'I came here to do art, not English': Antecedent subject subcultures meet current practices of writing in art and design education

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ABSTRACT

A writing/making divide, within the broader theory/practice myth, is part of the historical narrative in art and design education that both clashes with, and persists in, current practices of writing in art and design. The theory/practice myth separates thinking from doing, head from hand, and writing from making, causing internal frictions in art and design subjects. This article provides a historical and contextual mapping of the writing/making binary in creative practice, drawing on Ivor Goodson's (1993, 1995, 1997, 2002) work on 'antecedent subject subcultures' to discuss the formation and maintenance of subject cultures and – ultimately – their potential to change.

KEYWORDS: subject histories, essay assessment, Coldstream Reports, lecture theatre, studio, tacit knowledge, critical and contextual studies, theory/practice myth

Introduction

A writing/making, 'words/stuff' (Cazeaux 2006: 40) divide, within the broad theory/practice myth, is residual in art and design education across levels. The myth constructs writing as cerebral and formulaic, while making is visual, material, unthought and unpredictable. In discourse and debate, the myth has been debunked – there is an ironic disconnect between the 'words' in discourse and the 'stuff' of institutional systems and practices. Debate on the theory/practice relationship accelerated during the noughties (see, for example, Eisner 2002; Meskimmon 2004; MacLeod and Holdridge 2005; Sennet 2008) when, with specific reference to the links between writing and making, the pivotal WritingPad project (writing-pad.org, from 2002) was initiated by Julia Lockheart, Harriet Edwards, Maziar Raein and John Wood, at Goldsmiths university.

  Writing *is* practice; practitioners – writers, dancers, makers and so on – are all involved in knowledge generation and articulation. Writing practice is no less complex or

more 'knowing' (as opposed to 'intuitive'; knowing/intuitive is another obscure binary that the theory/practice myth maintains) than any creative practice. Practitioners of all sorts (including writers) draw on tacit knowledges in their work, making in Melrose's (2009, 2011) terms an 'expert-intuitive leap' in their processes of research and production. Tacit knowing, as much as codified knowing, involves practice and skill. Yet the theory/practice myth is powerful, and embedded within the 'antecedent subject subculture' (Goodson and Mangan 1995) of art and design – that is, the historical legacy that underpins the contemporary subject culture (Goodson and Marsh 1996; Ball and Lacey 1984; Ball 1981). I map moments in this historical legacy by unpacking the theory/practice myth and its contemporary residue and maintenance. Throughout, I use discourse on subject cultures to mark the significance of staff and student socialization in forming and reforming the myth that positions writing as other to practice.

Subject cultures: Defining terms

I refer here to art and design as one subject rather than as two distinct fields; I focus on the broad implications of the theory/practice myth on conceptualizations of writing in creative practice, rather than the differences between art and design subjects. Despite their independent loyalties, subjects within both art and design share some common cultural values and histories, and I share Young's (1971) view on commonalities within broad subject fields. In Golby et al. (1975: 117), Young refers to the example of science teaching and suggests that those teaching and studying chemistry, physics or biology share (either implicitly or explicitly) values and norms, however strong the identities of each separate science subject may be. Furthermore, it is important for this article that I discuss 'art and design' as one subject field to reflect the case study course upon which I

draw later. The case study course is the BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Art and Design, i.e., a course that identifies 'art and design' as one subject of study. Therefore, for consistency and to capture a shared experience of some aspects of the theory/practice myth, I refer to 'art and design' as one subject throughout this article.

