BORDERLANDS

A STUDY OF THE AESTHETIC-PRACTICAL
ENVIRONMENT AND ITS PEDAGOGICAL AND
THERAPEUTIC PROPERTIES. BASED ON THE
DESCRIPTION OF TWO INSTITUTIONS: THE
WORKSHOPS OF THE HAGA FOUNDATION AND
THE BOOKBINDERY AT THE
KRISTOFFERSCHOOL.

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A study of the aesthetic-practical environment and its pedagogical and therapeutic properties. Based on the description of two institutions: the workshops of the Haga foundation and the bookbindery at the Kristofferschool.

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Abstract

Borderlands. A study of the aesthetic-practical environment and its pedagogical and therapeutic properties based on the survey of two institutions: the workshops at Hagastiftelsen and the bookbindery at the Kristofferschool. The perspective on education, pedagogy and therapy taken is an existential one where the main aims of an educational-therapeutic intervention is to support biographical development and integrity. In the process action research in my own bookbinding workshop as well as hermeneutic research at the workshops at Hagastiftelsen where adults with autism and other neuropsychological disorders work, have been the sources of primary empirical data. Secondary sources are patient-histories written by Oliver Sacks as well as autobiographic narratives by some adults with autism. The phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty, aesthetic philosophy of Schiller, narrative studies and Antonovsky's concept of sense of coherence (SOC) have been used as interpretive theories to understand the research data. After outlining/surveying the two practices/institutions the study is concerned with analysing a number of basic properties of educational and therapeutic, aesthetic-practical environments: instrument/tool, beauty, rhythm and work. By incorporating the standpoint epistemology of autism the issues of identity-formation and biography have also been given a more inclusive treatment. A discussion regarding aesthetic-practical environments, their development, comparisons between them and their evaluation follows. In the final part of the study an outline for further research and development is presented.

Keywords

Workshop, Autism, Merleau-Ponty, Schiller, Aesthetics, Narrative integrity, Therapy, Education, Hand, Tool, Biography.

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Preface to the English translation

The following study is a translation from Swedish to English of my masters-thesis that I presented in June 2011. I have taken the liberty to make some clarifications and changes in the text compared to the original. With one exception, that I have noted, these changes are cosmetic in the sense of aiming to make the line of reasoning clearer and sometimes to flesh out a point that, in the process of translation, has appeared to me to be insufficiently expounded. In translating I have had some difficulty with the terminology. I have tried to clarify some of this in footnotes, however, it is possible that I have managed to mistranslate some of the technical terms without my knowing it, hopefully not too often and in a way that causes actual misunderstandings. The translation could also profit from some reworking in order to reduce the dissonance caused by Swedish syntax etc. in English, unfortunately I have, thus far, not had the time to do this.

1 Preface

This study is aimed foremost at those researchers and practicians who work in supportive and curative education or with art and body or somatic therapies. Above all the intention is to contribute to reflections on the work at the Haga Foundation and the Kristofferschool. My hope is that the interpretive perspectives that I've been working with together with the description of those properties I have been able to identify in aesthetic-practical environments can also be of more general value. It is also that the chapter concerning evaluation, documentation and development of such environments will be generally relevant. Hopefully it is written so that others as well might find it interesting to read, not least since workshop environments are so seldom discussed in educational research. I have also had a more general aim of contributing to a better understanding of what workshops (aesthetic-practical environments) can mean pedagogically.

In the process of researching I have received invaluable help from my supervising professor Agniezska Bron. Eva Bojner Horwitz, Per Apelmo and Hansjörg Hohr have been kind enough to read a late draft from their professional perspectives as researches and they provided a number of important critical perspectives. Med Dr. Walter Osika was the one who set me up to work with the Haga Foundation and who, thereafter, with constant enthusiasm has read draft after draft and given me his points of view. I owe all these people a huge debt of gratitude. I am also profoundly grateful to the Klinisk Medisinsk Forskningsfond (approx. Clinical Medicinal Research Foundation) in Norway and to the Olle Engkvist Foundation for generous support.

Finally, the study wouldn't have happened if it weren't for the co-workers and persons receiving care at the Haga Foundation. They have given generously of their experience, daily practice and time. So if this work should be dedicated to anyone it is the people at the Haga Foundations workshops. A thousand thanks.

2 Structure of the study

The study is structured so that after an introduction to the main theme I have moved on to present the background out of which I've worked as well as the basic terminology on which it builds. Following these chapters is the chapter that considers the aim and research questions. After that I go on to present my research perspective, methods, data and ethical considerations. In this an important part of the various interpretive perspectives that I have worked with is included. These interpretive perspectives are, as I've already written in the preface, a central part of the study without which its results would most probably be very different. For this reason I have placed a relatively large emphasis on working with the interpretive perspectives using autism as a standpoint epistemology. That forms the chapter following the discussion on ethics. What follows after that is the presentation of the two aesthetic-practical environments that I have studied: the Haga Foundations workshops and the bookbindery at the Kristofferschool. Joining these descriptions are the chapters on the basic properties of aesthetic-practical environments and the analysis of how possible evaluations and developments of, as well as comparisons between aesthetic-practical environments can be done. The study ends with a chapter discussing inclusive educational environments and further research.

I have written the study in a way that includes fairly long quotes from the various narratives I have worked with as well as to a lesser degree the other researches that have carried the most importance. In both cases it is in order to give the reader a feel for the voices of those that have contributed and their manners of expression. Regarding the narrative qoutes it is also in order to exemplify and clarify issues that would otherwise remain expressed in a more abstract form.

3 Introduction: Borderlands

Borders can be so many different things. A line that excludes or includes. That which makes it possible for us to differentiate between things and unite them. Borders are the reason we can talk of center and periphery. Which allow us to see the horizon or the rainbow. The way Goethe conducted his color experiments it is in the borderland between light and darkness that the colors appear.

A disability, accident or illness sometimes creates very restricting borders around a person's autonomy and sense of identity. In a single instant we might be robbed of everything it seems. Oliver Sacks writes (1986), in *The man who mistook his wife for a hat,* in the essay *The lost mariner* about Jimmie G. who had severe Korsakov's syndrome which meant that he (Sacks met with him for the first time in 1975) couldn't remember anything beyond 1945 (retroactive amnesia). He was also without any short-term memory and forgot everything almost immediately after it had been said or done (thus the title of the essay). Since his memory loss was so complete he was in many ways not even conscious of his condition, couldn't entirely fathom why he was in an hospital… And still… Sacks writes (ibid:34-37):

> One day I asked him not about his memory, or past, but about the simplest and most elemental feeling of all:
> "How do you feel?"
> "How do I feel," he repeated, and scratched his head. "I cannot say I feel ill. But I cannot say I feel well. I cannot say I feel anything at all."
> […]
> "Do you enjoy life?"
> "I can't say I do…"
> […]
> "You don't enjoy life," I repeated, hesitating somewhat. "How then *do* you feel about life?"
> "I can't say that I feel anything at all."
> "You feel alive though?"
> "Feel alive? Not really. I haven't felt alive for a very long time."
> His face wore a look of infinite sadness and resignation.
> [...]
> One tended to speak of him, instinctively, as a spiritual casualty – a "lost soul" […] "Do you think he *has* a soul?" I once asked the Sisters. They were outraged by my question, but could see why I asked it. "Watch Jimmie in the chapel," they said, "and judge for yourself."
> I did and I was […] profoundly moved and impressed, because I saw here an intensity and steadiness of attention and concentration that I had never seen before in him or conceived him capable of. […] Fully, intensely, quietly, in the quietude of absolute concentration and attention, he entered and partook of the Holy Communion. He was wholly held, absorbed, by a feeling. There was no forgetting, no Korsakov's then, nor did it seem possible or imaginable that there should be; for he was

no longer at the mercy of a faulty and fallible mechanism […] but was absorbed in an act, […] of his whole being, which carried feeling and meaning in an organic continuity and unity […]

The sisters were right […] and so was Luria, whose words now came back to me: "A man does not consist of memory alone. He has feeling, will, sensibility, moral being … It is here … you may touch him, and see a profound change." […]

But perhaps "moral" was too narrow a word – for the aesthetic and dramatic were equally involved. […] The same depth of absorption and attention was to be seen in relation to music and art: he had no difficulty, I noticed, "following" music or simple dramas, for every moment in music and art refers to, contains, other moments. […]

Jimmie, who was so lost in extensional "spatial" time, was perfectly organized in Bergsonian "intentional" time; what was fugitive, unsustainable, as formal structure, was perfectly stable, perfectly held, as art or will. Moreover, there was something that endured and survived. […] If he were held in emotional or spiritual attention […] the attention […] its quietude, would persist for a while, and there would be in him a pensiveness and peace we rarely, if ever, saw during the rest of his life at the Home.

Sacks' story highlights an aspect of the environmental spectrum that is the focus of this study: the rhythm and meaningfulness inherent in rituals. The aesthetic experiences of music and art provide Jimmie with a coherence and integrity he otherwise lacks, exactly what the German philosopher and poet Friedrich Schiller wrote around 200 years ago ([1795] 2010:86): "Only here [in the aesthetic condition] do we feel as if torn from time, and our humanity comes to expression with a purity and *integrity* as if it hadn't yet suffered any break from external forces" (italics by author, my translation). Jimmie with his severe amnesia surfaces a general reality. Aesthetic and aesthetic-practical processes seem to be essential in order to allow the articulation of meaningful moments in his life.

It was this case-study by Oliver Sacks, my own experiences as a bookbinder and my research concerning the workshop as educational environment, that made me want to understand more thoroughly what the properties in these environments are that contribute so intensely to the strengthening and healing of integrity and the sense of meaning.

Jimmie lacks all continuity in time. But without him Schillers' words on the aesthetic condition that tears us out of time and causes our humanity to express itself with "a purity and *integrity* as if it hadn't yet suffered any break from external forces" would have remained an open, philosophical, question. This study probably wouldn't have been written since I wouldn't have perceived how much his words actually mean. The extremity of Jimmies situation also brings to light something that otherwise mostly remains hidden in daily life. I experience the same processes as he does in the aesthetic condition, but the depth of the experience mostly remains hidden since my integrity is so much less disrupted than his was. This is also why I have included excerpts from several narratives by, and about, people whose experiences of identity, perception and communication are on the human periphery of experience. In order to bring to light aspects that if one only speaks to people with "normal" perceptions, may not ever be mentioned.

It's not just that people with severe disabilities, injuries or illnesses deserve to be treated respectfully, that they have the same human dignity and worth as everyone else and that one should strive to create inclusive environments that provide them with the possibility of developing biographical

integrity. It's that if one doesn't take their experiences and perspectives seriously and allow *them* to ask the questions regarding the limits of our humanity, if one doesn't let those who are the weakest and most marginalized represent us when working with such questions, then we will get answers that in the 20th century took the form of euthanasia, the sterilization of poor people and racism. It is in the borderlands of human life and experience that the most profound questions can be asked and answered.

4 Background

For close to ten years I have been working educationally and therapeutically in the bookbindery at the Kristofferschool. Mainly as an apprentice and journeyman and more recently as the bookbinding teacher there. This study is a culmination of the research process I initiated 2007 in my first studies at the institution for educational research at the University of Stockholm. At that time I began by trying to describe the workshop as educational environment based on the specific environment I worked, and still work, in. When I started the research it ended up being about that half of what I do that is concerned with curative or supportive education, what is called *supportive crafts* at the school. It ended up being that way for several reasons:

1. There is already good research done on the properties of workshop environments when their intention is to work pedagogically but still retain their function of having some sort of real production, ie. mostly different kinds of vocational training (documented in Brater et al 1988, Edding et al. 1985, Fintelmann 1990, Fucke 1996, 1991, 1981, 1977, 1976, Rist & Schneider 1979).

2. To work with supportive education using crafts the way its been done at the Kristofferschool for about 30 years is, as far as I know, a unique institution. During a ten month long research journey to Germany, USA, Switzerland, South Africa, Denmark and Norway, where I visited slightly more than 30 schools and spoke with teachers there (predominantly crafts teachers) with the express purpose of documenting educational innovation at the high school level I no where encountered a systematic work with this kind of supportive framework for students in regular schools. It is, however, fairly common in various special schools.[1] Against this background it seemed like a useful way to initiate research on the workshop as educational environment to attempt a description and documentation of the supportive crafts institution at the Kristofferschool.

3. Lastly it has also become clear that if one wishes to bring to light the properties of workshops as a part of an educational process dedicated to general education (ie. not vocational training where one works more towards production) the easiest way is to study those cases that most deviate from the norm. Those (students, teachers and others) who fit well into regular educational environments are the same people who obscure the limits and preconceptions built into them as well as their more fundamental educational properties. This is something that I will return to in the present study with even more emphasis by integrating a standpoint epistemology.

Supportive crafts, an aesthetic and practical way of working, is an important part of the overall supportive and curative education given at the Kristofferschool. It has been given to students as a central or complimentary support to help with eg. lack of studying motivation, parents divorce,

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[1] Eg. in Camphill communities. For further information see www.camphill.org. I spent two weeks at one myself outside of Aberdeen in Scotland and participated in the work they did in their workshops.

[2] In German the word is Urteilskraft or Urteilsvermögen.

[3] In Swedish and German the term I would use most frequently is pedagogy. Education in English carries a more narrow connotation that pedagogy but is so much more common that I've chosen to

ADD and ADHD, depression, anxiety, eating disorders and after suicide attempts. Until now I have worked during 2007 with documenting the organizational structure and methodology of the supportive crafts institution and during 2008 with gathering stories about some of the various supportive interventions that have taken place over the years. Here is one of the shorter ones to give some idea of what those stories looked like:

> Wolfgang [bookbinder]:
> There was with a pair of students an unbelievable sense of boredom, almost to the point of not really wanting to live… and they sit beneath an open window one day and one of them says: Goddamn, I'd like Sweden for once to be so hot that the air turned orange, that one can't even manage to lift an arm. And the other one answers: You're crazy, it should be the entire opposite, so cold that ones breath freezes and falls down half a meter in front of one, that the air is like a block of ice.
>
> And then my colleague Hasse, he gets two large gas tanks and lets one of them do welding work, they start with old Gevalia coffe tins and make patterns with the blow-torch, which is both hot and dangerous, then they go on to do other things as well, and for the other one he gets a piece of raw quarz crystal to cut and polish. Cut and polish so that if one uses sunlight it is possible to se the color spectrum in it and they do it [a rather complex geometrical and mathematical task as well]. The result is this whole gift of skill and knowledge, the consequences for he who cut and polished the crystal were that later on he was the role model for another 8 or 9 students who also cut and polished gemstones and from that the whole process of us getting the necessary tools. [Implicit in the story is that their boredom disappeared with the workprocess]

The narratives from the workshop environment left no doubt on the educational and therapeutical potential it offers. Several questions arose during the course of that research. Already in documenting the structure and method it struck me that the workshop environment has remained largely invisible in contemporary educational research. Those studies that have been conducted have mainly focused on the effects but not on the environment as such, ie. not only the space but also the activities and materials that are part of it. Bernard Schmalenbachs doctoral thesis (2007) and Frank R. Wilsons book (1998) first and foremost look to research done on the hands and their part in the development of the individual but not to the various practical environments in which we use them. One exception was the research done on the Hiberniaschool and the Waldorf school in Kassel who both have workshops with productive capacities for an integrated vocational training as part of an enlarged concept of general education (Brater et al 1988, Edding et al. 1985, Fintelmann 1990, Fucke 1996, 1991, 1981, 1977, 1976, Rist & Schneider 1979). But when it comes to workshops with a more general educational or therapeutic aim there is a lack of descriptive research that can provide the concepts one needs in order to really grasp the nuances of a workshop environments potential and specific character. Some of this can be transferred from the above-mentioned research and a few concepts close to the empirical material were also possible to develop in my earlier studies. These are:

1. Workshops contain a multitude of materials and possible tasks that are mostly very visible/tangible/corporeal. Among others, Schmalenbach (2007) has shown, in his review of the present research on the hand, how much our social and cognitive capacities rest on, and develop through, our bodily experiences especially those of our hands.

2. The craft objects on which one works tend to displace the usual relationship between student and teacher from a direct and unmediated one with all the issues concerning eg. power that then come into play to a indirect one mediated by the object which is at once "objective" in the sense of being visible and in the sense of its functionality (or lack of it) being easy to understand in practice, thus supporting the formation of a sense of discernment or judgement.[2]

3. Crafts or practical education provides a training of ones volitional skills, Brater et. al. (1988) eg. mention the following (my translation, p72):

   -Reliability, patience, endurance, exactness

   -Self-sufficiency, capacity for problem solving, readiness to take responsibility, flexibility, acting out of insight

   -Analytical thought, anticipatory skill, planning capacity, mobility of thought

   -Awareness, attention, perceptive skill, capacity for overview and concentration and the skill to understand and take into account complex situations

   -Transfer capacity, decisiveness, capacity for improvisation, openness to the unforseen, presence, learning capacity and interest, being able to adapt to new circumstances

   -Information readiness, cooperative capacity, social trust, being able to work out of other peoples intention, critical capacity and ability to perceive others, ability to make oneself understood.

   This list is incomplete and is easily enlarged based on relevant literature. It is also unclear to what extent these qualifications are on the same level, which ones might be part of others, and if it is at all possible to clearly differentiate them from each other.

4. Working in a workshop also provides a direct education or development of a person's emotional sides. Above all in the support of self-confidence since the results are so tangible/visible, given that the learner isn't given impossible tasks. It also supports the sense of *meaningfulness, manageability and comprehensibility,* to paraphrase Antonovsky and his salutgenetic perspective (1991, further on this in part 8.2.6). This occurs because one produces something of ones own, it is concrete/tangible and functionally transparent.

5. It also provides a direct and indirect cognitive development. Directly through the transparent functionality and objectivity of the objects one works on. This supports the development of judgement, meaning ones capacity to judge the practical realisation of an idea and to perceive the practical preconditions and possibilities in the development of new ideas. Indirectly through the various ways in which a persons senso-motorical development is connected to her capacity to develop balanced judgement, visualise three-dimensional images and translate two-dimensional drawings into three-dimensional constructions, etc. (Schmalenbach 2007, Wilson 1998, Arcini & Glans-Martinsson 2005).

From most of these points it is probably clear that their common ground is that objects in a workshop are not solely or mainly symbolical like texts but rather a mixture of symbol and visible material and it is precisely the visibility/tangibility that is one of the central properties of the workshop environment.

In order to continue on the same line of inquiry I have continued to research my own practice and its more elemental properties. Parallel to this I have carried on a research project with the Haga

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[2] In German the word is Urteilskraft or Urteilsvermögen.

Foundation, particularly its day activity institution consisting of a number of workshops for adults with neurological and neuropsychiatric disorders. This has provided an important contrast and also given the study a strong standpoint epistemological perspective to apply to research questions and more.

5 Basic terminology

My previous research and the studies we did on the history and philosophy of education at the beginning of the master course can be summarized in the form of some basic concepts or understandings. Hopefully this will clarify what I, *in this particular context,* understand with terms such as education or aesthetic-practical.

5.1 The terms education, therapy and biographical integrity

The view on education[3] and development that I make use of here is partly based on the works I've read on narrative psychology, narrative integrity and narrative perspectives on development (Freeman 2006, 2003, 1999, 1997, Bruner 2007, 2004, 1991, Rossiter 1999). These works have contributed to an accentuation of the necessity that learning and development is possible to integrate in the learners biography in a, from the learners perspective, meaningful way. It has also led me to rank biographical integrity above other educational purposes in importance. With other educational purposes I mean, for example, such things as the striving to teach someone a skill such as spelling or welding. Or the intent of socializing a student into a culture of some sort. There is no necessary contradiction between these purposes, learning a skill or becoming part of some cultural practice can both contribute important elements in the development of a person's integrity. Eg. the students who learn a crafts profession as part of the curriculum of the Hibernia schools general education at the high school level have spoken, in later studies, about how much the feeling of being skilled at something has contributed to their self-confidence and sense of purpose (read Edding et al. 1985, Fintelmann 1990, Gessler 1988, Rist & Schneider 1979).

In the following my understanding of education concerns above all such institutional practices where the educator views her main task as contributing to the learner experiencing a strengthening of her sense of meaningsfulness and integrity. In particular the task is to contribute to the experience of biographical coherence and context, ie. the sense of having a life story and that one is, in some way or other, its source and that it appears meaningful. This is a view I have developed as part of my earlier research in order to capture what the purpose is of the supportive crafts at the

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[3] In Swedish and German the term I would use most frequently is pedagogy. Education in English carries a more narrow connotation that pedagogy but is so much more common that I've chosen to use it.

Kristofferschool. In the following study I have tried to deepen this view further, especially the part on biographical integrity.

I have also worked with and incorporated medical perspectives on biography and integrity (Frank 1997, Charon 2008, 2006, Sacks 2007, 2005, 1996, 1984, 1986, Antonovsky 1991) because they complement and affirm what I have experienced to be the most important part of what supportive crafts are concerned with educationally: that illness, trauma and injury also lead to a disintegration of ones life story and that an important and often decisive part of the healing process is to recreate or restore a sense of biographical integrity. Leaving aside those students who receive supportive crafts because they are cognitively highly developed and easily remain understimulated in that part of the curriculum the support has most regularly been given because of disintegrative processes in the relationship of the student to her enviroment (specifically her capacity to experience learning and, generally, school, as something meaningful).[4]

This also narrows down what I understand with the terms therapy and therapeutic. To the extent that a therapy is educational it is so because it takes place in and through learning and biographical development. An educator is in this sense therapeutically active when she contributes to biographical integrity through her interventions and when these interventions come in the form of various *learning processes.* This is in contrast with art therapies or other psychotherapeutical activities where the focus lies with the curative work on eg. trauma. A pedagogically oriented therapy isn't really focused on a particular disability, trauma or problem but rather focuses its attention on how learning can contribute to the learner finding the tools with which she can work on her own process of healing.[5] If one limits the term therapy to such activities that take place in hospitals or in psychotherapeutical institutions I have caused some confusion with my use of the term. But with the perspectives on narrative medicine as well as Antonovskys salutogenesis (further on that in part 8.2.6) that have established themselves in the last four or five decades I find an expanded understanding of therapy to be sensible. To claim that an educator has no connection to therapeutic work I find both counterfactual and counterproductive. One cannot seriously have experienced then, how emotionally, psychologically and socially destructive pedagogical interventions can be, or, for that matter, constructive. I don't mean to imply that all educational activity always consists mainly of therapeutic activity but rather that the therapeutic aspect of educational work is worth emphasizing from time to time.

