to politicians and newspapers, attended hearings, spoke at public meetings, and walked door to door asking their neighbors to sign petitions. During this process, they nearly lost their home to financial hardship, were harassed by pro oil and gas lobbyists and had friendships end due to opposing views. However, because they loved their home and felt they needed to protect it, they persisted and eventually won. In 1994, Amoco Canada was refused a permit that would allow sour gas drilling in the Whaleback Region. And today, the Whaleback region is comprised of two Provincial Parks – Bob Creek Wildland and Black Creek Heritage, protecting the last remaining montane wilderness in Alberta.

During our visit, James took us on a hike through the Whaleback, pointing out all sorts of wonders along the way – the sandhill cranes heading south, elk scat, Douglas firs, a Chinook cloud. I remember how the grass reached as tall as my knees, how the larch trees stood out with a vibrant burst of yellow against the deep green of the Douglas fir. I remember the warm autumn wind sending waves through the dry grass of different golden hues.

What I remember most about the hike was the transformation of James. When he had spoken about his advocacy work, he was quiet, almost exhausted, worn out by his long fight with industry. However, during the hike he became animated, talkative, alive, excited to share the breathtaking beauty of the Whaleback – the endless rolling hills rising to the higher peaks. His enthusiasm spilled over to me and my classmates, and I was filled with a love of the land that had nothing to do with wildlife tracking, tree identification or compiling statistics from vegetation transects.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Over the four days that my community spent with James and Judy at their home in Pincher Creek, I was awed by their ethic of care toward the land and organisms who could not speak on their own behalf. James once said, “I don’t care about the science; this is my home.” His words stayed with me upon entering the field of environmental education (EE). I knew that I wanted to teach others to love the Earth and learn about their environment¹, but more specifically I was interested in how one is deeply moved to care². What I encountered as a practitioner in the EE field, however, was a dichotomy between methods and content and desired outcomes – I wanted my students to feel with their hearts, yet in the end what I was doing felt less about care and more about knowledge and fear. How does a person learn to care for the environment? What does it mean to care? And as an educator, how can I help nurture a caring relationship between my students and their environment?

Roots of Care in Affective Learning

The noted educational psychologist Benjamin Bloom classified learning objectives into three domains – cognitive (intellectual knowledge), affective (feelings, values, emotions, and attitudes), and psychomotor (physical skills) (Bloom, 1956; Krathwohl, 1964). The three domains work in congruence with one another to guide the learning experience by informing different ways of knowing (Bloom, 1956). However, although the learning process involves all three domains, educators usually give the cognitive domain preference, and environmental education is no exception.

¹ *Environment* is used in the same context as Environmental Psychology in that the term includes both the natural and human built surroundings (Clayton and Myers, 2009) rather than using the term *nature*, which in my mind actually creates a dichotomy that negates the interrelatedness that I seek to nurture as an environmental educator.

² *Care* throughout this dissertation refers to caring as feeling rather than an act of caring.

Correlating with the field's established goals and objectives outlined in the Belgrade Charter (1975) and the Tbilisi Declaration (1977), the ultimate goal of EE is to develop an ecoliterate citizenry who are "aware of and concerned about the total environment and its associated problems, and has the attitudes, motivations, knowledge, commitment, and skills to work...towards solutions of current problems and the prevention of new ones." From this we can surmise then that the goal of EE for k-12 education is to develop an ecoliterate citizenry whose amended attitudes lead to proenvironmental behavior in adults.

The EE literature has reflected this, with studies that focus on the role cognition plays as an informant toward attitudes, behavior, knowledge, action/participation, or a combination of the four in k-12 formal and non-formal education programming. Studies tend to focus more on attitudes, behavior, and action/participation (all characteristics) and little on how affective, emotional experiences may lead to care.

For this study, the affective domain is of particular interest to me. In addition to being characterized as feelings, values, emotions, and attitudes, the affective domain is also comprised of our "dispositions, preferences and orientations" (Milne, 2010, p. 105). It is in the affective domain where our feelings reside; where our relations develop through emotional experiences, and essentially where care is rooted: "In other words, affective education seeks to tap into the ways that we come to 'know' our environment through our emotional responses to it, rather than our scientific understanding of how processes and systems in our environment work" (Gurevitz, 2008).

The literature portrays the role of affect in the context of EE by looking at outcomes such as attitudes and behaviors (e.g. Armstrong & Impara, 1991; Farmer et al, 2007). However, these studies tend to be examples of a troubling dichotomy between methods and content and

outcomes in EE. For example, the desired outcomes measure affect while the teaching methods involved in the study were cognitive-based, aimed purely at providing knowledge. In other words, evaluation is based on the understanding that more knowledge will lead to a change in attitudes and behavior (Ernst & Theimer, 2011; Gurevitz, 2000; Kollmus & Agyeman, 2002; Stern, et al. 2008; Zimmerman, 1996). Practitioners and researchers traditionally rely on such a positivist model of learning, based on cognitive learning theory that emphasizes “teaching facts, concepts and generalizations about environmental patterns, processes and problems” (Fien, 1993) – a linear model that flows in one direction where the practitioner gives and the student receives information. However, the framework has been refuted by many researchers and deemed antiquated by social scientists and psychologists who found that what actually impacts behavior change is much more complicated (Gurevitz, 2000; Kollmus & Agyeman, 2002).

Affect has been shown to enhance students’ engagement with the environment. Iozzi (1989) reports on a study that found “mere participation in a cognitively based environmental education program does not have a significant impact on the attitudes of children. To change attitudes, specific activities designed to do just that must be included in the program. Increasing knowledge alone will not significantly change attitudes and values” (p. 5). Other researchers echo this statement (Fien & Slater, 1981; Gigliotti, 1990; Eagly & Kulesa, 1997), which highlights the importance of affect in experience (Goralnik, et al., 2012; Goralnik, et al., 2014; Pooley & O’Conner, 2000; Millar & Millar, 1996; Hinds & Sparks, 2007), and suggests that the synergy between affect and knowledge can help change attitude and behavior (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Goralnik, et al., 2012; Goralnik, et al., 2014; Weiss, 2000).

Kollmus & Agyeman (2002) argue that EE ought to nurture the emotional realm through affective methods, noting that *how* we teach is just as important as *what* we teach. They “do not

attribute a direct relationship to environmental knowledge and pro-environmental behavior” (p. 256). They offer, instead, that what leads one to change her or his behavior is actually a complex interplay of knowledge, values, attitudes and emotional involvement, an alternative they term *pro-environmental consciousness* (Kollmus & Agelyman, 2002). Could it be possible that *emotional involvement*, or affect, is not merely one of the variables in this complex but instead acts as the *thread* that *binds* all of the other variables together? And taking this one step further, might teaching through more affective means, using methods that address feelings and emotion, have a greater impact on our students’ learning to *care* for the environment?

Care in Environmental Education

Care as described in the EE literature falls into two camps: active caring and caring as feeling. The literature described in the former category focuses on environmental concern, stewardship or conservation efforts and, while important to environmental protection, is not the focus to this study. Instead, the present study resides within the latter category of caring as feeling, which I posit as a fundamental prerequisite for active caring. Caring as feeling is spliced even further within the EE literature into three categories that fall within relatedness: deep ecology versus ecofeminism, relationships, and experiential education/emotion.

The literature in the first category addresses the debate between deep ecologists and eco-feminists, which goes beyond the scope of this study. However, in simplistic terms the argument centers on how each view the self. The deep ecologists contend that we are not separate from nature; rather, we are nature, a part of the whole. The eco-feminists, on the other hand, find this view counterproductive and instead emphasize interconnectedness through relationships with other species. Eco-feminists argue that in order to understand and ultimately care about nature, a

relationship must be developed between the self and a separate other (Fox, 1989; Kheel, 1993; King, 1991; Sessions, 1991).

While the literature in the first category falls exclusively within the dichotomy between deep ecology and ecofeminism, the remaining two categories of relationships and experiential education/emotion are less distinct. In the relationships category, the development of care for the environment in young children is considered through the lens of object relations and attachment theory, which are rooted in developmental psychology (Chawla, 2007). These theories are concerned with the development of relationships between child and mother or caregiver. Most notable is attachment theory, which is based on security. If a child develops a healthy attachment, this allows the child to go off to explore her environment, confident her mother or caregiver will be there when she returns. Without this secure base, the child fears exploration, and, thus, the environment. Chawla (2007) explains that as we build relationships with our parents or caregivers, these relations are filled with emotional identity and strong instinctual feelings. The child turns to these relationships and learns what feels good and what does not by being in tune with the adult. If the child is in a natural environment with an adult who is exuding pleasure, this will resonate within the child's memory, and vice versa for feelings of fear or dislike. Thus, it is important to offer children positive experiences within the environment from a young age in order for them to relate to and ultimately care for it as adults.

Moving away from developmental psychology, but staying with the idea of relationships, both Littledyke (2008) and Martin (2007) also find that relating is the underlying root for developing care for nature. However, they focus on creating experiential education programs and infusing emotion into learning experiences. First, Martin (2007) argues that "better knowledge of environmental issues [that occurs with successive years of schooling] has no

correlation (perhaps even a negative correlation) with the development of a relational concept of the environment” (Loughland, et. al., 2003 in Martin, 2007). Martin (2007) finds instead that by creating experiential educational opportunities, students develop relationships with their learning environment. He asserts that by physically interacting with the subject at hand rather than just being provided knowledge, students develop care for the environment.

Littledyke (2008) expands upon this idea by adding that emotion is also an important contributor for the development of care. He explains that it is ineffective to only focus on the cognitive realm. He suggests that by integrating the cognitive and affective domains in learning experiences, students are able to build relationships through the infusion of emotion.

Finally, Goralnik et al. (2012, 2014) advocate for an ideal pedagogy they call “field philosophy”, which incorporates values of experiential education and emotional pedagogy that may be used as a way of connecting students to the environment without being in the field. With emotion at its core, and by including a place-based education methodology, field philosophy combines emotional, cognitive and physical learning domains in order to develop personal relationships with the environment. By incorporating emotional engagement, students are able to then develop capacities to care. This dissertation focuses on another pedagogical approach with the potential to develop learner’s care for the environment: arts and aesthetic experience.

Toward An Arts-Based Pedagogy

In education, the affective domain that encompasses emotional engagement is often realized through the arts. A learning model well known for its arts-based pedagogy and used specifically for touching the feeling life of the child is Waldorf education, a form of humanistic education developed by Rudolf Steiner in the early twentieth century. Waldorf education does not shy away from bringing feelings and emotion into the curriculum. Through its holistic pedagogy,

Waldorf embraces the child's whole being, not only her or his intellect. It treats our different ways of knowing equally, and includes a systematic infusion of affect into the curriculum.

Teaching and learning are done through imagination and feeling by using an artistic medium that highlights the children's aesthetic senses. Waldorf pedagogy is infused throughout with art: "the child learns through story and drama, through color and rhythms, through movement and interplay" (Richards, 1980, p.26). Waldorf educators do not do this to engage the students for the sake of developing artists, nor to create an end product, but rather to support the internal process of learning. Instead of the teacher handing over a body of knowledge to students to regurgitate, the arts provide a context for individualized learning and expression. In other words, learning becomes internalized by touching the student's feeling realm. Waldorf philosophy emphasizes that our emotional life – the affective realm – ties our thinking and doing together.

The aim of this study is to investigate how the use of art and aesthetic experiences in a Waldorf school may nurture students to care for the environment. I undertook this research using case study methodology, including conducting classroom observations and interviews with both students and teachers over the course of an entire academic year at a pre-school through Grade 12 Waldorf school. Through this case study, I sought to understand how teaching and learning through art and aesthetic experiences in a Waldorf school lead to care for the environment. Three related questions also guided my study:

1. How does the teacher describe the meaning and intent of her/his methods with relation to connecting students to the environment? And how does the teacher enact this intent?
2. How do the students respond to the teachers' methods with relation to care toward the environment?

3. What relationship exists, if any, between the student's concept of care for the environment and how they learned?

In the next chapter I present the theoretical framework of the study, which lies at the intersection of John Dewey's aesthetic experiences and Nel Nodding's ethic of care. Chapter 3 introduces Waldorf education, detailing its historical roots and focusing on its child-centered and arts-based pedagogy. In Chapter 4, I describe the study's methodology, the research site and participants, and data collection and analysis techniques. In Chapter 5, I present my findings followed by a discussion in Chapter 6. I conclude the dissertation by presenting implications and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this study is to explore how art and aesthetic experiences might nurture a student's development of care for the environment through the aesthetic foundation of the Waldorf pedagogy. In this chapter, I present the theoretical framework for this study, which lies at the intersection of John Dewey's philosophy of aesthetic experience and Nel Noddings' ethic of care. Dewey's philosophy is grounded in humanistic education that embraces our different ways of knowing – thinking, doing, and feeling – and informs how we create meaning and cultivate morality from our lived experiences. By infusing affective attributes into the learning process, Dewey's aesthetics has the potential to create experiences that are emotionally engaging and, therefore, empathetic. Noddings' ethic of care is based on the premise of relations. Rather than on an ethic of right or wrong, Noddings insists that care is based on the emotional connections we have with others. By rooting my work in these philosophies, I aim to show how aesthetic experiences in education may lead to care for nature.

I begin with a discussion of arts and their parameters within the study followed by their connection to Dewey's philosophy of aesthetic experiences and their intended use in aesthetic education. Next, I introduce Nodding's ethic of care followed by its relationship with aesthetic themes of education. Finally, I demonstrate how the educational literature portrays a relationship between art and aesthetic experiences and care.

The Arts in Education

The topic of art is a far-reaching subject that goes well beyond the scope of this dissertation. Therefore, my purpose here is to define what I mean by *art* within the context of the theoretical framework. I refer to art as both an object, such as a painting, a play, or a poem, and also the

“process of doing or making” (Dewey, 1980, p. 47) such an object. For this particular study, I am interested in how the connective qualities of the arts are used in education, especially the link between art and aesthetic experience with the affective domain, rather than their use in mastering skills or self-expression. I define aesthetic experience as the essence of one’s experience that is infused with affect so as to create value, meaning and appreciation.

The arts – painting, sculpting, handwork, music, drama, etc. – have long provided us an opportunity to stir one’s emotions (Miller, 2000). They help interpret and conceptualize the world in other ways beyond intellectual thinking (van Boeckel, 2009), while at the same time nurturing meaning making (Uhrmacher and Moroye, 2007): “art is one of man’s antennae stretched out to sense the world: ‘it is a way of existing and of understanding one’s existence...By sensitizing our perceptions, it makes us susceptible to new information, which may not necessarily come to us in the form of language” (Osimo Rauhala, 2003 as cited in van Boeckel, 2009, p. 2).

The arts in education can be viewed through four categories: discipline based, utilitarian, interdisciplinary, and transformational (Uhrmacher and Moroye, 2007). Discipline based art is taught as a subject by an art teacher who provides instruction on a specific medium such as painting, photography, or sculpting. Art education in this category is skill based, where students are introduced to different forms, styles and genres, engage in the critical evaluation of specific art objects, and place them in historical context. Within the utilitarian approach, art is used as a tool to enhance student performance, skills, or learning outcomes in other subject areas such as reading or math. Those teaching within the interdisciplinary category place art on equal ground to all other subject areas by facilitating the learning process through a systems thinking approach whereby “each disciplinary area contributes to the overall understanding of the broad theme”

(Uhrmacher and Moroye, 2007, p. 56). Finally, the transformational approach to art education focuses more on the learning process from the standpoint of both the teacher and student. Art in this category is incorporated into education from a phenomenological standpoint by creating learning experiences that unite our different ways of knowing, and thereby allowing students to discover new perspectives and create relationships between the self and other.

Using the arts in EE is certainly not a new phenomenon and many scholars believe that a “values-based, subjective orientation of affective learning typically found in art education” (Inwood, 2007, p. 3) complements the more science-based, cognitive approach typical to EE (e.g. Inwood, 2009; Iozzi, 1989; Graff, 1990, Adams, 1991; Lindholdt, 1999; Gurevitz, 2000). The arts in EE have been portrayed in the literature within all four categories mentioned above. For example, Young Imm Kang Song (2010) describes how artists engage students with nature by helping them to create artistic pieces with natural materials. This form of art within EE is most often referred to as ecological art or environmental art. It is comprised mainly of “land-based and site-specific art” (Inwood, 2009, p. 46) wherein art objects are created with specific environmental messages or themes, or represent either ecological crises or the Earth’s systems. This approach illustrates discipline-based art education. A utilitarian example of art in EE is found in Jakobson and Wickman’s 2008 study of elementary school children enhancing their knowledge of fish through art. While using art in EE in this manner has merits, it falls short of providing a holistic learning experience because it leaves out the emotional aspect of the experience.

Common to EE is the interdisciplinary approach that focuses on the human-nature relationship across the curriculum through the lens of stewardship (e.g. Soetaert and Top, 1996; Anderson, 2000; Kemple and Johnson, 2002). This approach is also referred to as environmental

art education or eco-art, and its integrated approach focuses on specific environmental issues across the curriculum “as a means of developing awareness of and engagement with environmental concepts and issues, such as conservation, preservation, restoration and sustainability” (Inwood, 2007, p. 2). Although all valuable, none of the above examples reflects a specific pedagogical intention to create a holistic curriculum (knowing, doing, feeling) that fully immerses students into learning experiences and that enhances affective sensibilities.

As an environmental educator, my specific interest in the arts is how their affective attributes may be utilized by the teacher to nurture caring feelings toward nature. Within this affective realm, art is a medium that inspires empathy (e.g. Adams, 1991; Verducci, 2000; Brassler and Latta, Eds., 2009) and develops an appreciation of beauty or aesthetic sense (e.g. Cohen, 1994), which is linked to our moral understanding or value through the development of the imagination (e.g. Kim, 2009; Stroud, 2011). The arts in EE used in this way fall under the *transformational* category: all educational endeavors are orchestrated to nurture students’ and teachers’ creativity, and the focus is on meaning-making. The transformational approach seeks to rethink education from artistic and aesthetic viewpoints. It is through this transformational lens that we set out to explore practical but meaningful ways, via the aesthetic themes, to encourage teachers to orient work toward a form of aesthetic practice (Moroye and Uhrmacher, p. 88, 2009).

In other words, art is not used solely to develop artistic skills, enhance skills in other subjects such as science, or complement a thematic project along with other subjects. Instead, art *is* the teaching and learning, reimagined and re-envisioned through aesthetic experiences in order to facilitate the internal process that provides a context for individualized learning and expression by allowing students to experience their coursework in another way (e.g. Inwood, 2009; Inwood, 2007; van Boeckel, 2007; Erzen, 2005; Kesson, 2004; Tarr, 2008).

Art used in EE in the transformative category is called “arts-based environmental education” or “aesthetic environmental education.” Rather than focus on a particular environmental issue, this approach has the specific intention of developing a relationship with the environment as a whole. Van Boeckel (2007) provides an example of this in his description of three Scandinavian programs. In one, a group of students embark on a multi-day “botanical excursion” (p. 76) to a local island. There they become fully immersed in nature using creativity and imagination. Using watercolor and sketchbooks along with magnifying glasses and the naked eye, students explore, examine, and capture beauty in their own way. They discover relationships not just between themselves and nature but also between different colors, textures and shapes: “this gave a sense of something as a whole, as opposed to being fixated on an isolated object. Thus this method is appropriate to the ecological way of looking we desire to attain” (L. Jolley as quoted in von Boeckel, 2007, p. 77). As a result, the students may develop a relationship with place and create meaning from their learning.