I draw upon Goodson's (1993, 1995, 1997, 2002) discussion on the social construction of subject fields. Goodson and Mangan define subject cultures as 'identifiable structures which are visibly expressed through classroom organisation and pedagogical styles' (1995: 120). Subject cultures are contemporary manifestations, representing particular constructions of teaching, learning and knowledge. Subject cultures are in relationship with, in Goodson's (1993, 1997) terms, 'antecedent subject subcultures'. Antecedent subject subcultures refer to the legacy of the subject; they are historical subject constructs, reinforced over time by tutors, students and course leaders (Goodson talks about staff and institutions reinforcing these cultures; I propose that students are also key in this process). Goodson argues that subjects are combinations of bodies of knowledge and social practices which determine what counts as valid knowledge, pedagogical practices, assessment processes and constructions of the student, in that particular subject. Antecedent subject subcultures underpin subject cultures and normalize pedagogic practices, curriculum design and assessment processes which staff and students then reproduce. Antecedent subject subcultures consist of:

> the general set of institutional practices and expectations which has grown up around a particular school subject and which shapes the definition of that subject as both a distinct area of study and a social construct.
>
> (Goodson and Mangan 1995: 615)

Goodson is referring to school subjects, but I draw on his thinking about subject cultures and antecedent subject subcultures to unpack the internal frictions within *one* subject in post-compulsory education – art and design – specifically in terms of the theory/practice myth and the writing/making divide therein.

Theory/practice myth: Constructing subject histories

Cultural shifts in the mid-twentieth century formalized the theory/practice myth in art and design education. While the myth precedes this moment, rooted in the Cartesian dualism of controlling mind and obeying body or hand, its visibility in art and design education has been most prevalent since the 1960s. At this point, art and design education made, in Addison's (2010) terms, a 'critical turn' or 'art historical turn'. On the (imperialist) art world stage, practice was increasingly critical and concept-led as Conceptual Art entered the canon. In art schools, students were increasingly trained in philosophy and critical French theory; theoretical discourse 'displaced – sometimes replaced – studio practice' (De Duve 1994: 35). In government policy, the Coldstream Reports formalized 'theoretical' studies and caused a chasm between 'theory' and practice, stipulating that 'the history of art should be studied and should be examined for the diploma […] About 15 per cent of the total course should be devoted to the history of art and complementary studies' (Ministry of Education 1960: 8). Since the Coldstream reforms, the design, content and assessment of this 'theoretical' element has been the source of lively debate; current incarnations and labels for this part of an art and design course include Critical and Contextual Studies, Visual Culture and Contextualizing Practice. Throughout this article, the term Critical and Contextual Studies (CCS), in wide circulation currently, is used to refer to contemporary iterations of this part of the course.

Following the Coldstream Report recommendations, the art history provision in art schools was expanded to include general studies and complementary studies. Dubbed 'the department of words' (MacDonald 2005: 205) by students at the Royal College of Art (RCA)[1], a words and writing culture was developing in isolation from making culture. The formulaic structure and examination of general studies clashed profusely with the prevailing Romantic myth of solitary, untutored genius artist and, in art and design in schools, the child-centred models of Marion Richardson (1948, published posthumously) and Herbert Read (1943). This child-centred approach then shifted towards an increasingly subject-centred and theoretical approach to art and design; illustrated in educationalist Dick Field's assertion that children at secondary school in England would 'benefit from more theoretical study in art, […] [and that the] insights gained through practical work alone were not sufficient for articulating experience' (Field 1970: 111–21). The theory/practice myth strengthened; 'theoretical' studies became a performance measure for art schools (following the Summerson Council's [National Council for Diplomas in Art and Design (NCDAD)] 1962 inspection, many art schools were closed down for inadequacies in their art history and complementary studies provision [MacDonald 2005: 207]) and 'theory' – and its associations, including writing – was increasingly insulated in an art and design curriculum.

The division between writing practice and studio practice played out in art teacher training as well as artist training. In the 1960s, few art teachers were trained in the history of art and few specialist art historians were available to deliver art history or complementary studies. The Courtauld Institute was the only institution that offered a single honours art history course prior to the 1960s, when more art history degree courses

opened. MacDonald (2005) reports that art history graduates were often employed on art teacher training courses but, in MacDonald's experience, they lectured in anything involving written work rather than in the subject of art history specifically. Writing was being cultured into both art teacher training and artist training as a form or tool, rather than a practice, that was increasingly synonymous with assessment.