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[4] Integrity is something one possesses in relation to the environment and it is worth keeping in mind that the educational environment of most conventional schools can be a strong contributor to biographical disintegration and that a return to school might not really be the best way of determining whether or not integrity has to some degree been restored. The question becomes particularly difficult for youth and adults since biographical integrity with age tends to become more and more connected existentially with personal issues of a meaningful life and ones biographical intentions. An analysis on a systemic level is therefore more often than not an important part of how one works even though I have no reason to return to this part of the question explicitly in this study.

[5] Another *possible* difference is that educators who work therapeutically in aesthetic-practical environments most often are professional craftspeople and artists with a teachers education. Therapists who work in therapy in the same kind of environments have their education predominantly as psychotherapists or psychiatrists, to what degree they are also thoroughly educated as craftspeople or as artists is something I haven't examined.

This perspective on education and the task of the educator is, to summarize, one where the task of the educator is to support the development of biographical integrity for those individuals who are present in the educational environment. It stretches from an almost medical therapy where the intervention might be to help someone with a severe illness to integrate this experience into her life story to an almost general educational activity where one might be concerned with how vocational training assists individuals at the high school level to find a stronger sense of purpose in the further shaping of their own biographical future and relationship to their social environment. It is clearly a strongly normative perspective on the function of pedagogy and it is closely connected to the research perspective presented in chapter 7.

5.2 The terms meaning and meaningful

The way I use the terms meaning, meaningful and creating meaning is mainly in denoting a relational, existential, activity. The sense or signification of concepts or terms, ie. the difference between an elk and a fox or between being inside or outside something is at least partially something different (diSessa & Sherin 1998, Halldén, Haglund & Strömdahl 2007). That the act of interpreting something as meaningful must be present in order for one to even grasp the sense of something seems probable, but this falls outside the boundaries of the study to pursue further. That something is meaningful denotes in this context that it is perceived as comprehensible and somehow worthwhile or precious.[6] To attribute meaning to something then, is from this point of view, an activity that stretches from enjoying a good meal to experiencing ones life as a meaningful sequence of events. I thus largely follow the view of Viktor Frankl as he expounds it in *Man's search for meaning* (1992).

5.3 The terms aesthetic-, practical- and aesthetic-practical environment

With aesthetic environment I mainly denote environments where aesthetic activities are meant to take place, eg. studios for painting and sculpture, stages for drama or rehersal studios for music. It is worth keeping in mind that painting, sculpture and music all contain a fair amount of skill and practice. A studio can thus be understood to be as much a practical workshop where different color

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[6] Here I have changed the original text. It previously read that something is to be considered meaningful if it contributes to ones biographical integrity which is obviously mistaken. Acts of self-destructiveness and the interpretation of experiences as meaningful that are clearly destructive on some level point to the fact that ascribing meaning to something and at the same time having this contribute to integrity isn't a law but rather an educational aim.

pigments are ground, paints are made or drawing is practiced. A secondary understanding of the aesthetic environment concerns the aesthetic properties of all environments, ie. the way an environment provides a more passive aesthetic experience through its design, color, etc. It is also necessary to consider that an aesthetic process cannot really be held as having any clear boundaries. Where does an aesthetic curative educational environment end? In the beautiful buildings? In the use of materials that provide developmental sense-experiences? In the work with the natural surroundings? In the social shape of the institution? Actual aesthetic environments are as manifold as works of art and from an educational perspective one of the important aims of research on such spaces is to note such constellations of objects and structures that frequently lead to aesthetic experiences (in Schillers words to play) and the creation of meaning. It is also to present narratives from such environments in order to bring to light what has taken place there in the form of lives lived full of meaning (read further in Rittelmeyer (2005), for a more thorough connection to Schillers philosophy).

With practical environment I denote such environments in which some kind of practical activity involving the body, particularly the limbs, is meant to take place, eg. workshops, laboratories[7] and gardens.

The combination of aesthetic and practical into aesthetic-practical environment (a rather cumbersome string of words in english) denotes such aesthetic environments in which elements of practical work are a part and such practical environments in which aesthetic processes are a part. Thus few educational environments are strictly one or the other. I use the term aesthetic-practical more or less synonymously with workshop even though aesthetic-practical covers a much wider area (and I will use workshop even more frequently in this translation). All educational workshops are not per definition strong aesthetic-practical environments just as all studios or stages aren't, although I expect it is fairly common.

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[7] I include laboratories here even though it probably isn't very common to find laboratories that have an educational intent in the same way workshops more commonly are, ie. where the experiments aren't just a part of explaining an educational content but where the laboratory is there for the purpose of experiencing an aesthetic process and/or the creation of a product.

6 Aim and research questions

The purpose of this study is a deepened understanding of those properties in pedagogically oriented aesthetic-practical environments that contribute to the strengthening (the educational part) and healing (the therapeutic part) of people's integrity and sense of meaningfulness.

In my earlier studies of the supportive crafts at the Kristofferschool I had two intentions. The first was to try to describe an, until then, undocumented environment and practice and how it was structured. The second was to document stories from the same practice in order to bring to light the processes that take place there and their relation to its aims. Against this backdrop I have narrowed the purpose of the present study to a descriptive part and two questions that in various ways expand upon the issues raised in the previous studies:[8]

1. The descriptive part is concerned with continuing the documentation and description of aesthetic-practical institutions working with pedagogical interventions. This is an end in itself, since a precondition for much other research lies in the previous documentation and description of these kinds of environments. It is also important to conduct this sort of survey since aesthetic environments don't follow any simple rules and thus are most easily understood through examples (Schiller 1995, Rittelmeyer 2005, Elliot 2009).

2. The first question concerns which properties in aesthetic-practical environments that come to light through a more systematic and thorough interpretation of the processes that take place in the described environments (this is the question that lies closest to the general aim of the study). For this reason I've worked a lot with the choice of intrepretive perspectives in part 7.1.3, 7.2 and chapter 11.

3. The second question concerns how the chosen interpretive perspectives and the results of the documentative research can contribute to developmental-, comparative-, and evaluative work. Development, both of existing and new practices, demands a stronger reflection around ones practice. Comparisons between different practices at least demands some commonly useable concepts. Evaluation also demands that one can state clearly what one does and especially on what terms it can be evaluated. Regarding all these issues I hope that the combination of interpretive methods and environmental descriptions will be able to contribute to clarifications. This is important in relation to the purpose of the study because it is first through work with these issues that a more systematic understanding can be reached. Otherwise this ends with being a descriptive study where the status quo of every institutional practice (both those researched and others) must be taken for granted.

The aim is to work with the first issue through the description of the Haga Foundation and the Kristofferschool, the second in the presentation of the basic properties of such environments that follows in chapters 12 and 13, and the third issue is then tackled in chapter 14.

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[8] This study is independent of the previous ones. Those parts that are important to its context are summarized in the preceeding chapters on background and basic terminology.

7 Research perspective (ontology, epistemology, methodology)

Egon Guba and Yvonne Lincoln present an overview of different scientific paradigms in *The Sage handbook of qualitative research 3rd ed.* (2005). They differentiate between the paradigms of positivism, postpositivism, critical theory et al., constructivism and, in reference to John Heron and Peter Reason (1997), a participatory paradigm. The perspective taken in this study belongs to the participatory paradigm, something that is also mirrored in the use of Merleau-Ponty (2009, 1992), and Schiller (1995) as interpretive perspectives.

Heron and Reason write (1997:276) that their reason for advocating a participatory world-view is based on experience. They refer to their work with "cooperative inquiry", mindfulness and ceremony, as well as their everyday practice as that which convinces them that the experiential encounter with the presence of the world is the basis of our own being and knowing. This is also the reason for their calling the participatory paradigm a radical empiricism like the one long advocated by phenomenologists. They write (ibid:276) that "the empirical is based on experience and it ceases to be empirical when experience is constrained by a restricting definition".

It is a subjective-objective ontology in which the process of understanding is neither something entirely separate from the object of its interest nor something completely individual but rather intersubjectively constituted. Heron and Reason describe epistemology as a critical subjectivity that demands that one can differentiate at least four ways of knowing: experiential knowing, presentational knowing, propositional knowing and practical knowing. To be critically subjective means to be conscious of these four ways of knowing and to work with them, actively relating them to each other. They describe these four ways of knowing in the following terms (ibid:280f):

> Experiential knowing means direct encounter, face-to-face meeting: feeling and imaging the presence of some energy, entity, person, place, process, or thing. It is knowing through participative, empathic resonance with a being, so that as knower I feel both attuned with it and distinct from it. …
> Presentational knowing emerges from and is grounded in experiential knowing. It is evident in an intuitive grasp of the significance of our resonance with and imaging of our world as this grasp is symbolized in graphic, plastic, musical, vocal, and verbal artforms. It clothes our experiential knowing of the world in the metaphors of aethetic creation, in expressive spatiotemporal form of imagery. These forms symbolize both our felt attunement with the world and the primary meaning embedded in our enactment of its appearing.
> Propositional knowing is knowing in conceptual terms that something is the case; … it is expressed in statements and theories that come with the mastery of concepts and classes that language bestows. …
> Practical knowing is knowing how to do something, demonstrated in a skill or competence. We would argue that practical knowledge is in an important sense primary (Heron 1996). It presupposes a

conceptual grasp of principles and standards of practice, presentational elegance, and experiential grounding in the situation within which the action occurs.

Methodologically this leads to various forms of collaborative action inquiry (Heron & Reason 1997:283). The collaborative part of the research strengthens the critical subjectivity of the inquiry by adding a critical intersubjectivity. The validity of the research becomes stronger to the same extent that the researcher/researchers follow up their immediate experience with the other three ways of knowing and thereafter return their propositional and practical results to new experiences in a variant of the action research cycle.

Finally the participatory paradigm assumes the following axiological standpoint (ibid: 286f):

> [Axiology is] …what is intrinsically worthwhile, what is it about the human condition that is valuable as an end in itself. ...
> The participatory paradigm answers the axiological question in terms of human flourishing, conceived as an end in itself, where such flourishing is construed as an enabling balance within and between people of hierarchy, cooperation, and autonomy. …
> The shadow face of authority is authoritarianism; that of collaboration, peer pressure, and conformity; that of autonomy narcissism, willfulness, and isolation. The challenge is to design institutions that manifest valid forms of these principles, and to find ways in which they can be maintained in self-correcting and creative tension.

The educational and therapeutical foundations of the study that I presented earlier have been developed from the same axiological standpoint. The research questions are questions that focus precisely on describing such institutions mentioned above in the area of education and in working with this description to try and clarify which elements that are effective and why, with the purpose of being able to develop and evaluate them in a more systematic manner.

8 Methods and interpretive perspectives

8.1 Research methods

Heron and Reason's participatory perspective ends up advocating action research as method but is also closely related to hermeneutics (Greenwood & Levin 2007). I have made use of both. I have also made use of Sandra Harding's thoughts on standpoint epistemologies (Harding 1992).

8.1.1 Action research

I have used action research to study my own workshop practice. This is both in order to be able to develop it and to articulate it. There is a wide variety of different action research methods, especially in the area of organizational development. I have worked with the methods described in Greenwood & Levin 2007, Bradbury & Reason 2009 and Noffke & Somekh 2009.

Greenwood & Levin (2007:6f) define action research as minimally consisting of action, research and participation. Action means that the research includes an intent to change and develop the object of ones research. Research means that one aims to achieve new knowledge and/or new perspectives. Participation means that the people who are objects of the study also participate as subjects and decide the agenda of the research in question. I deviate from this in that my action research project concerns my own practice. It follows from this that the participatory aspect mainly includes myself at this stage since I am concerned with formulating verbally, as propositional knowing, what it is I do and why. There are some predecessors to such a practice within educational action research (Noffke & Somekh 2009). The difference between the research on my own workshop and that on the Haga Foundation is also the difference in research methods. At the Haga Foundation my focus has been to describe and document the way in which they work, the action part, ie. some kind of change process, has not been central to this. Concerning my own practice the documentation and description has still been an important part of the research but strong elements of action have also been part of the process. I have made use of the results that the research has provided in order to develop the practice I work in something I will return to in the part where I present the results of this process (12.2), as well as in the interpretations in chapter 13.

The action research method is similar to the hermeneutical in its circularity. But where the hermeneutical moves from observation/participation to reflection and back to further observation until som kind of saturation point of information is reached, the action research method includes a third, sometimes very extensive part: the gathering of information and the participatory work is followed by reflection which in turn is followed by action. In the action phase a part or parts of the

studied practice is/are changed and developed. This is then followed by a new circle of gathering information and reflection based on the intervention carried through, whereupon new actions/interventions can be implemented. More often than not this is a circular process in which the different parts might be difficult to keep fully apart. Depending on the practical circumstances at hand as well as sudden insights and posibilities various stages may blend or the order be reversed. In the description of the bookbindery at the Kristofferschool (12.2) I will return to how the action has worked practically as well as the results it has provided.

8.1.2 Hermeneutics

I have made use of hermeneutic methodology in the work to document and describe the Haga Foundation and its workshops. Molander writes (1996:218f) that the method above all demands a lot of time and collaboration with those parties that are the focus of the research, including the regular return of the data produced to those parties it concerns for them to check and validate.

It has been participatory in that I have been part of their daily work and carried through the various tasks given in the workshops. I have complemented this with interviews, conversations, observations and some reading. Just like Molander writes, an important part has been to return the results of all this to the care-givers at the Haga Foundation. The collection of data has successively come to an end as a kind of saturation has entered the process and new information has ceased to surface. This, of course, in relation to the comparatively limited intention: to try and describe the workshops and to gather some stories that mirror the kind of processes that take place in them.

8.1.3 Standpoint epistemology

A central element in the present study is the incorporation of Sandra Harding's standpoint epistemology (Harding 1992). She advocates a research method she calls strong objectivity (in contrast to objectivism and relativism). She writes that research methods often carry a relatively weak kind of objectivity in the sense that there are seldom stringent demands that the researcher analyse the preconceptions that lay hidden in such things as research question, method, etc. and that reveal themselves in such forms as overt or covert racist, sexist, imperialist and social values as well as such objectivist thinking which makes ones own position the only legitimately "scientific" and neutral one. Her suggestion is to use standpoint epistemologies, ie. to proceed from a marginalized groups perspective to better get a hold of the limits to ones own perspective, thus strengthening objectivity. Thanks to the interest of the Haga Foundation to enter into a cooperative inquiry I have been able to subject the research process and intrepretive perspectives to a view from the margins, a standpoint connected with disabilities, particularly autism. In this way I have tried to see to it that the conceptual development in the study has become as inclusive as possible. Since the view of action research regarding generalizations is that one single case contradicting the generalization demands a revision of the same (Greenwood & Levin 2005) this view from the

margin has also been a way of working with case-studies that lie far out of the ordinary in order to actively test, especially, the concept of biographical integrity.

The inclusive intention of the study also brings a different character to the collection of data. If the search is for an exclusive norm then the method is most often one where the aim is to find some kind of average that leads to individual cases and deviations being viewed as less interesting. If one instead actively pursues deviations in order to catch a more inclusive "norm" it is enough to locate single individual deviations since the pursuit is for the most extreme cases in order to cover as wide a field as possible. This is the reason why I, in the present study, as part of its marginal perspective, together with my own observations and experiences, have used both autobiographies and case-studies where the descriptions can throw light on its reasoning as well as widen the requirements on what it must be able to include of human experiences.

An example: Tito, an indian boy with autism who's speech at eight years of age is limited to single vocalizations and who is hardly in command of any elementary practical skills. At the same time his mother has taught him to read and write two years earlier (Mukhopadhyay 2005). He writes (s35):

> He [Tito writes of himself in the third person] had the feeling of his body being strewn out and that it was hard to gather it together. The boy continuously saw himself only as a hand or a leg and spun around and around to gather his parts into a whole.

> He spun and spun around himself, because he wanted to be quicker than the fan. In this way he also feels that way! The idea to spin around is one he got from the fan when he saw how its wings, that otherwise were separate, combined into an unbroken circle when they spun at high speed. The boy reaches extacy as he spins faster and faster. When someone tries to stop him he again feels strewn out. [my translation]

The narrative speaks both of experiencing disintegration and the need for integrity/wholeness. It does so in a way that is easy to interpret using Merleau-Ponty's concept of the lived body at the same time as the process to reach a sense of wholeness remains something of a riddle if one desires to understand more precisely what takes place, I don't want to anticipate the entire study here, but the perspective that Schiller brings provides some interesting clues. Which takes us to the interpretive perspectives.

8.2 Interpretive perspectives

Those aesthetic-practical institutions that I am about to describe are in many ways permeated with concepts and interpretations that were developed by the people who built them. In practice this means that they are situated in a waldorf educational and social therapeutical context respectively.[9] For example, if one works with psychotherapy or art therapy or some sort of bodily psychotherapy the situatedness is generally one that encompasses that particular practices view on therapy and the

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[9] Read eg. Nobel (1999) and Liljeroth (1994) for a description of waldorf education and social therapy respectively.

nature of man. It is a kind of internal intrepretive method that is present no matter if one works with Feldenkrais, the Alexander method, Jacques Dropsy's method or some sort of Bodywork to take a few examples of bodily oriented methods. In choosing Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, Schiller's philosophy, narrative theory and Antonovsky's salutogenetic perspective I have tried to include interpretive perspectives that can be commonly used no matter which internal system of concepts and interpretations one has in ones particular practice. I am aware of the fact that many, maybe all, practices cannot, by far, be thoroughly interpreted with the help of these perspectives. At the same time I see the need for interpretive perspectives that at least in general areas allow comparisons between practices, contribute to explaining what happens in a practice and to ideas for further development, ie. much of what I wrote of earlier on the research questions. For this reason I have tried in chapter 11 to check the interpretive perspectives with the help of Harding's standpoint epistemological method in order to see to it that they can fill their function as interpretive tools.

It belongs to the issue in question that a practices internal system of concepts and interpretive methods gains a lot by being related to other perspectives that aren't as tied to one specific practice and because of this are better able to act as foundations of interpretation.

None of the chosen interpretive perspectives have a strong, previous, foundation in the practices I document and describe. Schiller's philosophical perspective is sometimes described as one of the predecessors of waldorf education but this has, to the extent of my knowledge, received limited attention in the literature on waldorf education written by its adherents and it isn't a central part of its internal system of concepts. His letters were, in passing, referenced in my initial description of the supportive crafts and they didn't appear to be a central element in the way the practicians spoke about their practice.

8.2.1 Phenomenology (Merleau-Ponty)

To understand the aspect of aesthetic-practical environments that engages the body I have found the phenomenological perspective of Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961) to be the most relevant. By introducing the concept of the lived body he both clarifies why the body and thereby also practical activities are so central in education and therapy as well as provides conceptual tools to understand in what way.

It was in his work with the philosophies of Edmund Husserl and Max Scheler (Bengtsson 1998:232f) that Merleau-Ponty developed the distinction between the objective (medical, biological) body experienced as an object among other objects in the world and the lived body, the body in which I as a subject experience myself and in time unfold my biography (Bullington 2004, Bengtsson 2001, Bengtsson 1998, Merleau-Ponty 1992, 2009). The lived body isn't something strictly limited; tools become a part of me and my body when I use them for example. On the other hand many diseases and injuries lead to parts, or all, of my body suddenly becoming estranged, ie. the body ceases to feel like *my* body (like *me*) or the tumor is experienced as a foreign (and hostile)

element *in* my body and thus in my identity, in that which physically provides me with the feeling of having a sustained integrity (Honkasalo 2000, Sacks 1996a).[10]

In turn, the lived body gives us the foundation for our identity[11] and our history/biography. It thereby also acts as an anchor of continuity in our biography. Our identity is the lived body's *meaningful,[12] lasting,[13]* experiences, this complex of habits, memories, encounters, relations, knowledge, emotions, views, personality traits, difficulties, hindrances, impressions, etc. that we denote with our name (Varela et al. 1993:59-81). A benefit to using the term identity instead of more frequently used words like "self" or "I" here is that identity allows for different experiences of self, ones that are very individual and ones that are more collective, ones that are weak and ones that are strong, ie. all people, even the most newly born infant, have an identity but everyone doesn't experience an everyday feeling of egoity (compare Freeman 2003, Sclater 2003, Crossley 2003, Bruner 2007). Schmalenbach (2007:17) writes about it in the following words: "the differentiated reflection on our corporeality shows it as *image, expression* and *"trace"* of a personality" (my translation, authors italics).

Close to everything we consider to be part of our identity can be affected by, or taken from us through, disease, injury or disability. Our senses, our behaviour, our emotions, memory, reasoning, movement, integrity and sense of self. To bypass the body in its lived relation to the world and its position as the foundation of our sense of identity in educational and therapeutical situations leads

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[10] Our integrity can be violated or injured in so many different ways but the body is seldom absent and more often crucial. Slavery and its consequences has left substantial empirical evidence here. It is decided on a bodily, practical, level and it is clear that an enslaved body cannot reasonably be perceived to have an identity (from the perspective of the slave owner) since that would be well on the road to recognize in it the same individual worth as one ascribes to oneself. Maybe it isn't a coincidence that Merleau-Ponty wrote in the midst of that historical moment when the lived body was denied most thoroughly and finally destroyed (two of his main works were published during the second world war).

[11] I'd like to emphasize that I have limited the present discussion concerning our identity to a general one, I leave the practical differentiation more or less untouched, ie. I believe that these general perspectives are just as useful in combination with a Buddhist mindfulness/awareness analysis that proceeds from the five aggregates: form, emotions/sensations, perceptions/impulses, dispositional formations and consciousness (Varela et al. 1993) as with the differentiation in bodily sheaths used in anthroposophy (Steiner 1987, 1981) or the various concepts used in psychoanalysis (although in this I'm not as sure) or any number of practical, traditional or new, systems concerned with our identity. If anything this general way of reasoning should be able to contribute to making comparisons possible and to at least a tentative possibility of relating traditional systems to contemporary scientific dialogue. Varela et al. (1993) do an admirable job of this in *The embodied mind* with regard to phenomenology, cognitive science and Bhuddist mindfulness/awareness tradition.