Van Boeckel (2007) explains that arts-based EE “turns the tables in a fundamental way” by “[offering] room for aesthetic experiences” (p. 2). Unlike the other approaches mentioned earlier, arts-based EE does not view art as “an added quality, the icing on the cake; it is rather the point of departure in the effort to find ways in which children can connect to nature” (p. 2). Van Boeckel further describes arts-based EE in that it “aims to increase the students’ openness and sensitivity and it can help them find new and personal ways to articulate and share their environmental experiences” (p.2). Arts-based EE can trigger the imagination, infuse emotion, and focus on the experience of art and nature. In addition, it focuses on beauty and relationships rather than environmental destruction and fear. For the purpose of this study, transformative art

is tantamount to aesthetic experience, which is the central tenet of my theoretical framework and will be covered in the next section.

Aesthetic Experience

The term “aesthetic” comes from the Greek term *aisthesis*, meaning “sense perception” or “sensory cognition” (Carroll, 1999, p. 157). Alexander Baumgarten used the term “aesthetics” in his 1750 publication *Aesthetica*, ultimately formalizing it to mean the overall philosophical study of art, paving the way for many scholars to use the term aesthetics and philosophy of art interchangeably (Carroll, 1999). Aesthetics is a branch of philosophy that deals with “perception, sensation, imagination and how they relate to knowing, understanding, and feeling about the world” (Greene, 2001, p.5). For many, aesthetic theory is synonymous with art and falls under the guise of art history, works of art and the sublime – that which is beautiful and from which we garner opinions on judgement, taste, and criticism. Baumgarten viewed aesthetics from the audience’s point of view, the perceivers of or receivers of different mediums of art: “Commonly ‘aesthetics’ is used as an adjective, modifying nouns that clearly refer to the audience’s share...and refer to some mental state that a spectator brings to or undergoes either in response to artworks or to nature” (as cited in Carroll, 1999, p. 157).

Perhaps the most well known person related to the field of aesthetics is Immanuel Kant, who built upon Baumgarten’s work, falling under the purview of analytic aesthetics (Carroll, 1999). Kant shifted the focus from the art object itself to the judgment about the object and the act of judgment (Carroll, 1999). While Kant described such judgments as subjective, he believed those trained or holding a natural inclination to see things aesthetically had the highest feelings or judgments of the beautiful and sublime and as such possessed the highest moral character. This meant that beauty was, in essence, absolute, and that aesthetic works in art and nature fell

under one universal standard.

Dewey, however, through what he called aesthetic experience, believed instead that beauty falls along a continuum. Dewey's philosophy of aesthetics, viewed through a pragmatist lens, is focused on each individual's experience, rather than a specific art object or standard. Prior to Dewey, the traditional philosophy of art viewed the so-called fine arts as the exclusive objects of aesthetic analysis; thus, to experience art was reserved only for those who had the means to access it. However, Dewey's vision democratized art in recognizing that everyone has his or her own way of experiencing art at the individual level. Dewey shifted "focus away from the aesthetic object onto the aesthetic experience of both the artist and the perceiver" (Criswell, 1983, p. 22). In other words, Dewey believed that art was not necessarily the object itself but rather the interaction between the artist and the object and between the perceiver and the object. For example, an individual might have an aesthetic experience while viewing a painting that goes beyond a mere appreciation of it as a work of art. She might experience emotions for the appreciation of color, texture, pattern, or the skill necessary to draw such a scene. She might interpret the story told through the painting, or make it her own through nostalgic associations of childhood or other feelings and memories that surface during the process.

In addition, Dewey's aesthetics based on experience differs from the traditional view wherein the artistic object such as a "building, book, painting, or statue in its existence apart from human existence" (Dewey, 1980, p. 3) is deemed aesthetic. In Dewey's view, "when artistic objects are separated from both conditions of origin and operation in experience, a wall is built around them that renders almost opaque their general significance, with which esthetic theory deals" (Dewey, 1980, p. 3). Dewey explained that art is not simply walled up in museums

but rather is “a process of doing or making” (Dewey, 1980, p. 47). He noted that experiences are like art, and emphasized the need to step away from the art form itself in order to reflect on the experience aesthetically. Dewey insisted that one cannot truly understand, enjoy or hope to create the product if one does not understand both the product and the process of its creation. This becomes especially true of art in everyday life (Dewey, 1980). For Dewey, the aesthetic experience “[added] value to human life and activity” (Stroud, 2011, p. 5).

At this point, I would like to share an event from my life that provides an example of Dewey’s argument of what makes an aesthetic experience. In the spring of 2007, my husband, Kyle, and I spent a few weeks in Italy, with the last two days of our trip concluding in Rome. After a particularly tiring day of touring the city, we took the metro back to our hotel. Ironically, we were returning from our tour of the Sistine Chapel where we had admired famous works by Michelangelo and Botticelli, but it was in the Rome underground where I encountered an aesthetic experience.

Along with commuters and other tourists, we filed into one of the trains and stood waiting for the doors to shut. A young girl stood particularly close to Kyle, almost leaning into him. I recall thinking that she was standing awfully close to my husband, but assumed the crowded train was the cause. Seconds before the train left, the young girl and a companion bolted out of the car. The doors shut and the train took off. An older woman sitting nearby tugged on my coat and pointed to a wallet on the ground. Kyle and I immediately realized we were the victims of a pickpocket scheme and the thieves, along with our \$200, were long gone. We returned to our hotel room feeling dejected and duped. However, after a few hours of reflecting on the incident, our tone changed to complete awe over the meticulous, well-orchestrated plan. I distinctly remember using the word “beautiful,” which is the perfect word for

how the crime played out. Looking back, it became obvious that the thieves targeted us in the station, likely realizing the time of day that tourists would be tired and easy to catch off guard. The girl and her companion spied Kyle taking his wallet from his money belt and then, out of habit, return it to his pocket instead. They knew where to stand in the car and the exact length of time that the doors remained open. And they knew to take only the cash, leaving behind credit cards in addition to the physical evidence, the wallet itself. To this day, I tell the story not out of anger or regret, but with real appreciation for the art of pickpocketing.

The specific act of the theft – the exact sequence of events immediately surrounding the lifting of the wallet – the girl leaning in toward Kyle, the two accomplices running out of the car just prior to the doors closing, finding Kyle’s wallet on the floor of the train – this was the art object, analogous to a painting on a wall being viewed in a museum. What made it an aesthetic experience, however, was our reactions, our emotions, our appreciation of the perfection of the skill set that went into the entire act. Translating this example to education, the art of capturing the essence of such an experience and facilitating a learning opportunity for students to feel emotion and create meaning is the heart of aesthetic education. In other words, aesthetic experiences bring an affective orientation to learning. Aesthetic experiences in education, can lead to students’ care, as I will explain in detail later in this chapter. At this time, I introduce an ethic of care, the second piece of the theoretical framework.

Ethic of Care

For the purpose of this study, the term *care* is defined as feeling empathy toward an *other*, whether that other is a human or a non-human object. Rather than as an action, such as *taking care of*, I refer to *care* as a sentiment, and as a relational, subjective experience between

the self and other. Using Tarlow's (1996) terminology, I refer to care as meaningful emotion versus practical activity, or affective versus concrete caring.

The individual most notable for her work on care is the scholar and educator Nel Noddings. In her work, Noddings focused on care in the classroom and its importance in teaching and learning, specifically in determining characteristics of the teacher and how these affect the student. In addition to exploring characteristics of care in education, she and other scholars have focused on caring behavior and caring relations (Noddings, 1984; Teven, 2001; Nguyen, 2007), teachers' own perception of care (Lindsey, 1998; Poon, 2004; Abioro, 2010); students' perceptions of teachers' care (Bosworth, 1995; Wentzel, 1997; Williams, 2010); students' perceptions of care (Quay, et al. 2002/2003; Garrett, et al., 2009); caring relationships between students and teachers (Mercado, 1993; Alder, 1996; Tarlow, 1996); and care in the Waldorf classroom (Nordlund, 2006; Armon, 1997).

The full scope of Noddings' work is beyond the purview of this study. What most interests me about Noddings' ethic of care is her understanding of the relational nature of care and her acknowledgement that care involves no one explicit model to follow and replicate; rather, "to care is to act not by fixed rule but by affection and regard" (Noddings, 1984, p. 24). According to Noddings, our memories of caring and being cared for, and the feelings these memories illicit within us, lead us to act in a caring fashion. Yet as many of the previously mentioned studies reveal, the *act of caring* "does not eschew logic and reasoning. When we care, we must employ reasoning to decide what to do and how best to do it. We strive for competence because we want to do our best for those we care for. But reason is not what motivates us. It is feeling with and for the other that motivates us" (Noddings, 2002, p. 14). With this in mind, I will focus on three

aspects of Noddings' ethic of care relevant to this study: 1) ethic of care versus ethic of justice, 2) relatedness, and 3) feeling.

Ethic of Care versus Ethic of Justice

Noddings' (1984) ethic of care is rooted in a feminist framework that “[emphasizes] differences between the traditional male dominated view of rules, regulations, and abstract thinking and the more feminine, ‘motherly’ voice of context that seeks connection and relationship in interactions and decision making” (Owens and Ennis, 2005, p. 393). “Voice” in this sense refers to “a sense of self and how one makes meaning of the world” (Owens and Ennis, 2005, p. 397). A feminine, motherly voice refers to “the voice of care” noted in Gilligan's (1982) groundbreaking work on moral development and care, which Noddings built upon. Noddings' ethic of care focuses on care that is rooted in relations rather than based strictly on right and wrong – in other words, acting on feelings toward the other rather than out of moral conviction of justice. I will share my experience with spiders at two different nature centers as an example of the distinction between an ethics of care and an ethics of justice.

For my first job in the EE field, I worked as an intern in California at a nature center where one of my tasks was to care for the animals, including, much to my chagrin, a Tarantula named Cleo. Having developed a great fear of spiders at an early age, I was quite frightened of Cleo, an education animal used for both on and off-site programs. When we took her off-site, my supervisor, Bill would scoop her up in his hands and put her in a small carrying case. As I watched from a safe distance, I was amazed at his ability to handle her without jumping in hysterics as I most certainly would have done. I was equally in awe at how the school children reacted to her when Bill brought her around the circle, safely cupped in his hand for them to “pet” gently with a 2-finger touch. They exclaimed she was cute and fuzzy. I held my fear in

check around the students but quickly made myself look busy when they nudged me to pet her as well.

Despite my daily interactions with Cleo – throwing her meal of crickets into her tank, making sure her water dish was full, seeing her at programs – I remained horrified of spiders. Yet, I had somehow developed a fondness for her. When the general public would visit, I became annoyed at those who looked at her squeamishly, or when others looked at her merely as an object. I also found myself worried when Bill held her during programs, knowing that another education tarantula was once dropped, damaging her delicate exoskeleton and leading to her death. In spite of myself, I had developed a relationship with Cleo. I felt protective of her and knew that I would never bring harm to her as I likely would to other spiders who spooked or surprised me.

Fifteen years later I worked at a different nature center 3000 miles away, and found myself in the midst of a completely different experience with another species of arachnid – the fisher spider. The nature center was infested with them. Their abdomens were larger than a quarter and the circumference of their body, including legs, was comparable in size to my palm. They were extremely fast and would surprise me, sending me into fits and screams. My staff thought I was nuts, though they were kind to capture the spiders in containers and place them outside. At some point during the summer, I showed my supervisor a picture of one of the spiders so he would understand what I was going through. He was surprised and quite taken aback at their size, insisting that I spray the nature center. I was shocked that my boss would exterminate the spiders for the sake of easing my fear.

Unlike my relationship with Cleo, I had no affinity toward the fisher spiders. In fact, I despised them. However, knowing the pivotal role they play in the food web, I knew that it

would be wrong to kill them simply because I was afraid. Whereas I had developed an ethic of care through my relationship with Cleo, my decision not to exterminate the fisher spiders was based entirely on an ethic of justice. My actions toward Cleo were based on my feelings about her, not simply the obligation to feed and water her to keep her alive. Although I kept my distance, I cherished her as a living being. On the other end of the spectrum, however, I felt compelled to keep the fisher spiders alive because it was morally wrong to kill them just because of my innate fear.

Relatedness

The second characteristic of care is *relatedness*. In differentiating between ethic of care and an ethic of justice, Noddings theorizes that our relations are at the heart of an ethic of care. As Owens and Ennis (2005) explain “human caring and the memory of caring and being cared for form the foundation of the ethical response to care” (p. 399). Relatedness “occurs when a person is actively involved with another person, object, group or environment” (Hagerty, et al., 1993, p. 293). It also has been described as “participation or involvement in a relationship” (Hagerty, et al., 1993, p. 293). Most notable is the relationship between the self and other – or in Noddings’ terms, between the one-caring and the cared-for. The caring process is the subjective experience that occurs between the one-caring and the cared-for.

Foreshadowing Noddings, the twentieth century philosopher, Martin Buber (1950) addressed the human experience through the concept of two relationships: between *I and Thou* and *I and It*. The I-Thou reflects a bounded relationship between one subject and another. According to Shel (2007), Buber believed that in order to enter the I-Thou relationship, “the other is not an object...but rather a subject” (p. 9) and thus, we recognize “the other as a thinking, feeling, and reasoning agent” (p. 9). Simply stated, the I-Thou is the point at which we enter into a

relationship with another subject, thus “humanizing” (p. 9) the other and viewing our experiences subjectively.

In contrast, I-It is the experience of an object by a subject. The *It* in this case is the object of one’s experiences. When we encounter others, we do not necessarily enter into a relationship with them; we may instead experience them by objectifying them. An example of Buber’s I-Thou and I-It in pop culture can be seen in Jeffrey Lieber, J. J. Abrams, and Damon Lindelof’s epic television series, *Lost*. The series tells the story of plane crash survivors who inhabit an island they soon learn is also occupied by a community they call “the Others.”³ Over the course of the series as the two bands encounter one another, they completely objectify each other and are unable to see each other as humans, only as enemies, often leading to misunderstandings and violence. However, when circumstances bring some members of each group together, those individuals begin to get to know each other, experience the island together, and witness events through each other’s eyes. They are no longer an objectified *It* but instead have become a relationship-based *Thou*. As such, “the Others” soon disappeared.

Feeling

The third characteristic of care I refer to for this study is feeling. Tarlow (1996) sought to describe caring in families, schools, and volunteer agencies by conducting interviews with 84 participants. She identified nine characteristics essential to the establishment of caring relationships. One of these characteristic is caring as feeling: “feelings and sentiments are part of what constitutes the motivation for caring, that is, why people care was nearly always tied to feelings and sentiments” (Tarlow, 1996, p. 71). The feeling characteristic of care is of particular interest for this study because, as I explain in the next chapter, Waldorf teachers intentionally use

³ Simply by using this term, the creators seem to explicitly play on Buber’s premise of I-It and I-Thou.

art and aesthetics in order to touch the feeling realm of the child. The Waldorf teacher addresses her students with the assumption that the feeling life of the child connects the child's knowing and doing. Just as aesthetic experiences are oriented toward affective sensibilities, an ethic of care is rooted in our emotional life.

I have now described the two underlying philosophies – Dewey's aesthetic experience and Noddings' ethic of care – that form the basis of my theoretical framework, each highlighting the importance of the affective realm. Next I introduce aesthetic experiences in education and through a review of the literature, illustrate an association with an ethic of care.

Aesthetic Experiences in Education

Dewey's philosophy of aesthetic experiences has served as a foundation for research in several studies in the education field. In their study on learning science aesthetically, Girod, Rau, and Schepige (2003) define aesthetic understanding as "a rich network of conceptual knowledge combined with a deep appreciation for the beauty and power of ideas that literally transform one's experiences and perceptions of the world" (p. 577-578). They explain that to engage students in aesthetic experiences, and thus develop their aesthetic sense or understanding, teachers need to take special care to pedagogically nurture an environment conducive for students to do so. In other words, teachers wishing to develop an aesthetic sense in their students need to intentionally engage students in learning experiences that Moroye and Uhrmacher (2009) refer to as "aesthetically-oriented activities" (p. 86).

Understanding that teachers need to nurture students' aesthetic sense, and drawing from Dewey's seminal work *Art as Experience* (1980), Moroye and Uhrmacher (2009) suggest that six educational themes characterize what makes an experience aesthetic: connections, imagination, sensory experience, active engagement, perceptivity (re-seeing), and risk taking. According to

Moroye and Uhrmacher (2009), these aesthetic themes of education are the “work” (p. 620) that teachers and students actively and intentionally engage in during the learning process to actualize aesthetic experiences. One theme is not more important than another to creating aesthetic experiences. Each plays a unique role and together they nurture the aesthetic in cohesive symphony.

The first theme, connections, reflects the heart of Nel Noddings’ (1984) ethic of care in regard to relatedness. Like Noddings, Dewey (1934) explains that “every experience is constituted by interaction between ‘subject’ and ‘object,’ between a self and its world, it is not itself either merely physical nor merely mental, no matter how much one factor or the other predominates” (p. 246). Through our experiences, we interact with the environment and *connect* emotionally, intellectually, communicatively, or sensorially with objects, whether they are “an idea, concept or something tangible” (Moroye and Uhrmacher, 2009, p. 91).

The second theme, imagination, provides “a means through which we can assemble a coherent world...[and] is what, above all, makes empathy possible” (p. 3). Imagination helps us to make meaning from our everyday life experiences; it is the depth of our subconscious where we interact with and reconstruct our lived experiences. Our imagination gives rise to our awareness “to which we grasp another’s world” (Greene, p. 4). In other words, the imagination is what distinguishes the *I-thou* from the *I-It*, by breaking down the barrier between self and *other*.

The third theme, sensory experience, has etymological roots; as mentioned earlier, the word *aesthetic* is derived from the term *aesthesia*, meaning “sense perception” or “sensory cognition” (Carroll, 1999, p. 157). It is through our senses that we interact and participate with the world – touching, smelling, tasting, seeing, and hearing. According to Uhrmacher (2009), “aesthetic experiences are sensory experiences” (p. 623).

The fourth theme, active engagement, is analogous to the act of embodying, which refers to knowledge we construct through movement and experience: “[constructing] knowledge through direct engagement in bodily experiences and inhabiting one’s body through being-in-the-world” (Feiner, 2007, p. 6). Active engagement is rooted in phenomenology, which is concerned with “the connection between human consciousness and the objects that exist in the material world” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 43). Instead of being passive learners, aesthetic experiences call for individuals to be self-directed, constructing knowledge and meaning as a result of being wholly immersed and interacting fully with their experiences.

Moving beyond active engagement to a point of re-seeing or deep observation is the fifth theme, perceptivity. Also related to phenomenology, perceptivity takes the learner beyond basic recognition of objects or experiences and transcends them to a place of deeper meaning. Perceptivity occurs when the learner moves beyond the reciprocal relationship between the subjective self and the objective world of active engagement to the reflective path in between. In an aesthetic experience, a cyclical embrace exists between perception and active engagement that is united by reflection: “consciousness, the world, and the human body as a perceiving thing are intricately intertwined and mutually ‘engaged’ (Merleau-Ponty, 2005).” In other words, we not only engage in perceptions and actions but we also reflect on those perceptions and actions, which, in turn, becomes an action in and of itself, a cyclical process through which the body is not just as a vessel but an active participant. This continuous cycle of perception, action, reflection, and back again becomes the basis of our knowledge by making sense of our experiences.