The antecedent subject subculture of art and design is formed through historical narratives that perpetuate a theory/practice myth, in which writing is other to making. The Coldstream Reports are core in the antecedent subject subculture of art and design; their aftermath formalized the false theory/practice binary in the art school and forged the origins of current CCS modules within art and design curricula. Goodson's (1993, 1997) antecedent subject subcultures are socially formed and maintained (i.e., by their participants), and this makes them useful for thinking about the social construction of art school histories and futures – this is fitting with Julia Lockheart's re-reading of the Coldstream Reports, in which she elucidated that 'there is no recommendation made for students to submit a written thesis or dissertation in either of the Coldstream Reports' (2018: 152). As Lockheart (2018) shows, there are assumptions amongst art and design educators that the essay assessment, so common in CCS on art and design courses across England, is a product of Coldstream. Antecedent subject cultures, rather than government policy, maintain a writing/making divide and shape current practices of CCS; assumptions about how to assess and deliver CCS are the product of a robust historical theory/practice myth and the power of subject cultures to uphold that myth through staff, student and institutional socialization. One way in which that socialization occurs is through learning spaces.

Myth maintenance: The lecture theatre and the studio

There are two dominant sites in an art and design course: the studio and the lecture theatre. These spaces typically construct and maintain discrete 'learning cultures' or 'communities of practice', in the terms of Lave and Wenger's (1991) 'situated learning'. Throughout the course, students learn and rehearse the cultural codes that these environments generate and reinforce. In doing so they progress from 'legitimate peripheral participants' or 'newcomers' to 'full participants' or 'master practitioners' (Lave and Wenger 1991). These concepts are a useful reminder of the socially constructed nature of these spaces and their uses.

Far from being mere names of spaces, the studio and the lecture theatre allude to ways of thinking, learning and organizing knowledge. The studio connotes visual, material, live practice and embodied, tacit knowledges. It is the home of practitioners; research and assessments are practice-based. The lecture theatre connotes words, text and oration. The lecture theatre is regulated by 'theorists' and its form of assessment is writing – most commonly the traditional written essay. The period of online learning necessitated by the coronavirus pandemic reconfigured these physical spaces, with potential for a democratizing and dismantling of their differences (for a detailed discussion of this, see Rebecca Bell's article 'Untrammelled Ways: Reflecting on the Written Text, Nourishment and Care in Online Teaching' in this issue). However, the antecedent subject subculture is powerful; the historical legacy of this space exists beyond the physical site, especially when its knowledge codes are maintained through a formal essay assessment. In addition, the screen in an online learning environment has

the potential to further distance and disembody a student in their experience of CCS, reviving Raein's (2003) question, 'Where is the I?' in CCS.

Unlike in Goodson and Mangan's (1995) model, the antecedent subject subculture of art and design is fractured into two: studio-based creative practice and lecture-based CCS. Art and design consists of antecedent subject *sub*-subcultures which are culturally, linguistically and epistemologically disparate. While CCS carries the legacy of Coldstream and a one-directional transmission of tutor-led knowledge, creative practice emerges via the conventions of the studio with its interactive, rhizomatic process of knowledge formation. The transmission of knowledge in these spaces, and the material outcomes and stuff of assessment, is very different.

> There is a world of difference between the traditional approach to definition which is purely formal and ritualistic – and is reproduced and caricatured in student essays – and an interactive approach which accepts the ongoing possibility of interruption, interrogation and demand for clarification.
>
> (Bourdieu and Passeron 1994: 23)

Furthermore, in Lave and Wenger's (1991) terms, it is through the language of the community that participants (students and staff) learn how to speak in order to participate fully. When writing and making are framed as discrete communities (located in discrete curricula and physical spaces), students are conversing in two fields simultaneously, negotiating the disparate languages and membership codes of each. A response to Lockheart's (2018) call for a diversity of writing practices in HE art and design might be to relocate writing so that it is free to move between the lecture theatre and the studio, symbolically dismantling the binary and identifying with the rhizomic, transboundary, nature of creative practice in module-crossing writing practices projects.