[12] An experience that we are powerless to interpret and give meaning to (something that may have many reasons, one might not be able to because the experience is too difficult, unintelligible, quickly forgotten, etc.) runs the risk of, just like injuries, becoming a foreign element (a sort of absence or denial) in the identity of our lived body and as denials such experiences also become part of the identity if only as negations. Much therapeutic work is also concerned with reaching a point where one is capable of affirming or embracing the denied elements that otherwise cause complications in the identity of the lived body, ie. both psyche and soma).

[13] All experiences, both ones that we perceive as positive and ones we perceive as negative, don't become lasting. It is rather a sign of illness if one is incapable of separating experiences that come to have enduring biographical meaning from others that one can allow to be forgotten.

to a limitation in both our understanding of such interventions as well as in the possibility of even conceiving of adequate practices in this context. Thus, with regards to educational and therapeutic activities that concern identity, biography and sense of meaning a philosophical perspective like the phenomenological one Merleau-Ponty has developed (or some equivalent one) is necessary if one doesn't want to risk underestimating the role that the body plays, especially for the growing, ill, injured and disabled human being.

In a more general sense the understanding of the body in its lived capacity and the integration of this perspective in educational work is perhaps most essential for children and youth. The child begins its life by taking control of the body, learning to crawl, walk, write (writing is to a large degree an issue of learning to use the finer parts of the hands motor skills and not simply a cognitive excercise), etc. It is also rather self-evident that young people have fewer primary experiences than adults, ie. fewer experiences that are their own, in the lived body and of its relation to the environment, but also just generally simply by being younger. It follows from this that one also lacks the richness of experience that older people can be expected to have and, especially, to connect to and abstract from when confronted with discursive presentations and theory. In therapy the understanding of the lived aspect of the body is always important and often central, since illness and disabledness strike at the body (both the objective, medical one and the lived one), our identity, and our capacity to interact with others and with the world around us. If one ignores the questions that we can enounter when taking the perspective of the lived body one also ingores, in a very practical way, possibilities for actual healing (Toombs 1993).

8.2.2 Schiller's aesthetic philosophy

The other important interpretive perspective is Friedrich Schiller's (1759-1805) the way he writes about it in his *Über die ästetische Erziehung des Menschen* (On the aesthetic education of man) that was first published in 1795 (2010).[14] The central statement in this context reads (p62f): "the human being only plays when he is, in the full sense of the word, human, and he is only fully human when and where he plays."[15] This, for Schiller, takes place in the space (field) between two extremes in which we are unfree: form-drive and sense-drive[16] (drive could also be translated as urge or instinct).

In the sense-drive we find everything that is materially given in ourselves or that proceeds from our sensory nature. He writes (ibid:47): "when the human being experiences the present, the entire endless possibility of his purpose is limited to this single form of being. Thus, where this drive alone is active there is of necessity the greatest degree of limitation." With this he intends, among other

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[14] I have written considerably more on Schiller's perspective that on Merleau-Ponty's, mostly because it is less familiar and as such there is less written by other authors, at least outside of Germany. It is also, in part, rather difficult ideas that Schiller formulates.

[15] This, and the following quotes from Schiller's text are translated from the German by myself.

[16] Schiller more commonly calls the sense-drive "Stofftrieb" which could be translated as material, substance or stuff, non of which read easily in English. The following discussion of his concepts should clarify his choice of words.

things, to say that given over entirely to our impressions or senses, there is no freedom or sense of self left, because we are wholly a part of the present moment, filled with it.

In the form-drive on the other hand we find the opposites of the sense-drive: names and concepts, logic, the mental necessities that cause us to be unable to give our concepts a completely arbitrary content (it is perhaps not so often reflected upon but there are lawful necessities in being able to count, understand cause and effect, identifying objects conceptually, etc. because logic is evident in and of itself). Schiller also includes what is morally necessary (he wrote the letters in part as a criticism of Kant's ethical philosophy with its categorical imperative[17]) and thereby finds that the urge to form gives us both reason and laws. He writes (Schiller 2010:48): "When the first drive only creates single *cases* the second gives *laws* – laws for every judgement [Urteil] when it comes to knowing and laws for every will when it comes to doing." (author's italics)

These two poles that limit human freedom awaken, from Schiller's point of view, a third drive: what he calls the play-drive (ger. Spieltrieb).[18] In play we relate to both poles at the same time as we remain free in relation to them. He describes the character of play as follows (Schiller 2010:60): "the word play designates all that is neither subjectively or objectively coincidental and yet at the same time neither inwardly or outwardly exerts coercion." He goes on to equate artistic/aesthetic[19] activity with play seeing them as possessing the same qualities, thus the title of the treatsie. It is even possible for our play to reach far into the poles of sense and form, even though Schiller repeatedly states that man, being a finite being can never reach the end of them. This causes freedom, for Schiller, to be something relative to our capacity for play, ie. to be more of a practical problem than a theoretical one.[20] His comparatively short study is generally of great interest but in this context the important concepts, that I will be working with, are play and aesthetics.[21]

To summarize in Schiller's own words, he writes (2010:56f):

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[17] That is, the idea that one should act in a way that allows ones actions to become general law.

[18] The German word Spiel is actually a blend of what the words play and game denote in English.

[19] I think it is important to remember that the aesthetic concept Schiller develops isn't to be confused with various artistic cultures. One might otherwise easily think of some bohemian artist when thinking of aesthetics. The aesthetic process Schiller writes of isn't culturally situated. Mark Johnson (2008) in *The meaning of the body, aesthetics of human understanding* belongs to those scholars who work with a similar wide understanding of the term aesthetics, a way of understanding in which an aesthetic process more or less is the same process one engages in when attributing meaning to something.

[20] Schiller's thoughts on freedom and autonomy aren't entirely clear, Sabine Roehr (2003) in *Freedom and Autonomy in Schiller* has written an interesting analysis of this. As far as I can judge it doesn't concern aspects of these issues that have a direct relation to the themes of the present study.

[21] An important question in the context of the study is how the sense-drive can be understood in relation to the knowledge we have of cognitive disabilities and mental problems like obsessions. I might not go so far as to claim that all disease, injury and disability is located in the body in the sense of being tied to the sense-drive but it seems reasonably close at hand to view much as part of complications in this pole. This would then depend on the fact that the human being, which Schiller also writes, isn't born into a balance between form and sense but rather at birth is entirely a sensory organism. It is during childhood and youth that the form-drive developes and the problems that surface during this process are then connected to organic (widely conceived) issues (apart from traumatic events).

> The sense-drive demands that there shall be change and that time shall have a content; the form-drive demands that time shall be annulled and that there shall be no change. That drive, therefore, in which both the others work in concert [...] the play-drive, therefore, would be directed towards annulling *time within time*, reconciling becoming with absolute being and change with identity.
>
> The sense-drive wants to *be* determined, wants to receive its object; the form-drive wants to determine *out of itself,* wants to generate its object: the play-drive will thus be directed to receive the same way it would have generated and to generate the same way the sense aspires to receive.
>
> The sense-drive excludes from its subject all autonomy and freedom; the form-drive excludes from its subject all dependence, all passivity. [...] The play-drive, in consequence, as the one in which both the others act in concert, will exert upon the psyche at once a moral and a physical constraint; it will, therefore, since it annuls all contingency, annul all constraint too, and set man free both physically and morally. (authors italics)

Schiller's terminology *play-drive* is at the same time the most exact way of expressing his idea and somewhat misleading since we tend to have a rather specific understanding of what play denotes. In Schiller's writing play denotes a function that the human being possesses, a function that in a more general sense might be called the capacity to give *meaning* to something, ie. one might well be warranted to call it the drive to meaning.

Meaning in this context, as I wrote previously, is not identical with signification in the sense of what a concept signifies (even though it can be from case to case). Meaning in this context is the creation of relationships which is precisely what one does in play, even though a box may become a boat for a while, the function, ie. the signification of what a boat is, remains intact. Freedom is the capacity to create and maintain a new relation between sense (the box) and form (the function of a boat). An occurrence is experienced as meaningful not by our interpretive arbitrariness but when we, playfully, experience a capacity to relate sense and form *autonomously,* ie. in a way where the relationship hasn't been established by law (form) or where no relationship is possible to bring about (sense). And, as Schiller writes, freedom has a history, ie. we are not concerned with absolute freedom but with a freedom that has both an individual and human history. In social contexts one also finds a critical questions regarding freedom and meaningfulness. All social relationships aren't mutual and consensual, in their most extreme forms we've moved entirely away from treating each other as biographical beings to treating each other as objects. But not even the most brutal excercize of power can prevent the victim from remaining a witness (the original meaning of the greek word martyrium). The way eg. Primo Levi (1998) writes about his experiences in Auschwitz supports this. No real meaning can be ascribed to these experiences in any ordinary sense, one cannot really understand *why,* but as witnessing it is in itself an act of will that denies the gas chambers and forced labor and the attempts to deny humans identity and biography. An act of witnessing that also comprises those who didn't survive and can speak for themselves. The question remains, who is there in a person suffering from severe dementia? Who is there in a patient lying in a coma? What remains when the self can no longer maintain the continuity and integrity of its biography and identity because the lived body is too suppressed by something foreign (be it a tumor, an injury, or something else)? In connection with Schiller I maintain that the self is still present as a witness to this process, however a witness who might never be able to articulate this witnessing. Does this mean that we should act as if the body thereby has entirely transformed into an object and become worthless?

The way Schiller describes the *capacity* for play it is always potentially present and active in an unreflective or subconscious way. The lived body and its processes of identity is a field where this capacity or function encounters various degrees of resistance (something it always does) and where a

disability is to be defined as a particularly difficult resistance. There is nothing that completely incapacitates the possibility of meaning, every life (every lived body) is full of potential meaning, but there are ways of *denying* this, to create environments that are hostile to continued creation of meaning and as much as possible, make the lived body into simply another object. Otherwise slavery, euthanasia, sterilizations, concentration camps and such would not exist… It is also possible to existentially deny the meaningfulness of ones own life, this is a form of denial that is self-fulfilling. It is important to be clear that Schiller's view provides every human existence with the *same* priceless worth since she possesses this function or drive complete irrespective of her capacity to articulate it. And the fact the she possesses this potential is what constitutes our humanness. At the same time he provides space for an endless process of becoming since the creation of meaning (play) is something that can expand and deepen without there being any simple way of assigning any limits to when it must cease, on the contrary it seems logical that such a function is boundless.

Schiller's differentiation of the human being (form- sense- and play-drive) is interesting precisely when the emphasis is on man as a being who's creation of meaning takes place in communication with others in a totality of relations comprising her environment. The meaning of play isn't arbitrarily decided by me alone, but always in relation to its materials: ideas (form) and surroundings (matter, impressions, including and mainly, the social environment).[22] Schiller's perspective views our social interactions, as well as educational activity to the extent that it is actual practice (communication and intervention), as predominantly aesthetic (playful) activities. In the polar drives, form and sense, our biography is lost. Schiller describes it pointedly with regards to the sense-drive (2010:47): "The human being in this state is nothing more that a quantitative unit, a fulfilled moment in time – or rather: *she* doesn't exist, because her personality is nullified as long as the sensation holds sway and time carries her away" (authors italics).

At this point I need to anticipate the standpoint epistemological discussion on the interpretive perspectives. The reason is that it is easy to confuse play and aesthetic activities with what we normally denote with these words. Which in turn would imply that children and artists are more human than others and that people who have a disability that strikes at the capacity to have strong conventional aesthetic experiences are less so. Oliver Sacks for example, writes of his meeting with Temple Grandin in *An anthropologist on mars* (1996:293):

> As we drove on into the park, the landscape opened out into an immense mountain plateau, with limitless views in every direction. We pulled off the road and gazed toward the Rockies – snowcapped, outlined against the horizon, luminously clear even though they were nearly a hundred miles away. I asked Temple if she did not feel a sense of their sublimity. "They're pretty, yes. Sublime, I don't know." When I pressed her, she said that she was puzzled by such words and had spent much time

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[22] Even though the play of children is just a specific form of what Schiller means when he writes of play it provides a very clear example of the freedom with which children ascribe meaning to sense and form. In the same way it becomes clear that the process is fundamentally social in nature, even when children play alone and daydream for instance. Schiller also writes (2010:80): "The sense-drive is thus activated before the form-drive since sensation predates consciousness, and in this, the *priority* of the sense-drive we find the explanation for the entire history of human freedom." (Authors italics. A further discussion of Schiller's relation to other theorists of play and the play of children can be found in Rittelmeyer 2005.)

with a dictionary, trying to understand them. She had looked up "sublime," "mysterious," "numinous," and "awe," but they all seemed to be defined in terms of one another.

"The mountains are pretty," she repeated, "but they don't give me a special feeling, the feeling you seem to enjoy."

On the way to the airport she tells him (ibid:296):

> […] Most people can pass on genes – I can pass on thoughts or what I write.
> "This is what I get very upset at. […]" Temple, who was driving, suddenly faltered and wept. "I've read that libraries are where immortality lies. […] I don't want my thoughts to die with me. […] I want to have done something. […] I'm not interested in power, or piles of money. I want to leave something behind. I want to make a positive contribution – know that my life has *meaning*. Right now, I'm talking about things at the very core of my existence." (my italics)

As previously stated, the aesthetic capacity as Schiller conceives it, is in many ways identical to our capacity for meaning and attributing meaning as well as to our *drive* to experience life as meaningful. This is obviously not a capacity that Temple Grandin lacks. This capacity to create meaning is a pure function without previous content. It is hardly inaccurate to call this ones Self or subject (Schiller calls it our personality and thereby denotes something more like a Self than what we today associate with the term) even though I have to emphasize that "self" doesn't necessarily refer to some being one can encounter. Exactly what this function "is" is actually much more difficult to answer that it is to describe how it appears in its activity. Especially if one considers that human beings have the potential to differentiate themselves so that they have, for example, beyond given or unreflected habits the potential to develop habits that are structure by an in freedom determined meaningfulness.[23]

I find it reasonable to assume that this function is synonymous with much of what has been researched from an entirely different perspective within the buddhist tradition, at least the mindfulness one the way it is described in *The embodied mind* (Varela et al. 1993). There the

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[23] A famous example is Benjamin Franklin (famous enough that I've allowed myself to quote him from wikipedia): "Franklin sought to cultivate his character by a plan of thirteen virtues, which he developed at age 20 (in 1726) and continued to practice in some form for the rest of his life. His autobiography lists his thirteen virtues as: 1. Temperance. […] 2. Silence. […] 3. Order. […] 4. Resolution. […] 5. Frugality. […] 6. Industry. […] 7. Sincerity. […] 8. Justice. […] 9. Moderation. […] 10. Cleanliness. […] 11. Tranquillity. […] 12. Chastity. […] 13. Humility. […] Franklin didn't try to work on them all at once. Instead, he would work on one and only one each week "leaving all others to their ordinary chance". While Franklin didn't live completely by his virtues and by his own admission, he fell short of them many times, he believed the attempt made him a better man contributing greatly to his success and happiness, which is why in his autobiography, he devoted more pages to this plan than to any other single point; in his autobiography Franklin wrote, "I hope, therefore, that some of my descendants may follow the example and reap the benefit." "Varela et al. (1993) also devote a substantial part of their book to the same question, most concisely when they write (s252): "The Tibetan tradition even talks about the five aggregates being transformed into the five wisdoms. Notice that this sense of transformation does not mean going away from the world – getting out of the five aggregates. The aggregates may be the constituents on which the inaccurate sense of self and world are based, but (more properly *and*) they are also the basis of wisdom. The means of transforming the aggregates into wisdom is knowledge, realizing the aggregates accurately – empty of any egoistic ground whatsoever yet filled with unconditional goodness (Buddha nature, etc.), intrinsically just as they are in themseleves."

function is called awareness but since this isn't a study on the human subject in all its aspects I haven't pursued this line of inquiry further, even though I believe there is much to be won by a more in depth comparison.

The important part of allowing the subject (self) to be free of any specific kind of content, to remain one (or more) function(s), is that it gives the subject the capacity to identify with everything else. To give meaning is by necessity a process of identification in which we wholly or partially forget ourselves as playing subjects in order to be part of the playing activity. The educational aspect of theatre, to take an example, consists precisely in offering a field of practice (a tool) for both identification, distancing and self-reflection.

Identity and biography are thereby not to be considered parts of the subject but rather a living field that one identifies with and interprets and reinterprets. A similar relational perspective that builds on G. H. Mead's philosophy has been developed by Moira von Wright in *Vad eller vem* (What or who?) where she writes (2000:161): "Who I am is revealed in the encounter with others, and my *who* is therefore not identical with my identity or my story about myself." (my translation, author's italics)

Below is a schematic overview of Schiller's perspective:
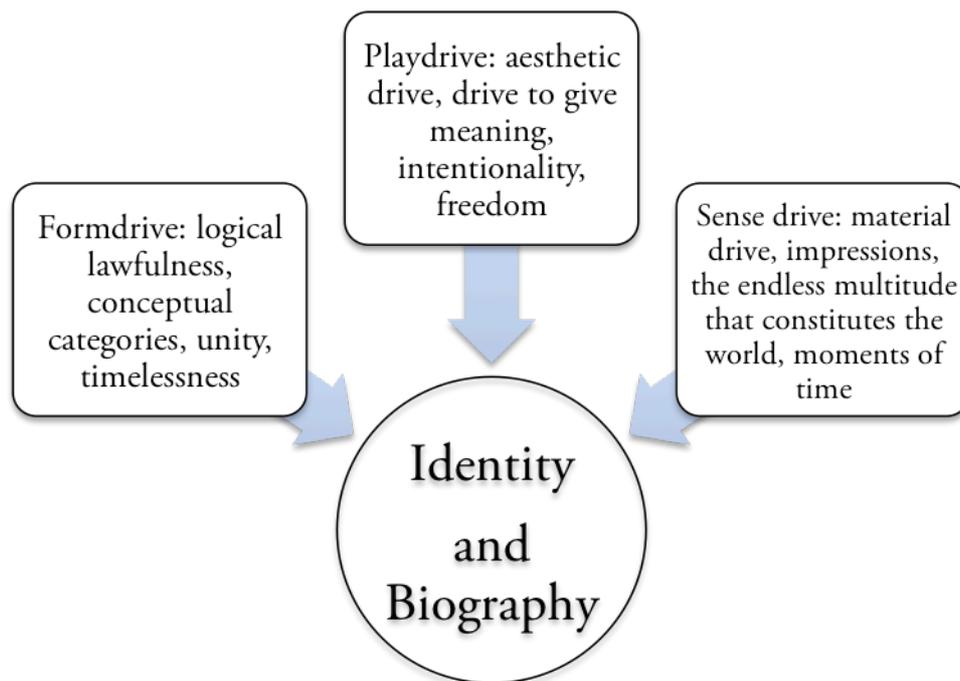
It is also interesting to proceed from Heron and Reason's four ways of knowing (1997) which provides an interesting perspective on Schiller: experience = sense-drive and when including the play- and form-drives it becomes presentational knowing which in turn, further worked on by the form-drive becomes propositional knowing. Practical knowing is a more or less articulated further development and synthesis of the other three ways of knowing with the help of the play-drive. Practical knowing: the capacity to relate to the endless multitude of impressions, decisions and possibilities that any practice offers with knowledge of those laws or general rules of thumb that

need to be considered together with the capacity to judge which possible action that is worthwhile and meaningful. In this way it opens the possibility to understand work resting on practical knowing as an evolved form of play, something many craftsmen bear witness to (Sennett 2008).

8.2.3 Schiller and Merleau-Ponty

Part of Schiller's unique perspective is writing in terms of drives (or urges or instincts), otherwise the sense-drive doesn't differ that much from empiricism and the form-drive from rationalism given that one take into account that Schiller has shifted the angle of his view in what I would term a more phenomenological, life-world oriented, direction. One might from this perspective ask what in the life-world that provides the foundation for the more abstract and reflexive theories in each respective field. As Bengtsson writes (2001:9): "Already Husserl knew that experience cannot be understood to be pure sensations or subsumations of various intellectual categories, which empiricism and rationalism respectively, attempt to do. On the contrary, sense and mind form an undissolvable unity that is only possible to divide analytically." And he continues, later on in the text (ibid:64f):

> Reality is mostly not distinguished by this abstract purity, rather the contingent and the general cross over into each other [I believe it is warranted to understand the contingent as akin to Schiller's sense-drive and the general as akin to his form-drive] and we encounter them in actual forms: *the general is contigent,* but the pure universality is an idealization, and *the contigent is general,* while the pure contingency is an abstraction. It is just as absurd to claim that everything has meaning as claiming nothing has. The only thing we can reasonably claim is that there is meaning, a meaning that is always incarnate. […] Thereby the mistaken ambiguousness has been overcome and been replaced, not with a clear certainty, but with a new ambiguousness. This, however, is an ambiguousness that cannot be overcome; it is ontological, and Merleau-Ponty thus calls it a *benign ambiguity* ("bonne ambiguité"). [italics by author, both translations by me]

I find it reasonable to assume that the benign ambiguity that Merleau-Ponty writes about is identical with what Schiller writes of as the play-drive and that it belongs to his great credit that he took a closer look at the point where general and contigent (form and sense) cross each other or encounter each other and to give this a content as play (free meaning-creating, aesthetic activity).