Finally, the sixth theme of aesthetic education is risk taking, which does not refer to participating in a physically or dangerous event, but to opening oneself up to new experiences,

which allow one to push comfort zones, experiment with different materials, seek new vistas, or re-create. Girod and Wong (2002) explain that students who learn through a Deweyan lens are motivated by “an exploration of the possible” (p. 204). As a product of experiences, they emerge transformed, illuminated by a new relationship between self, world, and the objects of such exploits (Girod and Wong, 2002).

The aesthetic themes of education, taken individually or together, help to orient our learning toward a more affective approach by infusing emotion, feeling and relatedness into our experiences. The desired outcome is “a more rich, multifaceted understanding that incorporates conceptual knowledge, skills, dispositions, feelings, attitudes, actions, and emotions and value” (Girod and Wong, 2002, p. 209). In addition to these themes, Girod and Wong (2002) note that “all aesthetic understanding is dramatic or compelling, transforming, and unifying” (p. 206).

Moroye and Uhrmacher (2009) explored how teachers used these themes in their classrooms. Though they did not collect empirical evidence of student outcomes, the researchers suggest that potential outcomes include increased student satisfaction, episodic memories, perceptual knowledge, the development of meaning making, and the possibility of creativity and innovation. Similarly, Girod, Twyman, and Wojcikiewicz (2010) compared teaching and learning science through two different frameworks: “transformative, aesthetic experiences” (p. 1) and a “cognitive rational perspective” (p. 5). The study focused on three content units – weather, erosion, and matter – taught by two teachers in two fifth grade classrooms located in one elementary school. The researchers measured five factors: interest, efficacy, identity, conceptual understanding and investigations of transfer. Data in all but one, identity, revealed increased student interest, knowledge, and retention of knowledge by those taught through aesthetic experiences when compared to those taught through the cognitive rational framework. In

addition, data suggests that students in the treatment classroom (aesthetic experience framework) perceived the world and their place in it differently than those in the control classroom. Though the researchers' interest focused specifically on conceptual understanding in science, their findings remain relevant to a broader educational audience, including EE.

Another study on aesthetic experiences in science education was conducted by Girod and Wong (2002) and re-analyzed by Girod, Rau, and Schepige (2003). This study compared teaching for aesthetic understanding with teaching for conceptual understanding. The study focused on a fourth grade geology unit taught in two different classrooms in the same elementary school. In the control classroom, students were taught geology through traditional means whereas in the treatment classroom, students were taught for aesthetic understanding whereby “the teacher employed a narrative lens allowing ‘the telling of rock stories’ to be the overarching goal” (p. 583). One of their key findings was how aesthetic experiences transformed students’ learning to become more relational with the subject matter: “the realization that rocks, and all things, have stories that we can reconstruct is a valuable and enriching way to think about the world” (Girod, et. al, 2003, p. 585). In other words, students taught through storytelling rather than a more conventional scientific pedagogy experienced the geology unit through the development of relationships with the subject matter.

A third study by Kim (2009) establishes a link between aesthetic experiences and morality. Like Noddings’ ethic of care, Kim defines moral education through relationships and aesthetics, in contrast with a traditional perspective that views morality as keeping behavior in line by “obeying society’s rules, laws, and regulations or possessing certain virtues as knowledge” (p. 2). Kim found that students taught through a traditional moral education did not “genuinely” follow through on their moral reasoning in their actions and beliefs outside of school (p. 3). He

explains the lack of follow-through as a result of morality being habituated through the cognitive realm through facts and knowledge rather than through the affective realm of feelings and values. In other words, students learned about right and wrong from books, lectures, and lessons rather than engaging in experiences. He states that “both our concepts and our reasoning about them are grounded in the nature of our bodily experiences and are structured by various kinds of imaginative processes” (Kim, p. 4). Furthermore, Kim found a clear relationship between aesthetic experience and empathy: “feelings/emotion and imagination promote empathy. Imagination and embodied reason result in moral reasoning. Feelings/emotion, imagination, and embodied reason lead students to moral action” (p. 85).

Taken together, these studies demonstrate a relationship between aesthetic experiences in science education and relatedness between the student and their subject matter. However, researchers have not examined the connection between teaching through aesthetic experiences and learning to care for nature, which the present study seeks to address.

I began this chapter by describing the different ways in which care is utilized in EE, placing this study within that larger context. Next I introduced the arts in education. I defined art as both the process and product, and explored the connective and affective attributes of art and its relationship to aesthetic experiences. I then described four categories of arts use in education – discipline based, utilitarian, interdisciplinary, and transformational. I particularly concentrated on transformational art, which focuses on the experiences of the teacher and student and works to integrate our thinking, feeling, and doing realms. This category of art is synonymous with aesthetic experiences, which I define as the essence of one’s experience that is infused with affect so as to create value, meaning and appreciation.

Next I introduced Dewey's aesthetic experience, and explained that Dewey diverged from the traditional idea that reserved aesthetics exclusively for artworks and instead viewed our everyday experiences as aesthetic. He deemed the act of experiencing, reflecting and perceiving of our experiences itself as aesthetic. In other words, not only the product of our experiences give meaning, pleasure and add value to our everyday lives, but the process we engage in during such experiences is equally essential. I continued by introducing Nel Noddings' ethic of care, where I focused on three aspects – ethic of caring versus ethic of justice, relatedness, and feeling – which all comprise the idea that caring is a subjective relationship between self and other motivated by feelings and emotions rather than by a fixed rule. Finally, I turned to six educational themes that characterize what makes an experience aesthetic – connections, imagination, sensory experience, active engagement, perceptivity, and risk taking. I illustrated that these six themes, which pull from both Dewey's aesthetic experiences and Noddings' ethic of care, are rooted in the affective domain and, therefore, are the mechanism through which students have the opportunity to develop care (Figure 1).

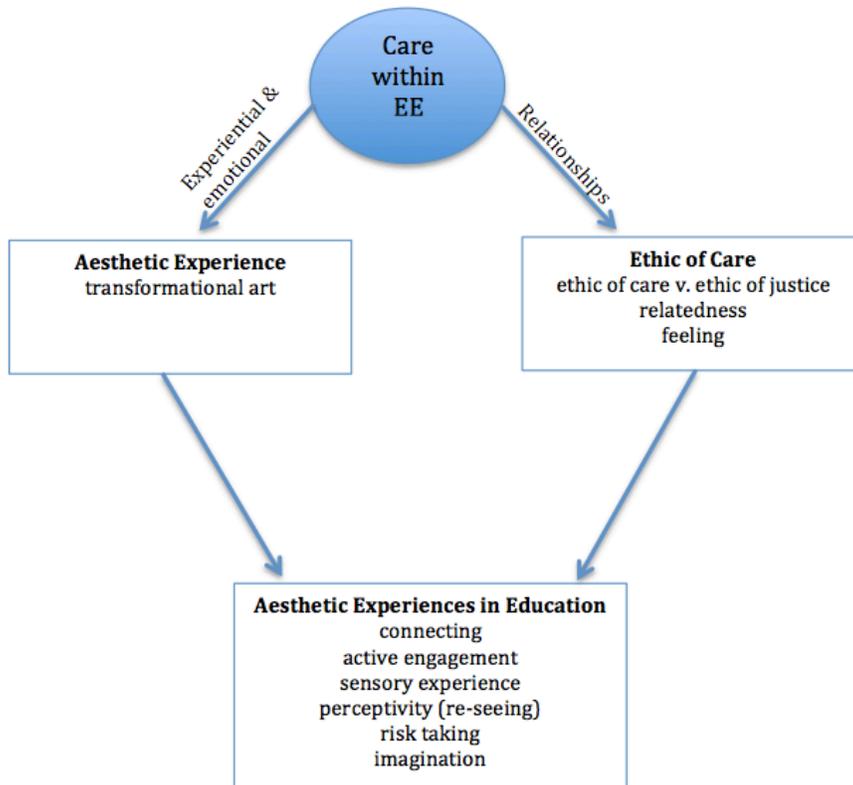


Figure 1. A visual depiction of the study’s theoretical framework.

In the next chapter, I describe in detail the Waldorf philosophy of education and its corresponding pedagogy. Often described as a framework for moral education, Waldorf education is well known for integrating art and aesthetic experiences in its curriculum. Therefore it aligns well with the theoretical framework I have just laid out.

CHAPTER III

WALDORF LEARNING THEORY

I follow the children out of the building, down the path, and across the field toward the forest. Red-winged blackbirds bid good morning from nearby trees still barren of leaves, dismissing the morning cold and threat of rain. The calendar says May 15th, but the chilly, damp air feels more like a late winter day. The children, however, are well prepared, dressed in raincoats and pants, hats, mittens, and boots. They each carry a backpack and are expressive and chatty, wondering aloud if they will see any sign of Lalli and Edgar.

Lalli and Edgar are tree root gnomes who live in the woods and often leave gifts for the children in thanks for taking care of their home. The children learned about the tree root gnomes from their teacher, Mr. Gold, during their outdoor classroom block in grade one. The tree root gnomes had been displaced after their tree was felled, and the children and Mr. Gold helped build them a new home near the class's camp. Now as second graders, the class has returned to the woods for another outdoor classroom block where they will continue to learn about the forest while helping to repair Lalli and Edgar's home. Yesterday, the children's first day of their block, they left nuts and berries for Lalli and Edgar. And today as we return for a second day, the children are eager to see if there is any sign of the gnomes.

The world of Lalli and Edgar is a wonderful example of how children learn in a Waldorf school – through a creative, experiential manner that appeals to one's head, hands, and heart. Often described simply as *beautiful*, Waldorf education is artistic and lively, bursting with color, music, magic and wonder. From fairy tales to singing, from painting to theatre, the arts are infused into the daily rhythms of the day rather than taught as separate subjects. The curriculum is not rushed, meeting the child where they are developmentally. Children grow up in a caring

environment that inspires a love of learning how to experience and celebrate the beauty of our world. I chose Waldorf education for my research focus because arts and aesthetic experiences are emphasized in teaching and learning, specifically for the purpose of addressing the *heart*, which is the affective realm. In this chapter I briefly describe the development of the human being through the lens of Anthroposophy, which is the philosophical foundation of Waldorf education. In addition, I demonstrate how Waldorf education exemplifies an arts and aesthetics-based philosophy of education as described in the previous chapter.

The Waldorf School movement began in Stuttgart, Germany in 1919 with the opening of the first school by its founder and teacher Rudolf Steiner. Initially, the school began operation to meet the needs of educating the children of the workers of the Waldorf-Astoria Cigarette Factory. However, soon children of all social classes were enrolled and other schools began opening throughout Europe (Steiner, 2009). Today over 1000 Waldorf Schools operate in 83 countries (www.whywaldorfworks.org/02_W_Education/history.asp).

Steiner developed an educational philosophy for Waldorf education based on his background as a spiritual and esoteric teacher grounded in Anthroposophy, a philosophy he founded in 1891 with the publication of his doctoral dissertation *Truth and Knowledge* (Steiner, 2009).

Anthroposophy is the knowledge and worldview that the human being is not only a physical being but a spiritual one as well. In Steiner's vision, spirituality and science are compatible, and we can use science to study spirituality (Steiner, 2009). Anthroposophy's ideas have influenced different fields such as banking, medicine, agriculture, and education. Anthroposophy's overall concept is that the human being is comprised of three aspects – *body*, *soul*, and *spirit* – which

correspond to three different ways we engage with the world (Steiner, 2009).⁴

The *body* is where we perceive the world through our senses. The *body* correlates to knowledge gained through the engagement of our *thinking* capacity. The *body* is the only aspect of the threefold being that is a physical structure that can be penetrated by the environment. It is often referred to as the vehicle through which our *soul* and *spirit* experience the world.

The second aspect, the *soul*, enables the individual to experience “pleasure and displeasure, attraction and aversion, as well as other emotions in relation to the world” (Steiner, 2009, p. 26). The *soul* is where we process what has been taken in from the *body* and correlates to knowledge gained through the engagement of our *feeling* capacity. It is the mediator between body and spirit, that which connects the spiritual divine with the earth. The *soul* is our consciousness.

And, finally, it is through the *spirit* “that the individual experiences the world” (Steiner, 2009, p. 26) through engagement of our *willing*. The *spirit* issues from the divine, spiritual world and, when embodied in the human being, translates as the unique eternal kernel of one’s self. The *spirit* is what brings “life” to the body – similar to what is commonly referred to as “qi” in Asian philosophy and medicine.

Figure 2 illustrates the concept of the threefold human being and its attendant capacities.

⁴ Throughout the dissertation, the terms *body*, *soul*, and *spirit* will be italicized in order to distinguish their usage with regard to Steiner’s philosophy of the human being compared to their common usage in the English language.

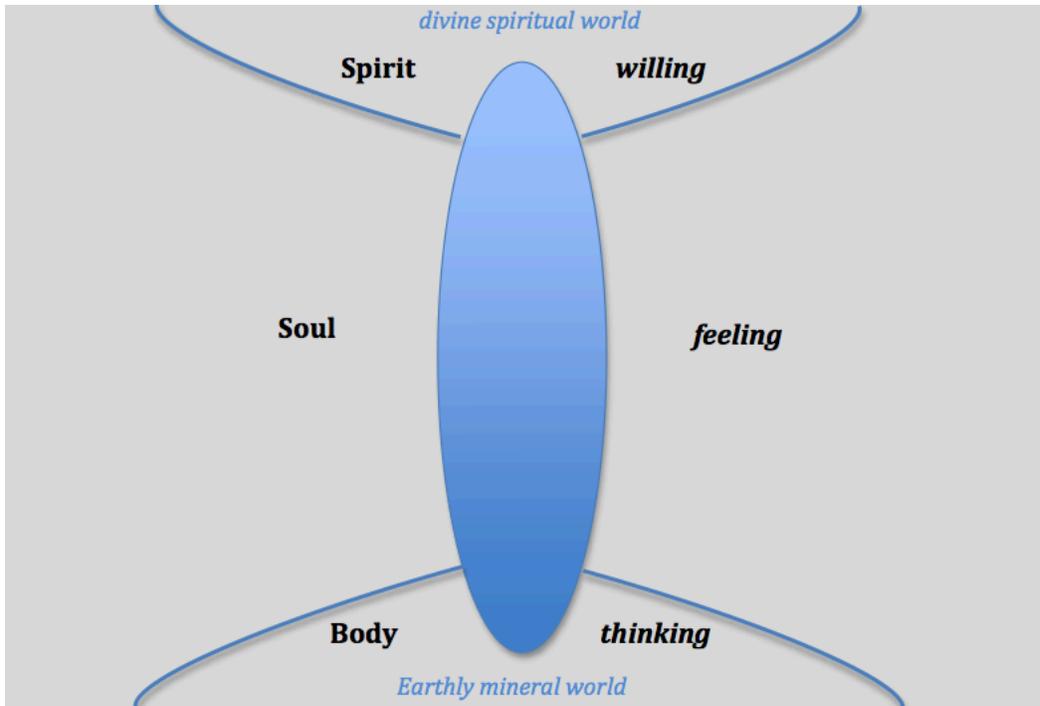


Figure 2. Threefold human being and attendant capacities

A rendition of this diagram was provided to me in many of the courses I attended during my participation in the Waldorf teacher training program at Antioch New England University (AUNE). Below is an example of how we encounter the world through the lens of the threefold human:

imagine encountering a red rose. Through the Body we see the rose is red and smell its fragrance. Through the Soul it awakens a sense of joy and pleasure through our encounter with it. Through the Spirit we learn about some of its inherent qualities such as impermanence where as it blossoms it withers away...In the physical world we form a world outside of us. In the soul world we develop a world within us. In the spirit world we learn about a higher world beyond ours (<http://www.jocsonhealth.com/the-threefold-nature-of-the-human-being.html>).

In addition to the notion of the threefold human being, Steiner created the concepts of the fourfold, sevenfold, and ninefold human being that expand on aspects of body, soul, and spirit to offer a deeper understanding of the Anthroposophical view of our spiritual realm.

For purposes of this dissertation, I focus on the fourfold structure, because it forms the philosophical foundation for Waldorf education. Table 1 explains how the fourfold human structure relates to the threefold.

Table 1

How Steiner’s Threefold and Fourfold Human Being Overlap

3-fold	4-fold
SPIRIT	future stages/angelic consciousness
SOUL	Ego
	Astral body
BODY	Etheric Body
	Physical body

Steiner describes the fourfold human being as comprised of four "bodies": *the physical, etheric, astral, and ego or “I”*. This concept of four bodies guides the Waldorf teacher and the curriculum with regards to the individual child’s development. When we think of the term “body,” we refer to corporeality. However, when describing the make-up of the human being, Steiner uses the term to also mean the “higher, nonphysical aspects of the human being” (Steiner, 1998, p. 2). Of the four bodies, the physical body is the only one that can be perceived by the senses, the only body “subject to the physical and chemical laws and processes that govern the mineral kingdom” (Trostli, p. 2). We can think of the physical body as the shell, which acts as a

vessel for the other three bodies; in their absence, the physical body is simply a corpse.

Inhabiting our physical body is the etheric body, which Steiner also referred to as our life body – that which brings “life” to our physical body. The etheric body gives expression to the physical body – utilizing forces “to form and mold the physical body” (Troostli, p. 116) through growth, reproduction, and the “inner movement of vital body fluids” (p. 3). We can think of the etheric body as the architect of the physical body, helping to develop and organize “our thoughts, our ideas, and our memories, and [by providing] the foundation for our conceptual life” (p. 116).

The third body is the astral body, which marks the transition point where the *body* and *soul* overlap, and is, therefore, sometimes referred to as the soul body because it straddles both. The astral body is responsible for our ability to perceive sensations and experience emotion – it provides the basis of our feeling life. Sentient beings such as animals and humans have an astral body allowing them to consciously interact and respond to the outer world. Just as the etheric forces work toward developing our intellectual life, the astral forces work to form the basis of our judgments. For simplicity sake, we can view the astral body as the conduit of information from the *body* to the *soul* by which information gathered from our senses is then reflected upon and given meaning and judgment.

The fourth body in this view of the human being is the “I” or Ego. According to Steiner, the “I” is what makes human beings unique in comparison to all other living species. The “I” allows us to be conscious of our own selves as a unique individual. When I say “I” in reference to myself, I can mean no other person – it’s the divine element within ourselves, the eternal individuality of the person. Just as the etheric is related to our conceptual life, and the astral body to our feeling life, the “I” is related to our intentions, ideals, and morals. The “I” lives in the soul and works to transform and raise our other bodies to a spiritual plane.

Through this depiction of the fourfold human being, we begin to understand how to achieve different levels of knowledge – Sensory or Perceptive, Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition⁵ – that ascend upward from our physical body through our “I” or Ego (Steiner, 1967). To explain further, our physical body takes in sensory or perceptive knowledge through our nose, eyes, ears, touch, and taste buds and provides us with knowledge about our outer world, our environment. This is our lowest level of knowledge; at this stage we are only encountering material objects (Steiner, 1967). Our sensory knowledge about these material objects then moves upward through the etheric where the next level of knowledge occurs – Imagination. At this point, from the information provided by our senses, we create images of the material objects presented to us.