Goodson and Mangan's (1995) conceptualizations of antecedent subject subcultures enable possibilities; antecedent subject subcultures exist beyond and prior to the arrival of the student and the tutor – akin to James and Biesta's (2007) identification of 'learning cultures' – so that students and tutors interpret and develop social practices that are aligned to subject identities. Staff and students are *socialized* into subject cultures which are underpinned by *historical* legacy; subject cultures and antecedent subject subcultures are reproductions of powerful narratives which are not dictated by policy but are produced and reproduced by participants. When institutions empower staff and student participants to redefine their subject culture (through affording them space, time and resources), the constraints of the antecedent subject subculture are unlocked. A subject culture rewrite is another way in which writing practices could be diversified in HE art and design – one in which students and staff reimagine and rewrite the subject culture set of priorities, e.g., using Goodson et al.'s (1998: 106) list of subject culture–specific priorities that include particular learning activities and ways in which students relate to their work and their tutors.

Case study: BTEC Extended Diploma in Art and Design

In this section, I give a snapshot of a case study course, the BTEC International Level 3 Extended Diploma in Art and Design (EDAD)[2], to illustrate some of the ways in which writing is experienced by art and design students. In England, the EDAD is the first opportunity that students get to study art and design full time after compulsory schooling, and it is an increasingly common route to HE art and design. Writing practices on this course form a bridge from school to HE for many EDAD students, and so are worth noting from the perspective of HE art and design.

The EDAD awarding body (currently Pearson Edexcel) has been recommending increasingly less prescriptive types of writing and increasingly less discrete delivery of CCS on the EDAD over the past two decades. The CCS units during this time have shifted from a broad, historical and generic unit assessed by essay, to a student-focused unit that includes practice-based outcomes. This is indicated in the changes to unit titles. Prior to 2010, CCS was delivered as unit 5: Historical and Contextual Influences in Art and Design; prior to 2016, it was unit 5: Contextual Influences in Art and Design; pre-2020, it was unit 2: Critical and Contextual Studies in Art and Design; currently, it is 'B2: Personal Investigation' – which combines making and writing. As well as the unit titles, the unit descriptors indicate a shift away from a writing/making binary and towards less prescribed written outcomes.

In 2007, the written essay was recommended by the examining body, then Edexcel, and the aim of CCS was 'to provide a broad knowledge of developments in art, craft and design'. In 2010, the CCS unit aim was 'to develop learners' skills and knowledge of how historical and cultural influences inform art, craft and design' (Edexcel 2010: 1)[3]. The 2010 shift indicated the intension of a closer alignment to studio practice, and students were encouraged to write and analyse but the 'formal academic essay should be avoided' (e-mail response from the Edxecel Ask the Expert service, 29 January 2010). From 2016, the assessment of this unit included written examination of various forms of writing for particular audiences, including composing text for an exhibition guide and an e-mail to a curator with the aim that 'learners develop skills in contextual research and visual analysis in order to critically analyse the work of others and improve their own practice' (Pearson 2016: 5)[4]. In 2020, the BTEC Nationals were

replaced by the BTEC Internationals; discrete CCS (along with many other units) was removed and replaced by 'Personal Investigation' (among other more holistic units) which combines written and practice-based outcomes. The EDAD qualification is described in the specification as supporting 'progression to higher education in its own right'[5]. The gradual trajectory away from the writing/making binary in Further Education (FE) is significant, therefore, in defining the art and design subject culture from which students enter Higher Education (HE) art and design.

Student experiences of writing on the EDAD

In this section, I draw on data from a wider mixed-methods study into the BTEC EDAD course (for detail on the wider study, see Rintoul 2017). The wider study involved a questionnaire survey, five in-depth qualitative case studies, including observation, interviews with student and staff and the production of visual representations by students. Here, I draw upon interview data from three of the case study EDAD courses, Wrickford, Barrinborough and Rensworth (all pseudonyms), to illustrate student experiences of writing and extend discussion on subject cultures. At Wrickford, Barrinborough and Rensworth, the traditional essay was the assessment outcome for CCS despite the awarding body recommendation at the time that 'the formal academic essay should be avoided'. This indicates the power of the antecedent subject subculture on contemporary subject cultures.