8.2.4 The narrative interpretive perspective

On the basis of our experiences over time we construct our identity and our biography. What makes a biography biographical and not just a description or a chronology of a series of events is the meaning we ascribe to it. Mark Freeman har written a fine essay on this theme (1997) *Death, narrative integrity, and the radical challenge of self-understanding. A reading of Tolstoys Death of Ivan Illich,* where he, with the help of Tolstoys short-story, discusses narrative (what I call biographical in this study) integrity and how Ivan Illich in the moment of his death finally reinterprets and is

reconciled with his, up to that time, mostly meaningless life. Mark Freeman writes that even though there are plenty of meaningless, fragmented lives, lives without moral compass this isn't equivalent to that being the fundamental order of things. He suggests that lives lived well are everything but a succession of moments. Instead he writes that they are the result of our creative capacity, maybe not as coherent as a novel, but therefore "no less poetic in their connectedness and in the possible beauty of their form" (ibid:382). He goes on to write (ibid:388f):

> Only in the final moments of Ilych's life does this occur, the result being that 'He sought his former accustomed fear of death and did not find it. … In place of death there was light' […]. He is redeemed. But what exactly happened in this final scene? How are we to make sense of this dramatic movement from 'death' to 'light'? *What seems to have happened is that Ilych, upon recognising and avowing the falsity of his previous self-understanding […] also recognises the poverty of his previous ethical commitments.* This is the destructive moment of the process of rewriting the self […] Indeed the creative moment of rewriting the self is the dialectical counterpart to the destructive […] Notice in this context that self-understanding, as it occurs in the movement of rewriting the self, is always and inevitably an act of self-transcendence […] Notice, in addition, that 'rightness' is not something to be seen but heard. […] It is precisely at this point that visual metaphors give way to auditory metaphors. Self-understanding thus comes to involve not only gazing over the heretofore concealed landscape of the past but listening to the call of those larger presences (be they gods or spirits or other such unnammeable beings; we must each decide for ourselves) that call us forward, toward our unique station. Far from being suspended in the flux of moments, we are living a story in the making, one whose potential for truth and goodness is underwritten by what exists beyond us. (my italics)

The "self" that Freeman writes of and that one is engaged in writing and rewriting is, in the context of the present study, identical with the identity of the lived body more or less worked on by conscious, reflected, meaningfulness (ie. by the play-drive). Serious injuries and disabilities place us in a similar position as the consciousness of our unavoidable death and highlight what Freeman so eloquently describes as (ibid:388): *"what is meant by narrative integrity is not merely harmony of proportion or beauty of form but the soundness and depth of one's ethical […] commitments."* (my italics)

Biographical or narrative integrity isn't limited to people who are able to articulate their experiences of meaningfulness reflectively since integrity is lived through the body in relation to the entire environment, we are thus mutually responsible for each others life stories (Freeman 1999:112f).

The narrative interpretive perspective is especially suited to understanding educational interventions. Where Schiller and Merleau-Ponty provide perspectives that concern the aesthetic-practical environment, the narrative perspective concerns the educational intentions of interventions. It is also through the narrative perspective that one can bring to light the aesthetic processes that Schiller writes about.

8.2.5 Forms of illness narratives

Arthur W. Frank in his book *The wounded storyteller* (1997) divides illness narratives (and this is easily expanded to include various forms of pedagogical narratives) into three different groups. Restitution narratives, chaos narratives and quest narratives. He points out that all three forms of narrative are present most of the time in actual stories of illness and that they reflect strong cultural and personal preferences. He writes (ibid:77): "Reflection on one's own narrative preferences and discomforts is a moral problem, since in both listening to others and telling our own stories, we become who we are." It is also a moral and practical problem when one conducts research on, and development of, institutions that inevitably reflect these preferences.

Restitution narratives (ibid: 77-96) are strongly modernist in their perspective and have a fundamental structure of having been well, become ill and then reachieved health again. They are most common in contexts where the possibility of objectifying is large, ie. where the lived body is only affected in passing, as with many injuries or diseases that are easily medicated. Chronic difficulties, lifelong disablement, death and experiences that strongly affect ones experience of identity are harder to speak about in the form of restitution narratives. They constitute a type of narrative that views illness as a disruption in life and the return to health and the future as the most interesting issue. This also means that the interest of the individual lies with upholding health, taking medicine or whatever the case may be. Frank writes (ibid: 92):

> Is the restitution narrative capable of generating self-stories? No, in the sense that restitution stories bear witness not to the struggles of the self but to the expertise of others: their competence and their caring that effect the cure. In this witness restitution stories reveal themselves to be told *by* a self but not *about* that self.
> […]
> But this "no" must be qualified by recognizing that not every illness story has to be a self-story; even among the seriously ill, many people do not have their sense of coherence disrupted.

Against the backdrop of Schiller's philosophy it follows that restitution narratives can be viewed as being strongly influenced by the form-drives need for continuity and unity. The immediate, singular, momentary break of illness is then something that needs to be fixed.

Chaos narratives (ibid: 97-114) are illness stories without any real narrative structure, neither concretely nor in any more abstract manner in the form of expectations for the future. The narrator doesn't really present an actual story but rather the kind of chaos and sensations that he or she is unable to give meaning to. It constitutes a form of anti-modernist narrative. To even be able to verbalize the chaos already constitutes a certain distance and narrative control. The complete chaos narrative is one in which the subject is entirely dissolved in the sequence of events (temporarily or for a longer period of time). In Schiller's terms the chaos narrative is ruled mainly by the properties of the sense-drive.

Quest narratives (ibid:115-136) are stories in which the illness becomes an opportunity for the narrator to undertake a journey, a journey that becomes a mission and a search. Most published illness narratives are quest narratives. In the quest narrative the narrator goes through a transformation of identity and this regardless of if the illness is chronic, passing or leads to death.

Illness isn't, as in restitution narratives, a break in ones biography that one strives to be restored from but rather becomes a source of biographical development, ie. the play-drive asserts itself.

In eduction the restitution narrative is mirrored by interventions that have a rational purpose of achieving some given intention, ie. to learn certain skills or bodies of knowledge. Self-narratives are what in education corresponds to the goal of biographical development and integrity. Both forms of educational intervention are necessary and in a larger perspective the achievement of skill and knowing are also a potential part of biographical development viewed, as Frank does, in terms of quest narratives. There is also the continuing risk that interventions deteriorate into chaos, that the school is experienced as incoherent and devoid of meaning. Thus my constant mention of integrity, life truly is constantly threatened by disintegration, of becoming a chaotic narrative. Integrity is the healing of these disintegrative processes.

Narratives are a presentational form of knowing that also functions as a foundation for propositional statements. If these statements do not correspond with the narratives it means either that the statement is onesided or mistaken or the narrative is such that it fails to represent experience other than in a onesided or mistaken way. This is also why the practical way of knowing is so important, since it is first at this level that one really can catch eventual onesidedness in experience, presentation and proposition. Practice can be both something very practical but can also be a communicative practice in which praxis is made up of social relations and symbols. The advantage of practical practices, to which the aesthetic-practical field generally belongs, are their immediateness, concreteness and the visibility/tangibility with which they answer ones actions. It also lies in the objectivity of the objects one works with which makes it simpler to critically examine ones own subjectivity. By basing my research on a combination of presentational and propositional statements I hope that it has become more interesting, readable and rigorous. The practical and experiential sides are aspects that I haven't been able to invite the reader to inte same way.

8.2.6 Antonovsky's salutogenetic perspective

I include Aaron Antonovsky's salutogenetic perspective (1991) with its concept of *sense of coherence* and the three elements that constitutie that sense: meaningfulness, manageability and comprehensibility since his perspective fits very well together with the properties that aesthetic-practical environments have. The feeling of meaningfulness is supported especially in the aesthetic part of environments given that the aesthetic-drive is identical with the drive for meaning, which also supports the use of art-therapies. Manageability and comprehensibility are two fields that are supported by the visibility/tangeability and transparency of practical environments as well as the return of aesthetic-practical work to ones own personal experience instead of someone elses pre-existing demands.

By including the salutogenetic perspective I have also included a slant towards actively searching for factors that point to a strong sense of coherence and it also supports choosing to include autobiographical literature as secondary data since its mere existence bears witness to this (Frank 1997, Charon 2008, 2006). I have also, in connection with this, looked for elements where meaningfulness surfaces especially clearly.

A consequence of the view on meaning creation and the lived body described in the present study is also that transformational learning (Wilhelmsson in Bron & Wilhelmsson 2004) is at the one end of a spectrum where illness and disintegration are at the other end. This is, however, a simplification, since the spectrum needs to be understood as internally dynamic so that transformational learning isn't the exact same thing for everyone and thus health isn't as well. A lifelong disability also relativizes the spectrum and Antonovsky writes (1991:30f):[24]

> I mean, that we would be able to reach a more adequate diagnosis if we could understand the history of the individual – notice that I do not write the patient, since salutogenesis forces us to view people on a continuum – rather than the bacteria that cause a certain disease. Which implications do the two views carry for treatment? The pathogenetic view causes scientists, health care practitioners and decision makers to concentrate on the specific diagnosis or on preventing a certain disease, especially among high risk individuals or groups. On the social level this means declaring war against disease X, Y or Z. This often leads to the "illusion of health", that Dubos (1960) so convincingly warns against. The salutogenetic view causes us to, more pessimistically, focus on the overarching problem of actively coping with an environment that is unavoidably rich in stressors. The central concept becomes *negative entropy.* The main task turns to finding positive additions, to the social system, the physical environment, the organism and systems of lower order down to cellular level, that work against the inherent tendency towards entropy [ie. precisely what I've described as the aesthetic-practical environment and the lived body where Antonovsky writes physical environment and the organism]. It is of great importance and no accident that this opens the way to a cooperation between biologically and psychosocially oriented scientists. When looking for cures against specific diseases, one has a tendency to remain within the field of pathophysiology. When looking for the effective adaptation of the organism one can move beyond post-Cartesian dualism and study *imagination, love, play, meaning, will and the social structures that support them.* Or as I would prefer to express it, theories on successful coping. [first italics author's, second mine]

It isn't hard to see how well the salutogenetic perspective fits together with Schiller's and Merleau-Ponty's. Health is the extent to which one is able to play, ie. create meaning.

8.3 Summary discussion on methodology

I have used standpoint epistemology and hermeneutics as research methods in the surveying of the Haga Foundation as well as in working with the biographies and case-studies I've read. I have used action research and standpoint epistemology as methods of surveying the bookbindery at the Kristofferschool. In both cases standpoint epistemology has helped to make properties and fields in the surveyed practices visible that otherwise risk remaining invisible. Both action research and
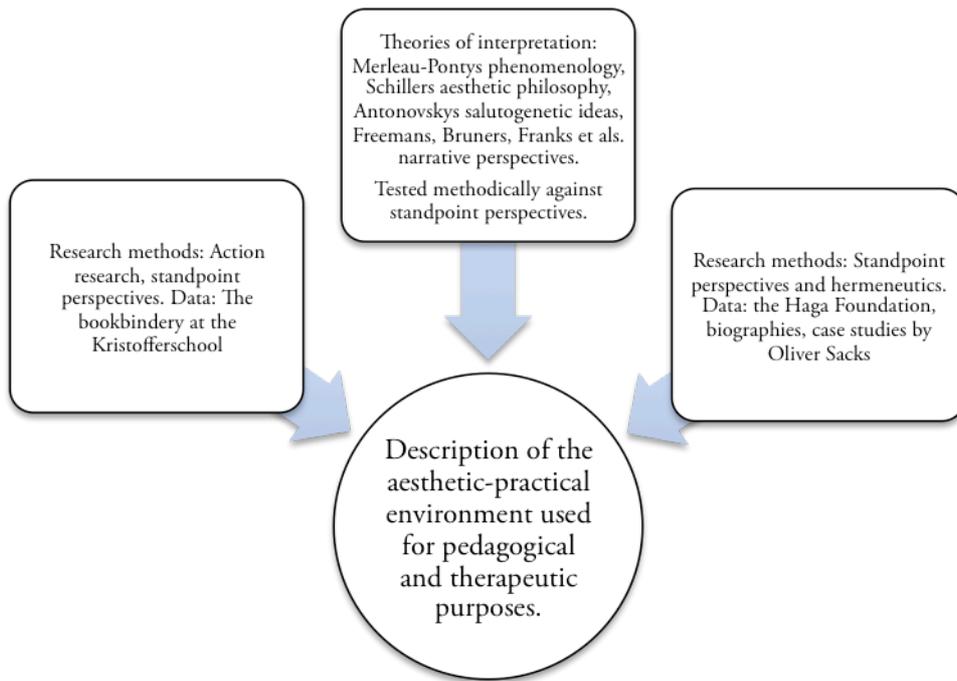
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[24] The English original, *Unravelling the mystery of health,* is out of print so I have had to retranslate the Swedish translation back into English.

hermeneutics have a fundamental basis in going back and forth between participation and reflection and back to participation that are well suited to catching a practice in writing. Not least since this is approximately how many practicians work in their workshops. In the case of the Haga Foundation I have tried to use a method that helps me describe their workshops, in the case of the bookbindery at the Kristofferschool to develop the practice there as well. This made the choices of hermeneutics and action research respectively fairly straightforward. Regarding the Haga Foundation the choice of method was also influenced by the aim of both describing an environment as well as telling stories from it and the narrative perspectives I've worked with often use hermeneutics as a method (Bruner 2007, 2004, 1991, Chase 2005, Crossley 2003, Freeman 2006, 2003, 1999, 1997, Sclater 2003).

A guarantee that the survey does justice to the practices is in the end only possible to obtain by comparing with the reality at hand and thus the review of the survey by other parties who share an experience of the practices is essential. I have striven to do this with the studied institutions.

Finally, I have also used the chosen standpoint perspective in order to further test the interpretive theories that I've worked with (chapter 11). They are, in order, Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, Schiller's aesthetic philosophy, the narrative perspectives of some scholars and Antonovsky's salutogenesis. The choice of theories mirrors the participatory ontological and epistemological foundations of the study. Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology through deepening the possibilities of interpreting the experiential aspect of the knowledge process, the narrative perspective by connecting to the presentational aspect and Schiller and Antonovsky by connecting with the propositional aspect of knowing.[25] I have also chosen them because they are, in various ways, perspectives that show up in related research, especially Merleau-Ponty (Bullington 2009, 2007, 2004, Charon 2008, 2006, Frank 1997, Heron & Reason 1997, Johnson 2008, Nyström 2002, Schmalenbach 2007, Sennett 2008, Varela et al. 1993). It would have been easy to involve G. H. Mead's symbolic interactionism since it has a similar focus on the role of social relations as I do (read eg. von Wright 2000) but here I chose the narrative perspective instead since both this and my previous study on narratives from the supportive crafts concern themselves extensively with questions of biography as narrative, even if this narrative is viewed as being to a large extent socially constituted. Below is an overview:

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[25] Merleau-Ponty and the narrative theorists also contribute to the propositional aspect of the study with concepts such as the lived body and biographical integrity. What I mean to say is rather what level of knowing these concepts refer to. The lived body is above all a useful concept when one attempts to understand the experiential level, where things are still not articulated but nevertheless remain a form of knowing. Correspondingly, biographical integrity is useful when one attempts to understand the presentational level of knowing that a person has of him- or herself.

Theories of interpretation:
Merleau-Pontys phenomenology,
Schillers aesthetic philosophy,
Antonovskys salutogenetic ideas,
Freemans, Bruners, Franks et als.
narrative perspectives.

Tested methodically against
standpoint perspectives.

Research methods: Action
research, standpoint
perspectives. Data: The
bookbindery at the
Kristofferschool

Research methods: Standpoint
perspectives and hermeneutics.
Data: the Haga Foundation,
biographies, case studies by
Oliver Sacks

Description of the
aesthetic-practical
environment used
for pedagogical
and therapeutic
purposes.

9 Design, data, data collection and data interpretation

9.1 Design

I've designed the study so that I've begun with gathering the questions and issues to investigate and relate to each other. Following that I have worked on documenting and surveying the Haga Foundation's workshops in order to, during the summer of 2009, return to the questions to read, process data and write an initial draft of the study. With this draft as a basis I have then, during the fall of 2009 and spring 2010, regularly revisited the Haga Foundation's workshops for further observations and dialogue. Together with this I have continuously worked on the surveying and development of my own workshop practice. I have also been able to work on specific issues in the courses I've read on the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty and G. H. Mead's symbolic interactionism. I spent the summer of 2010 until spring 2011 revising, reformulating and expanding the study as well as conducting some final data collection. This has made the process of research a regular movement between reflection, processing and writing on the one hand and data collection as well as dialogue in order to gain new perspectives on the other.

I have also attempted to ensure the objectivity of the study by exposing it to external reviews at various stages of writing. The reviewers have been specialists connected to the Haga Foundation, co-workers at the Haga Foundation, a few practicians connected to the supportive crafts as well as three external scholars with their own art-therapy practices or other relevant expertise. During the same period I have also, on a couple of occasions, taught teacher-students at the Waldorf teacher college on the theme of the workshop-environment and the role of crafts in education and thereby had the opportunity as well as reason to expose parts of the research to questions.

9.2 Data

The research data is composed of my visits at the Haga Foundation, my own experiences as a teacher in a bookbindery that is partially of a supportive educational orientation. I also have secondary data consisting of autobiographical literature written by adults with autism that I have chosen to include on account of the standpoint perspective as well as the connection to the salutogenetic concept of sense of coherence, the concept of (striving for) biographical integrity and Schiller's thoughts on that. Finally I have also included a number of clinical case-studies that Oliver

Sacks has published as data, this is mostly coincidental, if I hadn't read some of the stories I wouldn't even have come to work on these issues the way I have. He also happens to relate cases that are particularly relevant to one of my methodological questions, using a marginal or standpoint perspective in the search for new knowledge. A more systematic review of case-studies would of course be both desirable and possible but hasn't appeared neccesary considering the purpose for which I have used them in the present study.

9.3 Data collection

Regarding the collection of data for the survey and development of the bookbindery at the Kristofferschool this has been done mainly through action research. In practice this has meant going through tree small cycles of action research that started with the articulation of the existing practice (something that reaches back into my earlier work on the supportive crafts). After the initial description I added those crafts-elements that I refer to when describing the bookbindery in part 12.2. Then I moved on to reflect on the experiences this brought, writing about them and then, for two more rounds of action research, test them for further reflection, certitude and refinement. Every round has consisted of a school-year for simplicitys sake and the time for reflection has been both the summer vacation and throughout the year. I have also reused some of the recorded interviews from my previous study on the supportive crafts at the Kristofferschool.

The documentation of the Haga Foundation's workshops consists of data from observations, fieldnotes and the reading of biographical texts as well as, in part, on recorded interviews. The description of the practice rests on eight day-long visits, five in the beginning of the study and then three more spread out throughout a year as well as regular contacts in-between with some of its co-workers.[26] In the presentation I have included such matters as were brought up by multiple care-givers irrespective of each other regarding methods of work and I have also turned the written descriptions over to them on several occasions for comment and correction. I have included a couple of narratives to surface the kind of work-process that goes on at the Haga Foundation, especially describing the workshop where they make beeframes. I have participated in the other workshops there as well and they all have important elements in common. I have refrained from providing any descriptions of the care-takers there, their biographies or specific disabilities, in part because it is the environment that is the focus of the study and in part because it is close to impossible to make members of such a small group anonymous, especially since autism is such an heterogenous disability. I have also conducted a series of interviews that were partially recorded but mostly documented with notes. This has been necessary on account of the sensitive nature of the data or because of circumstances that simply didn't admit of recording, such as it bothering the care-takers a lot or there being limitations to the possibility of recording an entire day and there is

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[26] I was also a co-worker at Vårdinge By Community College for one semester eight years ago and the workshops of the Haga Foundation are in the same compound of buildings. This meant that I knew some of the co-workers there from back then and that made it much easier to participate in the work at the workshops this time.

much that can be said during a couple of spontaneous minutes. The recorded interviews have proven to contain data that wasn't central to the context of the study so I haven't been able to use them. The written notes, however, have been of great help in documenting the practice.

9.4 Data interpretation

I have interpreted the data gathered at the Haga Foundation and from my action reseach in two steps. The first already during the phase of gathering data, by structuring it in the form of narratives and descriptions of the environments and the way people work in them. The second has consisted of using the interpretive perspectives to try and identify the basic properties of educational aesthetic-practical environments. At every step of the interpretive process I have worked to involve the standpoint perspective thereby forcing a more inclusive and thorough description but also one that contains thoughts and perspectives I would otherwise have remained blind to.

I have integrated exerpts of those texts that have contributed to the studys standpoint perspective in the descriptions to surface aspects of human experience that differ enough from "normal" experiences that the description itself is important in order to clarify the diversity that exists in human experience of identity and perception. I have also included them to illustrate my line of thought in order to anchor the text on the experiential- and presentational levels of knowing (Heron & Reason 1997). As far as I know I haven't included descriptions of experiences, either autobiographical or others, that are doubtful as to their veracity. Oliver Sacks is a respected neurologist and the various narratives written by adults (and a child) with autism are such that when one has read a few one notices the similarities in how they describe the disability. I have also shown the exerpts to others with more experience of autism than I have and no one has thus far questioned the included quotes or found them unlikely.

9.5 Role of the researcher

Conducting action research in ones own workshop might be viewed as exposing oneself to the risk of becoming too subjective in ones research. However it is also quite often impossible to really catch the nuances of an educational practice without a long prior experience of ones own, eg. it took me several years to really develop the sensitivity to be able to distinguish different qualities of paper with my fingers. As far as I can tell this issue involves two different questions that one has to deal with. On the one hand what kind of research perspective one has and on the other what kind of practical measures one takes in order not to make unwarranted claims or retell experiences in an idiosyncratic way.

With regards to the research perspective one can assume a hermenutics of suspicion as well as a hermeneutics of faith (Josselson 2004).[27] Both approaches are warranted depending on what kind of research one is doing and where in the process one is. The present study mostly rests on a hermeneutics of faith which is connected to the purpose of surveying and surfacing the Haga Foundation and the bookbindery at the Kristofferschool. Josselson writes, in the same article (ibid:6), that a reconstituting hermeneutics is founded in phenomenology (not as method but as philosophy), which also matches the descriptions of chapter 12. It is foremost an attempt to depict both experience and practice in a presentational (narrative) style. It is only possible to examine their premises more suspiciously or critically after the inital articulation of the narratives. This is also why the section that deals with problems and difficulties concerning the surveys and the method used is placed more towards the end of the study (part 14.1).

Regarding the actual survey-work, the attempt to guarantee descriptions free of idiosyncracy and wishful thinking, rests on the reviews of my descriptions by others, inside as well as outside of the practices. John Elliot, among others, has discussed the necessity of reigning in one's unavoidable value-judgements in dialogue with fellow scholars (Elliot 2009).[28] I have also tried, especially in the description of the bookbindery at the Kristofferschool, to include and surface the criteria I've used in order to evaluate the practice, criteria that are not identical with the narrative itself. Lastly, a lot of what makes the research valid rests on having enough time in order to reflectively catch sight of the role one plays, something that has meant that the three years it has taken to complete the study has been beneficial.

Finally the inclusion of a standpoint perspective (Harding 1992) has, in part, been in order to ensure that I become more conscious of those preconceptions of my own that might otherwise remain hidden.

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[27] Josselson (2004:3) refers to Ricoer's examination of the two perspectives of hermeneutics and writes that one may either be out to reconstitute a meaning or to demystify one. In the first instance one strives to recreate something and this requires faith towards what one intends to recreate. In the second instance one strives to expose something considered to be hidden in one way or another, eg. within Freud's psychoanalysis or a police interrogation.