The next stage of knowledge, Inspiration, takes place in our astral body. Moving from the etheric into the astral, knowledge of the object deepens and we develop conceptual knowledge. In other words, through Inspiration we move beyond simply knowing what an object is to *understanding* about that object (Steiner, 1967). Finally, the last stage of knowledge is Intuitive occurring in the “I.” This highest level of knowledge occurs when the concept of the image transforms into a more personalized representation of the object. In other words, we form judgments and place meaning on the object based on our personal experience with it (Steiner, 1967).

For a Waldorf teacher, the three stages of knowledge beyond sensory, which comes through the physical body, translate into the learning process and the integration of our different ways of knowing – thinking (Imagination), feeling (Inspiration), and willing (Intuition). The introduction of a new subject or topic in a Waldorf classroom offers a simplistic example of this. In the case of Mr. Gold’s students, he introduced the idea of Lalli and Edgar, which sparked their

⁵ These terms are capitalized in order to distinguish them from their common usage.

imagination and inspired within them feelings and eventually the will to internally act.

This idea relates directly to the lemniscate, or infinity symbol, that was presented at the Parent Evening I attended early on in the data collection phase of this research (Figure 3). During the evening, the lower grades teachers presented an overview of Waldorf education highlighting the thinking, feeling, and willing realm of the child, as well as providing curriculum highlights for the upcoming school year. The lemniscate represents the connections between the three realms, and how the feeling realm connects the thinking and the willing. In other words, in order for a student to fully develop her learning, she needs to feel the phenomenon, which in turn motivates the will.

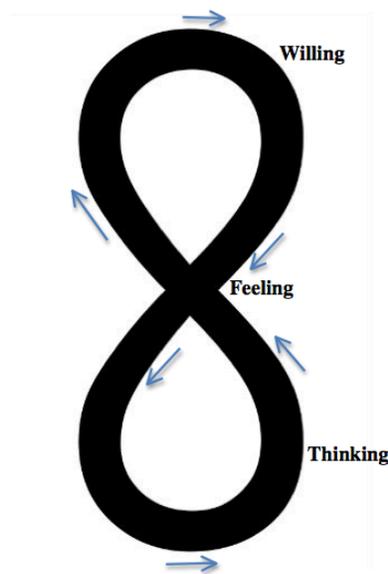


Figure 3. The Lemniscate representing how the feeling realm connects thinking and willing

It is important to note that Anthroposophy itself is not taught in the Waldorf classroom, but instead provides the spiritually based knowledge of human development that roots the teacher and makes Waldorf education unique. To a person new to Anthroposophy or Waldorf education, the idea of a threefold (and fourfold) human being may seem esoteric; however, we can relate to

the notion that in our daily interactions with others, we do not perceive one another as simply a body, a vessel but as people “with feelings and thoughts and abilities not visible in external appearances” (Richards, 1980, p. 3).

What is profound about Waldorf education is that it translates the Anthroposophical basis of the threefold human being and child development into an educational philosophy – educating the child throughout her or his development with the understanding that we know in different ways through different parts of our threefold selves throughout our development. In other words, the key to Waldorf education is to understand that the human being interacts with the world in three different ways: *thinking (body)*, *feeling (soul)*, and *willing (spirit)* (Finser, 2007). Our knowledge is not limited to strictly cognitive learning, but we also learn in other capacities through different vehicles at various stages throughout our development. With this in mind, Waldorf educates each child’s *thinking* (head), *feeling* (heart), and *willing* (hand) throughout the k-12 curriculum. An important part of being a Waldorf teacher is to be well grounded in Anthroposophy, as it is the spiritual foundation from which human development is viewed and the curriculum is presented: “The growing metamorphosing, changing child is the curriculum, becomes the curriculum; it is the rationale for everything we do; it is the foundation for all of our work; where the child is at each phase and why we are doing what we are doing. There is a rationale for everything we do in the Waldorf classroom” (B. Boyer, Faculty, personal communication, July 5, 2010).

Child Development and an Overview of the Curriculum

Similar to other educational philosophies, Waldorf education views childhood development through different stages, specifically three stages that are divided into 7-year epochs: from birth to the change of teeth, from the change of teeth until puberty, and from puberty to adulthood.

The Waldorf teacher views the child as a spiritual being and the developmental process as an incarnation of the spirit into the physical body. In addition, Steiner believed that “with the exception of the physical body, which is fully born with the infant, the other three bodies unfold gradually at different periods of the child’s development, finding fuller expression at the end of each cycle” (Rudge, 2008, p. 83): 0 = physical body; 0-7 = etheric body; 7-14 = astral body; 14-21 = ego. It is important to note that the age ranges indicated are approximate because Waldorf education gauges child development on the basis of maturity rather than on chronology. The transitional periods between developmental epochs are indicated by the change of teeth and puberty. With this in mind, the Waldorf teacher presents curriculum and uses methods that follow the individual through different stages of child development, paying particular credence as to whether the etheric, astral, or ego is unfolding within the child. In this way, students experience an education that allows them to not only grow in *body* but also in *soul* and *spirit*, enriching their learning through different ways of knowing rather than being limited strictly to “head” knowledge.

Taking the above into consideration, the Waldorf teacher understands that in early childhood (0-7), children’s etheric forces are working on the development of their physical body and, therefore, children learn through their *will*⁶. At this stage, then, learning occurs through perception rather than cognition. Put another way, their head is asleep and their limbs are awake. Furthermore, curriculum for the preschool and kindergarten student is designed with the knowledge that children of this age learn best by example through activities that are active and imitative: “we [learn] by moving and experiencing before we [conceptualize]” (Finser, 1994, p. 20). For example, on a day observing Waldorf kindergarten, I noticed imitation occurring in two

⁶ The child is incarnating from the spiritual world at this stage of development and, therefore, interacts with the world through their *will*.

ways: the first came during creative play time when some children of both genders were mimicking activities of the home – playing house, dressing up, tending to dolls. The second occurred during the main morning activity, which takes place after creative play, and on this particular day was breadmaking. The children worked in two groups at long tables, one with the lead teacher and the second with the assistant. From the head of their respective tables, the teachers provided each child with a piece of dough and, without giving specific verbal instructions, modeled for the children how to knead.

In addition, children at this stage of development perceive themselves as extensions of their environment. Therefore, they should be surrounded by beautiful, comforting classrooms and taught by teachers who are models of morality, understanding that their words and actions are being watched intently and imitated by their young pupils. During my kindergarten visit, I noticed that the teachers spoke in quiet, calming voices and possessed a serene, unhurried demeanor.

The change of teeth marks the second stage of development (7-14) – the “heart of childhood” when the child’s etheric has been released and the teacher works within the feeling realm (heart). In doing so, everything the child learns is taught with feeling and given living form – bringing abstract concepts to life by teaching in and through the imagination. In this way, the curriculum is revealed through pictures and stories in order to help penetrate the child’s soul (feelings) through rich and vivid imagination. For example, Mr. Gold describes the process of why and how he created the characters of Lalli and Edgar:

You know, last year, I invented these tree root gnome characters Edgar and Lalli.

And I had this old man character that I told them, I met him at a hardware store and his name was Mr. Barthalomew and he was this botanist. So I just created

this whole story around the adventures of Edgar and Lalli. And I created them in first grade for the outdoor classroom because I figured we could explore trees.

And I found a huge uprooted tree. And that was their old home so we would have to build them a new home, hence the bivouac out there in the woods (Mr. Gold, Class 2 Teacher, personal communication, June 12, 2012).

Concepts acquired with feeling are given a life of their own in that they are “mobile and extendable...have the ability to grow and develop” (Steiner, 1991, p. 90). Concepts acquired in the artistic realm – through stories, art, music - “remain alive and capable of further development and metamorphosis, particularly if related concepts have also been acquired in the same manner” (Steiner, 1991, p. 90). Concepts acquired otherwise will be retained, recalled, and perceived exactly how they were originally given. Nurturing healthy development of the imagination is to teach in the soul realm, which “connects the development of inner life and behavior” (Miller, p. 49). Also during this stage it is important to monitor how the child receives the curriculum, and to note that children learn best from someone whom they love and who they look up to as an authority figure in the knowledge being presented (Steiner, 1998).

Finally, during the third developmental stage (14-21), children have reached adolescence and experience additional changes. The astral has been released and enters the *body*, and the teacher now focuses on working with the ego – *thinking*. While students during the second epoch learn best through authority, the high school student seeks a mentor who they respect as an expert in her or his specific subject who will guide the student to the truth (Mitchell, www.whywaldorfworks.org/02_W_Education/high_school.asp). In addition, the purpose of the curriculum in high school is to help the student develop critical thinking skills by learning to discriminate and make their own judgments about what they have learned (Steiner, 1998).

Creative expression becomes more individualized and self-directed.

The Imaginative Curriculum: A Living Art

An integral component of Waldorf education is its holism and the difficulty, if not impossibility, of discussing one aspect of the three-fold human being without the others. One's *thinking, feeling, and willing* are interconnected, and the aim of a humanistic education such as Waldorf is to consider the system of the whole rather than merely its parts. This in turn gives the child a sense of connectedness – an understanding and a feeling of belonging to some greater whole of which the child is a part. Unlike conventional education, the Waldorf method involves teaching lessons centered around feeling, giving life to all that is learned in order for the child to develop her or his imagination and understanding of interconnectedness to a greater whole. For example, children learn to read and write first through stories told by the teacher. The sound of the letters coupled with the feeling of the story helps draw the children's imaginations, connecting the letter sounds to pictures. At this point, they begin to paint pictures that create the letter as part of the image. Then they will draw the pictures, which take the form of letters. And, finally, the child learns to read from their own handwriting: "In this way writing is closer to them; it lives more immediately in their limbs" (Richards, 1980, p. 64). The child does not learn to read from letters that are "dead," but instead "experiences words as living forms and living meaning" (p. 65) through their artistic imaginations. Furthermore, "by receiving aliveness into one's learning, one feels the wholeness of life in every part" (p. 65).

Because of the artistic nature of the curriculum, Waldorf teachers approach their teaching as creative artists. The arts are an important aspect of the theoretical basis of Waldorf education and are infused in the curriculum through the teaching method and through experiences of the children. However, to say that Waldorf education simply integrates the arts into the curriculum

reduces the method of the Waldorf pedagogy: “Waldorf schools consider that enabling children to learn in a meaningful and holistic way is an art, and requires creative and aesthetic input, a subjective expressive approach, and attention to intuitive and imaginal processes” (Stehlik, 2008, p. 237). The intentionality of utilizing the artistic realm goes much deeper than that. Steiner believed that the curriculum should be nourished through a living context of rhythm and color: “Rudolf Steiner states that life is to be experienced in the same way that art is experienced. Both are inner experiences expressed through the senses” (Richards, 1980, p. 3). Since the arts live in the *soul* realm of feeling, the arts help connect the *body* and the *spirit*.

The three realms of *thinking*, *feeling*, and *willing* are integrated through the arts, allowing students to experience their coursework through different ways of perceiving: “Subjects which appeal almost exclusively to mental activity will risk leading to sleepiness if they are not accompanied by activities which involve the waking life of the body: handwork, writing, eurythmy, singing, playing music, or gymnastics” (Richards, 1980, p. 34). For example, the movements in eurythmy can aid in the understanding of a poem, allowing the students to feel the movement of the word, or bring a deeper understanding of geometry by walking the geometric shapes.

Overall, Waldorf education offers the child the ability to observe, feel, and experience the curriculum rather than to simply learn abstract concepts or study theory. With a holistic, integrated approach to learning, the whole being of the child is nurtured throughout her or his journey into adulthood, instilling a love for lifelong learning. By recognizing that other mediums exist for cognition beyond our heads, learning becomes richer, emotionally infused, and more connected to a world greater than our individual selves.

The primary research question of this dissertation is: How can teaching and learning through art and aesthetic experiences in a Waldorf school lead to care for the environment?

Three related questions also guided my study:

1. How does the teacher describe the meaning and intent of her/his methods with relation to connecting students to the environment? And how does the teacher enact this intent?
2. How do the students respond to the teachers' methods with relation to care toward the environment?
3. What relationship exists, if any, between the student's concept of care for the environment and how they learned?

Waldorf education is uniquely suited to answer these questions as the arts play such a prominent role, integrated throughout its curricula. In the next chapter I describe the research methods used to attain these answers.

CHAPTER IV

METHODS

The purpose of the study is to explore how art and aesthetic experiences might influence a student's development of care toward the environment. The methodology I employed for the study was a single bounded case to address the primary research question: How can teaching and learning through art and aesthetic experiences in a Waldorf school lead to care for the environment? Three related questions also guided my study:

1. How does the teacher describe the meaning and intent of her/his methods with relation to connecting students to the environment? And how does the teacher enact this intent?
2. How do the students respond to the teachers' methods with relation to care toward the environment?
3. What relationship exists, if any, between the student's concept of care for the environment and how they learned?

I begin this chapter by explaining my choice of case study as a methodology. Next I describe the site and participant selection, data collection methods, and approach to data analysis and synthesis. The chapter concludes with a discussion of validity.

Methodology

The aim of case study methodology is to examine the phenomenon narrowly and deeply over a long-term research period in order to gather rich, intensive (multiple sources) data (Swanborn, 2010). By conducting a case study, we “gain detailed understanding of that case, and hope from this understanding to shed light on the wider phenomenon of which that case is an example” (Court, 2003, p. 4). With this in mind, the purpose of choosing case study methodology was to first and foremost understand the relationship between the aesthetic and arts-based pedagogy of

Waldorf education and the development of care toward the environment in this specific case. To distinguish this from an ethnographic case study, I also turned outward from my selected case in order to extrapolate to the field of EE insight gained about the nature of this phenomenon (Stake, 1995; Court, 2003; Swanborn, 2010).

In addition to drawing on Court and Swanborn's purviews of case study methodology, I relied on three criteria offered by Yin (2003) in my decision to use case study methodology: "a) the type of research question posed, b) the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioral events, and (c) the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events" (p. 5). Correlating to Yin's first criterion, the central question of the study was explanatory in that I set out to answer a "how" question, which is one of two types of questions that meet the requirements conducive to a case study. The second criterion applies because I conducted the study in a real-life classroom where I did not have control over the research setting or the participants. Finally, the third criterion was met in that the context of the Waldorf school was relevant and necessary for studying the phenomenon. In other words, I did not examine the teaching method as an isolated phenomenon; rather I investigated the Waldorf teachers' arts-based pedagogy in context of the teaching and learning process as it relates to the possible development of care for the environment.

I also drew from Stake (1995) who insists that the case, or object of study, is an integrated system bounded by time and place. In this study, the school calendar – in terms of a single school year and of a k-12 education – offered the boundary of time while the Waldorf School bounded the study by place. The different parts of the system included the curricula, the teachers' methods and intentions, and the students' learning. Both Yin (2003) and Stake (1995) describe the importance of context while investigating the phenomenon. Likewise, Walters (2007) states,

“case study does not ignore context but it focuses on the case situated within a context” (p. 93). In addition, Yin (2009) and Stake (1995) discuss the importance of converging evidence, meaning multiple sources of evidence. To gain holistic understanding of the study context and allow for analysis of converging patterns across multiple sources of evidence, I designed the research data collection to include five sources of evidence (Table 2).

Finally, a qualitative case study may be conducted with either a single case or through multiple cases (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). My decision to conduct a single case study for this research follows criteria described by Yin (2003). The first rationale I took into account was whether the study represents the “critical case” (Yin, 2003, p. 40) and thereby would be expected to contribute to knowledge and theory. The selected Waldorf school constitutes a critical case because it embraces an educational philosophy that encompasses the feeling realm wherein the teachers infuse art and aesthetic experiences into their pedagogy. While representative of Waldorf more generally, this is unique when compared to many non-Waldorf, k-12 schools. The second criterion was whether the selected single case acts as the “representative or typical case” whereby “the objective is to capture the circumstances and conditions of an everyday or commonplace situation” (Yin, 2003, p. 41). The selected Waldorf school represents Waldorf education generally for two reasons: 1) almost all Waldorf teachers view the child through the same developmental lens and 2) although some variation exists from school to school, all Waldorf classrooms operate under the guise of the same curriculum. For example, all third grade classrooms have a farming block. Finally, a third rationale was conducting a longitudinal study: “studying the same single case at two or more different points in time...would likely specify how certain conditions change over time” (Yin, 2003, p. 42). For the study, I spent time with multiple grades from ECC-12th grade throughout the entire school year in order to observe how arts-based

pedagogy changed in the curriculum over time. I also asked students to reflect upon their experiences in earlier grades during interviews, thus adding a longitudinal perspective to the data.

Site Selection

The single bounded case study included the teachers and students of a Waldorf school that encompassed grades 1 to 12 and an Early Childhood Center (ECC). Criteria for site selection included a school fully accredited through the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA). In addition, I desired that the school span the entire 12 grades and include an ECC in order to capture the holistic nature of the Waldorf curriculum across the grades and throughout the child's development. Finally, Waldorf education in general is known for its close connection to the natural world through incorporating nature into its classrooms, curriculum, and festivals. The selected Waldorf School was no exception, specifically stating environmental stewardship as one of its core values and priding itself that breathing nature is a daily part of the school.

Founded in 1984 and the oldest of three Waldorf schools in its state, the school is comprised of two campuses. The main campus, where the ECC and grade school (1-8) are located, is one of six schools (5 private, 1 public) in a small town (population 8,000) in New England. The high school (9-12) campus is located in a neighboring town (population 4,803) nine miles northwest. The 243 students (166 families) hail from 25 towns with commutes ranging from as near as a few hundred feet to as far as 60 miles. The school has graduated six high school classes beginning in 2010. The faculty includes 35 members: 2 ECC teachers, 8 class teachers, 6 high school core subject teachers, plus ECC aides and teachers of music, art, eurythmy, movement, and foreign language. Of the 35 faculty members, nineteen have had some form of Waldorf education training (e.g. certification, master's degree, coursework); all of the ECC-8th grade teachers possess some level of Waldorf training.

The main campus sits on 80 acres of field and forest in a rural setting on the outskirts of town. The main campus facilities consist of 8 buildings. On one side of the street are a restored farmhouse housing administrative offices, a barn utilized by the caretaker, and the ECC building with two kindergarten classrooms, the nursery classroom, and the public relations/alumni office. Across the street are two class buildings (1-4 and 5-8), a handwork building, a community hall and the main office. The basement below the 5-8 building houses the woodworking classroom and the eurythmy room and full kitchen are found in the community hall. The high school leases the top floor of one of the 28 buildings located on a 1600-acre site that was once a former school for the intellectually disabled.

Both locations offer ample outdoor space. The main campus boasts five playgrounds with forest and fields adjacent to them as well as a 5K trail system used for walking and cross country skiing. The trails are not open to the public; however, the wider school community (family, friends, alumni) can use the trail system for their own year-round recreation. The school's trail system connects to a larger 20K trail system that is owned by a neighboring company, which the school is allowed to use. The high school has access to trails located on public land across the road from the campus. At the main campus, a large garden area located next to the administration building provides space for the farm block that occurs every year in the third grade. Each third grade teacher and her class decide how they will use the space and what they will grow. In the forest, special names describing specific locations – such as the witches' tree, gnomeville, and the campsite – have been handed down in oral tradition from class to class. For example, the campsite refers to a small clearing in the forest with a picnic table and dead end trail leading to an outhouse. Here the third grade has their first overnight experience – a right-of-passage that marks the beginning of the annual camping trip for years to follow.

