

Development of the Scholar–Practitioner Identity through Selected Pieces by Picasso

A Critical Aesthetic Inquiry

Charles L. Lowery

Abstract

Bringing together elements of aestheticism and authentic leadership this article seeks to demonstrate the potential of framing reflexive critical autobiographical inquiry within an arts-based context. The author engages in a subjective study of his identity as an emerging scholar–practitioner educational leader by reflecting on six selected paintings by Picasso that form for the researcher an analytical lens. These pieces form a portrait of the scholar–practitioner that frames fragments of the researcher’s experiences relating to his personal development as an educational leader. These areas are presented as leadership and academic profile, research and inquiry, scholarly accomplishments, the identity of the scholar–practitioner, and importance of the mentor. As such, Picasso the artist becomes a metaphor of the scholar–practitioner ideal, and his art collectively creates both a prompt and a structure for the complex theoretical work and bricolage of scholarly practice in leadership for social justice, equity, and care in education.

Keywords: aesthetic inquiry, critical autobiography, currere, Picasso, reflexivity, scholar–practitioner

The following self-examination forms a critical autobiographical portraiture as a form of reflexive qualitative inquiry. It represents an attempt to situate my personal and professional self as an educational leader in the work of

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scholar–practitionership, and to question the authentic and aesthetic nature of my practice as a school principal. As an arts-based study, I draw from Prendergast, Leggo, and Sameshima (2009) and Prendergast (2014); as a portraiture, this inquiry finds theoretical foundation in the work of Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997); additionally, as an autobiographical inquiry and a revival of *currere* (Pinar, 1975), this endeavor of *becoming* sprouts from the roots of Greene (1988), Grumet (1992), and Pinar (1994).

Through self-awareness and becoming critically conscious of my world as an educational leader and doctoral student, I encountered a newfound method of engagement—the reflective and reflexive act of self-study—that caused me to look at preparation, policy, and practice from different perspectives. As Prendergast (2014) has stated,

Revelation of self can be argued as one of the central concerns of art. Self-study has informed art making to some degree for as long as we can know. Aesthetic philosophers, art critics and artists themselves have recognized self-portraiture, autobiography, memoir and confession as legitimate and often potent topics for artistic exploration. With this history of art practice in mind, what problem can there be for an arts-based educational researcher who wishes to engage in self-study? (p. 1)

Along with this newly discovered awareness I began to acknowledge that I had spent a great deal of my life viewing others as *The Other*, objectifying their lives and the value of their individual lived experiences. Likewise, I realized that I had lived much of my life in a state of anaesthetized ignorance. Arriving at this understanding, I found that I was perpetuating the ecological and socio-cultural attitudes and assumptions in which I had been raised.

During my doctoral studies I was introduced to the notion of scholarly practice and with it the ideas of authenticity and aesthetics in educational leadership. Dewey’s work on aesthetics in *Art as Experience* (“Experience as Aesthetic”) gave me pause to reconsider my experiences with the artistic in my life, my teaching, and my leadership. Concerning having an experience, Dewey (1981) maintained,

Experience occurs continuously, because the interaction of live creature and environing conditions is involved in the very process of living. Under conditions of resistance and conflict, aspects and elements of the self and the world that are implicated in this interaction qualify experience with emotions and ideas so that conscious intent emerges. Oftentimes, however, the experience had is inchoate. Things are experienced but not in such a way that they are composed into an experience. There is distraction and dispersion; what we observe and what we think, what we desire and what we get, are at odds with each other. (p. 555)

Moving from *Art as Experience* (1981) to *Experience and Education* (1938), I began to integrate Deweyan perspectives on reflective thinking (Rodgers, 2002)

into a self-reflection and self-awareness that employed artistic and poetic work as a critical lens to examine and interpret my previous practices as a teacher and current methods as a principal. As Jenlink (2006) states, “Dewey’s conception [of the educational administrator] reflects characteristics of a practitioner who is a scholar as well as practitioner, an individual who understands the intellectual, moral and social responsibility of education in relation to transforming society” (p. 56).

The interactions, the conflicts, the distractions, the unconscious “purposes” of doing to which Dewey alluded had been aspects *taken-for-granted* in the daily experience of my educational practice. Under an aesthetic lens of criticality I began to question the meaning and motives of my own administrative practices and the socio-political influences in my social setting—influences that had empowered me with discretionary decision making and led me to blindly accept policies as given.

The Scholar–Practitioner

For many in academic circles the notion of scholar-practitioner is centered on philosophies underscoring Ed.D. programs (as well as some M.Ed.) as professional-oriented degrees. Varying frameworks for the scholar-practitioner can be found at University of Nebraska-Lincoln (Brooks, n.d.), Pennsylvania State University (Miller, 2013), Benedictine University (Ludema, 2014), Capella University (Capella, 2015), and my *alma mater*, Stephen F. Austin State University. However, Jenlink (2001, 2003, 2010) and others (Bouck, 2011; Hebert, 2010; Lowery, Walker, Gautam, & Mays, 2015; Lowery, 2016) have pushed the scholar–practitioner identity beyond the definition of scholar-practitioner as a mere “professional degree” toward a moral intellectual engaged in theory and practice.