[28] He claims, and I concur, that all research rests on implicit values, especially regarding what issues are even worth researching and what methods are to be used (Elliot 2009). Scholars with long experience of action research are often critical of other social scientists for not being concerned enough with if their methods supports the status quo or some kind of change and what might be the most desirable in different cases (Elliot 2009, Greenwood & Levin 2005, Heron & Reason 1997). For my own part I engage in both change and preservation. The action research in my own workshop is meant to develop and change the practice for the better, the surveying of the Haga Foundation rather to describe the present practice. Both are conscious choices.

10 Ethics

The final paragraphs of Mark Freeman's essay *Autobiographical understanding and narrative inquiry* (2006) reflect a central part of my ethical core in doing research. He writes (p141f):

> It means […] that a portion of narrative inquiry ought to be directed toward writing about human lives in such a way that their own inherent poetry can be made visible.
> I have referred in this context to the idea of "poetic science," a form of critical narrative inquiry that would lie at the intersection of art and science and that would support not only the *epistemological* aim of increasing knowledge and understanding of the human realm but also the *ethical* aim of increasing sympathy and compassion […]. Perhaps in the name of scientific legitimacy there remains a tendency in narrative inquiry to minimize the artful dimension and to maximize the dimension of scientificity, thereby leaving the aforementioned "deep human stuff" to poets and philosophers. But the social scientist, broadly conceived and imagined, can and should enter into the endeavor and, when the situation calls for it, do so as imaginatively and artfully as possible through creating work that not only purveys knowledge of this or that area but that uses writing, that uses *form,* in a way that truly serves the content, and the *people,* in question. This is a challenge – a poetic challenge – for autobiography and narrative inquiry alike, and it is well worth pursuing.

This kind of ethical stance fits well together with the kind of work I have tried to engage in when doing my research.

Since the study concerns practices in which comparatively few care-takers/students and co-workers take part and, in the case of the Haga Foundation, it also concerns care-takers that can't normally articulate their own view on what is made public, I have tried to be as sensitive as possible in working with documentation. I have come to know the care-takers and co-workers at the Haga Foundation and heard their stories but allowed them to remain outside of the public space, ie. I present only the actual results in this study, which is another reason I've had to involve as many autobiographies written by people with autism as I have. I have also replaced many of my immediate experiences from the Haga Foundation with narratives taken from these biographies. What I have kept and included in the study from the survey-work is the narratives regarding their workshop practice since in this area the work itself is the focus and not the individual care-taker. They have all been given other names.

That I have structured the research as I've done in the form of an ongoing dialogue with practicians and other researchers is both an ethical stance as well as a practical method of giving the research a stronger reliability. In this way more concerned parties are given the possibility to contribute their reflections, something that presupposes that the process is slow enough, ie. that everyone is given enought time in order to be able to form an opinion for him- or herself. In practice this has meant that, on several occasions throughout the research process, I have turned my writing over to the co-

workers at the Haga Foundation for comments and review and during the last part of the research process it has also been reviewed by some external experts.

Other than this I have followed ethical praxis according to how Arvidsson (2002), Fontana & Frey (2005), Chase (2005), Josselson (2004) and Bron & West (2000) have discussed it.

11 Standpoint perspective: autism

In this part of the study I have explored the chosen interpretive perspectives from a standpoint view. The purpose is to create a stronger element of inclusiveness and also to clarify aspects of them.

Autism is a disorder with very heterogenous symptoms (especially when one includes the entire autistic spectrum, including Aspbergers syndrome). Central to it are difficulties with communication, social interaction, perception and imagination. Autism has been called a dissociative disorder in that a major part of it concerns the grasping of larger wholes or the integration of various impressions, both in the moment and over time. It becomes difficult to follow and understand longer processes especially if they demand a higher degree of abstraction and symbolic representation. Autism is often coexistent with other disorders. Some lose all or most of their verbal capacity (but at least some times with a remaining capacity for communication, ie. sign-language or writing can still be used), and/or are struck by movement stereotyping and fixations, extreme sensitivity to certain sense-impressions, epilepsy and a raised pain-threshold (Gillberg & Peeters 2001, Altevogt et al. 2008, Klin 2006).

When it comes to explaining autism from a medical perspective this is considerably more difficult than with eg. Downs-syndrome, it is considered to have neurological causes but these are still to a large degree unknown or debated (Ramachandran 2011). Treatment of autism has also proven to be complex and eg. the use of various diets have been beneficial to some and not at all to others (Gillberg & Peeters 2001, Altevogt et al. 2008, Klin 2006). High functioning adults with autism such as Temple Grandin, Iris Johansson and Donna Williams give a vivid account in their autobiographies of how they have struggled to overcome, or learn to live with, aspects of their autism at the same time that other parts remain (Grandin 2005, Johansson 2007, Williams 1995).

11.1 Autism and phenomenology

In connection with autism there are often phenomena present that indicate displacements in the experience of the lived body. In *Exploring the experience of autism through firsthand accounts* (Cesaroni & Garber 1991), the story of Jim is told who couldn't stand any kind of touch before the age of 23, it has remained a difficult area for him, eg. touching the lower part of his face causes a soundlike experience to appear together with the sense of being touched. He experiences touch intensely and sometimes overwhelmingly. They go on to write (ibid:306):

Interestingly only certain sounds would frighten Jim. For example, in the fifth grade Jim recalled that

when he was listening to a record, low-frequency notes in the background music became so terrifying that he refused to return to school. In high school "I had a similar experience of finding certain frequency shifts very disturbing on a record … although I kept that reaction to myself."

Or Iris Johansson who writes (2007:35):

I prefered to be in my inner world, what I later came to call "the real world" or "Outside". "The usual world" – the one where one thought about being hungry, cold, longing, missing – was very strange to me. Sometimes, for short periods of time, I ended up there, and it was very unpleasant. It made the body feel like a movable lump of flesh that often hurt. And lots of dangerous demons and frightening sounds that scared me senseless. I often screamed and banged and screamed then until it went silent. Light was also scary in the "usual world". Everything changed constantly and it burned/pinched and hurt in my head. [my translation]

There are similar narratives in Gerland (2008) and Williams (1995). To everyday experience one's lived body tends to be an integral, almost invisible and imperceptible, part of our total identity. At the same time it also allows our intersubjectivity its immediateness since nothing comes in-between (Merleau-Ponty 1992). Our sense-impressions exist in a kind of dynamically balanced state of neither being too close nor too distant. With autism this is displaced, especially with regard to sense-impressions that can become colored by strong sympathies and antipathies, or experienced as much more intense than usual. There also commonly follows a disturbed relation to pain so that one can become rather insensitive to pain. Gunilla Gerland, eg. relates this but with the specific exception of drops of water on her skin which hurt (2008:99ff). Temple Grandin on the other hand writes about self-abuse and finding that pain reduced anxiety (2005:114). Pain is one the phenomena that most intensely reminds us of how the body can be both an intensely experienced part of our subjective self and a strange "lump of flesh" as Iris Johanssons writes (Bullington 2009).

Since the environment (ie. the world in its totality of impressions including other people) isn't separate from the body but more or less a part of it (Merleau-Ponty 1992, 2009) it is easier to understand the importance of meaningful environments that are made to fit the particular expression that a disability assumes in the individual. A lot of environmental and design issues concern themselves mostly with technical and practical aspects in order to ease communication or basic activities like cooking, clothing oneself or cleaning. This way of viewing the issue is predominantly objective and oriented towards results in a way that permits generalizations (of which I am not at all critical since these things are the basis for most other activities). Viewed from a phenomenological perspective it is the meaningfulness of the environment that enters into focus. *If there isn't anything meaningful to communicate then the potential for communication is mostly left untapped. If there isn't anything meaningful to get dressed for then that potential is also left mostly disregarded.* This becomes especially obvious when the autistic disorder is severe enough that it leads to some kind of institutionalization. How one designs the institutional environment, how one educates the care-givers so that the care given becomes full of meaning or leads to the creation of meaning, these are questions that one is able to answer differently if one supposes from the start that body-soul-world are connected and intertwined rather than not. The phenomenological perspective in part makes it easier to understand a disability as part of the totality that an individual is instead of viewing him or her as *an* autist. It also makes it easier to focus on more concrete ways of shaping environments so that they provide space for meaningful experiences, for a life that is

biographical. Oliver Sacks writes, in *An antropologist on mars* (1996) about a boy with autism, Stephen Wiltshire, with an incredible talent for painting:

> Here was Stephen being exhibited as a significant artist […] but Chris and others, even the most sympathetic, seemed to see him as greatly lacking in both intellect and identity. The test that had been given to him seemed to confirm the severity of his emotional and intellectual defect. Was there, nonetheless, a mental and personal dimension, a depth and sensibility, in him that could *emerge* (if nowhere else) in his art? Was not art, quintessentially, an expression of a personal vision, a self? Could one be an artist without having a "self"? (ibid:203, my italics)

People with autism are often said to lack imagination, to be extremely literal and limited in their play. Even if autism as a disability leads to all this it is also true that the environment, as in the case of Stephen and painting, has an enormous capacity to provide openings to meaningful development and the more one views the environment and the body as a unity the easier it is to develop ways of treatment where this is taken into consideration. It follows from Sacks continued narrative that Stephen got extensive help in his development through art. But he belonged to those few that had an obvious talent, ie. it was easy to get hold of a potential and to construct an environment around this. When there is no immediate talent that confronts one the question becomes if it is possible to construct environments supportive of meaning in which the lived bodys, sometimes quite unexpected and hidden, ways of expressing and experiencing meaning receives as large a space as posible to emerge. Suzanne Schäfer (2009), eg. writes in her biography of her love for round objects and how this led her to a vocation (during a period of her life) in optics (glass-polisher), a vocational situation that supported her in working creatively with her disability and to develop biographically. That one through perception, ie. the experience of materials, ways of working, artforms, etc. (activities in which one moves or touches), can successively come to understand both where the disability creates difficulties and where there are special opportunities for interest and development, doesn't require a phenomenological perspective. But I imagine that it can provide a more systematic understanding of what one does and greater insight into why.

11.2 Autism and Schiller's philosophy

Since autism is a disability with an especially strong influence on perception and the ability to relate concepts and percepts to each other, it is also a valuable perspective against which to contrast Schiller's thoughts.

Donna Williams, for example, writes in her book *Somebody Somewhere* about an experience that I believe comes close to how it would be to be entirely given over to the sense-drive (1995:222f):

> We arrived in a town full of bright, colored lights. I felt part of the rainbows dancing upon a shiny, black, shimmering surface. I got lost in becoming part of bright, red, squiggly patterns. I 'disappeared' into a haunting, blue square high up above us, beyond black, curling patterns that went on and on.

My senses went on red alert. I had fallen into meaning-blindness, and my visual hypersensitivity was absolutely sky-high without any interpretation at all but I had been too hypnotized by beauty to notice it coming on.

Ian was scared for me, although scared was no longer a concept to me. I mirrored his facial expression. It seemed purposeless and meant nothing.

I was like a person on drugs looking at this incomprehensible paradise around me, racing from one form of heaven to the next. I looked at Ian. He was form without meaning, yet still familiar.

I began to become afraid. I tried to name the things around me. I could not. The shapes and patterns and colors could not be interpreted. I began to get more frightened. Would this person with me understand? Was I safe? Should I run? Thoughts drifted by me and I couldn't touch them.

Darkness. I turned down a long stretch of darkness away from the colors. I had flown too high. Each height had topped the last one until I was almost flying.

I hit the hard surface under my hand. *Splat,* said the surface. 'Bricks,' I said in reply. I hit another surface, commanding my mind to bring interpretation back. *Thud,* said the surface. 'Wood,' I said in reply. 'Yes, wood,' said Ian. 'Stone,' I said, stomping upon *clack-clack* cobblestones. 'A laneway,' I said, looking around and finally getting a whole picture of where I was.

Gunilla Gerland paints a vivid picture in her book *En riktig människa* (A real person/human) of how she, during childhood, discovers the formal, ie. the lawful, in one context (2008:98f):

I discovered behind and inside.

It was an enormous insight with equal parts joy and pain and it completely took my breath away. I was seven, maybe eight, years old and it was spring or early summer and rather warm outside. I sat outside in the garden and tickled the neighbour's cat with a straw. I had my striped dress on. The cat, whose name was Higgins, way lying almost inside the bushes that overlooked the neighbours place, I had to stretch in amongst the leaves and branches to reach him. I sat there thinking of nothing in particular. Then I looked up and saw the hedge itself that divided our yard from the neighbours, then I looked out over the whole area. Since our house was on top of a hill I could see far away, I saw a large, beautiful house, like a castle, far in the distance. It was the retirement home, I'd heard someone say. I saw the houses and the trees and suddenly the insight struck me.

Behind everything is something!

And I immediately knew how it was with inside as well, that this meant everything.

Everything has an inside!

The joy of understanding was great. It almost sang inside of me but it hurt also to understand what I hadn't understood before, and that this was something that naturally was self-evident to others. I wanted to tell someone but I didn't have any words with which to explain, I knew that no one would understand if I tried to tell of my important insight. It was also painfully obvious that I could think with much greater clarity than I could express myself and I felt very alone with my special moment. [my translation]

It is important to emphasize that Schiller's way of understanding play leads to a disability never being able to target the part of a person that gives/creates meaning since this is a function that lacks any specific properties, that consists of a free capactiy to relate thing to each other and to identify with processes. The disability strikes at the other two drives, form and sense, and through them meaning becomes different that we are used to and more difficult since various properties resist. Such as when Iris Johansson writes (2007:126):

> Mother couldn't understand that it was so difficult for me with the sense of touch. That it had to be soft and right in order not to be unbearable, uncomfortable and filled with anxiety for me. This oversensitiveness meant that if someone touched me with a caress or softly it felt like fire in my body and I was totally knocked out, threw myself backwards and screamed. I constantly avoided that kind of touch, which meant that I always had a need, a desire to lean onto something else. [my translation]

These elements of limitation and resistance are something we all experience in extreme situations (one only need think of sharp lights or sounds) even though the issue needs to be somewhat nuanced since these things cause us to be attentive to how a process of meaning is both made difficult and sometimes given more depth if we manage to master the situation.

11.3 Autism and biographical integrity

Biographies are one of incarnated lifes fundamental purposes, without a life story there is only life potential and the story needs narrative integrity in order not to disintegrate into chaos (Frank 1997). If one's biography is experienced as incoherent or not, if one can uphold a sense of integrity or not, is a result of the interplay between self (the aesthetic-meaning creating function) and the identity process of the lived body.

 The dramatic aspects of this issue become obvious if one takes the time to read a few autobiographies written by people with disabilities on the autistic spectra. Iris Johansson in *En annorlunda barndom* (2007), Temple Grandin in *Emergence: labeled autistic* (2005), Donna Williams in *Somebody Somewhere* (1995) and Gunilla Gerland in *En riktig människa* (2008) all bear witness to the great struggle they have had and have in the field of meaning and communication (also read Carol Feldman's (2007) article *Self-making as cultural cognition* that discusses identity and narrative from a similar interpretive perspective as the one I represent here, as well as Jerome Bruner's (2007) *A narrative model of self-construction*). Apart from giving a glimpse of how many-faceted and varied a disability can be and how complex it is to live with, they are witnesses to the fact that most or all people strive to achieve and uphold a sense of meaning and communication. They are even more convincing since autism tends to be a disability that affects precisely these areas of human capacity (Gillberg & Peeters 2009, Schmalenbach 2007).

Mental disabilities, injuries that make us unavoidably dependent on others for our bodily continuity as well as infancy, are all situations in which the common or communal components of life stories are especially clear. The habit of emphasizing ones own, to view ones life story as a self-construction that one identifies with, easily obscures the importance of ones social environment. In the confrontation with serious limitations to autonomous life it is made clear that either certain people lack the opportunity to formulate a real biography with narrative integrity or one must, inclusively, try to understand the biographical as something partially free of memory, articulation, autonomy and reflexivity. From this perspective the individual biography is a relation between

several people in direct and/or indirect community[29] and including the complete environment (read also the discussion in Freeman (2006), Bron & West (2000), and Bruner (1991, 2004, 2007)). What I mean is that even if one finds oneself in a coma unable to actively do anything one is still part of a social field of potentially meaningful relations. If a coma patient is then left all alone I won't argue against the claim that his or her life lacks integrity and meaning but I would argue that this mostly says something about the extent to which we are responsible for the lives and narratives of each other and that the responsibility is great because our freedom is too, ie. we constantly choose whether or not we want to include each other in meaningful relations (something similar is also what Frank writes (1997) in his discussion on quest narratives).

Gitta Magnell writes at the beginning of her book on her son who has autism and herself, *Teo och Jag* (Teo and I, 2004:5): "I have decided to tell my story which is also Teo's; or Teo's story which is also mine. They are intertwined. If it hadn't been for Teo there hadn't been a reason to tell it." And somewhat later she continues (ibid:5f): "Today Teo is a grown young man, but he will never be able to read this book. He remembers a lot from his childhood but all jumbled together because he doesn't have a real sense of time. He doesn't know if it happened yesterday or if it was years ago." And finally at the end of the book after having written of their life together during Teo's childhood (ibid:163):

> These days I consider Teo to be the greatest gift of my life. Of my sons he is the one who gives me the most love and when he comes home during weekends and holidays we do fun things together. He is touchingly grateful for everything I do for him. He is happy over little things like a visit to a café or when we walk over to his favourite store, a thriftstore in Old Town, where he is captivated. There he studies old money-bills together with the owner who himself is a passionate collector. As soon as Teo gets some money he buys a new bill for his collection.
> […]
> There aren't a lot of people who want to spend time with us, but some of my friends, among others my sister and her husband really love him. […]
> Having a child with autism is no tragedy, on the contrary it is a special gift, but it has taken a long time for me to reach this insight. [all translations of Magnell by me]

What she is able to articulate so clearly through her experience, through the journey that she as made, to use Frank's metaphor, is precisely that the meaningful life story is a potential for *everyone* but that the realization of that potential rests on the shoulders of us together as a community. That is, its existence or possibility isn't something that needs to be proven or disproven (one single case of a meaningful life would suffice) but rather something that needs to be done in practice.

As Moira von Wright writes my *whom* (Schiller's playing self) isn't the same as our identity or life story. She continues in direct connection with this (von Wright 2000:161):

> By viewing the *whom* as the emergence of subjectivity I want to further remove the understanding of "self" [Schiller's playing I] from egocentrical introspection towards shared communication and action.

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[29] An hermit shapes his or her biography in isolation from the community at large but still always, and especially, in a living relation to the community of people that he or she has left.

Individuality is then not a personal property but rather something that the environment offers or treats one to. [my translation]

Play or the aesthetic process can only realise its potential activity in communicative actions. Concerning people with severe injuries and disabilities it seems particularly fitting to view individuality not as personal property but as something one receives from ones surroundings.

11.4 Summary

Autism as standpoint perspective on the interpretive perspectives I have chosen helps connect theory and experience.

In connection with phenomenology the concept of the lived body assists in the understanding of experiences connected to autsim. This in turn can contribute to our ability to develop tools for people whose disability includes difficulties that have to do with the body from its lived perspective. An example of this is provided in the parts about rhythm, tools and work (13.1, 13.3, 13.4).

In connection with the philosophy of Schiller and the narrative perspective, the experiences of autism add a critical and inclusive aspect. Regarding Schiller by demanding a more precise explanation of what play and aesthetics mean. Regarding the narrative perspective by insuring that it isn't limited to the lone individual and her capacity to articulate experience.

12 The aesthetic-practical environment

In what follows I will describe two aesthetic-practical, educational and therapeutic environments, both to provide an example of how such environments might be structured and to provide a foundation for the ensuing analyses (chapters 13 and 14). The descriptions of the Haga Foundation and the bookbindery at the Kristofferschool are themselves a basic analysis, if one wishes to catch the full reality there is no real way around visiting them oneself. I have had my perspective as bookbinder and teacher with my specific research agenda as background to this analysis. As I wrote in the discussion on method (8.3) the descriptions are mainly phenomenological since they are meant to surface practical institutions. They are, however, phenomenological in a way that might feel unusual, the practical way of knowing (Heron & Reason 1997, Heron 1996) presupposes, as I wrote earlier (chapter 7), a conceptual understanding of the principles and standards of a practice as well as a presentational elegance and an experiential grounding in the context and situation within which the practice is carried out. Thus, I haven't tried just to describe a life-world but I have worked with elements from all four ways of knowing in the descriptions that follow.

12.1 The workshops at the Haga Foundation

The Haga Foundation is a social-therapeutic institution that has existed since the beginning of the 1990s and that today has 14 living-units with circa 120 co-workers. The workshops that I have visited belong to the foundations day-activities. The Haga Foundation has as a fundamental tenet to work in such a way that "the disabled actively participates in the development and growth of the Haga Foundation". Furthermore: "at the Haga Foundation the care-taker is in a way considered the facilitator for the care-givers struggle with him- or herself […] the same reversed perspective is also true with regards to the work done at the Haga Foundation. It isn't primarily the directors and the co-workers who develop the institution, it is the care-takers themselves." Concerning the work done at the foundation the following is said: "the care-taker who hasn't found a place in other institutions […] has qualified for the Haga Foundation. This mostly means individuals with great difficulties and chaotic, often violent symptoms." (All quotes from an undated article, my translations.)

The workshops at the Haga Foundation cover the materials wood, metal and textile. They also work with some more specific things like bee-frame construction and candle making. Mechanics, mould-casting, and other practical activities are also part of what is done depending on the questions and needs that arise. In the textile workshop both candle making and the weaving of rugs

takes place. They also make fire-lighters there that consist of rolled-up pieces of newspaper dipped in wax. In the wood workshop things are presently set up to mostly construct bee-frames.

The care-takers at the Haga Foundation suffer from very severe disabilities. There is a conscious effort made there to refrain from predictions on the possibility of curing and the degree to which one can expect improvements in existing states because the expectations risk turning one blind to the actual situation. Instead they point out the possibility of being open to unexpected solutions that haven't been planned ahead and where the care-givers own developmental process is often a part. In this area developmental breakthroughs for the care-giver can bring breathroughs for the care-taker. The perspective is thus one that is explicitly transformative and relational where the biographical development of the care-givers is intertwined with that of the care-takers. This is clearly always the actual case but perhaps something that isn't turned into the fundamental way an institution aims to work, thereby becoming less of an object for reflection. The care-givers view on how they work correlates well with the markers that Taylor & Bogdan (1998) have identified as qualities in environments that aim at the social inclusion of severely disabled people.