Student perceptions of written work and practice-based work are strikingly different across the EDAD case study courses. Writing is assumed to be limited and limiting, while practice takes many forms – for students, there is more complexity and

creativity to modes of visual over written communication. For example, on drawing, a second-year student at Wrickford stated:

> There are people who can't draw, but they can be really creative. They know exactly what they want to do but they can't draw so they do it in different ways.
>
> (Second-year student)

While drawing is perceived as one of many forms of creative practice, writing is perceived as the antithesis of creative practice and synonymous with assessment; one student at Barrinborough said:

> Being an artist you are creative, but writing just kills you as an artist. When you have an idea you are excited about it, but when you write (the essay) you are there for two hours just trying to type up something. It kills you off.
>
> (Second-year student)

When asked what CCS actually is, a student at Barrinborough asked, 'What, you mean writing – the essay?'. CCS is associated with writing; writing is associated with assessment (for discussion on writing and assessment, see Mitchell 2008).

Elsewhere in the course (beyond CCS), students use writing as a tool rather than a practice. For example, a tutor at Barrinborough gave a typical example of writing in a first-year sketchbook:

> This is a drawing of an apple, I used pen and ink to draw this.
>
> (Studio tutor, Barrinborough)

This student is using writing to reiterate what is already communicated pictorially. It is as though writing is needed to substantiate or translate the practice, maintaining the broader theory/practice myth that places value and status on written languages over visual languages. Goodson et al. (1998) talk about the institutionalization of the labour market's mental/manual divide, whereby high value is attributed to school subjects that connote

'intellectual, complex' thought as though this is distinct from 'manual, concrete' thought. Twenty-five years later, Progress 8 (a value-added measure) and the EBacc (a schools performance measure) value student achievement in non-arts subjects, giving the message to schools, parents and students in England that the arts are less valuable than more (archaically labelled) 'academic' subject choices. Students arrive at HE or FE from a culture where written subjects are 'academic' and practice-based subjects like art and design are Other.

A tutor at Barrinborough stated:

[T]he students are recalling their experiences at school I think, where they are writing without engaging in the content, and where they associate writing with subjects outside of art and design.

At the start of the first year, students are on the peripheries of a new 'community of practice' (Lave and Wenger 1991), drawing upon their previous experience of education codes and cultures before becoming fully versed in a new set. While students might draw upon the familiarity of the school experience, there are also examples of them actively trying to move away from this. This is particularly the case in an FE environment as a 'second chance' at education for students who have not done well at school. Writing is key here in its associations with the school student rather than the student artist:

Quite a few people were glad it (the CCS) had finished because they don't want to write. They want to get away from school and they want to be artists, so they were glad not to have to write any more […] But it's the written stuff that ruins art history (CCS). Not actual art history.

(Second-year student, Wrickford)

It is specifically the *form* of the essay that clashes with the antecedent subject subculture of art and design. It is as though the antecedent subject subculture of art and design is

split into two: one belongs to subjects where knowledge exchange takes place in the lecture theatre, assessed by written essay (e.g., humanities subjects), while the other belongs to subjects where knowledge exchange takes place in the studio, assessed by practice. This culture clash creates tension and the view that writing is not part of the subject of art and design:

> When I'm researching, I look at artists and ideas and theories and that is useful, but I don't understand why we have to put that into writing; there's no point.
>
> (Second-year student, Rensworth)

Students describe essay writing as important preparation for university because (according to the students) the essay and the dissertation are mandatory components in HE, echoing Young's contention that the shape of school subjects is controlled through staff's shared assumptions over 'what we all know the universities want' (1971: 31) and extending this to include the significance of students in shaping subjects.