The classrooms at the main campus are pleasant, beautiful, clean and tidy spaces with an overall cozy, warm feeling. Filled with natural wood in the form of cubbies, benches, desks, chairs, floors, and trim, classrooms have nature tables at the front of the room displaying various natural items the children have collected during the year, such as rocks, shells, pine cones, bark, and leaves. Plants, throw rugs, baskets, and candles also fill the classrooms, each of which is painted in a soft pastel color with flowy, chiffon curtains and Chinese lanterns covering the lights, both matching the wall color. As part of the Waldorf philosophy, the room color matches the child's stage of development. Unlike many conventional education classrooms, all of the Waldorf classrooms have chalkboards. Students have their own cubbies at the entrance of the classroom where they keep their jackets and backpacks and at the end of the day their indoor shoes. They also have their own bowls and mugs that are kept by the sink. The uncluttered walls of the classrooms often display student work – paintings and drawings – or copies of famous works of art, such as the Mona Lisa or Van Gogh's Starry Night.

Data Collection

The intent of the case study was to gain a holistic understanding of the relationship between the aesthetic and arts-based pedagogy of the Waldorf teacher and students' possible learning to care for the environment. To accomplish this, I collected three forms of data: participant observation, interviews, and documents and artifacts (Table 2). I describe each in further detail below. The case study considered student learning and development over the span of the 13 years at the school using the 12th grade students during the 2011-12 school year as the reference point for learning to care for the environment. Seven of the eleven 12th graders had been students at the school since ECC and an eighth began in the fourth grade. I interviewed ten of these

students as one elected not to participate in the study at the interview level. Six teachers were also interviewed.

Table 2

Sources of evidence collected as they relate to the study's three sub-questions

	Semi-Structured Interviews (Teachers) (n=6)	Semi-Structured Interviews (12th grade students) (n=10)	General Observation	Focused Observation	Document Examination
How does the teacher describe the meaning and intent of her/his methods with relation to connecting students to the environment? And how does the teacher enact this intent?	X		X	X	X
How do the students respond to the teachers' methods with relation to care toward the environment?	X	X	X	X	X
What relationship exists, if any, between the student's concept of care for the environment and how they learned?	X	X		X	X

Participant Observation

The study included two phases of observations: general observations and focused observations. The general observations took place at the start of the school year with the eleven 12th graders and included:

- 1 main lesson period during their zoology block;
- 3 full days over their 5-day camping field trip during their zoology block; and
- 1 entire day that included chorus, morning meeting, morning lesson, science, French, and humanities.

During general observations, I took written field notes of the activities of the teachers, the students and the setting. I also took photographs during the field trip. The purpose of the general observations was to become acquainted with the twelfth grade class and gain insights into "a day in the life" of the 12th grade students, as well as their culminating experiences as a student at the school. Additionally, I conducted general observations with the younger grades to form an overall impression of the rhythm of the school day and of the relationship between the teacher and students. Overall, these observations served as a way to familiarize myself with Waldorf classes at key ages throughout their development, focusing on daily routines, lessons and activities. These general observations took place with the following grades:

- 4 main lesson periods with the 1st grade during their Form drawing block (this included observing music and their weekly nature walk);
- 2 main lesson periods with the 2nd grade during their St. Christopher Play block;
- 2 main lesson periods with the 3rd grade during their money block, which included an introduction to their farm block;
- 2 main lesson periods with the 6th grade during their South American geography block;
- 2 main lesson periods with the 7th grade during their Renaissance block;
- 1 morning with the ECC with one of the kindergarten classes and during recess;
- 1 handwork period with the 3rd grade;
- 1 woodworking period with the 7th grade;
- 1 full day with 1st through 12th grade during the Michaelmas Festival; and
- 1 morning with the ECC for their Lantern Walk festival.

Focused observations took place in designated classrooms during specific blocks throughout the year in the lower grades. These took place after the 12th grade interviews. The intention of these observations was to observe 1) art in the learning environment (classroom or other), 2) how the teacher used and presented different aesthetic mediums, 3) how students visually, audibly, and physically interacted with the aesthetic medium, 4) the interactions between student-teacher, teacher-environment, and student-environment, and 5) changes in teaching methods over the span of the 13 grades. Overall, the intent of the focused observations was to observe how the arts and aesthetic experiences affect the teaching and learning relationship.

I selected grades and blocks for the focused observations based on the following criteria: 1) themes that arose from the 12th grade student interviews, 2) learning blocks most translatable to EE, 3) classroom activities/learning blocks most representative for the use of the arts in a Waldorf school, 4) diversity of grades, 5) working relationships among researcher and classroom teacher, and 6) research schedule. It was my original intention to spend the entire designated block with the specific grade. Main lesson blocks in the grades classes lasted between 3 ½ and 4 weeks with main lesson occurring for 2 hours each morning. Blocks in the high school were 10-19 days with main lesson occurring for 1.5 hours, five days a week. However, in some instances, scheduling conflicts and wishes of the teacher prevented this. The specific grades and their respective blocks observed are below. The 1st grade nature walk was not a block per se, but an activity that occurred every Monday throughout the year regardless of the block:

- 2 main lesson periods with the 1st grade during their nature walks;
- 3 main lesson periods with the 2nd grade during their Outdoor classroom block;
- 5 main lesson periods with the 4th grade during their Animal block; and

- 3 main lesson periods with the 7th grade during their Astronomy and Poetry blocks.

During focused observations, I took written field notes. I was allowed to take still photographs outside of the classroom during the 1st, 2nd, and 7th grade observations. With permission, I also audio recorded the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade children singing. During focused observations, I started out using an observation guide (Appendix A). However, the guide felt extremely limiting to what I observed in the classrooms, so I ceased using it and instead noted all aspects of interactions observed relevant to the study.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted with two different groups of participants: teachers and students. I conducted two rounds of interviews with the 12th grade students, the first at the beginning of the school year and the second at the end of the school year (n=10; there were eleven 12th grade students but one declined to participate in the study). The first round of interviews took place over the course of three days, and each interview lasted between 20 and 50 minutes. The purpose of these interviews was to gain an overall sense of the students' experience as a Waldorf student. In addition, the interviews focused on memorable experiences each of them had with relation to nature during their time in the lower grades. Two of the students, however, began attending the school in the 9th and 10th grades respectively. These interviews focused on their experiences at the high school level only, as well as comparisons to their former education. The interview questions may be found in Appendix B.

The second round of student interviews took place at the end of the school year and included only those 12th graders who had been enrolled at the school prior to entering high school (n=8). Of these eight students, six attended the school continuously since the ECC, one enrolled

in the fourth grade having been homeschooled in a Waldorf setting earlier, and one began school in the ECC with her present cohort but left for her 9th grade year and returned in 10th grade.

Due to the students' tight schedule at the end of the school year, these interviews lasted between 13 and 25 minutes. Although rushed by time constraints, these interviews allowed opportunity to focus on understanding the students' perspective regarding relationships and care in addition to play, imagination, and aesthetic experience. Both sets of interviews with the 12th grade students were semi-structured, took place in person, and were audio-recorded. The questions for the second round of student interviews may be found in Appendix C.

I also conducted interviews with the six teacher participants – 1st, 2nd, 4th, 7th grade teachers, the high school humanities faculty, and high school science faculty. The 7th grade teacher interview took place after the astronomy block in December, while those with 1st, 2nd, and 4th grade faculty took place at the end of the year after all of the classroom observations were completed. The two high school faculty were interviewed a year later after the data collection was complete. The purpose of these interviews was to explore the teacher's intention and understanding of their pedagogy with relation to how the pedagogy informs learning, and, from their experience, how it affects their students specifically with respect to care for the environment. These interviews were semi-structured, took place in person, and were audio-recorded. The questions for the teacher interviews may be found in Appendix D.

Finally, I conducted informal interviews with 9 other faculty that occurred in conjunction with down time during observational periods, recesses, festivals and field trips. These conversations generally addressed pedagogical decisions made by them at that specific time and their connection toward indications of childhood development. In total, I observed 17 teachers

and interviewed 6. I had several informal conversations with 7 subject teachers during festivals, breaks or during recess.

It was my original intention to interview students in the ECC through 11th grade in as much of an organic fashion as possible during activities of observational periods for the purpose of helping me to understand the students' experience during a specific activity. However, these did not take place due to the wishes of the classroom teachers, who feared my presence would distract the children. Greater access to all students and longer second round interviews with the 12th grade, as well as data collection from parents and the school's alumni, might have enhanced the findings.

Documents and Artifacts

Finally, I examined documentation provided by classroom teachers, which included main lesson books, artwork, and thank you letters to organizations who hosted field trips. Photographs were taken of these documents.

Participant Confidentiality

At the outset of the study, all participants and their guardians signed consent forms. In order to protect the identity of each participant, several precautions were used throughout the study to ensure confidentiality. Each teacher participant was provided a pseudonym, and each student participant was provided a code used throughout the study in field and interview notes, photographs, and interview transcripts. A separate document linking identifiable information to the teacher pseudonyms and student codes was stored separately by encrypted computer files to which I had sole access. Finally, all audio-recorded interviews were downloaded and securely stored on computer files. Upon completion of the study, all audio-recorded interviews and photos will be destroyed. Despite these precautions, given the small size of the school, I cannot

guarantee that teacher and/or student participants at the school will not be able to guess an individual's identity.

Data Analysis

The analysis procedure occurred in four stages. The first stage involved transcribing the audio-recorded student and teacher interviews. In addition, observation notes and memos were organized. Two copies each of the interviews, observation notes and memos were printed and read through. Stage two involved confirming that Waldorf education uses aesthetic experience as a teaching method by viewing it through the lens of the six educational themes introduced in Chapter 2 that characterize what makes an experience aesthetic: connections, active engagement, sensory experience, perceptivity (re-seeing), risk taking, and imagination. This part of the analysis procedure was not used to generate data for the study, but rather as a simple check to ensure that Waldorf education did indeed utilize an aesthetic pedagogy. Stage three involved coding the data inductively into themes with respect to the research's three sub-questions, first from the perspective of teaching and then from the perspective of learning. Finally, stage four involved organizing the themes that emerged for each research sub-question into broader categories that address the primary research question: How can teaching and learning through art and aesthetic experiences in a Waldorf school lead to care for the environment?

Validity

There were four possible validity threats (Kapala and Suzuki, 1999; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Maxwell, 2005; Scott and Morrison, 2007; Yin, 2009) to the research study: researcher influence on the site and on the participants, data bias, misinterpretation of observational meaning, and researcher bias. Each of these validity threats and the strategies that were

employed in the study's methods and procedures to help rule them out are explained in detail below.

Researcher Influence on Site/Participants: When observing educational settings, my experience has shown that a new person or phenomenon in a classroom environment piques children's curiosity, leading them to become distracted and incur behaviors seen as uncommon in their normal daily routine. But by conducting long-term observations, I was able to see beyond possible superficial behaviors expressed by children who may be excited or shy about a visitor. Some teachers were cognizant about introducing me and acknowledging me throughout the day, while others treated me as if I was not in the room. This seemed more of an individual teacher's choice rather than based on the age of the students. By visiting for the entire school year – in and out of classrooms, at festivals, etc. – my presence seemed less foreign and allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the teaching and learning processes of each classroom.

In addition, due to the longevity of the study, it was possible as a qualitative researcher that I could have developed an emotional connection with both the setting and participants. However, I did not develop personal relationships with any of the faculty, staff, or students, and I was emphatic about employing the use of reflection and analysis to ensure that my interactions did not bias the data.

Data Bias: Conducting a research study and collecting data from only one source through one method is a clear indication of data bias. In addition, if data is being collected through different methods, bias may still be present if it is the same *kind* of evidence. For the study, I collected evidence from four sources (teacher, students, my own notes/journals, and student work) and through three methods (interviews, observation, document examination). In addition, while collecting and analyzing the data, my aim was to ensure that the evidence I collected

reflected the phenomenon being studied. For example, during the student semi-structured interviews, my guiding questions were similar for all interviews (Appendix B). Also, I provided a structured guideline to follow during the focused observation period (Appendix A). These guidelines permitted for multiple interpretations of the data while at the same time ensured that the data was viewed through a consistent lens (however, I did not solely use the guide during observation periods).

Researcher Bias: To help alleviate researcher bias as a validity threat in this study, I kept a research journal where I wrote down reflections from each day I was at the school, noting any awareness of presuppositions. In addition, during the data analysis and interpretation phase of the study, I searched for discrepant evidence and/or alternative explanations of how participants may have developed care toward the environment.

Misinterpretation of Observational Meaning: During this study, I performed member checks by having the observations be part of the interview process in that I verbally recalled my observations for both the teacher and student participants in order to confirm my understanding of the observational data. In addition, documents such as drawings, letters, paintings, main lesson books, and portfolios were analyzed with the participants during the interview process.

Having described the case study methodology, study site and participants, specific methods of data collection and analysis, and the strategies used to ensure validity, I present the results of this research in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS

Grade 2 Adventures with Lalli and Edgar

With backpacks on and lunches in hand, the second graders walk in a disorderly line across the field toward the forest where Mr. Gold, their teacher, has set up their campsite. As we draw nearer to the forest, their chatter turns to squeals, their stride quickens and then turns into an all-out run up the trail. One boy passes me yelling over his shoulder to no one in particular that he wants to see what Lalli and Edgar have left them.

Today is the second day of Grade two's Outdoor Classroom Block. For the next three weeks, the students and Mr. Gold will spend their entire day (8:30-2:30) in the woods behind the school. Mr. Gold introduced the Outdoor Classroom to his class as first graders by telling them the story of Edgar and Lalli who are tree root gnomes living in the forest behind the school. He first "learned" about Edgar and Lalli through a gentleman named Mr. Barthalomew, a retired botanist he met at a hardware store. Mr. Barthalomew lives just down the road from the school and used to conduct research in the woods. He became friends with Lalli and Edgar many years ago.

Mr. Gold originally created Mr. Barthalomew, Lalli and Edgar and brought them to the children through story, sharing the adventures of the root gnomes with the intention of exploring trees. One of his first tales revolved around a huge uprooted tree he found. He explained to the children that it was Lalli and Edgar's old home and that during their outdoor classroom, they would build a new home for them:

I think Edgar and Lalli speaks to the magic of nature because in the stories of

Edgar and Lalli, which you weren't privy to in first grade, there were all kinds of

other animal characters. There was the bear, there was the owl, there was the turtle, and the snake. So you know, there were all these other characters involved. So they really had an appreciation for nature (Mr. Gold, Class 2 Teacher, personal communication, June 12, 2012).

Mr. Gold introduced each story by telling the students he had just recently visited with Mr. Barthalomew, who had shared with him another story about Lalli and Edgar. In Mr. Gold's imagination, which he described in detail to the children, Mr. Barthalomew was bald with a big, grey beard, and an English accent. He would sit by his fireplace in an old leather chair and they would enjoy tea and biscuits.

As I catch up with the students, they are excitedly out of breath peering wide-eyed at a circle of flat river stones arranged around two items gift-wrapped in birch bark and tied with a leaf ribbon and flowers. Some of the students are touching the stones reverently, seemingly in awe that Lalli and Edgar placed each rock there. The children keep each other in check, asking one another not to touch the display. Mr. Gold takes special notice of the beauty and care put into each package as he ceremoniously unties the leaf ribbon. Inside are wooden pencils, one for each child. The pencils look as if they were carved from a twig – gifts from Lalli and Edgar thanking the children for their help in building them a new home. The children are careful and gentle with their gifts; some tuck them immediately in their bags while others hold on to them tightly.

Everything that Lalli and Edgar share with the children came from the woods, and vice versa. Rather than leave behind corn chips or other processed foods as snacks for the gnomes, the children gather berries and nuts. And gifts that Lalli and Edgar make the children were

created from nature and thoughtfully and beautifully put together, right down to how they would leave notes – tied to a branch with small stems rather than using a shoelace or string:

So it all kind of fed this idea of nature and things from the woods. I think it deepened their appreciation for nature and I think it deepened their belief, if you will, that they really exist. So I think it helped feed, you know, this appreciation and magic and hopefully desire to understand it more (Mr. Gold, Class 2 Teacher, personal communication, June 12, 2012).

The excitement over the pencils wanes, and Mr. Gold and the children switch gears. The children disperse, some gather material for Lalli and Edgar's house while others collect roots, leaves, and flowers to make soup. As the children collect these materials, many pick sticks up off the ground, break off tree branches from downed trees, move rather large logs, and one group actually uproots a small tree. As I witness their activity, some of it can feel quite damaging and uncaring towards the woods. However, the children are only thinking about Lalli and Edgar's house and getting enough materials for their friend's home. They look at the tree limbs as materials in their imaginative play and are not concerned with whether it is a fir or beech tree or whether it has whorled or alternate branching. The tree is simply a prop in their world of root gnomes. Similarly, the root gatherers are not really admiring the roots and flowers, but are just thinking about gathering them to make the soup. Rather than wishing to learn more about the items they utilize, the children are content to be in their imaginative world; Lalli and Edgar's world. Nature is simply a prop, a tool. However, Mr. Gold does tell the students to thank the forest for using materials to build with and to only collect downed things.

Witnessing these second graders at play in the woods in this manner, one may think that they are not respecting nature, or caring at all for the trees or flowers or land. However,

developmentally, Waldorf teachers believe that you cannot teach a second grader to love a tree by telling them what kind of tree it is; the children are simply not there yet. Knowing this, instead Mr. Gold created Lalli and Edgar, understanding that the time caring for them and for their home will plant the seeds of care later in life as twelfth graders and adults.

Questions 1a and 1b: Teachers' Intent and Its Enactment

In this chapter, I present my findings beginning with the first research question: *How does the teacher describe the meaning and intent of her/his methods with relation to connecting students to the environment? And how does the teacher enact this intent?* The findings resulted from analysis focused on the data reflecting the teachers' perspectives: How did they present their curriculum? What materials did they use? What experiential teaching opportunities did they offer? How did they utilize nature? How did they specifically present and interact with their environment (classroom or outdoors)? Table 3 presents, in no particular order, the themes that emerged, which I describe in further detail below.

Table 3

Teachers' Intent and Associated Mechanism for Implementation

Themes Related to Teachers' Intent	Mechanism of Implementation
Nurturing beauty	presenting beautiful space, taking care of physical space, habit life
Reverence for life	modeling respectful behavior, ritual, ceremony
Nurturing relationships	using nature as metaphor, spending time outside, storytelling, incorporating the elementals
Awe and wonder	hands-on experience
Mystery and exploration	hands-on experience
Embodiment	active engagement

Nurturing Beauty (presenting beautiful space, taking care of physical space, habit life)

The theme nurturing beauty surfaced throughout my observations and during teacher interviews. The grades classrooms in Waldorf schools are known for being beautiful, and my research site was no exception. Teachers intentionally surround their students with beautiful spaces – neat classrooms painted in beautiful pastels and windows covered with sheer curtains, often a softer, paler tone of the wall color. There is wood everywhere – wooden desks and chairs, ornate doors, trim, and hardwood floors. Wooden shelves hold baskets containing classroom items. Plants hang over the windows. The younger grades have nature tables that display items the children have collected from outside. Everything is neat and orderly – desks with chairs pushed in aligned in rows, children’s belongings in cubbies.