The workshops (as well as the rest of the Haga Foundation) have two parallel tasks. One is to offer a therapeutic environment in which the care-takers can develop and work with their disability and its problem-areas. The other is to offer an educational environment in which the care-takers can develop meaningful experiences. The second task thereby is meant to contribute to an all-around rich life story for people who are often institutionalized in environments that offer very little beyond simple diversions and relatively pointless activities. There is repeated emphasis on the work-tasks being a common focus for the care-takers and the care-givers around which both parties can gather without the disability being the center of attention. On the one hand having the practical work as focus provides a greater sense of objectivity since it is possible to immediately see the consequences of ones activity. On the other hand meaningful work also brings with it experiences of meaningful communication and social interaction. The last part is important since shared work creates as good basis for conversations as well as allowing social relations to develop without there being a specific intervention in place. This is pretty much the same case as in my own experiences with supportive crafts. Since the work-task provides a focus around which to gather, the coercive need to be social is removed (in purely communicative situations what else is there to do but to either be social or to withdraw?) and the social impulse is allowed to develop at its own pace and with regard to the needs and capacities of all parties involved. One might say the care-givers turn large parts of their therapeutic role over to the shared work-process and thereby allow that role or function to be taken up by all participants depending on the situation and opportunity, something I return to below in the story about Emil.

12.1.1 The bee-frames

The objects made are frames for beehives in which to fasten nets so that the bees can build their wax-cakes on them. They are made and sold to bee-keepers all over the country as well as internationally. The process is designed so that specially constructed tools for drilling holes, pulling through wire, etc. are adjusted to the manual skill of the care-takers and the work is done in small

workshops. The pieces for the wooden frame are made in a couple of other day-activity centers for disabled where there are more advanced carpentry machines.

The work can be subdivided into approximately twelve steps:
1. The wood-pieces are drilled in a 5-hole drill to prepare for the wire
2. A machine helps to put metal casings through the holes
3. Holes are drilled for the nails
4. The nails are placed in the holes
5. The pieces of the frames are fitted together in a machine
6. The frames are threaded with wire through the metal-clad holes
7. The thread is tightened and the nails are fully hammered in
8. Tintacks to ensure exact distance of frame from bee-hive walls are fastened with machine
9. Further tintacks are fastened with different measure
10. The frames are stacked
11. The frames are packed, 30 at a time and wrapped in plastic for delivery

12. A special job aside from the above process is to put some of the nails into little plastic casings to use in the making of the frames.

The frames bring the Haga Foundation a small income but more importantly they provide meaningful work that has developed in a form exemplary of the way things are done there. Making bee-frames was part of the manufacture at another activity-center for disabled people but in a slightly different way, since many of the co-workers there had an interest in bee-keeping. When the Haga Foundation got a co-worker who took care of an old care-taker and the co-workers father in law became ill and left him 15 bee-colonies to care for the co-worker decided to let this become a daily part of the care-takers work and then mostly in the form of making bee-frames. This work proved to be meaningful to the care-taker. In time they received an order for 5000 frames through a bee-keeper familiar with the foundation and who whished to change vocation and become professional keeper. The size of the order led to the expansion of the manufacture and also to the building of special machines as well as templates in order to allow for a meaningful production.

One example of the kind of meaning considered here comes from a care-taker, we can call him Emil, who's communication is normally limited to conversations with himself and who happened at one time to be in the little carpentry (he was usually a part of other workshops) and one of the co-workers sees him approach the drill indicating that he wants to begin drilling and the co-worker helps by feeding the pieces of wood into the machine for him to drill. After a while another care-taker spontaneously comes along and takes over the work of feeding the parts into the machine. In relation to the severity of the disability this is a noteworthy process precisely because autism has created barriers against ordered interaction with the environment. Above and beyond this the division of labor in the workshop allows a social field of work that is made visible in the example and that in many ways might be the core of that educational and therapeutical practice. It is easy to forget that an important source of meaning is the feeling of being able to help others and that there are often few possibilities for severely disabled people to express this need. Co-workers also point out that the work is organized in a way that allows everyone to feel as skilled as the next person, that it leads to a stronger sense of self-confidence and pride since one is active in producing something useful.

By dividing the work into minute steps it has become possible to create a situation where the different care-takers can use a particular step both in working with his or her specific disability and in the biographically central experience of doing something meaningful.

12.1.2 The locomotive

Another example of how the Haga Foundation strives to work is the locomotive that was built from an old vehicle used previously on train stations to move luggage. It stood, gathering rust, on the property of the foundation when a care-taker with a special interest in machines wondered if they shouldn't fix it. Said and done, it has been repainted, rebuilt and added to, rust has been removed, etc. Today it is a functioning little locomotive that, among other things, is used during the autumn festivities to drive people around in. The driver is the same care-taker who initiated the project and this is a typical story from the Haga Foundation in which "scrap" becomes the cause of a project that finally ends up creating a new social situation.

12.1.3 A short commentary from the narrative perspective

The way things are done at the Haga Foundation, the example with the bee-frames is the most striking but far from the only one, it surfaces both the shared responsibility we have for biographical development as well as fundamental components in narrative integrity for those who participate in the process. The shared work that has developed in the cooperation between care-takers and care-givers, the setting up of work-processes so that all participants have the opportunity to feel skilled and to develop further, as well as the meaningfulness of the products all contribute to biographical integrity. The autistic disability doesn't go away in the workshop but it recedes into the background, what remains is a group of people who work together. The shared work, the workshop as *space,* takes the place of every participant's individual capacity to verbally articulate his or her life story.

Persons with severe autism often have strong feelings of insecurity, anxiety, low self-esteem, insufficiency and experiences of other people's incomprehension. In the workshop this recedes and one encounters an active agent. For example, once when I stood there working, one of the care-takers showed me how to do one of the steps, later corrected my work, and finally saw that I was about to start on the next step and, in anticipation, fetched the tool I would be needing. These are such basic activities that one is liable to look past the importance for people of being able to carry them out. It is easy to forget how often young and old people as well as people with illnesses and disabilities are forced to experience themselves at a disadvantage by constantly being the focus of other peoples agency. This is where the Haga Foundation's workshops clearly illustrate how an aesthetic-practical educational environment can act as a constant support for the sense of biographical integrity in the life of those who work there.

12.2 The bookbindery at the Kristofferschool

The bookbindery at the Kristofferschool is an environment that was designed and built by my predecessor, master of bookbinding Wolfgang Bremer. It has been in its present locale ever since the crafts-building was constructed in the mid eighties. The workshops in the building are all built with a considerable amount of care with regards to the quality of materials used as well as to their design or aesthetics. To a large degree the bookbindery there is similar to a traditional workshop although somewhat differently organized since it isn't a workshop focused on production but rather on education where students from different grades bind various sorts of books. It might be important to also emphasize the professional standard of the workshop, it hasn't been "adjusted" to the level of the students and the work they do. This means that they encounter a vocational reality and a wealth of materials, tools and possible work. The hours of 10-12, before lunch, is when the main part of supportive crafts education takes place. The afternoon focuses mostly on the regular lessons in bookbinding.

In this context, a rather unusual element is the tea-table that is located in one corner of the workshop. It is open to the students to have a cup of tea there during breaks or during the entire supportive crafts period and to converse with each other as well as with the teacher. The table is an original part of the design of the workshop. Viktor, an ex-student, said the following in an interview we made during the documentation of the supportive crafts:

> I remember last spring, I was in a … it was incredible, one would come here and be in a really bad state in the morning, but I sat down, or had a cup of tea, sat down and drew a picture and then I sat there and talked and then when one went home later one would be in a good mood again, it is incredible really…
>
> I think everyone needs a place where they can relax, feel good, try to be themselves a little, where there is no pressure… and this is it for me, and I've talked to others who agree as well because this is really a place where one can be oneself…
>
> A lot probably depends on Wolfgang and him being so incredibly good, funny, and, this isn't something one could do somewhere else, there's probably almost no other teacher where the first thing the say to you in the morning is like "sit down, have a cup of tea, relax"

The tea-table allows a movement back and forth between work and rest, it also opens up a conversational space that doesn't place any particular demands on the contents but which relatively often becomes the point of departure for important conversations (of course, many of the topics are entirely without such deeper meaning as well).

During the three years that I have researched, and tried to develop, the practice I have had roughly 15-20 students in the supportive crafts each year (the first year they were fewer, more like 5, since at that time I wasn't yet employed but worked solely as a researcher and developer together with Wolfgang). It is hard to give a more exact number since a couple of students that should have come hardly did or didn't for various reasons and a substantial number spend a lot of time in the bookbindery irrespective of if they have a formal supportive crafts period or not. The needs for which students received support have encompassed things like severe traumas, low self-esteem often on account of difficulties with reading and writing, severe depression and anxiety, social difficulties

in school or/and at home, parents divorce, substance abuse problems or general fatigue with school and learning. In many cases the supportive crafts is neither the sole nor the main form of support or therapy. Social services, child and youth psychiatry and other educational support are also quite often part of the interventions as well as, when needed, the appropriate medications. Supportive crafts is a form of educational therapy that mostly takes place in a group, ie. together with other students having both different problems and ages and who work together in the workshop and often help each other. This means that the teacher often recedes more into the background. As the one responsible for the supportive crafts he or she is of course decisive in many ways but an important part of being there as a teacher is not to intervene too much in the processes other than through the work itself or when directly asked to by the students.

With these students I have bound notebooks, sketchbooks, photo albums, stamped engolded calendars, constructed geometrical figures in cardboard, made portfolios for artwork and re-bound previously printed books like Siddharta by Hermann Hesse or poems by Pablo Neruda (in both cases as gifts to parents).

Bookbinding as craft stands out because the actual work of binding is markedly mechanical compared to making a copper vase, a cup on a potter's wheel or in sculpting a wooden bowl. The more aesthetical side of bookbinding lies with the choice of paper and other materials and with the design of the decoration.[30] It is also a craft with a number of very clear steps (given that it is a book one is making). In many ways it is most closely akin to weaving where one is also part of a given work-rhythm. The difference is that bookbinding is much harder to make simple than weaving is. Many institutions that work in social therapy or curatively (like the Haga Foundation) have looms since it is possible for the textile-teacher to set everything up and even to help move the hands of the weaver. The one weaving still gets a strong orientation in space, left-right, front-back, up-down, something that is important to work with since many disabilities and needs that require educational support are such that parts of them express themselves as difficulties with spatial orientation (for further reading I refer to Schmalenbach 2007). It isn't possible to simplify bookbindning that much and what takes place over an entire loom for the whole body is comparatively miniaturized and limited to the hands and arms in the bookbindery. It also demands greater motor-skills.

When I took over from Wolfgang I had a background as a previous student who received a comparatively large amount of supportive crafts during my own years in school. I thereafter spent four years in the workshop as an apprentice and at that time also took part in the educational work there. Finally after finishing the apprenticeship I continued to work, on and off, with various projects in the workshop during my time as journeyman where some of them came to involve supportive educational work. The educational-therapeutical interventions that I have initiated thus rest on these experieces as well as on my professional background as bookbinder. This is also where the action research has been important.

An important initial reflection was how strongly the quality and beauty of the finished work affected many of those who participated in the supportive crafts. They would often make things meant to be gifts for parents or other, for them, important people. Some would use an incredible amount of time and effort in order to design a book or something else that would really show how

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[30] That is, eg. an embossment of the cover or an engolded stamp or a handcolored cover paper.

much someone meant to them. The beauty of the results would also strengthen both self-confidence and joy of life, in many cases markedly. The way finished work is also possible to actually see and touch makes it even more important especially to parents and others close by who may have gotten used to their children not achieving much during regular education. To then encounter a son or a daughter who, perhaps for the first time in a very long time, does something, and something that turns out beautiful, can mean (and has meant) a substantial shift in perspective on ones child.[31]

Against this background I have, as the action-part of the research, succesively increased the exclusivity of the materials used and the items being made. I have worked more with gold-leaf and engolded the edges of the books together with several students. Not least because gilding the edges as it is called, is one of the most complex chemical and technical processes I know of within the trade and the process itself is quite special to witness, especially the thinness of the gold-leaf.[32] It also makes for a rather spectacular result. I have worked more with leather as a cover as well as with engolded stamps as decorations. I have finally, also introduced some other parts of the profession that lie on a comparatively high level of skill, generally with the purpose of having the result become as splendid and impressive as possible but also in order for the student to experience both how difficult it can be and how skilled he or she is. The result of this has been tangibly positive both in practice and in the research work. I will return to that part in discussing the workshop-property of beauty where it has contributed to the reflections.

The aesthetic-practical interventions that I have offered the students for the past three years have their strongest effect in the field of biography. With this I mean that for instance students who have lost interest in school, ie. who in many ways experience a loss of meaningfulness, manageability and comprehensibility in school, often regain an interest in learning after six weeks. This is connected to several things but prominent causes are the facts that a book is tangible/concrete, meaningful, manageable, comprehesible and immediately engaging. The problems of the students begin and end in the biographical. The days in school, ie. a rather large part of their lives, are experienced as

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[31] In practice the evaluation of the supportive crafts rests in part on the participants own verbal statements. In part it rests on two kinds of observation. One concerns the psycho-physical gesture or gestalt of the participant, ie. if he or she initially looked pale, tired, unhappy etc. and in time regained joy, interest, alertness and color. The other concerns the way the participant works, his or her social context. Mostly the making of one book awakens the will to make several more. It becomes visible when participants start showing up on their breaks to work or when they more and more start helping each other with various stages in the work. Of course it happens that the supportive crafts intervention doesn't seem to have lead to any positive effect, that one can't note any particular change on account of it or where the participant breaks it off before it was meant to end. Of the circa 35-45 students I have worked with there are 4-6 where I am either unsure or (in one case) believe I know that it hasn't achieved anything. The intervention sometimes fails because the participant just doesn't have the energy to be there at all owing to the situation that led to the intervention in the first place (I have had two such students thus far, that just haven't had the energy to leave home in the morning but who otherwise would have liked to be in the workshop). Regarding the interventions where no discernible difference can be observed I know of a few where my predecessor much later has come to hear of how important it nevertheless has been and I myself know of a few where more than the usual six weeks has been necessary in order to bring about a visible change.

[32] As with so many other things in narrating practical work, it is almost impossible to capture in words, and keeping it short, the magical quality in the process of gilding. It is a magic that seems to create a sort of reverence in almost all who witness it, a feeling that might be comparable to what one has as a child when one listens to a folk-tale and still is able to become absorbed in its pictures.

meaningless. As a consequence the life-story becomes more and more chaotic. The intervention of supportive crafts turns into a sort of biographical restitution story where the student regains control of his or her life. Most students also return to regular lessons afterwards with more or less restored enthusiasm and interest (ie. in Antonovsky's terms, with a stronger sense of health). How this is also supported by the act of work itself is something I will return to in the discussion on the workshop-property of work (13.4).

Other students, perhaps more than anything those with severe anxiety and depression, have problems that go way beyond the biographical. In general the supportive crafts interventions are still biographical interventions here as well. This means that much of the anxiety and depression remains untouched, especially when it has become, or is, chronic and has led to more permanent changes in brain chemistry that require medication or other more intense healing interventions. But the will to live, the intentionality of the student, is often immensely strengthend.[33] Several students have successively worked themselves out of a close to brutal paralysis when it comes to activity coupled with an almost complete sense of worthlessness. In part thanks to the possibility of making gifts to their loved ones that in their beauty at least somewhat mirror the sense of gratitude that is often there for all that parents and others have done and do (given that they are not part of the problem of course). The sense of being worthless is fairly common among depressed and disinterested youth and it is seldom that words alone make a marked difference. The objectivity and beauty of ones own work can, on the contrary, often become almost a lifeline for a person's self-esteem and sense of worth, something that, in an otherwise sad situation, provides both joy and comfort. The will to live, sense of worth and sense of coherence/meaning are those areas where these interventions reach their most general achievements.[34]

Sometimes one also more or less stumbles onto more specific consequences of the supportive craft interventions, as when the above quoted Viktor says the following earlier in the same interview:

> Me: Ok, is there something else that you feel you have developed during your time in the bookbindery, you've mentioned self-reliance and initiative.
>
> Viktor: Good sense of form maybe… and then, one of the best ways I know of when I can sense that I'm starting to feel bad… I try to sit down then and do geometry 'cause it always starts with me sitting with an empty paper and a ring on that paper and then one more and one more and then it becomes… I don't know, I disappear, it just becomes, Wolfgang [the bookbinding teacher] said… we talked once about meditation and such and that I don't know if I can do that kind of thing but he said

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[33] It happens that the bookbindery (or the smithy which is the other workshop that offers supportive crafts at the moment) is the only place that these students go to, sometimes in order just to be there. Often this is not even viewed as "going to school".

[34] The corroboration of this comes regularly when one encounters the parents of the students who participate or in conversations with the participants themselves. One participant with severe dyslexia can begin coming to the supportive crafts with a marked feeling of always failing at everything and no interest in doing anything. Already after a couple of days he or she starts showing up as soon as the other lessons end and enters the work-process with an almost violent enthusiasm. Later both parents and class-teacher witness how markedly the joy and self-esteem has increased during the eight week long period. Another participant with severe depression and anxiety might, for a while, more or less live in the workshop and later recounts how this was the only thing that made him or her get up from bed in the morning and feel that there was any meaning to life at all.

then that when I draw [do geometry] that's really what I do and I think that's true to some degree, for me its incredibly good therapy, a good way I've developed. And I might not get my feelings out on the paper maybe, but it gives me time, I can think things through in a sensible way when I do it, its really pretty incredible…

Me: You discovered this yourself didn't you?

Viktor: Yes. I was going to make a book and I said to Wolfgang: what the hell am I supposed to make on the cover [as decoration]? And then I think he suggested I do something geometrical, some forms and so, so I sat down with a compass and that's how it turned out…
I have, I don't know, for two years tried any amount of different medicines, but nothing has really worked, but when I do [geometry] I usually calm down like…
I almost always start with a circle, and then… that there can be such variation… every line one draws becomes a new possibility…
I usually have a premonition, soon [the anxiety attack comes], and then I'll sit down and I'll try to do something like that and it won't come…

The above example illustrates how an aesthetic-practical activity in a surprisingly manifold way intervenes and works educationally and therapeutically for a person. It also points to how incredibly much is still unknown to us. I have seen plenty of students do geometry but am yet to hear of a single one who has experienced it in the same specific and thorough way, who has been able to use it as a tool for his or her own healing. This does imply a wide field of developmental possibilities that I will return to in the discussion (part 15.2). Until now the most common effect of the supportive crafts interventions have been to strengthen the biographical integrity of the participant but any specific tool in the whole wealth of possibilities has seldom surfaced. The anxiety and/or depression is then often so strong that several of the processes I have been able to follow myself are still ongoing. The successive restitution of biographical integrity through supportive crafts thus needs to be augmented with more directly therapeutic interventions that the school doesn't possess and that outside of school mostly take the form of medication, conversational therapy or cognitive behavioral therapy (ie. excluding therapies that are aesthetic such as the art-therapies and practical such as bodily oriented therapies). I will return to this question as well in the discussion (part 15.3).

12.2.1 A short commentary from standpoint perspective

The work with documenting the Haga Foundations workshops has been a standpoint perspective on my own institution. To what degree is it inclusive or exclusive? Bookbinding as a craft is relatively excluding since it sets such high demands on motor-skills and the cognitive capacity to comprehend the structure of a whole work-process. For this reason it is also one of the last crafts and materials to be introduced in the general lesson plan at the Kristofferschool as opposed to say, knitting, which most children learn to do in first grade.

The attempt at being inclusive has led in a direction where I have included more and more advanced aspects of the craft in the processes that the students partake in. A standpoint perspective

can thus lead to the active work at incorporating parts of a craft that from a professional perspective demand several years of education. The point of this is twofold. If one, as an example, makes a full-leather binding, with handmade headbands, embossments, gilding and perhaps also leather inlays on the cover, the result of this is very impressive in its splendor and quality. Not least when one explains that the work lies on the master-level of education. At the same time it becomes possible for one, as a professional, to use this will to be inclusive so that one includes the students in ones own professional development. The first time I made a full-leather binding with a couple of students I had only made a few myself and the work was at least as educating for myself as it was for them. This way the work becomes a kind of collaboration between teacher and student where the teachers effort to master an area she is only partially at home in, through its visibility, can become a very strong role model. A role model both for being secure in ones own uncertainty and for the will to keep developing and learning (the precondition for this is that one gives those students who so desire the opportunity to complete every step of the process themselves which sometimes happens, mostly with those who intend to learn the craft themselves in time).

Another aspect has been the Haga Foundations way of actively trying to work from the intentions and wishes of the care-takers. To reach a kind of cooperation between care-giver and care-taker in the development of the work-processes in the way I have presented it when telling the stories of the bee-frames and the locomotive. A comparable way of working that has been in place since the beginning and that I have striven to develop further is to create a workshop environment where materials and products are visible in a way that can stimulate the imagination and will of the students. Through this many students choose the work-task that will become the main intervention themselves since the choices are visible, concrete and interesting enough. The benefit of working in a context that encompasses both regular lessons and curative or supportive education is that one can let them cross-pollinate. Work-tasks that have been developed as part of the regular lessons can be transfered to the supportive lessons and the reverse. In this way, for example, the task of making whole-leather bindings was initially something developed in a supportive context and after it proved its educational worth it was transferred to regular lessons and has now become the main content of an optional course during the last year of high school.

13 Basic properties of aesthetic-practical environments

In this part of the study I have made use of the interpretive perspectives in order to understand and analyse the environments that I have just described. The purpose has been to try to capture some of the general properties that these kinds of environment have and that explain what it is in them that works. This chapter thereby corresponds with the main purpose of the study.

The analysis has been conducted in two steps. Working with describing the two practices has caused my attention to fall on a number of common properties that they share. The initial analysis has consisted in identifying these properties. The second has been to look at them with the help of the interpretive perspectives in order to better understand and clarify what they are and how they work.

