

Jennifer Gore

Professor Emerson

English 110 I

March 28, 2019

The Pros of Arts and Sciences Joining Forces

Looking into the history of the arts and sciences, it is evident that they both are uniquely their own. After delving into the inner workings of some scientists and artists we can also see that they, from time to time, borrowed from each other, meaning scientists used art and artists used science. For instance, in the 1920's scientist Niels Bohr struggled to understand what the inside of an atom looked like, but with the help of art it shifted his thinking to grasp the concept better, and allowed for him to have an abstract way of viewing things (Lehrer). With this new interpretation, Bohr was able to make the famous Bohr model, changing science as we know it. This is just one example of how the collaboration of art and science can be overwhelmingly beneficial to us. So, when the question, "should science and art commingle?" is asked, I think, why not? With almost everything in life, intertwining and mixing up new and different ideas can create magic. It is about what we do with said magic, and how it can affect our society. Innovation, inspiration, and knowledge are just some of the outcomes of which the two fields can create, affecting our society for the better. In my future line of work, nursing, it involves a lot of education, specifically science based. I believe that when im in school for nursing, art is needed for learning purposes, and as I get into the hospital setting it is evident that art is already seen in hospitals from the language being used, to diagrams

plastered on the walls teaching the patients, to entertainment aspects such as music, movies or drawing in order to comfort patients in an emotional time. I will also be able to build empathy with the use of arts, and overall the arts will enhance my career allowing me to be a better nurse.

In the process of becoming a nurse, here at college I will need the application of art to aid the sciences. Learning in most cases, if not all, is multifaceted. It is not one way or another, but rather the collaboration of multiple subjects is what leads to success. As Lehrer states, "Science needs the arts...If we want answers to our most essential questions, then we will need to bridge our cultural divide. By heeding the wisdom of the arts, science can gain the kinds of new insights and perspectives that are the seeds of scientific progress". Lehrer makes clear that it is important to no longer have them be segregated because together, it makes a stronger foundation for our world. He also says that:

It will cultivate a positive feedback loop, in which works of art lead to new scientific experiments, which lead to new works of art and so on. Instead of ignoring each other, or competing, or co-opting each other in naive or superficial ways, science and the arts will truly impact each other. (Lehrer)

Learning science is probably the only important subject needed for my profession, nursing. We have anatomy classes, biology classes, and chemistry classes, which in turn will heavily impact my career down the line. In these classes, I wouldn't be able to get by without the use of arts. I see it in my textbook when i'm studying, whether it be diagrams, real life pictures, or simplistic drawings. I even see it in the classrooms when

my teacher draws on the board, or when she brings out a ceramic model. For me, and I guarantee for most people, visual aspects of science is what forms connections and understandings. Without the arts, as a nurse I wouldn't know what the inner body looks like or its microscopic functions are. I wouldn't know how a muscle contracts without a visual image, or even know what each bone looks like. The arts are not optional when it comes to learning in my experience--its essential.

The integration of arts with the sciences is seen already in hospitals. From the language being used, to diagrams, to entertainment aspects, whether clearly defined or not, art is within our hospitals. As a nurse, and specifically the specialty I would like to go into as a pediatric nurse, it involves a lot of explaining, simplifying and "dumbing-down", to my patients. One of the most common ways to do this is through metaphor. Metaphor is not a typical aspect of art but in a subtle way it is art. Metaphor exchanged between me and my patients will make conversations and understandings much easier, and as most people know, communication is an especially important part of a medical providers job, especially if i'm working with kids. Metaphor can also be seen to help explain research findings within hospitals. Lehrer says, "Metaphor in science serves not just as a pedagogical device, but also as an aid to scientific discovery". What Lehrer means is that not only is metaphor good for educating people and simplifying things, but it is helpful for people making discoveries. Overall, although metaphor is not usually seen as an art, it is in fact art, and it is just one way art is seen through hospitals.

Another way art is seen in the hospitals is through diagrams. Like school, to

learn new ideas we use pictures and drawings to help us, so as a nurse i'm designated the duty to also teach my patients about their illness. If i'm working with kids as a pediatric nurse, drawings, pictures and diagrams will be an option for me to give clarity and knowledge. Lehrer states "art lets us comprehend, at least a little bit, the incomprehensible." I think this statement is very much true when it comes science or medical-related situations. Another way that art is in the hospital is through entertainment. A hospital can be scary at times for a patient, especially if the patient is a child. Being a nurse for children, I can use art to comfort them, whether it be through music, a coloring book or a movie. Anxiety and stress is a legitimate health risk, and there has been studies done, and proven, to say that these forms of art can lower these risks. In all, arts within the hospitals are all clearly there to help, and the combination of the sciences and arts can stimulate a sense of understanding and comfort.

The arts can also help me and others gain empathy. There are so many aspects to being a nurse and one of them is the ability to empathize. This is because as nurses we deal with a broad amount of emotions and people, so without it, it can affect how people perceive and trust us, compromising our relationships with the patients. Ma says,

To be able to put oneself in another's shoes without prejudgement is an essential skill. Empathy comes when you understand something deeply through arts and literature and can thus make unexpected connections...Empathy is the ultimate quality that acknowledges our identity as members of one human family. (Ma 258)

Art allows the ability to form empathy, whether it be through films, the media, or art on a canvas, and with that it can be then related back into science, and more specifically, my career as a nurse. Ma goes on to explain what empathy is and why it is important for us, "Empathy and imagination, the artificial layering of different realities, are linked. Empathy is your capacity to imagine what someone else is going through; what they are thinking, feeling, and perceiving" (259). I believe that as a nurse it is vital to have empathy towards your patient. Without it, I would be ignorant to their emotions, and it can create a barrier between myself and the patient. Art is important, for it creates empathetic thinking. Science is essential to us, possibly even more than art, though, and as Pinker says, "The facts of science, by exposing the absence of purpose in the laws governing the universe, force us to take responsibility for the welfare of ourselves, our species, and our planet". With this, I believe I have the duty as a nurse to use my knowledge, but combine it with the arts so I can responsibly take care of myself and others through the intertwining of the two. In general the arts will enhance my career allowing me to be a better nurse.

When i'm in school for nursing, art is needed for learning purposes, and as I get into the hospital setting it is evident that art is already seen in hospitals from the language, to diagrams, to entertainment aspects. I will also be able to build empathy with the use of arts. In a world that divides the two subjects of science and art, it takes away the opportunities for growth of an individual and can make people believe that one is better than the other. It takes away humanity and leaves nothing but bare facts and information. Let us use art to spice up the sciences and vice versa. From where i'm

sitting, the day we segregate the two important aspects of our world--medicine and art--we are doing our world a huge disadvantage.

Works Cited

Lehrer, Jonah. "The Future of Science...Is Art?" *SEED Magazine*, 18 June 2008.

Ma, Yo-Yo. "Necessary Edges: Arts, Empathy, and Education."

Pinker, Steven. "Science Is Not Your Enemy." *The New Republic*, 7 Aug. 2013.