Waldorf teachers pay particular attention to their classrooms, ensuring that they are beautiful and that, overall, they are warm and inviting:

So the room holds them, and I feel as though when they’re in a beautiful place, then they know without my saying it in words that I really care about them and it starts with the place I offer them (Mrs. Turner, Class 7 Teacher, personal communication, December 14, 2011).

Learning in a beautiful space is part of the teachers’ intentions, as they believe, just as Dewey did, that this encourages learning recognition of the beautiful in every day objects and occurrences.

A related mechanism of nurturing beauty in the classroom is taking care of physical space and objects. The teacher takes pride in her classroom, often invoking this same attitude in her students. This can be seen throughout the day through small gestures, nurturing of the children’s habit life, and end-of-day chores.

For example, just inside each classroom is the cubby area with benches that hold shoes on one side and tall cubbies that hold lunches, coats, and book bags on the other. Every morning students swap out their sneakers, boots, or sandals for their clogs, slippers, or other indoor shoes. As the children enter the classroom each morning, there is no need for the teacher to remind the children to complete this task, nor do the children hesitate or complain. It simply has become a part of their habit life. I noticed that sometimes in the excitement of beginning a new day, some of the children forgot to take their shoes off and their classmates quickly pointed out they are not to stray from the tiled cubby area onto the hardwood floors in the rest of the classroom with their outdoor shoes on. Also in this same area is the sink where each student has her own ceramic mug. These mugs are used during snack and lunch or throughout the day for a drink of water. After they are used, the children returned them neatly on the shelf. Throughout the day I observed the teacher taking pause to make things just right – aligning desks and chairs, keeping them in straight rows, asking students to clean up the cubby area or to clean up their desks after work time. Some teachers even sing a song to focus the children on cleaning their space at the end of work time.

Chores are another way that the teacher models taking care of the classroom. At the end of each day, the children take part in cleaning, rotating different chores every week. This, again, gives the children the opportunity to think about the space in which they live throughout the day, ensuring that it remains clear of dirt and stays clean and neat:

But I think they are just beautiful and aesthetic and beauty is something that makes a big impression on the children. Learning in a beautiful space and knowing how to care for your environment is also something that makes an impression on how they grow, how they take care of themselves, how they value

and respect the environment. If I wouldn't take care of things, why should they?

(Mrs. Grey, Class 1 Teacher, personal communication, June 12, 2012).

One last example of taking care of physical space or objects is the modeling of care toward the children's flutes. Children in Waldorf schools are introduced to flutes as first graders. Each morning at the end of Main Lesson, Mr. Abbot, the music teacher, visited the first graders. The children moved their desks to the side of the room and brought their chairs into a circle on the rug. Mr. Abbott asked the children to sit with their palms curled, facing the ceiling, resting on their knees. Holding the flute in both hands, he gently and ceremoniously presented each child with a flute. They were instructed to hold them like this until everyone had a flute. Then, he began the day's lesson, during which he spoke the entire time in a soft, quiet voice and modeled gentle care for the flutes.

At the end of the lesson, Mr. Abbott introduced swabs for cleaning, explaining that this is one of the most important parts of playing the flute. He silently demonstrated this by cleaning his own flute with a swab. Then he walked around the circle giving each child a swab. They each had a different reaction: some smelled it, others touched the fabric, some compared it to their flute, some just looked at it. Then the children followed his lead and swabbed their flutes. When all of the children's flutes were clean, Mr. Abbott walked around the circle collecting each flute and swab and putting them into his basket, saying "thank you" to each child. In the older grades, each child keeps their flute in their desks in a case that they have knitted.

Another intentional aspect of nurturing beauty comes through a focus on perfecting tasks through practice and repetition. Waldorf teachers seek for their students to master what they are working on, whether it be saying the morning verse, singing a song, or completing a painting. They expect these tasks to be performed well and the end product to be good. This nurtures the

ability to realize beauty in bringing a task to completion and also on understanding of the difference between something done well and correctly versus not:

It's kind of like developing the ability to care about things. And that's in artistic work. I mean, it's in speech. And all that comes from this practicing. Like it matters if it's good or not. It matters that I can hear whether I'm saying "tu", "du", or "mmm", whatever those sounds are. And singing. You don't just sing a couple songs. All right. We sang it a couple times. Let's sing a new song. You sing it and then you sing it until you can sing it well and then you sing it in two parts because that would be really cool. You develop not just the feeling for perfecting something or really caring that it's good, but just the act of singing develops subtle capacities within somebody - singing or painting or drawing or any of those things a subtle feeling for color or for tone or sound or any of those things or how you move your hand actually - oh, I can move it this way, move it that way. So it's not always specifically related to one subject. It's just developing the ability to sense something finely and then - then you can care about it. But if you can't take it in, you don't know it's there. Then you don't care so much about it (Mrs. Curtis, Class 4 Teacher, personal communication, June 12, 2012).

Overall, the children have opportunity to learn through watching their teachers and from direct experience that their classroom and the items within form an important part of their day and are to be cared for and respected, and that their endeavors are to be done correctly and beautifully.

Reverence for Life (modeling respectful behavior, ritual, ceremony)

A second theme is a reverence for life. The teacher impresses upon the children a reverence for life through modeling respectful behavior with both nature and each other. This was obvious one day when a spider interrupted the second grade right at the end of their recitations. The children did not squirm or squeal and stepping on it did not come up as an option. Mr. Gold did not make a big deal of its presence, and instead simply picked it up, spoke to the children quietly while acknowledging the spider in his hand, and gently put it out the back door.

The younger grades also have nature tables. When the children spend time outside, they often bring a treasure back with them from nature that is special to them and put it in a special place. These nature tables have an altar feel to them, with flowers and a flowing pastel cloth covering the table. Shells, sticks, acorns, and other items are neatly placed on the table for display.

A reverence for life is also evident in the use of ritual and ceremony both in the classroom and for seasonal festivals. Ritual in Waldorf education makes use of formal solemnities that celebrate specific times of the school year through a rich and elaborate festival life. These include, for example, the Michaelmas festival in the fall, the Advent spiral by the Kindergarten in early winter and the May Day festival in the spring. During many festivals there is singing and eating; some have a choreographed procession, play, or dance while others are more informal and less orchestrated.

A certain degree of magic underlies festival life that marks a rite of passage in a child's school career, as many are specific to a certain grade. Children eagerly await their year to participate and then look back with nostalgia when the baton is passed to a younger grade. As the

festival marks a certain point in the child's life, they also follow the rhythm of the seasons, connecting the child and her school year to nature.

At the same time, the ritual in the classroom is evident in smaller gestures such as the teacher greeting the students each morning by shaking their hand as they enter the classroom, the 4th grade singing the peace song to start snack, or the 3rd grade teacher lighting a candle before telling a story. The teacher takes the extra effort to make a moment special, infusing feeling into what otherwise might be considered mundane.

Nurturing Relationships (using nature as metaphor, spending time outside, storytelling, incorporating the elementals)

Another theme that arose from the data is nurturing relationships. The data revealed that the Waldorf teacher's intent of bridging the gap between self and other manifests through the use of metaphor, spending time outside, storytelling, and incorporating the elementals.

During the younger grades, teachers will often give directions to the children or relate their every day movements or activities by using metaphors of the natural world. For example, Mr. Abbott asks the children to be tall trees, with strong roots, meaning to sit their feet flat on the floor, and sit with tall trunks, meaning to sit up straight. Another time, he directs the children with their recorders by saying they're going to visit the birds again and shows where to place their fingers over the holes by describing that birds sit on their nests, fly away, come back, fly away, come back. He then says they're going to learn how to blow a soft gentle breeze through the recorder, just like that of the Prince Pentatone when he found the pear tree. Similarly, Mr. Gold asks his students to make "a beautiful circle as round as the sun" or to be "quiet as the wings of a butterfly" when he's measuring their feet for new indoor shoes. By doing so, the teacher helps the children to connect their experiences with familiar objects or occurrences in nature.

Beginning with Kindergarten, the children enjoy ample amounts of structured and non-structured time outdoors during the day. Teachers feel being outside is a healthy part of child development. The children not only become comfortable being outside, but it also helps them to connect emotionally to special places such as the “witches’ tree”, “gnomeville”, and “the campsite,” which they then take ownership of.

In addition, children are outside in all kinds of weather – sunny and warm, chilly and rainy, frigid and snowy. Teachers embrace each day and different kinds of weather, modeling acceptance and a sense of excitement. Children are expected to have raincoats, rain pants, and mud boots if it rains, as well as appropriate warm winter clothing for the colder months. Parents receive a clothing list sent home in the summer mailing. And unless the wind chill factor becomes dangerous, recess is held outside. In addition, annual camping trips begin with the third grade and continue through twelfth grade.

Because of the school’s attitude toward being outside in all weather conditions, and because teachers utilize the outdoor environment for classes, it seems that children have developed a sense of comfort with being outside. On the first morning of Class 2’s Outdoor Classroom block, I observed the class go through their usual morning routine outside. Despite being in the field next to the parking lot with some cars coming and going, a visitor watching them (me), and red-winged blackbirds flying around and calling from trees right next to the field, the children did not become distracted. The same is true of the Class 1 students during their Monday morning walks and the 12th graders during their week-long Zoology camping field trip. All of the students seemed just as comfortable outside as they did in their classrooms. It is evident that being outdoors is not an anomaly but rather a natural part of their school day.

Finally, as I shared at the beginning of this chapter, Class 2's relationship with Lalli and Edgar is an example of how teachers in the early grades incorporate the elementals such as fairies and gnomes, and use stories to nurture relationships. Developmentally children of this age group live in their imagination; thus, they are able to believe that Lalli and Edgar truly exist in the woods behind their school. They do not have to see them to believe they are real and feel care toward their friends, and, therefore, the world in which the gnomes live. In addition, a stark difference exists between how the teachers talk about gnomes and fairies compared to how people talk to children about Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny. Rather than being used to excite children for specific holidays, the gnomes and fairies in Waldorf education are presented as special yet at the same time normal, everyday creatures that exist alongside other natural phenomena.

Many classes interacted with animals – the first grade teacher brought her dog to school every day, while the third grade had a gerbil for a classroom pet. During the fourth grade Animal block, every day for 4 weeks a different animal was brought into the classroom, including a flying squirrel that had been caught in the attic of another teacher. The children took time to observe the squirrel while in a cage in a classroom and then later outside upon its release.

Awe and Wonder (hands-on experience)

Waldorf teachers strive to have the children learn and discover from a phenomenological perspective, especially from their every day lives, and also to really perceive familiar objects in a new way. Teachers also encourage figuring problems out on one's own, observing or working through a problem until there is an a-ha moment. For example, during their Monday nature walks, Mrs. Grey and her first graders explored the forest and the trees using their senses:

One time we tried to wrap our arms around trees for measurement purposes, but also for finding where are we and how many students do we need around a tree. It also came from a story that Mr. Abbott told us about how the flutes came here from Prince Pantotime and so on... There are trees out there where the branches are cut or broken off but they still have some kind of part of the branch sticking out, and if you hit that with the stick, it makes a beautiful sound. So we would have a certain area where we felt the tree and then we would just do music (Mrs. Grey, Class 1 Teacher, personal communication, June 12, 2012).

Another example is when Mrs. Turner gave her 7th grade students an assignment to follow the sunrise over a several month period. Mrs. Turner instructed her students to watch the sunrise on the 21st of every month. They were to find a spot in their yard and from there locate the eastern horizon, drawing on a piece of paper where the sun's location was, just above it writing the date and time. And they were to repeat this on the 21st of the following month from this exact spot:

So the next month comes along. And this is lovely. Hey, Mrs. Turner, the sun moved. Are you sure? Are you really sure that's what happened? Were you sitting in a different place? No, no, no. I sat in exactly the same place. I watched. It wasn't in the same place. I said, no. I said, all right. If that's what you saw, if you're sure that's what you saw, draw it there with the time and the date (Mrs. Turner, Class 7 Teacher, personal communication, December 14, 2011).

The children followed these same steps for several more months and began to guess where the sun would rise. In addition to some in-class activities, the children began to piece together what was happening:

So that was one of those moments where I'm always thrilled when they just notice, really notice something and they don't already have a conclusion in mind. Many of them had to add on a piece of paper. I didn't draw enough of my horizon because I thought I knew where the sun was going to rise...and they figured it out - wait, wait, wait, that means, that means... (Mrs. Turner, Class 7 Teacher, personal communication, December 14, 2011).

Amazement is the key here, and that teachers provide hands-on experiences that let the children be surprised from experiencing something strange or new. Through these methods, the students truly learn to appreciate knowledge they have gained as it is living inside of them, instead of “dead” facts provided to them.

Mystery and Exploration (hands-on experience)

Similar to awe and wonder is mystery and exploration, where-by the teacher also utilizes hands-on learning experiences to investigate unknown phenomena or experiences. Many times children are afforded the freedom to investigate these mysteries at their own pace and are either facilitated lightly by the teacher or are self-guided in order for the student to ask questions they find meaningful and to come to their own conclusions.

For example, when the flying squirrel visited the fourth graders during the animal block, Mrs. Curtis asked for the children to observe him, to really look to notice things about him that they can see with their eyes rather than what they may have heard on television or read in a book.

Mrs. Curtis desired for the children to discover the squirrel and all of his qualities, noting differences when comparing it to their own bodies.

I noticed this again when the 12th graders visited the ocean and spent time first tidepooling and then observing phenomena through microscopes – the students delved directly and intimately into their subject rather than reading about it in a textbook.

It is important to distinguish that awe and wonder can most certainly be a part of mystery and exploration. However, there are times when awe and wonder are not part of mystery and exploration; that one can simply explore and investigate mysteries without encountering amazement and surprise. Both categories use hands-on experiences that engage students in very different ways, but both elicit appreciation for the phenomena at hand.

Embodiment (active engagement)

The final theme I found is embodiment. Waldorf teachers want their students to become immersed in learning experiences that are alive and have meaning, are active, engage the senses and filled with emotion. Waldorf teachers strive to move beyond superficial, busy activity, and instead want their students to become absorbed in lived experiences.

For example, during the 4th grade animal block, Mrs. Curtis narrated a story about a snake and a mongoose to the children while they acted it out – half the children played the snake while the remainder were the mongoose. She set the scene by asking the students to move their chairs and desks to the side of the room, dimming the lights and having them sit on the floor with their eyes closed. She spoke in a soft, slow voice, telling the story from the animal perspective using the word “you,” identifying the students as the animals. She spoke of encountering and approaching another animal and then described biting, killing and swallowing it in detail, all the while using the second person. At one point, the students lay on the floor and moved around

without using their limbs. With the children acting out the story rather than simply listening to it, they embodied the mongoose and the snake.

Another example is the 8th grade class trip to Rockland, Maine, where they spent five days living aboard a schooner:

We know Penobscot Bay. We know a boat. But a wooden schooner moving at the speed of wind and tide, living in that rhythm, going to bed each night with the oil lanterns on the deck, raising sail, raising the very heavy six hundred pound anchor each morning, eating on the deck in that wind-blown kind of situation, that's an experience that you could only live, right. And it has to be day after day after day after day. Plus those captains who have dedicated their life to that ship to that body of water whose mastery of their craft and their environment is so profound, that's a life-changing experience (Mr. Benton, High School Humanities teacher, personal communication, January 10, 2013).

A final example of embodiment is during the 12th grade Transcendentalist block when the students encountered several experiences that had them actively engaged. After reading Thoreau's *Walking*, one of their assignments was just to saunter, to walk aimlessly for an hour and then write about the experience. During the same block, Mr. Benton took them to the Thoreau Institute and Walden Woods where the students, in addition to spending time at the more popular pond area, also explored the more remote areas, quietly walking through the woods thinking back on what the Transcendentalists had written. Finally, Mr. Benton took them across the street from the high school and into the woods where there is a red oak that is over two hundred years old:

It was here when Maine was actually part of Massachusetts. So I've taken classes out just because most of them don't even know it's here and just to sit under that oak and to read passages from Thoreau. And under that tree something sort of special happens. I mean, this is a tree that five or six students can wrap their arms around. It's a huge. (Mr. Benton, High School Humanities Teacher, personal communication, January 10, 2013).

By actively engaging their students in such experiences, teachers are able to encourage learning on a deeper, more profound level.

In summary, teachers' intent included nurturing beauty, reverence for life, nurturing relationships, awe and wonder, mystery and exploration, and embodiment. Teachers enacted these intents through the following respective mechanisms: presenting beautiful space, taking care of physical space, habit life, modeling respectful behavior toward other, ritual, ceremony, using nature as a metaphor, spending time outside, storytelling, incorporating the elementals, hands-on experience, and active engagement. Next, I will share how students responded to these methods.

Question 2: Students' Responses to Teachers' Methods

The results described below come from my examination of the data from the students' perspectives in order to answer the second research question: *How do the students respond to the teachers' methods with relation to care toward the environment?* Table 4 presents the eight themes that emerged from the data, which I describe further below.

Table 4

Student Responses to Teachers' Methods

Student Responses to Teachers' Methods
Inherent sense of responsibility
Ability to appreciate the beauty in the ordinary
Feeling comfortable outside and being still and quiet and alone in nature
Feeling cared for
Feeling connected to elemental beings
Feeling connected to place
Engaged learning

Inherent Sense of Responsibility

I observed the Waldorf students from an early age having an overall sense of responsibility – toward their classroom, toward their peers, toward their school, toward their teacher, and toward nature. Some gestures are small – the entire second grade class searching for their peer's lost rock that Lalli and Edgar had given to her; a third grade student retrieving the class knitting basket during a class discussion about money so she would not be fidgety; two students helping to clean up yellow paint that spilled on a third student's desk; the fourth grade class asking for guidance from their teacher on how to keep their playground free of litter, which had become an issue one year; or the seventh grade class confessing during a class meeting that they were the ones misbehaving during chorus and not the 8th grade, who were initially blamed.

These observations were reinforced during the interviews with the 12th graders:

Everything – yeah, it was held with sort of respect and you don't ever hurt anything that's special, like, if you broke your pencil, and nobody would ever break their pencil (12th Grade Student #1, personal communication, November 2, 2011).

Yeah, I mean, we were always, you know, looking at the trees and don't take the bark off the trees, don't, like, throw sticks or pull them off the branches, don't pick leaves. Yeah. So then I would like to [act the same way] when I went home too (12th Grade Student #1, personal communication, November 2, 2011).

I remember with lunch, we tried not to have a trash can in the room, in our classrooms because we wanted to try to make it as carry/in carry out as possible, like we were on a camping trip or something (12th Grade Student #6, personal communication, November 10, 2011).

Ability to Appreciate the Beauty in the Ordinary

The second theme arises from my observations of students developing their aesthetic sense as early as the first grade. An example of this comes from viewing the third graders paint from a painting that their teacher displayed. I observed the children painting silently, drying their wet brushes before dipping them into a new color. They seemed adept at their methods, standing at their desks with their aprons on. Miss Pinkham's painting sat on an easel in the front of the room facing the children for them to reference. Some children picked different colors for the background. The only sounds came from the clinging of brushes on jars, coughs, Mrs. Pinkham's footsteps and whispers with students, and sniffles from runny noses. Because of the wet on wet painting, the children are able to blend colors to create new colors. Sometimes this happens accidentally, sometimes on purpose. The children really know the colors – they understand when and how to use them, and are not afraid to blend and water down. They have a relationship with the colors.