13.1 The perspective of the lived body: The workshop and the concept of the tool[35]

The tool is a complex metaphor for the combination of environment (in a wide sense where for example the teacher is also a part), work-tasks and education that encompasses several stages of possibility for a person to independently decide the purpose or aim of his or her learning. In principle it allows for one to view the individual as potentially being the originator,[36] architect, engineer and builder of his or her own development. One can examine the metaphor extensively but in this context the most important aspect is that one relates to a tool at the same time independently and influenced by the function of the tool and the work-task. The interaction (dialogue) that arises when one allows the workshop environment to be and to supply tools for the biographical development of a person is a combination of interpretive freedom: the freedom to change tools, to lay them aside, to recontextualize them, and objectiveness: the tool makes certain demands in order for one to be able to use it. These demands are also identical for everyone even if the personal conditions differ between people. In the encounter with a piece of work and its function a tool surfaces the way one thinks to a large degree, the use of a tool, a material, changes both the individual and cultural way we think and experience the world (Merleau-Ponty 2009, 1992, Wilson 1998, Sennett 2008, Radkau 2007).

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[35] I have looked briefly at how Heidegger writes about the concept of *zeug* but I haven't found that the present perspective demands that one take a closer look at differences and correspondences.

[36] Where it is the visibility and the manifoldness of the workshop environment that gives birth to the desire to be an originator of an initiative at all.

In this context the visibility is decisive both to a persons imagination and to her independence. She sees the multitude in the workshop thanks to the quantity of materials, work lying half done, etc. She has the potential to be independent thanks to being able to see and touch what is presented to her and thus having an easier time deciding if this is what she wants to do. Finally the same visibility and transparent functionality in crafts-objects supports the relation between teacher and learner in becoming horizontal and dialogue-oriented. The object receives the role of objective corrector and the workshop teacher can limit herself to the pointing out of how function needs to be understood or even to assist the learner in the encounter with part of the task at hand that demands more skill or presence of mind than she has at the moment.

Tools are also good metaphors because they allow the unique twofold quality of the workshop to surface. The teacher can use a specific work-task as a tool to achieve an educational or therapeutical purpose and this then happens through the hand-work that the learner does (the purpose can be better coordination, concentration, accuracy, etc.). Simultaneously, since it is the work-piece and the practical work itself that carries this purpose through (and not the teachers narrative and authority), the learner is left free to decide her relation to the work and to interpret it's meaning, ie. to use it as a tool in her own developmental and learning process. To bind a book, for example, can thus become a tool (where both the book as a material object and the process of binding it constitute the tool) where the biographical development of the individual coexists with the teacher's intent of achieving a specific effect. In the end this depends on the teacher placing the intentions of the learner befor her own and the difference in individual perspectives and preconceptions are evened out by the "tool" that helps prevent *both* from being arbitrary in their conversations and formation of judgement.

This is by far not a complete description of the tool as property and metaphor. But it is *one* way of understanding *how* a constructionist formation of knowing, skill and biographical process can be developed in an environment that is exemplary in how it externalizes and surfaces these processes. At the same time this property is strongly connected to the workshop as specific environment and in other environments it might be more relevant to use, for example, *role play* or *the narrative* as the most important tool(!). Understanding and developing the properties of various environments is just as much an interpretive perspective as it is a normative precondition for a construction of knowledge, skill and biography. The tool is both concretely and in the abstract that which mediates between experiential knowing and propositional knowing as well as being a concrete issue of practice (an issue of practical knowing) and more abstractly (metaphorically) an issue of presentational knowing.

The strength of the educational workshop rests, to a large degree, in the support it offers the teacher in moving between different ways of working, in the general visibility of the work being done and *in its capacity to engage a person in her entirety.* This last part means that an object to be made in the workshop simultaneously engages a person's cognitive, social, senso-motorical, empathic and aesthetic capacities. Different things and the processes involved in making them place the emphasis on different aspects. A strongly aesthetic object like a sculpture has somewhat different qualities compared to a very functional one like a book for example. The wide role that tools can play by being both concrete and metaphorical causes the educational workshop (or body-oriented practice) to be an inclusive environment. It does this by having people gather around work with a

communicative point of departure in the lived body and in the demand for shared verbal capacity to articulate. This isn't meant as a total or abstract inclusiveness but one that one must actively adjust depending on who is supposed to use the workshop environment as educational and therapeutical tool, preferably together with them.

As an environment the workshop is a continuation of the hand *in the surrounding space* where it becomes visible in an exemplary way how intensively the lived body continues out into the surroundings. Its most outstanding property is being able to work as a tool in the way described above. It surfaces how we are able to create specific environments that in turn influence our lived bodily experiences. For the human being the hand carries an importance that is condensely summarized by Schmalenbach who writes (2007:159):

> Up until now in this presentation the importance of the hands in the development of the child has become clear, especially in those areas that don't immediately connect with manual activities: the development of speaking and thinking, for the development of the self as well as for the shaping of social relations. *The hand proves to be the foundational organ for coherence, for the unity of the person/personality. The various aspects of the human personality become, as we have seen, unified and integrated in particular through the use of ones hands.* (my translation and italics, read Wilson 1998 as well for an overview of research on the hand)[37] [38]

This means that practical work is such that it especially contributes to the creation and maintenance of biographical integrity. It also means that the aesthetic-practical environment is particularly well suited to support coherence and integration.

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[37] In the German original: "Im Verlauf der bisherigen Darstellung wurde die Bedeutung die Hände in der Entwicklung des Kindes deutlich, gerade auch für Bereiche, welche zunächst nicht in Verbindung mit manuellen Tätigkeiten gebracht werden: den Aufbau von Sprache und Denken, für die Ausbildung des Selbst wie für die Gestaltung der sozialen Beziehungen. Die Hand erwies sich als das grundlegende Organ der Kohärenz, der Einheit der Person. Die verschiedenen Bereiche der menschlichen Persönlichkeit werden, wie wir gesehen haben, insbesondere durch die Hände verbunden und integriert."

[38] Schmalenbach also works with the question of how to understand the consequences of being born without hands (as can be the case with so-called contergan-children) and claims that they are functionally replaced by the feet in many cases. In more extreme cases of disability it remains, as far as I have presently been able to find out, an open question to which extent and how, the coherence and unity of the person is affected.

13.2 An aesthetic perspective: beauty

Working with Schiller and his view of man as an aesthetic being makes it easier to understand how crucial the experience of beauty is in practical work. Crucial because she finds the same quality in the environment that she encounters in her most intimate inward experience: herself.[39]

With beauty I mean both the beauty of the finished product, the process of making it,[40] and the beauty inherent in the materials, in the sense-experiences of touching leather or a polished copper surface. This experience of beauty is connected to the breathtaking feeling of having made something oneself, something so perfect, complex and functional as the book ones bound or the blanket ones woven. Everyone doesn't experience this in the same way with the same materials. For someone it is the book that provides this experience. For someone else it is carving wood for a sculpture. For the people working with the bee-frame manufacture I believe it is the meaningfulness of their own work.

It is in the feeling of being the creator of something oneself, to be the origin of an aesthetic process that I think much of the healing element lies hidden. In part because illness, disablement, or feelings of meaninglessness so often bring about even more passivity in the subject. One is bereft of even the little agency that might have existed previously or the agency that is there is mostly in the form of distractions, like placing children in front of the tv for a while to get some peace and quiet. In the creative process precisely that part is engaged in the human being that is also engaged when she interprets and understands her life. When she is active in shaping her life-story. This makes it easier to understand how such work can feel like a matter of life and death when one is ill. How it can be that Jimmy is made whole in moments of aesthetic activity. Beauty in itself is a therapeutic intervention.

In order for one to really be able to utilize the possibilities of this it demands materials to work with that in themselves are of a high quality and beauty. It also demands a knowledgeable craftsperson/artist who with her knowledge and skill can guarantee the quality and beauty of the results. In the supportive crafts interventions, for example, I only use hand-made paper or paper that in other ways is of a high quality on account of surface-structure, etc. The same goes for the materials used for the covers, which consist of leather, linen or decorated paper, and so on. To the

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[39] Schiller describes the aesthetical in a more differentiated way using the terms dissolving or exciting (auflösende) and tensing or moderating (anspannende) where the former is connected to the qualities of the sense-drive and the latter to the qualities of the form-drive. He writes (Schiller 2010:69): The person onesidedly ruled by feelings or sensously tense is dissolved and set free through form. The person onesidedly ruled by laws or spiritually tense is dissolved and set free by matter." (my translation) I haven't gone further into this line of thought here but it is an important part of Schiller's perspective that also allows an understanding of why certain artistic processes are healing for some people and not for others (read further in Rittelmeyer 2005).

[40] One of the most captivating stories I have heard of the process itself is of a Japanese lacquerer who in order to apply the final layer of lacquer would dress in a white ceremonial kimono and row out to the middle of a lake where there is no dust whatsoever. The process of making an object carries its own beauty if one pays attention and cares about it.

same extent that a person experiences the value of what she is given to work with she can also come to experience the value of herself.

13.3 An aesthetic-practical perspective: rhythm[41]

Oliver Sacks writes (1986:15f):

> When the examination was over, Mrs P. called us to the table, where there was coffee and a delicious spread of little cakes. Hungrily, hummingly, Dr P. started on the cakes. Swiftly, fluently, unthinkingly, melodiously, he pulled the plates towards him, and took this and that, in a great gurgling stream, an edible song of food, until, suddenly, there came an interruption: a loud, peremptory rat-tat-tat at the door. Startled, taken aback, arrested, by the interruption, Dr P. stopped eating, and sat frozen, motionless, at the table, with an indifferent, blind, bewilderment on his face. He saw, but no longer saw, the table; no longer perceived it as a table laden with cakes. His wife poured him some coffee: the smell titillated his nose, and brought him back to reality. The melody of eating resumed.
> How does he do anything, I wondered to myself? What happens when he's dressing, goes to the lavatory, has a bath? I followed his wife into the kitchen and asked her how, for instance, he managed to dress himself. "It's just like the eating," she explained. "I put his usual clothes out, in all the usual places, and he dresses without difficulty, singing to himself. He does everything singing to himself. But if he is interrupted and loses the thread, he comes to a complete stop, doesn't know his clothes – or his own body. He sings all the time – eating songs, dressing songs, bathing songs, everything. He can't do anything unless he makes it a song."

And a little further on (ibid:17):

> I think that music, for him, had taken the place of image. He had no body-image, he had body-music: this is why he could move and act as fluently as he did, but came to a total confused stop if the "inner music" stopped. And equally with the outside, the world…

Doctor P. had been struck by a massive tumour or degenerative process in the visual regions of the brain writes Sacks, something that caused him to lose the capacity to discern totalities like faces, a glove or as above, a laden coffee-table. In a later book *An anthropologist on mars* (1996) Oliver Sacks tells the story of a surgeon, Dr. Carl Bennett, with Tourettes syndrome. There he narrates an operation that he was part of (p.95-98):

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[41] The part on rhythm is founded mostly on my own experiences in the workshop together with what my fellow craftsmen- and women have told me throughout the years. But I have chosen to exemplify with a couple of quotes from case-studies presented by Oliver Sacks since they fit better into the perspective of the study that is concerned with disability and the way their extreme situations accentuate the importance of rhythm.

Bennett preparing for the operating room was a startling sight. "You should scrub next to him," his young assistant said. "It's quite an experience." It was indeed, for what I saw in the outpatient clinic was magnified here: constant sudden dartings and reachings with the hands, almost but never quite touching his unscrubbed, unsterile shoulder, his assistant, the mirror; sudden lungings, and touchings of his colleagues with his feet; and a barrage of vocalizations – "Hooty-hooo! Hooty-hooo!" – suggestive of a huge owl.

The scrubbing over, Bennet and his assistant were gloved and gowned, and they moved to the patient, already anesthetized, on the table. They looked briefly at a mammogram on the X-ray box. Then Bennet took the knife, made a bold, clear incision – there was no hint of any ticcing or distraction – and moved straightaway into the rhythm of the operation. Twenty minutes passed, fifty, seventy, a hundred. The operation was often complex – vessels to be tied, nerves to be found – but the action was confident, smooth, moving forward at its own pace, with never the slightest hint of Tourette's. Finally after two and a half hours of the most complex, taxing surgery, Bennett closed up, thanked everybody, yawned, and stretched. Here, then, was an entire operation without a trace of Tourette's. Not because it had been suppressed or held in – there was never any sign of control or constraint – but because, simply, there was never any impulse to tic. "Most of the time when I'm operating, it never even crosses my mind that I have Tourette's," Bennett says.

[…]

Bennett's operating brings up all the conundrums of Tourette's, along with deep issues such as the nature of rhythm, melody, and "flow," and the nature of acting, role, personation, and identity. A transition from uncoordinated, jerky ticciness to smoothly orchestrated, coherent movement can occur instantly in Touretters when they are exposed to, called into, rhythmic music or action.

[…]

It is similar with the jerky, broken movements of parkinsonism (sometimes called kinetic stutter); these too can be replaced with music or action, by a rhythmic, melodic flow.

[…]

Some of the transformation while Bennett was operating, I felt, was occuring at this elementary, "musical" level. At this level, Bennett's operating had become automatic; there were, at every moment, a dozen things to attend to, but these were integrated, orchestrated into a single seamless stream – and one that, like his driving, had become partly automated[42] with time, so that he could chat with the nurses, make jokes, banter, think, while his hands and eyes and brain performed their skilled tasks faultlessly, almost unconsciously.

But above this level, coexisting with it, was a higher, personal one, which has to do with the identity, the role of a surgeon. Anatomy (and then surgery) have been Bennett's constant loves, lying at the center of his being, and he is most himself, most deeply himself, when he is immersed in his work. (author's italics)

Both examples have rhythm as their common denominator. The song or humming and the surgical work include everything I have written about the workshop and the lived body but they also include everything that I have written on aesthetics/play/meaning. In rhythm one is right in between what one might call mechanical tact on the one hand (the formal) and total absence of regularity and order (the sensory), ie. in the rhythmical-musical. Dr. P. and Dr. Bennett use the environment to, temporarily, sidestep or however one might express it, their disabilities. And it becomes more and

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[42] Merleau-Ponty would say that the skills have been sedimented in the lived body, a more telling description than automatization which is more of a machine-analogy (see Bengtsson, 2001:80f).

more effective the more the purely rhythmical, that I would call the grounding of the play-drive in the lived body, is connected to what the person most strongly associates with her own identity. Music for the music-teacher, surgery for the surgeon, ie. where the meaning-giving activity of the play-drive become the most personal and intense. The possibilities of rhythm thus reach in an arch between supporting everyday activities as when one uses little rhymes to remember something all the way to the most existential experiences of ones own identity.

Rhythm is a central component in aesthetic-practical work and once again disabilities surface something that takes place generally but not with the same clarity. Exactness for a craftsperson is completely dependent on entering into a work-rhythm and a lot of practice for a beginner as well as the difficulties that he or she encounters depend on the lack of rhythm. To use an example almost as extreme as the ones I have quoted from Oliver Sacks: my own bookbinding teacher used to speak of a french woman he met, Jeanine, who worked with making gold-leaf. One uses a rather large hammer with slightly curved surface that one strikes a pack of gold with in order to thin it out to a few molecules of thickness (it is thin enough to be transparent when held up to a light source) and she would strike, while repeating a French nursery-rhyme, in perfect five-pointers, thousands of strokes per package. For me, as a craftsman, it is almost incomprehensible how someone can work with that kind of precision, for such a long time. The explanation lies in the rhythm of the nursery-rhyme. And if one works with such gold-leaf compared to machine-made the difference in quality is obvious, thus far in the favour of the hand made variety.

At the Haga Foundation, as well as within most institutions that work with people with autism that I know of, the whole day is explicitly rhythmical in its structure since even small deviances from the known and habitual can create apprehension and anxiety. The outer rhythm complements and supports a capacity to establish rhythms autonomously that has been limited by the disability.

In rhythm, the aesthetic-meaning creating process perhaps most strongly interacts with the lived body and this contributes to why aesthetic-*practical* environments are so important for the support of identity and sense of agency in people.

13.4 A biographical perspective: work

One of the most difficult properties of workshop environments is the role of work. Work is an extremely vague term that can encompass everything from poking around in ones garden to sitting at a conveyor belt assembling components. It stretches from almost complete autonomy to complete subjugation depending on what the power-relations are that organize the work. Work, for many, is the central way of being part of society, but for many others it is that which causes a sense of alienation and subordination. For some work is just a way of making ends meet but nothing with which the identity is strongly connected. For others work is part of the very core of their identity (quite often with regards to craftspeople incidentally, Sennett 2008, provides a more in depth and

fascinating analysis regarding work). It is no wonder then, that the term calls forth quite varied feelings and associations in people.

In the educational workshop environment the role of work is central. At the Haga Foundation it is to a large degree about giving the care-takers an opportunity to feel important, knowledgeable and secure in the sense of being able to contribute something meaningful to others. The bee-frames are needed by the bee-keepers for instance. In the supportive crafts and in the regular crafts-lessons one of the most tangible results of practical work when it engages people is that they become warm. Many students who receive supportive crafts are cold and pale and often complain of freezing. Already a couple of hours of practical work tend to lead to rosier cheeks and a lessening of feeling cold. This isn't necessarily because of the physical exhertion, bookbinding for instance, doesn't require a lot from the body in that way. The feeling of being cold is also quite often more psychosomatic that entirely corporeal. To work with ones hands breaks the isolation from the surrounding world that is often a part of depression or generally when experiencing emotions of meaninglessness.[43]

Given that the work is pedagogically structured, ie. that one has aimed for a sense of voluntariness, choice, meaningfulness and comprehensibility being attached to it, I can, thus far, identify the following points where it contributes to integrity and healing:

1. Psychosomatically through an increased sense of warmth. Both somatically through reduced paleness and psychically through an increase in enthusiasm and interest.

2. To self-esteem by resulting in a useful product to give away or keep. The supportive crafts are often structured so that if the student remains there long enough it is possible to first fill his or her immediate needs and then to move on to the making of things that are needed more generally by others. Which brings us to:

3. The experience of meeting another person's needs and to be needed and through that being able to find a way into a large part of our social context.

4. Additionally to self-confidence by an increased sense of safety or security. The experience of ability or skill, reflected in the results of ones work, can give an incredible boost to ones inner security. Especially to someone who in school or because of disability has gotten used to regular failure. One might, of course, make just the opposite claim, that someone who proves incapable of binding a book or whatever the case may be, would receive a proportionate decrease in self-esteem instead. To this there are two answers. One is that the teacher is responsible for not giving someone a task to complete that the person has no serious chance to manage. The other is that the advantage of practical tasks as opposed to theoretical-cognitive ones is that if someone isn't capable of completing part of the process in the bookbindery I can always step in and do it for them. However, if someone is incapable of understanding an historical connection or a mathematical question there is no way I can help the person other than trying to explain again from another perspective and hope for comprehension. It is easy to underestimate this aspect of practical work but it also

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[43] Med dr. Walter Osika has pointed out to me that it could be a question of "a physiological reaction, where a chronically elevated stress-level together with an imbalance in autonomous regulation and a peripheral vasoconstriction as an answer to what is experienced as threats is relieved by a calm and trusting external and thereafter internal environment that increases the peripheral perfusion and the experience of warmth" (Personal communication).

means that the teacher is capable of showing his or her care in a very concrete and visible way without the other person having to feel inferior. It is easy to admit a hierarchy of competence that obviously is founded on years of practice, harder to handle intellectual differences and inequalities like the ones that one encounters in more theoretical education and work.

5. Finally, practical work also contributes directly to the integrity of ones biography. This is on account of the above points taken together. Individually it happens through an increase in self-esteem and few things cause as much disintegration and chaos in a persons life as the feeling of being worthless and unable to do anything. Socially, practical work contributes to a visible connection between people and makes a tangible example of how dependent we are on each other for our survival and for what in the end will become our life stories.

Several of these points are also brought up in the literature that stems from related perspectives but where the focus is on a wider ideal of general education. As far as I know this is most explicitly formulated in the research on the Hiberniaschool and the Waldorf School in Kassel that I've mentioned earlier in the study (read Edding et al. 1985, Fintelmann 1990, Fucke 1996, 1991, 1981, 1977, 1976, Gessler 1988, Rist & Schneider 1979).

13.5 Summary

In summary one might say that if the workshop, and the way it can act as a tool, is the continuation of the lived body into the environment, then the aesthetic properties of work are the continuation of the activity of the playing self into the environment. The construction of aesthetic-practical environments thus allows the environment to meet the person with processes and properties that illness, injury, trauma and disability have limited in her. In this way such environments provide support for a person to heal herself.

We have, then, in aesthetic-practical environments a unique possibility to engage people in developmental- self-healing- and transformative processes.

Important basic properties of aesthetic-practical environments are their capacity to act as tools, their capacity to provide beauty and rhythm, and their ability to provide a meaningful sense of working.

This doesn't mean that I can be sure of having understood all the basic properties of aesthetic-practical environments. Further experience and reflection will most probably provide a more nuanced and complete picture, as will the inclusion of other interpretive perspectives.

14 To develop, compare and evaluate aesthetic-practical environments

In the empirical field there is an enourmous amount of work left to be done with documenting various practices and with researching in detail what separates, for example, a smithy from a garden as far as properties and qualities go.[44] This is work that I know many professional practicians have already done much of and where I believe that incorporating the theoretical perspectives of the lived body and the play-drive can be of help in formalizing these experiences, especially when one attempts to bring together the research that has been done to date and tries to compare their results. In the present study I have focused on the common and shared characteristics.

It follows from the previous descriptions of the lived body and the play-drive that the interpretive relationship we have towards our experiences makes any attempt to claim causal connections between environments and effects of them that are more than rules of thumb impossible in principle. Still, the present study also shows a way of finding "soft" connections without doing violence to individual experience by documenting narratives like the ones here about the use of geometry and the bee-frames as well as (when possible) larger portions of life-stories. An institution also has the possibility of making an internal, systematic documentation of its interventions and then attempt to describe their results. In time such a collection of interventions would become extensive enough to work, internally and later externally, as a tool for development and evaluation.

Before any specific knowledge of the various materials and environments is presented one can still, on the basis of the present study, draw two conclusions. A practically oriented educational environment needs to be as multifaceted as possible in the choice of materials and work-tasks so that care-takers and/or learners have the opportunity to explore what, for them, might be suitable tools for development and integrity. An aesthetic environment carries the same preconditions. Just as it is almost impossible to predict what every person has as needs and conditions, how his or her lived bodily identity will relate to materials and work, it seems rather difficult, without asking, to predict how an individual will play/give meaning. If one limits the diversity of options/environments one also limits the possible responses of the subject, in some cases perhaps leading to no meaningful response at all. From this there seems to be no other conclusion to draw other than that one hasn't yet, in the environment, found the right key or *tool* that the person is able/interested to make use of. To *systematically* achieve meaningful results with regards to aesthetic-practical environments thus requires enough diversity of materials and possible work. In the case of the Haga Foundation they have been careful to point out that it is the care-takers who ultimately control what will be done and what parts of the institution that will be developed further. The above must also be considered against the backdrop of a spectrum that reaches from the provision

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[44] Especially gardening as therapy has been given attention in research. See, for example, Clara Ossiansson's doctoral thesis on the gardens of Alnarp (2004).

of a number of carefully constructed work-tasks to choose from all the way over to the construction of as rich an environment as possible within which a person herself must locate something of interest.