However, in terms of the control of subjects and their contents, 'the universities do not possess the arts in the way that they do the formal academic disciplines, precisely because they do not create them' (Stenhouse 1975: 11). On one hand, this aspect of art and design's subject history emphasizes that CCS (when it is delivered in a lecture theatre and assessed by formal essay) has more in common with the disciplines that grew out of the university, further insulating CCS from creative practice. On the other hand, Stenhouse's statement opens scope for the creation of a new space, neither dictated by the assessment conventions of subjects that were born in the universities nor a nostalgic reformation of the isolated art school. When the staff and students on a course aim to make writing practices as fluid and complex as making practices, there is scope for the subject culture to change.

The prevailing view among students is that the written element of their course clashes with the subject culture of art and design. Students insinuate that they are grappling with the clash of two antecedent subject subcultures in their subject, epitomized in a student at Wrickford stating, 'I came here to do Art, not English!'. Students at Wrickford report feeling inauthentic when writing; for some in FE their choice of an art and design course is a move away from schooling and from the disciplines that involve writing. These themes, and the depersonalization that students report feeling when writing and when in the lecture theatre, are highlighted in discourses on art school education, including Kill (2004), Blythman and Orr (2004), Raein (2003) and Pollen (2015).

At Rensworth, in contrast, a tutor who teaches into both CCS and studio practice stated 'it is easier for the art tutor to teach like an artist, rather than doing something different', echoing the moments of not knowing in Melrose's (2009, 2011) 'expert-intuitive-leap'. In discussing the format of lectures in a lecture theatre, this tutor says:

> Give us a big screen and a three-inch-plus stage, and we're away. And it could go anywhere.
>
> (CCS and studio tutor, Rensworth)

At Rensworth, the CCS and studio tutor challenges the 'pedagogic authority' (Bourdieu and Passeron 1994) so embedded in the fabric of the lecture theatre. Students are socialized into the space as creative practitioners, recalling Bruner's proposal that 'the school-boy [*sic*] learning physics is a physicist, and it is easier for him to learn physics behaving like a physicist than doing something else' (1960: 14). This CCS and studio tutor at Rensworth refers to his practice as a performance artist in relation to his pedagogic work:

> When I go in [to the lecture theatre] it's theatre to me. I love it. And I make it theatre and
> I make it live and I get them involved. If we're doing something on the history of a
> painting they'll end up performing it, a body sculpture. I often don't know where it's
> going. I'm a performance artist, that's what I do. And the students are artists too, and
> that's how they learn and what they understand.
>
> (CCS and studio tutor, Rensworth)

The Rensworth lecture theatre experience is refocussed on self, risk and the unknown; in short, the lecture theatre is versed in languages of creative practice. The tone of the space shifts, against the antecedent subject subculture with which it is associated:

> The chair from which a lecture emanates takes over the tone, the diction, the delivery and
> the oratorical action of whoever occupies it, whatever his personal wishes.
>
> (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1994: 11)

While antecedent subject subcultures refer to historical narratives that generically define the subject, subject cultures enable local manifestations of the subject. At Rensworth, staff and students create a local subject culture that complements – rather than clashes with or cancels – the antecedent subject subculture. Wilkins (2011) suggests that local knowledge gives agency to educators and is preferable to adopting a generic, standardized and externally defined example of 'good practice'. With this approach, there is scope for a multitude of writing practices in art and design courses that evolve through staff and student specialisms at individual institutions, i.e., that form and that are formed by the local subject culture.

Conclusion

Goodson and Marsh (1996) note that antecedent subject subcultures reinforce and normalize divisions between subjects; they manifest in contemporary subject cultures into which staff are socialized. I have drawn on Goodson, on the socialization of subject

cultures, to suggest that both staff *and* students construct subject cultures, bringing their understandings of antecedent subject subcultures with them. Rather than socialization into one subject, I identify a *dual socialization* within the subject of art and design – manifest as CCS and studio practice – a duality that has been constructed through the theory/practice myth.

The dual socialization that students experience on art and design courses that adhere to a writing/making divide manifests in a collection of dualities: the essay assessment and practice-based assessment; the lecture theatre and the studio; CCS staff and studio staff (often discrete teams insulated from one other). Goodson et al. (2002) suggests that when antecedent subject subcultures meet contemporary subject concerns, culture clashes emerge. The subject of art and design is involved in negotiating the clash between *two* 'antecedent subject subcultures' *and* the contemporary subject culture (which may retain some aspects of the divisive theory/practice legacy, and refute others).