Another example of this aesthetic sense comes from a particular Monday morning nature walk with the first grade. Before heading outside, Mrs. Grey shared with her students in detail

about seeing beautiful leaf prints in the ice at her home over the weekend. The children were curious and showed a lot of interest in her story. When it came time for their walk, Mrs. Grey led her students across the field to the edge of the forest where they encountered the same phenomenon she had just described. It was early spring and nearby oak and beech trees were shedding their old leaves, some of which had landed on a thin patch of snow. During the warmth of the day, the snow melted and then froze the leaf in place when the overnight temperatures dipped below freezing. The children were noticeably excited to see what Mrs. Grey had just described. They let out squeals of delight as they went around picking up the leaves, noticing the leaf formations imprinted in the ice, and comparing which of the leaves made a more beautiful imprint. It was clear from my observations that the students were seeing and appreciating beauty even in something as ordinary as a leaf print in the ice.

Finally, an aesthetic sense was also evident when the students experienced something as typical as being given a pencil or going for a walk in the woods. These everyday activities were given to the students with such exceptionality that it left a lasting aesthetic impression:

So they would always make everything really special. Like we would have this butterfly basket that would present all of our new things, like, when we were allowed to use pencils in second grade they handed out special pencils for us and they're big and they're soft. And we went from our block crayons to our pencils and it was just very special. Everything was made – this is, like, worth something for you. So we would all, like, yay, here's our pencils. We can use our pencils now. And very specially we would be given our pens and our flutes and when – yeah, so whenever there was something new, yeah, it would just be given to us in

a special way (12th Grade Student #1, personal communication, November 2, 2011).

He would just walk and we'd follow. But just being in shock at just how perfect everything was just the way it was...[For instance] I like photography and stuff like that. And so I feel like that's kind of grown out of that seeing how stuff – I like coming across a perfect spot with perfect lighting and perfect everything and just being like, my God. That's just fantastic. I wish I could just freeze it just like that. Photography kind of comes the closest you can, but it doesn't come as close as it should (12th Grade Student #9, personal communication, June 1, 2012).

Feeling Comfortable Outside and Being Still and Quiet and Alone in Nature

As a whole, this student body had experience being outdoors through school activities and in some cases family life. As I mentioned earlier, it was evident from my experience working with other students outside that these students were, in general, very comfortable being outdoors. They were comfortable getting dirty, falling, and getting bumps and bruises:

And recess was the best part of the day, and we were encouraged to go catch frogs, and we were encouraged to build gnome homes and really get in touch with nature as opposed to just be chased away from nature and being told to spend more time with books (12th Grade Student #9, personal communication, November 11, 2011).

This comfort level extended to being still and quiet in nature either alone or in a larger group, which for many is no easy feat. From the second graders walking slowly through the woods during an observation walk, the fourth graders spying on the flying squirrel upon its release, the seventh graders doing a solo sit in the playground and, finally, to the 12th graders

writing poetry along the rocky shores of the Atlantic, these students were exposed to the sounds of silence only noticeable in nature:

I loved doing that, going off by yourself for an hour or so and just sitting with nature and writing about it. Even to writing about it, I just love sitting with nature. Yeah, it connected me more with my environment, and I felt closer to nature, I guess, during that week (12th Grade Student #4, personal communication, November 2, 2011).

It's a different kind of importance, but I think it's always important to touch base with nature and your roots and just sit and think and – and maybe not even think and just write down your thoughts, write down something. It may not even be pretty. It doesn't matter, and I think that's just as important as scientific research. But just in a different way (12th Grade Student #4, personal communication, November 2, 2011).

Feeling Cared For

Caring interactions were observed throughout the study between teacher and student, among peers, and community-wide. Ideally, students stay with the same teacher for 8 years. Because of this, the teacher truly gets to know the child – where they are developmentally, socially, and often knowing each child's family life intimately. This creates a learning environment based on trust and certainty:

Well, I definitely think even – yeah, by the end of the eight years, she knew each person in the class so well that she could tell if we weren't focused and knew what to do to bring us back into focus, and because of that we could – you know, she could teach us a lot better, I think. She could recognize that quickly that

something – that we weren't learning it and that we needed something different (12th Grade Student #6, personal communication, November 10, 2011).

In addition, I observed the students looking to their teachers as authority figures who were gentle and warmhearted. They responded positively to their hugs, their back rubs, and the soft-spoken tone of their voices with love and certitude. There is almost a familial relationship: "Miss Maple was a lot more like a mother if we wanted her to be. And the teachers here, if you need them, they're there for you," (12th Grade Student #1, personal communication November 2, 2011).

Community also is a large part of the school. First there is each class community wherein the parents gather for class meetings and typically become close out of necessity. Then there is the wider community of the whole school that gathers together at least three times a year for festivals, plays and other celebrations. Everyone knows each other. The students overwhelmingly responded that it was during these events that being a part of a larger community was really important; they felt special that everyone knew one another and watched out for one another. They felt connected.

Feeling Connected to Elemental Beings

Fairies and gnomes are introduced to the children in the early grades and, for many students, even earlier by their parents. Just as Mr. Gold shared the adventures of Lalli and Edgar with his students, the elemental beings represent the spirit of nature and are brought to the students through stories. The children came to think of them as real beings with whom they develop an emotional relationship:

[In] the lower grades it was more like flower children and earth fairies; appreciating the spirit of the whole thing rather than telling you not to. It just

makes you appreciate them. If you think there are fairies in this garden, you're not going to go mow it down...I mean, I never really saw them. But I mean, I felt they would appreciate what we were doing for them (12th Grade Student #8, personal communication, November 10, 2011).

As I observed children in the younger grades play in the woods, much of their time was spent either building gnome homes and fairy houses, finding places where they might live, or gathering food for them. In all of these instances, the children expressed utter devotion to these unknown beings, some of whom were their friends:

Oh, yeah, I believed in them completely. We would always go find cattails to build specifically for warmth. I remember specifically fairy houses. I love[ed] it. And we would do it at home too. And I don't think that that was a bad thing to make us believe because it...really connects you to believe that this is a sacred place, you know, we're not going to go out and destroy the earth and that type of thing (12th Grade Student #1, personal communication, June 1, 2012).

Feeling Connected to Place

For the students, the playgrounds and woods had become an extension of their classroom space. The school embodies these spaces just as much as their actual classroom building does. They are afforded much free play in these areas and as a result, engaging in imaginative free play is a natural part of their day. Certain areas of the woods have become landmarks, given special names that have been handed down from student to student over the years. They are special, sacred spaces where the children spend time either by themselves or in groups. These places are also havens for the students to retreat to when they are at school for community events. Many

students often bring the elementals into their play in these spaces, further cementing their connection to the areas as they develop real relationships with gnomes and fairies.

Gnomeville. Gnomeville's awesome. That was a place where we'd all...basically beyond the normal recess field, there's a patch of woods and we'd all build forts out of straw and hay and leaves and sticks and whatever we could find. And most of them weren't built by us. Classes in the past had all built them. And that was a really, really fun place we'd go. And if there was any place that we were begging the movement gym teacher to take us that would be gnomeville (12th Grade Student, personal communication, June 1, 2012).

Yeah, I mean, there's like certain – there's landmarks that every kid knows and like even now you – I mean, there's the gully, there's gnomeville, there's – I mean, a lot of them don't even have names...like, the tree, the lightning tree. And, like, a lot of the stuff doesn't even have names but you can just...talk about it and...any kid I went to Waldorf school with or who has been to our Waldorf school knows what you're talking about (12th Grade Student #2, personal communication, June 1, 2012).

Engaged Learning

The final theme relates to the students feeling engaged with what they are learning. Rather than simply hearing about an event, they instead become fully engrossed by experiencing what it is they are learning about. For example, for handwork students dye their own wool using natural dyes they made from plants they found in the woods; during woodworking, students made stools from trees they picked out in the woods rather than having the materials in place for them; and, during a block on European geography, a student knit an entire map of France. By

taking learning to a deeper level and experiencing something firsthand in these kinds of ways, students create meaning and develop empathy while gaining appreciation of the subject at hand:

And I think [the school] really helped with that because you're doing a bunch of composting, gardening and they actually – and drawing the botany, not just drawing it but tasting it and going out there and making – tasting the plant essences and just picking these flowers and looking at them (12th Grade Student #8, personal communication, November 10, 2011).

Well, we'll go out – like, when we have science classes about botany or biology, we'll go out and look at the animals we can see or look at the trees that we've learned about so we can identify them, you know, without looking at a page that has a little print out of what it looks like. We can actually go look at it, what it actually looks like in real life (12th Grade Student #7, personal communication, November 10, 2011).

Instead of just thinking about it and instead of just being told about it, we do it. And so we – I mean, you can tell someone how to make a gnome home three thousand times and they won't know how to make a gnome home unless they make the gnome home themselves. And then, of course, that brings – when you make the gnome home, you're obviously thinking about the gnome that's, of course, going to live there. And then you have this emotional attachment to the gnome that doesn't even exist. So it's like – I think that's a big part of it is being so – you're touching the material. You're touching the untouchable, and it's super cool (12th Grade Student #9, personal communication, November 11, 2011).

In summary, students responded to teachers' methods through an inherent sense of responsibility, an ability to appreciate the beauty in the ordinary, feeling comfortable outside and being still and quiet and alone in nature, feeling cared for, feeling connected to elemental beings, feeling connected to place, and feeling engaged in learning. Next, I will share the relationship between the student's concept of care and how they learned, which will be developed further in the Discussion chapter.

Question 3: The Relationship Between the Concept of Care for the Environment and How Students Learn

The results described below come from my analyzing the relationship between the themes that emerged from the two prior questions in order to answer the third research question: *What relationship exists, if any, between the student's concept of care for the environment and how they learned?* This resulted in three categories – morality, empathy, and appreciation – which together I found form the roots of care in this Waldorf school. Table 5 shows how each theme fits within each corresponding category. In Chapter 6, I discuss these three categories as they relate to the study's theoretical framework and other literature, setting forth a context from which to answer my primary research question: *How can teaching and learning through art and aesthetic experiences in a Waldorf school lead to care for the environment?*

Table 5

Categories Representing the Roots of Care

	Morality	Empathy	Appreciation
Teacher Intent and Enactment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurturing beauty (presenting beautiful space, taking care of physical space, habit life) • Reverence for life (modeling respectful behavior toward other, ritual, ceremony) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurturing relationships (using nature as metaphor, spending time outside, storytelling, incorporating the elementals) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awe and wonder (hands-on experience) • Mystery and exploration (hands-on experience) • Embodiment (active engagement)

<p>Student Response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inherent sense of responsibility • Ability to appreciate the beauty in the ordinary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling cared for • Feeling connected to elemental beings • Feeling connected to place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged learning • Feeling comfortable outside and being still and quiet and alone in nature
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CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

The theoretical framework for the study lies at the intersection of John Dewey's aesthetic experiences and Nel Noddings' ethic of care. Dewey's aesthetics moves beyond physical artistic treasures and instead directs attention on the processes of our every day experiences. Noddings' ethic of care focuses on being moved to care by feelings we have toward others, rather than through a moral code of right or wrong. I chose Waldorf education for its pedagogical use of the arts and aesthetics as well as the way that it infuses feelings and emotions into its curriculum, which I empirically found leads to students developing the capacity to care. This capacity to care stems from the three categories identified in Table 5: morality, empathy and appreciation. These categories emerged from analysis of the student and teacher interviews as well as observations, but they also echo the work of Dewey and Noddings. I describe the categories below, linking each to my theoretical framework. I then discuss my results as a whole within the wider context of EE.

Morality

The themes within *morality* all focus on the student looking inward and developing their inner lives – who they are, how they see themselves in the world, and whether their actions are right and good. The category is about students developing their ego, pride and the ability to recognize within themselves the will to do what is expected of them and what is right and just. Waldorf education is often referred to in the literature as being a moral education. Steiner believed that we are born with a natural inclination from the spiritual world to do what is morally right rather than learn to abide by external doctrines. Citing the importance of freedom, he believed that instead of learning through rules and regulations, individuals come into their own

inner morality “through inclinations, habits, conscience, character and temperament by guiding the imagination through stories and artistic activities” brought by the teacher (p. 35). He did not espouse dogma by providing teachers with a set of commandments or imparting a moral code by which students need to abide. He instead established a framework, whereby each child’s individual morality is developed and nurtured by the teacher through specific methods.

From my observations, this framework of morality is a progression beginning in the early grades as more “rules” based, whereby teachers model correct behavior and present that what is beautiful is good and right and what is good and right is, therefore, beautiful⁷. Many examples of this can be seen with classroom management. The teachers in the early grades would often use “good” and “beautiful” together when referring to how straight the children should be standing in line, how perfect their circle is, or how their desks should be precisely arranged. Another example can be found with the main lesson books: there is a correct way of putting together each main lesson book, and they are expected to be beautifully and neatly constructed. A third example can be found in the arts with teachers saying “beautiful” while giving praise for singing a song correctly or hitting the right note on the recorder.

In these early stages of childhood development, Steiner differs from Dewey in that he sees beauty and morality as synonymous; moral judgments about what is good and bad are equivalent to aesthetic judgments. For this reason, teachers in the early grades use a method that is rigid, and the teacher is viewed as the authority on what is right and beautiful. The idea is that through their work with students in the younger grades, the teachers eventually lead the children to become free, morally responsible individuals: “they’re all different, and they’re all stunning. So this is in them, and what has been nurtured all these years is that ability to create something

⁷ I am not arguing here that beauty and good are equivalent, but rather that in the younger grades in Waldorf education, the teachers use this method to enhance a concept of morality and an aesthetic sense.

beautiful” (Mrs. Turner, Class 7 teacher, personal communication, December 14, 2011). Here Steiner’s view of morality mirrors Dewey’s view of beauty; he saw morality as ultimately being relative and individualistic, on a spectrum that depends on each person, rather than fixed or based on a hard set of rules. He believed this must be naturally developed in the child. As the children develop, the strict authority on the part of the teacher makes way for more subjective experiences.

This category sways somewhat from the study’s theoretical framework regarding Noddings’ ethic of care, which is rooted in relations. The kind of morality that I am describing in the early Waldorf grades is based on an ethic of justice - what is right versus what is wrong: Mr. Gold not killing the spider in the classroom; the fourth grade students working toward keeping their playground free of litter; keeping your individual cubby space neat and clean. This category is all about developing a sense of self, which needs to be nurtured before we can develop relations with another. In other words, the inward-looking category of morality lays the groundwork for the next category, empathy.

Empathy

While the themes in *morality* are inward looking and deal with right and wrong, those in *empathy* extend outward and focus on the subjective relationship with the other. By definition, empathy refers to having the ability to stand in another’s shoes and relate to their emotions or experiences. However, this category goes further to whether they are emotionally connected, invested and responsive to the other.

Waldorf teachers use a creative, active, and engaging approach in their teaching methods that focus on the lived experience of the student. Steiner believed that by learning in a phenomenological way, students are able to make discoveries about phenomena through their

own direct observations and experiences. By actively interacting with the world and different phenomena, students break down the barrier between self and other; by developing the ability to view the world through a pair of eyes other than their own, they ultimately build relationships and connect emotionally.

This idea of phenomenology to infuse relationships in a child's learning is reminiscent of the lemniscate I introduced in Chapter 3, which represents the rhythmic path of thinking, feeling, and willing within a child. The teachers in the study interpreted Steiner's view of the lemniscate to portray the feeling realm as being in the moment, the present. In other words, it is the kernel within from which sprouts our emotional connections with phenomena to become actively engaged through the will, which as a result leads us to discovery through our thinking.

The idea of the lemniscate parallels the notion of Dewey's aesthetic experience. In both iterations, the subject may be compelled to marvel at an experience's beauty and artistry, which then allows her to build an empathetic relationship with the phenomena, as when the second grade students squealed at the revelation of finding Lalli and Edgar's gift of pencils in the forest, wrapped in bark, tied up with leaves, and stems and ornately arranged within a circle of stones. By participating in the aesthetic experience staged by Mr. Gold in the forest, the students developed a real caring relationship with the mythical creatures.

As a further example of an empathetic approach, I will share my own teaching experience with 9th grade students learning about the geological timeline on the first day of our Geology block in a different Waldorf school. In the gravel parking lot, the students laid down a rope measuring 92 feet, which represented the 4.6 billion years since the formation of the earth. I split the students into two groups, and each group received a duplicate set of note cards displaying geological events without the year of occurrence. Their task was to place these cards on the

timeline. Students asked, “If I don’t have the year, how am I supposed to know where it fits?” I asked them to look at the timeline as a painting they could interpret rather than a mathematical equation to solve.

Even though I initially heard exasperated grumblings, I observed them work through these frustrations of “not getting it” as they began placing the cards; their utterances turned more positive and cheery. I also observed them connecting, not necessarily with the events scribbled on the back of the cards, but more importantly with the much bigger concept of geological time. It was during this last part – the thinking part of the lemniscate and what I call the “a-ha” moment – when I observed the students step outside of the present moment and really look at the timeline and the idea of the geological timescale from a new perspective. This process is called perceptivity, one of the six educational themes that characterize what makes an experience aesthetic, which I introduced in Chapter 2. Perceptivity refers to the continuous cycle of engaging in our perceptions, actions, and reflections, which in turn helps us to make sense of our experiences. The geological timeline activity ended with a discussion about where students placed the items on the timescale versus when the events actually happened. I observed their positive impressions of this activity, and throughout the remainder of the block, we often referred back to it, leaving me with the notion that the students had developed a relationship to geological time through this experience.

From a pedagogical point of view, Waldorf teachers are known to present their curricula in a manner such that students first experience the lesson, then step back and reflect upon the product and the process from a new perspective which warrants the moment of discovery strived for in learning. This phenomenological process allows the student to build empathy for the subjects of their lessons and beyond. As the fourth grade teacher, Mrs. Curtis, explained:

developing that caring isn't always in relationship to something specific. It's not always like I'm trying to have you care about botany and so oh, good, you care about botany now. It's kind of like developing the ability to care about things (personal communication, June 12, 2012).

The category of empathy also fits well within Noddings' ethic of care. Unlike the previous category of morality, empathy is rooted in relations and feelings toward an other. "Noddings argues for a curriculum organized around 'centres of care' in which attention is given to learning how to care for ourselves, for intimate others, for associates and acquaintances, for distant others, for non-human animals, plants and the geophysical world, for the human-made world of objects and artifacts, and for ideas" (Fien, 1997, p. 439). This aligns with the basic principle of Waldorf education whereby teachers consciously guide the developing child on their journey to adulthood, fostering them to be compassionate human beings. Everything they do is mindful of this premise. The Waldorf teacher strives to engage their students in developing empathetic relationships with the other, whether that other is a classroom, an object, a sentient being, the environment, or an idea such as the geological timescale.

Appreciation

While *morality* looks inward and focuses on being proud that you are doing the right thing, and *empathy* looks outward, developing a relationship with a specific other, I consider the final category of *appreciation* as a culmination of the two. Through morality we are able to recognize what is good and beautiful; we essentially develop an aesthetic sense. Through empathy, we are able to develop relations with others outside of the self. *Appreciation* is the final progression – a combination of the two that goes to a broader, deeper level of an experience. Appreciation is to become fully aware of and immersed in the experience – recognizing it as beautiful but also

understanding why it is beautiful, and how we connect and identify with it. This leaves us emotionally connected at the core, able to find value and meaning in the whole. First you have to care for yourself (morality), then the fairies and gnomes (empathy), and finally move beyond to the larger context (appreciation). For purposes of this dissertation, appreciation as defined here is distinguished from the lay sense of the word of merely recognizing value or feeling grateful.