In this way various possibilities for both internal and external comparison begin to appear. A comparison (and thereby a serious evaluation) is simply not possible without some kind of saturation in the diversity of affordances that an aesthetic-practical environment has.[45] If the number is too limited the results of the documentation, no matter how it is conducted, become unreliable simply because people differ too much. If anything I hope that the examples in the present study confirm this, which is why I have only given some vague indications of how different materials and environments could be thought to influence interventions. One cannot expect a tool for integrity and the formation of identity (ie. an environment and its affordances) will be the same for different people even when they suffer from the same illness or disability. Which doesn't preclude exceptions. It may well be that gardening does help specifically in the healing of burn-outs in almost all cases (Ossiansson 2004). But this needs to be tested against a larger diversity before one can say for sure. Thus single studies, such as this one or Ossiansson's, don't *prove* anything with regards to specific environments, but rather with regards to aesthetic-practical environments in general, ie. on the level of propositional knowing.[46] On the level of practical knowing they do provide new knowledge since any effort to emulate such environments needs to take into account the whole complexity of a specific context in order to adapt it to a new situation. What I am trying to say, which is of central importance, is that few aesthetic-practical environments have been created *systematically* in such a way that one can really speak of a possibility for comparison, evaluation and development. This doesn't mean that all practices are deficient, practical knowing, especially in the field of aesthetic and practical environments, is perfectly capable of developing outside of such a context, or there would be no hospitals, schools, etc. It means that they contain areas of possible development, that they partially lack the systematic order necessary to allow for more elaborate and specific reflection.

A thorough comparative- and evaluative work would also make it possible to organize development more since it becomes easier to integrate and make use of elements from different practices. As long as one works within more productive aesthetic-practical practices this is much easier since one can, to a much larger degree, remain within ones own area of work when it comes to development. This is why a journeyman used to go on his or her journey, since it ensured the dissemination of new knowledge. But to the degree that one moves into pedagogical and therapeutical work, the measure of their worth isn't visible in products one can judge and compare but in the individual development of people and their experiences of meaningful learning and healing.

In conclusion then, the descriptions in the present study indicate that evaluation and comparison requires involving a larger number of practices/environments. They also indicate that such work

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[45] I use the term affordance conscious of Gibson's writing on the subject. There are certainly commonalities between the way he approaches issues and the way I have done in the present study. However, the scope doesn't permit a more thorough comparison.

[46] It may well be that some of the characteristics of say, the bookbindery at the Kristofferschool, are specific to that craft, that context of education and its history, but this is impossible to say with any certainty unless there is a study comparing both other workshops at the Kristofferschool and other similar institutions outside of the school. This is clearly not an easy research-task.

should incorporate the documentation of intervention-narratives. Another result of the present study is that it supports the gathering of narratives or case-studies as a research method for documenting practical institutions. The risk with using narratives as a foundation for research is that the knowledge gained thus isn't general or that one interprets the narratives in a too trusting or suspicious way. Both these risks are much reduced if one, as I have also tried to show in the study, incorporate them into an elaborated theoretical context and let them mutually correct each other. This brings me to the next part, a closer look at the problems of using narratives of intervention and biography for the purpose of research.

14.1 Problematic issues

In the process of research I have encountered three issues that might seem problematic when one intends to use narratives in research the way I have done here.

The first one concerns how to guarantee that the narratives are a reasonably accurate portrayal of an experience and not just a result of the wishful thinking of the participants. This is especially important to consider when the narratives are about people who themselves cannot control their content and correct misunderstandings, etc. Complete certainty, I suspect, is an impossibility. One advantage with practical activities is that the narratives can receive support from visible behaviours, results and processes. What otherwise mostly remains hidden inwardly is to a certain extent made visible outwardly and it becomes harder (although far from impossible of course) to be gratuitous or unfoundedly positive or negative. One also needs to have some idea, within the context of ones institution, of what constitutes a successful intervention and its narrative. I have tried to supply a very general norm for this with regards to the type of environments I have studied, by using the philosophy of Schiller. When the play-drive is able to assert itself it provides the subject with a greater freedom or autonomy to maintain itself in relation to the environment. When working with people with autism, the disability limits this, which means that one can pay attention to processes where the limiting factors recede. The co-workers that I met at the Haga Foundation were also, through their professional knowledge of crafts and their familiarity with the care-takers, in many ways practically skilled in perceiving and participating in these kinds of processes.

The second issue is how to treat the fact that a narrative has a beginning and an end but the person that it is about only has a beginning until the moment of death. A narrative of intervention in other words, is just a part of a much greater totality where a biographical event may very well be interpreted quite differently years later. This means that one must first of all be somewhat restrictive in the scope of meaning one gives to a narrative. One also needs to be careful not to transfer a success achieved in one environment to any other kind of environment. Many students with difficulties of concentration and attention in regular class-room environments have no problems at all functioning in a workshop environment for example, something I have experienced several times myself, including with students diagnosed with ADHD or ADD. But to generalize from what one has seen in the workshop is just as short sighted as the, probably more common, opposite. One also

needs to pay attention to the time-frame that one has so as not to confuse long and short perspectives. An intervention narrative based on a short time-frame, for example a specific event during a week, can appear irrelevant the next week. At the same time, many such short glimpses of everyday processes provide support for the larger narratives one might also work with that perhaps cover several years of work. What complicates things even more is that every finished process about which one can speak in retrospect depends on the perspective of the narrator at the time of narration. The safest way I know of to avoid onesidedness in judgement here is sufficiently long contact with the object of research and, if possible, the perspectives of different people regarding the same process. Different people also vary in the extent to which they are good narrators, which in turn can make a huge difference in vivdness and richness of detail. There is simply quite a lot one must do in order to shore up a narrative if one wishes to evaluate a practice. In the case of the Haga Foundation this might include such things as looking at the degree of sick-leave for co-workers, illness of care-takers, the number of care-takers who leave the institution because of dissatisfaction, etc. One might also survey what the care-takers do during a random month in order to clarify how the resources of the day-center are distributed. This also allows one to surface what an average day looks like, what is part of it and what not. One could presumably also explore the relationship between the day-center and the group-quarters where the care-takers live, how they communicate, how the totality of the institution is run and the distribution of resources. All of these are fields of research within which the various narratives can be placed and provided with context. What might be the corresponding context for the supportive crafts is something I have tried to hint at, especially in the footnotes to the description of the bookbindery.

The third issue concerns how to relate to narratives about "successful" and "unsuccessful" interventions. An intervention that does not succeed is, more than anything, one that doesn't happen which is the case sometimes, ie. it happens that students refuse to go to the workshop or quickly cease coming. It is, of course, important that a practice reflects on such cases, especially if it occurs often. How one is to interpret situations where a person is part of an activity but where no change seems to take place is difficult. Often one just doesn't perceive what actually happens. It isn't evident that just because nothing appears to have changed one must view an intervention as failed. The Haga Foundation works with very long time-frames here in order to avoid too much interpretation of processes before they have had a chance to play out. In practice this means taking the risk that one causes unnecessary suffering to someone by being afraid to act for fear of disturbing a process one believes one cannot yet perceive. That kind of judgement, in the end, is something that is strongly connected with learning from ones own practice and needs to be cultivated and reflected upon together with ones professional peers.

15 Discussion

Looking back the empirical part of the study has resulted in two surveys of aesthetic-practical, educational and therapeutical environments: the Haga Foundation and the bookbindery at the Kristofferschool. The descriptive purpose of the study is thereby met. These surveys, as I wrote in the chapter on aim and research questions (chapter 6), have a value in themselves since aesthetic-practical environments are so seldom described in more scientific contexts. Since it is difficult to provide a more abstract description of what constitutes an aesthetic-practical environment descriptions of them serve a purpose here as well. Over time it might be possible to develop a few prototypical descriptions.

The analytic work has consisted of applying the chosen interpretive perspectives to the empirically based descriptions. Through this a few of the basic properties of aesthetic-practical environments, when they are used for educational and therapeutic purposes, have become visible. This answers the first of the two questions posed in chapter 6. The second question is then answered in the continued analysis regarding possibilities of development, evaluation, and comparison. In connection with this there is a discussion of the problems with using narratives in the work with documentation and evaluation. The properties that are closely connected to the empirical aspect of aesthetic-practical environments and that I listed in the beginning of the study in the chapter on background have thus been complemented with a description of more fundamental properties. The premise that *pedagogical* therapeutical interventions are interventions that contribute to biographical integrity has been possible to follow up on in the analysis and it has also proven to be an important perspective when evaluating such environments. This leaves just a couple of short discussions, on the one hand concerning one of the main themes of the study: inclusion, on the other hand concerning what further research could look like.

15.1 What does an inclusive perspective bring?

A further, interesting aspect of the I-Thou meeting is the question of how much of the dialogue that needs to take place on a verbal level? Is it possible to meet the lived body without words? Therapists who work with non-verbal techniques (bodily therapy and music therapy) are convinced that something has been communicated and worked on during these sessions, but not in words. If we consider Merleau-Ponty's body-soul [-world] – continuum, would it be possible to imagine that the body's expressions are a first attempt at formulating a meaning on a bodily level around something that demands an answer. (Bullington 2004:64)

The examples I have provided from the Haga Foundation and even more the visits themselves give strong indications that people with limited or no verbal communication capacities still possess the capacity for meaning and communication in their lived body. Autism is also a disorder that manifests differently in different environments and environments that contain possibilities for meaningful activity, even for those who's disability generally prevents them from actively participating in work, provide the space for sometimes surprising expressions of communication and healing. What the Haga Foundations workshops do is to afford a communicative possibility to people for which the usual form of communication, language, is limited or closed.[47]

My visits at the Haga Foundation and the stories from it prove how indispensable an aesthetic-practical environment is to the care-takers, both for the therapeutic process and for the possibility of maintaining a meaningful biographical development. But what becomes almost too obvious when considered from a standpoint perspective is just as valid for *all* institutions that have as their main educational and therapeutical purpose to develop identity. I expressly do not include such educational institutions or activities that have as their main purpose to train skills but those that aim at an existential and transformative activity, conscious of the fact that many institutions and activities encompass both. To the extent that identity formation and/or therapy is connected to the capacity of having aesthetic/playing experiences, and I hope I have been able to show how central this is, these types of environments are crucial.

More specifically, aesthetic-practical environments are essential to the same extent that a person is dependent on his or her body for the creation of meaning, ie. mainly in childhood and youth as well as through illness and injury. In the former case because children still don't have the capacity for abstraction that later in life allows one to disregard ones body and ones environment to a large degree. As a child one is still in the process of developing ones senses, ones sensorimotor functions, and having ones first experiences. In the latter case because injuries and illnesses (including mental illnesses) disturb the relationship we have with our body, intrude into our objective body but also in our lived body. To heal a wound doesn't mean that one automatically has healed or worked with the meaning that the wound came to have biographically. At this point the study connects with and gives further support to the work that Jennifer Bullington and others have done in the field of psychosomatic illnesses and pain (Bullington 2009 & 2007, Honkasalo 2000, Toombs 1993, Frank 1997).

Focusing on autism as a standpoint perspective has helped surface how people interact with their environment and their dependence on it. Without the workshops at the Haga Foundation, the care-takers preconditions for meaning creation would be drastically limited given that no other equally supportive environment took their place. It also helps to surface our preconceptions regarding what self-evidently appears to be the center of a human being and how one develops. It does this by placing us before the choice of either denying people with severe autism full human dignity since they lack the capacity for verbal communication, agency and self-control, have severe stereotypical beaviours and are mentally disabled or we develop an idea of the human being that doesn't necessitate that she possesses all of the above, that doesn't presume humanity means possessing a

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[47] This isn't the place to take a closer look at how facilitated communication works, a rather controversial method that helps people with autism who have little or no verbal capacity to communicate, given that one agrees with the proponents of the method. Critics claim it is entirely bogus.

series of capacities but, more dynamically and inclusively, shows that the human being *appears* as owner of capacities and qualities in part because of what the environment affords her. A disability is then, in part, something that causes us to be more susceptible to/dependent on the environment than we would otherwise be. This is why I have been anxious to work with a philosophy of the human being that gives her a value and dignity that is inviolable, that extends this dignity to all people no matter their capacity for articulation and therefore doesn't tie it to any specific property or quality. The capacity to play or the aesthetic/meaning-creating capacity is dependent on the body in order to express itself, at least to the extent that this activity is to manifest through the body which is why it easily appears as limited by disabilities. And for the exact same reason, aesthetic-practical environments are important because they construct spaces that provide one with the same properties or qualities of meaning and life (the lived body).

15.2 The development of aesthetic-practical environments

The results of the study have contributed to an explanation of why aesthetic-practical environments are so effective, they have also contributed to some guidelines for future systematic developmental work. Until now there has been preciously little work done in this area although much has been done in related fields such as the organization of working environments and with regards to conventional learning-environments such as class-rooms. But when it comes to the development of new forms of aesthetic-practical environments that don't directly follow the molds and designs of traditional workshop- and therapy-spaces and that include more than just a few alternatives, there has been less done.

A systematic developmental work has, taking into account the results of the present study, the following elements to take into consideration:

1. Diversity. The aesthetic-practical environments that aim to work educationally and/or therapeutically need to encompass all basic materials and/or artforms and bodily oriented activities. With regards to materials this includes approximately: metal, textile, wood, clay, paper and stone. Alternatively, for institutions such as the Haga Foundation, where the care-takers cannot in any self-evident way handle any material or work-task an open workshop environment where one actively searches for a diversity of more specific tasks and materials.

2. A regular documentation of interventions, including the documentation of narratives.

3. For therapeutic interventions, a coordinated work on several therapeutic levels. What I have attempted to work out in this study is the educational-therapeutic level where meaningfulness and biographical integrity are the central aims. Next to this level are the levels of art-therapy and bodily oriented therapy that are both possible to connect with the interpretive methods and the results of the present research (see eg. Bullington 2009, 2007, 2004, Honkasalo 2000 and Toombs 1993, for a connection between psychosomatics and

Merleau-Ponty). This naturally doesn't exclude such established forms of therapy that I haven't touched on here such as conversational therapy, cognitive therapy as well as various forms of medication.

4.   The basic properties that I have been able to describe with the help of the interpretive perspectives: tool, rhythm, beauty and work, are such that one could successively work on the construction of environments that more and more systematically and consciously integrate them into their structures and processes.

5.   The use of a standpoint perspective has been of great help in the action-research on my own workshop and in the examination of the interpretive perspectives I chose. It seems reasonable to assume that a more systematic developmental work would gain much from a continued integration of such perspectives.

In other words, this study has resulted in the view that considering the central role of aesthetic-practical environments in assisting people with their communication and meaning-creation it would be both possible and desirable to work in a more systematic way with the construction of such environments. At the same time it is important to emphasize that an *aesthetic*-practical environment can never be identical from place to place but needs to change and adapt so that one is here less reliant on generalizing propositions on what constitutes such an environment and more on narratives documenting such environments (see further in Rittelmeyer 2005). What I mean is that the contents of the present study above all can provide a more intentional and reflective way of working in and with such environments.

15.3 An example of further research and development

As I stated above a consequence of this study is that if one desires to know to what degree for example various bodily oriented therapies and practices (like yoga, Feldenkrais, various forms of massage, etc.) work one must offer some kind of diversity. An experiment in this direction is described in the neurologist Frank Wilson's book *The Hand* (Wilson, 1998:246f):

> Wanting to respond more effectively to the unusual needs of some of my musician patients, I decided to invite a mixed group of "alternative therapies" practitioners to meet with me and one of my patients. I would describe his problem, let him discuss it, and ask for their help, how would you see it, and what would you do? The patient was a young guitar player plagued by wrist and arm pain who had agreed to a public discussion of his problem. It was an eye-opening event for all of us.

The therapist working with the Feldenkrais-method could, after speaking to the man and after having asked him to play a little on his guitar, observe that even though his hands had developed an amazing skill and agility the rest of his body was still a teen-agers in the way it moved and held itself. The guitarist also said that he had been overjoyed in high-school when he heard that playing guitar could count as physical education since he had never had any interest in anything but his

hands. By working with his body as a totality the therapist could, with time, help him to both painlessness and to a technique of playing that didn't result in further therapeutical needs.

This is the area where I myself see the greatest potential for further research. In my work with youth in need of supportive or curative educational interventions it repeatedly becomes painfully obvious that the interventions we can contribute from the supportive crafts are not always sufficient. There is often a lack of necessary contributions to healing from at least three other areas:

1. It isn't enough with just the supportive crafts as educational-therapeutic intervention. Even if one medicates simultaneously to alleviate eg. depression the medicine doesn't provide any lasting effect if given to someone who also has anxiety, panic-attacks, eating disorders, deliberate self-harm, etc. at least partially due to trauma (which is often the case) and these experiences aren't processed in any way. But the conversational- and cognitive therapies that are available often aren't, on their own, the solution to this. In part because trauma (just as all disorder and injury) manifests in and through the lived body and thus needs a bodily oriented therapy in order to deal with that aspect, in part because as far as I know, there has been no really systematic research done to explore how the various art therapies can contribute to the processing of disintegrative processes. Thus, in addition to conventional therapeutic interventions that work on a conversational and cognitive level (basically no matter what the problem might be) one would need to work with a plurality of bodily oriented and artistic methods of therapy. This in order to enlarge and diversify the possibility of finding just the right tools that the individual can use in working to achieve greater coherence, meaningfulness and healing.

2. Added to this, almost all interventions that are done, aim at the individual even though many close relatives also have a need for interventions in order to deal with the situation. Both because these relations often are one of the reasons to begin with for the need of interventions but also because many parents and siblings are traumatized from worry, stress and, perhaps the most difficult part, complicated relations to the various social agencies (social services, child and youth psychiatry, etc.) that are often a part of the process of helping their child. Which brings me to the third aspect:

3. To the extent that children, youth and adults need psychiatric help, such help is often difficult to come by, demands enormous resources of time and knowledge in order to get (that ones seldom has), and it is seldom coordinated so that it becomes the responsibility of the person seeking help and his or her relatives to keep a network of contacts with various parts of psychiatry, social services, etc. together. I have seen and heard about enough examples of where this has caused yet another trauma with even more negative consequences for those who are least equipped to handle them.[48]

With regards to issues two and three there are possibly examples of interventions that receive much better coordination than I know of. Examples where the social part of the problems that need to be dealt with are also handled more extensively. With regards to the first issue I have, thus far, not encountered a systematic work with that field.

I have, until now, worked specifically with the workshop as educational and therapeutic environment. Since the result of this study has been to clarify how aesthetic-practical activity works

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[48] This is, of course, a very localized view from Stockholm, the situation is perhaps very different already in other parts of Sweden and even more so in other countries.

to integrate and heal the biographical development of a person the foundation is laid to incorporate more aesthetic and practical forms of therapy in the research. People who are subject to injuries, illnesses and trauma are subject to a disintegration biographically, something that then might also manifest psychosomatically and in dislocations of biological rhythms such as sleep. A perspective on therapy that is educational proceeds from the biographical and tries to provide the traumatized individual with an environment and a series of activities that allows him or her to recreate the intentionality of his or her biography. What I have in mind is the systematic construction of a model for more holistic educational-therapeutic treatment of ill and traumatized people. This would then constitute a continued cycle of action-research in which a group of practicing therapists constituted a research-team. The aim would be to examine if one, building on the results of the present study as well as the research of others, can realize a more inclusive way to contribute to the healing and development of the individual.[49]

Such a holistic treatment would need to develop and encompass models for the combination, coordination and evaluation of educational-therapeutic, aesthetic-practical interventions with art therapy and bodily therapy. It would also need some complementary research in the area of human development, perception and sensory modalities as well as other issues that impact on how one develops, experiences and interacts with ones environment. It would also need to develop or copy models for therapeutic interventions and surveys that include the environment of the individual, particularly the social environment. Finally it would need to develop or copy models for the coordination of therapeutic work that in the case of schools are founded on the assumption that it is the school that has the overall responsibility for this. As far as I can see, there is no other agent or institutional actor that has the same regular and wide contact with a child or youth (presuming that the illness, trauma or disability isn't of a severity that causes school to cease being part of the young persons life-world). It is a source of serious social inequality to place this coordinating responsibility on the parents since their resources differ widely. Students who have the most serious problems are also often ones that lack functioning homes or who have parents that themselves are ill, traumatized or disabled, which causes them to have to assume responsibility for the coordination themselves. To maintain such a coordination of various therapeutic, social and medical interventions isn't the responsibility of schools today. The question is if it could become that.

Working in this direction would mean tackling at least two questions:

1. What is it possible to achieve in the way of healing for a person with a more holistic kind of work? Children and youth who are in need of such interventions are in most of the cases I am familiar with unable to finish high-school, end up in severe dependencies on drugs and/or alcohol, and in the best scenarios take years to heal reasonably. By that time the process itself has been so difficult that disabled, traumatized and ill children have suffered even more trauma that make things even more difficult. It's impossible to predict beforehand if such an holistic intervention-method would be markedly better than todays options and then in what way and in what contexts. My hope is that the present study has contributed evidence that helps underscore the value of a closer examination of this.

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[49] A similar instutitional work that I know of is the emergency-pedagogy that has been created by Bernt Ruf in Karlsruhe, Germany. See further at www.notfall-paedagogik.de. A similar holistic approach to treatment has been developed by Med dr. Dean Ornish for the treatment of patients with severe cardiovascular problems (Deutschman 2007).

2. The question is also how such a model can be evaluated with regards to cost and efficiency given that the results of holistic interventions prove successful. A holistic intervention is probably more costly in the short run that a conventional one since one needs to involve more agencies in the work. It remains to been seen if this is actually the case and, above all, what the case may be in a longer perspective.

To summarize, one might say that the result of the present study is a conception of how further research and development might be conducted. A holistic model for educational and therapeutic work. Hopefully it will be possible to pursue this in the upcoming years.

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