These clashes are products of historical legacy and social construction. Lockheart's (2018) re-reading of the Coldstream Reports makes clear that there were no governmental recommendations for academic writing on art and design courses. The Coldstream Reports do not uphold the theory/practice myth; the institutions (and tutors, students and management teams within them) do. Lockheart's (2018) discussion significantly contributes to dispelling the theory/practice myth which upholds antecedent subject subcultures in art and design discussed in this article. I view her findings as a hopeful reminder that subject cultures, and the antecedent subject subcultures that underpin them, are socially constituted by tutors, students and their affiliated institutions – and are thus receptive to reconstruction.

The Coldstream Reports are mythologized for their role in formalizing a theory/practice binary in HE art and design. Lockheart's (2018) re-reading of the reports exposes essay writing in HE art and design as an unfounded legacy of Coldstream. Other unfounded legacies include the delivery of CCS as a discrete module of study and the studio/lecture theatre divide (and the conflation of CCS with the lecture theatre). On complementary studies (a previous iteration of what I term CCS through this article), the first Coldstream Report states:

> We hope that the complementary studies will give scope for practicing written and
>
> spoken English *whether this is studied as a separate subject or not*.
>
> (Ministry of Education 1960: 8, cited in Lockheart 2018: 155, emphasis added)

CCS (and its equivalents) was not prescribed as a discrete subject in a discrete curricula space; it has been widely constructed and is commonly maintained as such (by tutors, students and institutions). The lecture theatre/studio divide is also socially constructed by institutions and their participants; regarding the DipAD having parity with university courses, the Coldstream Council stated:

> We have not taken this to mean that art studies are to be made to diverge in a scholastic
>
> direction or *swamped by the atmosphere of the lecture room*.
>
> (Summerson Report 1964, cited in Lockheart 2021: 155, emphasis added)

The lecture theatre is a common home for CCS since the Coldstream reforms, but this has been constructed and maintained by HE art and design institutions and their participants, rather than recommended in policy. In fact, the Coldstream Council appears to be encouraging an avoidance of the lecture theatre. The 'pedagogic authority of the lecture theatre' (Bourdieu and Passeron 1994) that is so key in forming the learning culture of

CCS is absent from the documents that were instrumental in the birth of CCS as a discrete area of study.

Subject cultures are socially constructed and maintained, via the powerful theory/practice myth. The participants within those cultures (tutors, students, management teams) both form and reform them – and therefore have the capacity to reshape their subject culture. Writing is a material that could contribute significantly to that reshaping. Writing practices have transdisciplinary capacity, spanning all art and design subjects. A move away from a generic essay assessment does not mean that writing should move into subject silos – that would reinforce the division and insularity that is so insidious in the theory/practice myth. Writing practices in multiple forms, moving between and through multiple curricula spaces across art and design subjects, makes writing as rhizomatic as practice. There is potential for local subject cultural reconstructions to put writing practices in symbiosis with – not other to – creative practice.

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SUGGESTED CITATION

[1]. RCA, founded in 1837 as the 'Government School of Design' in Somerset House, London.

2.	This qualification replaced the BTEC National Extended Diploma in Art and Design in 2020, which replaced the BTEC National Diploma in Art and Design in 2010.

3.	See https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/BTEC-Nationals/Art-and-Design/2010/Specification/Unit_5_Contextual_Influences_in_Art_and_Design.pdf (accessed 14/05/2022).

4.	See http://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/BTEC-Nationals/Art-and-Design/2016/specification-and-sample-assessments/Sample-assessment-material-Unit-2-Critical-And-Contextual-Studies-In-Art-And-Design.pdf (accessed 14/05/2022).

5.	See https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/btec-international-level-3/art-and-design/specification-and-sample-assessments/btec-international-level-3-art-and-design-specification.pdf (accessed 14/05/2022).