I envision appreciation as being synonymous with intuition, which is the highest level of knowledge in Steiner's fourfold human being introduced in Chapter 3. It is this level of knowledge that Waldorf teachers wish for their students to attain, and they attempt to do so by providing lessons that are experiential, integrated, and rich with feeling – such as the 8th grade students who, alongside their woodworking teacher, chose their own tree in the forest to cut down themselves from which they made a stool, or the 12th graders who, while spending time at Thoreau's cabin, had the opportunity to hold artifacts, read his papers, and look at his pictures.

In comparing appreciation as a category with Dewey's aesthetic experiences, I identify one important parallel beyond the phenomenological teaching methods that have been described at length. As I referred to in the empathy section, as part of my theoretical framework I introduced six themes that characterize what makes an experience aesthetic. I identify overlap with appreciation and the risk taking theme. "Risk taking" in aesthetic education is where the participants push beyond the known and familiar into "an exploration of the possible" (Girod and Wong, 2002). As with appreciation, this delving into the intriguing unknown allows students to be transformed, building relationships between self and the rich, newly discovered world they explore.

Finally, appreciation connects with Noddings' ethic of care through the feeling aspect I introduced in Chapter 2. As we progress from morality to empathy and finally to appreciation, our capacity to care continues to develop. As the final stage in this progression, appreciation is about moving beyond the dualistic I-thou relationship, and instead is about recognizing at the parts of the whole, and being awestruck and connected to a greater beauty. We are left filled with emotion, as described in Nodding's feeling: "why we care [is] nearly always tied to feelings and sentiments" (Tarlow, 1996, p. 71). Appreciation is driven by those feelings and sentiments that stir within us, motivating us to care about something larger than ourselves.

Just as intuition is the highest form of learning in the fourfold human being, I suggest appreciation is the highest stage of learning to care for the environment. I found that by developing capacities in first morality, then empathy, and finally appreciation, students were provided the necessary mechanisms that would allow them to care for the environment.

The data demonstrate that developing students' care for the environment progresses pedagogically through a child's 12 years. This evolution begins with bringing nature into the child's world, such as when the 1st grade saw the beauty of the fallen leaves' imprints in ice. It then moves outward, such as in the 2nd grade's friendship with Lalli and Edgar. Finally it expands to the 8th graders embodied experience of choosing and then cutting down the tree from which they made their stools. In order to ultimately care about the greater other, children have to first learn self-awareness and reflection about doing what is right, before using their imaginations and acknowledging the connection to the other, then ultimately moving on to reverence for a systemic whole (Figure 4).

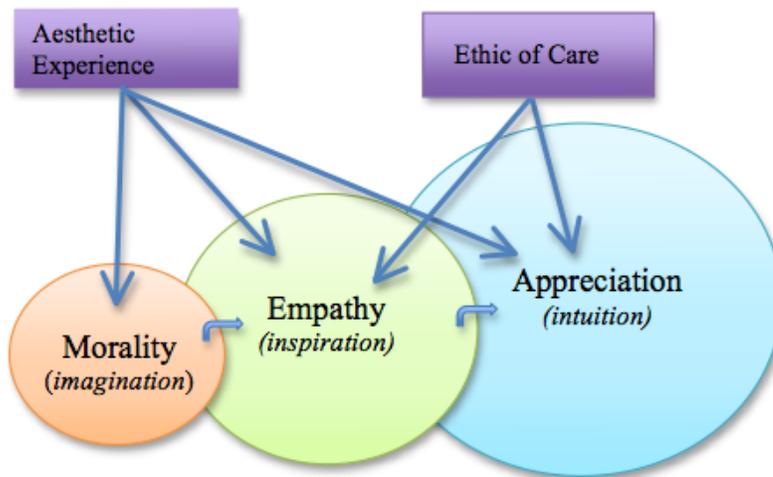


Figure 4. Relationship between theoretical framework and empirical findings.

While Waldorf teachers do not necessarily approach their pedagogical work from these categories, I found that from the early grades through grade 12, Waldorf teachers taught within the framework of morality, empathy, and appreciation:

Well, I've come to think of them as beings like myself. I don't feel that I am better than plants and trees, and I guess I feel strongly about protecting the forests (12th Grade Student #1, personal communication, November 2, 2011).

Alternative Explanations

While my empirical findings demonstrate how arts and aesthetic experience lead to care for the environment, it is important to note that other explanations for students developing care are possible. Here, I consider three alternative explanations. First, because aesthetic experience is based on each individual's subjective engagement, different people may have different experiences and, therefore, different reactions upon interacting with phenomena. While one person might walk away moved from an aesthetic experience, another may be left uninterested or unfeeling and thus without motivation to care. However, if individuals are systematically

exposed to a curriculum that nurtures morality, empathy and appreciation through multiple aesthetic experiences from the early years onward, then the learner's aesthetic sense has the opportunity to develop over time and, therefore, the student can begin the progression upward in her relationship with others and the environment.

Family life is another possible factor motivating students' care for the environment. Many of the 12th graders cited spending lots of time outside in their early years and being encouraged by parents to do so. Many students also embrace outdoor extracurricular activities with families such as hiking, camping, sailing, and skiing, which could be a factor in their developing a positive relationship with the environment. Family life also includes parental interest in environmental issues, which may influence students from an early age to develop certain proenvironmental behaviors and attitudes. Yet the elements of care I observed in the Waldorf school were evident ubiquitously, and not limited to students who came from such active families.

A third alternative includes the overall philosophy of the individual teacher and administration. Even though a specific Waldorf curriculum is offered across the grades in a particular order at all Waldorf schools, there may be some variation among offerings and facilitation from one school to the next based on the school setting, socioeconomic stature of the school, and/or teacher interest. The research site has a strong environmental ethos – beginning with its mission statement – and including the interest and dedication of the individual teachers who recognize the importance of connecting children to the environment. In addition, the student body was one that was highly involved in extracurricular outdoor sports.

As a comparison, at a different Waldorf high school where I taught, I was the only faculty member who had a passion for EE and I sometimes found it difficult to keep students engaged

and connected with the environment. I found that their interest was more issues-based and episodic – wanting to attend rallies at the state house on global warming but reluctant to tend to the compost pile on a daily basis. However, when I introduced nature-based aesthetic experiences through the Waldorf pedagogy, I observed empathetic, appreciative relationships form between the students and their environment. An important take away is that by starting young and in the manner presented here – emphasizing aesthetic experiences in the curriculum and teaching with morality, empathy and appreciation – students have a chance at developing the capacity to care for the environment.

Benefits of this Research for Practice

This research provides enhanced theoretical understanding by illuminating the pathways through which students develop morality, empathy, and appreciation through a pedagogy infused with arts and aesthetic experiences – forming the root of care for the environment. The study's findings also offer practical guidance for four groups of educators:

- veteran, novice, and pre-service environmental educators and nature-based early childhood educators;
- higher education faculty in departments serving the above programs;
- veteran, novice, and pre-service classroom teachers; and
- faculty in teacher education programs who integrate EE standards

The study's findings might encourage environmental and nature-based educators to approach their work through a lens of childhood development that foregoes a fear- and/or proficiency-based curriculum for one that cultivates beauty, imagination, and caring relations. In other words, perhaps these educators will be motivated by the benefits of incorporating, for example, a

more “Lalli and Edgar” approach to learning about trees in addition to or instead of a more traditional approach using tree and leaf keys or pictures of clear cuts.

Likewise, the study’s findings might inspire higher education faculty who prepare future environmental educators to include in their curricula child development and arts-based learning courses such as singing, storytelling, painting, and drawing to encourage their students to connect with the aesthetic experiences in education. Higher education faculty can inspire new generations of environmental educators to educate by valuing the beauty and good in the world instead of from a position of fear and hopelessness.

Veteran, novice, and pre-service classroom educators, specifically those who currently incorporate or aspire to integrate EE programming in their curricula, also can benefit from recognizing the importance of using a developmentally appropriate curriculum coupled with a relational, more heart-based approach as opposed to an entirely proficiency based and/or a possible fear-based approach. In addition, this study’s findings may inspire confidence for teachers who are perhaps intimidated by their perceived lack of skills teaching in the outdoors or integrating EE into their lessons in general.

Finally, the benefits of this study’s findings for higher education faculty members in teacher preparation programs echo those to higher education faculty in EE: to include arts-based learning courses such as singing, storytelling, painting, and drawing that encourages their students to incorporate aesthetic experiences in their curriculum design and teaching.

An Example of Aesthetic Education for EE

In all of my experiences as an environmental educator at EE centers, and as a science teacher in a public school, the subject was presented in a quantitative manner that focused on rote memorization with no context provided. Conversely, by using aesthetic experiences, the teacher

approaches the subject matter from the whole to the parts, which provides context, emphasizes the student's phenomenological experience, and develops relationships.

Here I provide an example for a 6-week 10th grade hydrology block that focused on watersheds that can be transferred to other educational settings. In Waldorf child development theory, the 10th grade adolescent embodies metamorphosis, experiencing the many physical, emotional, and cognitive changes that are inevitable throughout this stage of development. Allowing the student to feel balance and order in what they are learning is beneficial to their development. The block begins with singing and instrumentation of song selections from different genres such as John Prine's *Paradise* and Joseph Shabalala's *Rain, Rain, Rain, Beautiful Rain*. The teacher would encourage a discussion about the content and culture which inspired both songs, followed by a conversation about water in our culture and student's experiences with water (including recreation, fears, memories, interest and/or disinterest in the topic, etc). The students would then discuss watersheds, beginning with the general concept of what a watershed is without needing to define or even use the term initially, by having the students follow water they can see – mini “streams” on the landscape after a rain, or if the weather does not cooperate, having them play (yes, play) in a gravel parking lot with water as they would when they were younger at the beach, making waterways and dams with sticks and stones (I experienced this activity in the desert southwest during the second semester of my master's program). They would then discuss what they saw, the characteristics of the water on the land, where it moved and why. Slowly, the idea of the watershed will be born. The teacher and her students discuss the idea of the watershed further using the context of each song. It is important not to wash over the perils of drought and pollution (which are noted in both songs), but to be mindful of having these observations come from the student.

Continuing with the idea of the whole to the parts, the students would then move from the concept of a watershed to their own watershed, beginning with their personal home – mapping where their water comes from and where it goes. This would include the type of system they have (dug/artesian well, spring, town/city water): if it is a well, where is it located on their family’s property? How deep is it? How long ago was it drilled? The teacher would ask, how does a toilet work? The students would take a toilet apart and put it back together again, then visit a waste water treatment facility. They would research and create beautiful and accurate maps of their own personal source to sea watershed, along with interviewing parents and perhaps calling city officials to gather information. This would bring up some interesting discussions because 10th graders, much like students in younger grades, do not want to discuss what happens after the toilet is flushed. They would then visit, explore, and compare the different riparian habitats they located on their maps – looking at the different substrate, flow, vegetation, and conduct macroinvertebrate studies. These would all initially focus on student observations rather than using guidebooks for labeling. They would keep journals and write reflections at the end of each day – always returning to song, introducing new ones along the way. The block would end with group discussion about the entire experience followed by a self-evaluation and overall reflection.

This is an example, but this kind of teaching cannot be reduced to a method. The teacher must be mindful and have intention behind their actions. Additionally, teachers must always observe her students, listening to them and following their development in the block, slowing down or speeding up accordingly.

Environmental educators aspire to create an ecologically aware and ecoliterate citizenry whose amended attitudes lead to pro-environmental behavior. This study illustrates how teaching to care about nature and the environment can be achieved through a humanistic approach.

Relationship With EE Literature on Care

Ultimately, any type of EE can benefit from incorporating the Waldorf teaching methods I have described in order to model and promote care. Similarly, this study advances the theoretical discussion of care in EE by presenting a holistic pedagogical model. As discussed in the Introduction, much of the literature on care focuses on the need to build emotional relationships with the environment. In general, this study aligns with the ecofeminists who identify the self/other dichotomy between humans and nature, which allows for a caring relationship to form (citation). Although I do not emphasize attachment theory (Chawla, 2007), I advocate for closely following human development as the teacher builds from morality to empathy to appreciation. Further, like Martin (2007) and Littledyke (2008), this study posits a need for experiential education infused with affect – essentially aesthetic education.

Goralnik et al. (2014) describe a “field philosophy” that uses phenomenological methods to reach the emotional, cognitive, and physical domains of students. Drawing from Noddings’ and ecofeminism, their approach offers a recommendation for how EE might be taught in a way that produces real and lasting care. While Waldorf does not exclusively teach EE, it certainly incorporates aspects of EE into its curriculum. This study represents another possible working model of field philosophy in everyday use; the thinking, feeling, and willing realms are engaged simultaneously, and, using the arts and aesthetic experience, the lessons are presented in an affective way. Waldorf education succeeds in part because it adheres to its unique philosophy of childhood development from kindergarten through 12th grade, giving children a stable, nurturing

environment in which to develop care. Yet by identifying the categories of morality, empathy and appreciation as the building blocks of care, this study offers concrete, achievable mechanisms that may be at least partially replicated to promote care for the environment in settings beyond Waldorf schools.

Epilogue

“Listen. Close your eyes. Millions of years ago – not even to the first notch on the geological timeline we created in the parking lot – imagine that we’re looking out onto an expansive continental glacier/ice sheet. Listen as the wind solidifies the individual snow crystals – timpani and a hard crack; a trapped turbulence. The glacier’s internal heat begins to spill out as an ice stream far, far below as it melts. Slowly downward, scouring the rock below, plucking debris from its hardened surface. The wind howls, the ice creeks, moans like the deep tinny echo of a ship’s hull. Slowly inching downward, shrinking toward the sea unveiling the skeletal remains of mountains, plucked and pruned, scarred and scoured, pocked and polished. Silence.”

I read the above excerpt to my students while they sat on granite outcroppings in clusters in front of me. We had just hiked up Mt. Willard. It was a cool day with a slight breeze that was much colder than the air. It was overcast, but we could still see mountains for quite a ways into the distance. This is my favorite time of year to hike – the fall, when the air is cool and smells crisp and stagnant like the drying, rotting leaves on the ground. I had hiked this mountain countless times before, but never with this group of students and never on this exact day. I wanted to share this space with them. As they sat here looking out over the U-shaped valley called Crawford Notch, I watched them take in the scenery and soak up my words...some actually whispered, “Wow.”

We heard the train whistle below as it moved up the notch, along with murmurs and laughter from the crowd of other hikers off to our left. But my students were silent, either just looking out at the scenery or writing reflections in their journals. I brought them up this mountain for so many reasons. For one, you get a lot of bang for your buck – the short 2-mile hike brings you to the top of a cliff face overlooking one of the best scenic vistas in the region. But for another, it’s

so hard to understand changes in the earth because we can't see them in our lifespan. It can be difficult to comprehend and appreciate a geological phenomenon without feeling, breathing, living, and experiencing it firsthand. They may not actually have seen the continental ice sheet carve out this U-shaped valley before us, but being here, listening to my story helped stir their imagination, and I feel that they are able to visualize it now.

After conducting my research, I worked hard at changing the way I teach to really focus on bringing an aesthetic experience to my students in order for them to connect with and actively engage in what we are learning about. I want their senses to be immersed in the experience so as to awaken and enliven their imaginations. I want them to have a moral admiration of beauty, to build an empathetic relationship with the land, and for them to appreciate a whole larger than themselves. I want them to say, "Wow."

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Appendix A
Criteria for Focused Observations

	Music	Visual Arts	Somatic Arts	Literature	Dra
How is the aesthetic medium presented and/or used by the teacher?					
How is the aesthetic medium experienced and/or created by the student?					

Appendix B
Guiding Questions First Round 12th Grade Interviews

1. Can you describe Waldorf education?
2. What do you like most about being at [school]?
3. Tell me about a memorable learning experience you had in Mrs. [teacher's] class in the lower grades.
4. Can you remember a time in [teacher's] class when you felt emotionally connected to what you were learning?
5. When I say "care for the environment", what does that mean to you?
6. Is there a place in nature/environment that is special to you? Can you describe that place and its meaning to you?

Appendix C:
Guiding Questions Second Round 12th Grade Interviews

Relationship/Care:

1. Tell me about activities that you like to do in nature.
2. What prompted your interest in these activities?
3. Can you remember a special place in nature that you used to visit as a child?
4. What was it about this special place?
5. Can you remember how you first became connect/acquainted to the place?
6. What would you say is your relationship with this place? (then and now?)
7. What about now? Do you have a special place in nature that you visit now?
8. And how did you become acquainted to it?
9. How do you feel when you visit this place?
10. What would you say is your relationship to this place?
11. Can you recall having a similar relationship to a place you might have visited while at [school]?
12. What about the school itself? I know that the school boasts a lot of land – fields and forest. And that many of the classrooms utilize this space for school. In the younger grades, do you recall Miss Maple taking you outside during any of your classes?
13. What did you do during this time? What were some activities that you did?
14. What about during high school? Can you tell me how some of your classes connected you to nature?
15. How did your interactions make you feel toward the place?
16. Do you have any special places at [school]? (that you can recall with fondness? Positive feelings? That you care for?)
17. What would you say is your relationship to the [school] fields and forest?
18. Do you recall any specific moments during throughout your time at [school] when you felt a reverence for nature?

Play/Imagination/Aesthetic Experience:

1. Did Miss Maple ever introduce you to fairies or gnomes?
2. Were you introduced to other imaginary creatures? If so, what were they?
3. Can you recall those particular situations when you interacted with these imaginary creatures?
4. Did you have a relationship with the fairies and gnomes?
5. Can you describe this relationship?
6. Can you remember how you felt about the fairies and gnomes and their home?
7. Tell me how the relationship developed?
8. Do you recall when the magic of fairies and gnomes ended and how that changed how you looked at the woods or nature? How you felt?
9. What can you recall about playing in nature as a child?
10. What were some of the imaginative activities you would participate in?
11. Can you recall how this play made you feel about your surroundings? About nature?
12. Do you play now?
13. Do you still think about the fairies and gnomes now when you are in nature?

Appendix D

Guiding Questions for Teacher Interviews

1. How long have you been teaching at [school]?
2. Where did you teach prior to coming to [school]?
3. If taught in a non-Waldorf school, can you describe the difference from a teacher's point of view?
4. Did you have the opportunity to work with last year's graduating class? What did you teach?
5. Can you share with me a memorable teaching moment you had, again, with either last year's 12th graders or with any class?
6. What about during a field trip experience in nature? Can you share with me a memorable moment you had, again, with either last year's 12th graders or with any class during one of these experiences or trips?
7. Can you recall a moment where you felt that you were truly affecting a student's learning?
8. Thinking about last year's seniors, or if that is hard to remember, think about the student body in general, can you share with me what you encountered as differences between those students who grew up at [school] (or another W school) versus a student who started [school] at the high school level?
9. Can you describe to me what you notice in students and how they change the most from the 9th grade until they graduate as seniors?
10. What are your goals as a teacher at [school]?
11. How do you utilize the outdoors and nature in your classes?
12. What do you notice about the students and how they encounter and interact with nature? And how does that change, if any, over the course of their time at the high school?