According to Jenlink (2006), the school leader as a scholar-practitioner is a bricoleur. This image of Levi-Straus’ mythical artisan of patchwork practice serves as a metaphor for the educational leader engaging in analysis and application, of thinking and doing, merging theory and practice to improve learning and schooling by advocating for social justice, equity, and care (Jenlink, 2001). Emerging from the work of bricolage—the praxis of the bricoleur—is an idea of scholar-practitioner that extends beyond the idea of a mere doctoral degree—specifically, the Ed.D. Instead, the bricoleur uses a variety of critical lenses to examine and investigate within the context of her or his particular field and craft. Jenlink (2006) conceptualized the scholar-practitioner educational leader in the following manner:

The construct of scholar-practitioner leadership is premised on an alternative epistemology of inquiry as practice, wherein the leader as scholar and his or her leadership practice are inseparable from scholarly and critically oriented inquiry. Scholar-practitioner leadership is grounded in a postmodern—postpositivist

view of leadership, which seeks to blur boundaries in the knowledge-practice and inquiry-practice relationships. (p. 55)

Jenlink (2006) proposes that the primary concern of the scholar-practitioner educational leader is a democratic work for social justice, equity, and care. From an autobiographical perspective, the academic coursework and portfolio assignments in Stephen F. Austin State University’s doctoral program present a *currere* (Pinar, 1975) outlined by the candidate’s profile, accomplishments, inquiry, identity, and interaction with mentors and cohort members. Integrated into the candidates’ *currere* are concepts of critical pragmatist and poststructuralist theory, together with spiritual, poetic, authentic, and aesthetic ways of knowing in leadership. These elements are designed to become theoretical lenses that candidates use to examine contemporary issues relating to education and to better comprehend the epistemological, ontological, and axiological nature of education in the patchwork context of present social conditions (Doctoral Cohort Candidates, Coleman, & Alford, 2007; Hickey, Gill, & Amonett, 2011; Lowery, Gautam, & Mays, 2016).

Over the course of the last several decades the philosophical underpinnings of education and schooling has diversified greatly. Debate over standards and accountability has continued to augment into the 21st century. Emerging concerns now directly impact practice, policy, and preparation. Token expressions such as *globalization*, *digital citizenship*, and *media literacy*, as well as *asynchronous* and *anytime-anywhere learning* are now commonplace in discussions relating to the development of students and educators alike. As well, ongoing concerns still exist in terms of *race*, *diversity*, *at-risk*, *poverty*, and the perceived and well-publicized *achievement gap*.

The new language of accountability and assessment is increasingly relevant to dialogues concerning preparation programs for educational leaders. New metaphors are being considered to better render and interpret the nature of the school leader as a public intellectual. According to Jenlink (2006),

Problematically, leadership preparation programs are challenged to prepare educational leaders equipped with a repertoire of skills, dispositions, knowledge, and methods up to the challenges that leaders face in the pragmatic world of schools. Increasingly, leaders and the programs that prepare leaders are faced with the challenge of reconceptualizing leadership preparation and practice. (p. 54)

In response to this growing concern, Jenlink (2006) offers the metaphor of the school leader as *bricoleur*. Implicated in this metaphor is the idea of *bricolage*—“a construction that arises from the reflexive interactions of different types of knowledge, mediating artifacts, and methods in relation to the social contexts, cultural patterns, and social actions and activities that comprise the daily events of the school” (p. 54). In this selection, the *currere* of reflexive inquiry comes to

the forefront of the methodological concern of the bricoleur as artisan and her or his research as an art form. With this in mind, I turn an intentional gaze on Picasso's works as a means to aesthetically focus on critical autobiographical and reflexive inquiry to make meaning and sense of my first-person development as a scholar-practitioner.

Method of Reflexive Inquiry

Methodologically, Picasso and, specifically, six works of Picasso serve as a metaphorical and arts-based framework for inquiry into my own understanding of my work as a school leader in P20 educational settings. Drawn from the selected paintings are six reflective/reflexive sketches that depict the development of an educational leader as a scholar-practitioner. The pieces providing this framework are *The Old Guitarist*; *Ma Jolie*, *Woman with a Zither or Guitar*; *Girl before a Mirror*; *Self Portrait 1972*; *Self Portrait 1907*; and *A Portrait of Gertrude Stein*. Selecting these works, while based on subjective aesthetic values held by the researcher, was not a strictly arbitrary act. A balance of represented dispositions was sought out with a degree of intentionality. Three of these paintings signify the feminine nature of leadership while three depict a masculine aspect. Collectively these works of art epitomize a desired balance in the life and leadership style of the scholar-practitioner as well as his commitment to empathy, equity, emotions, and gender rights. Moreover, each was picked for its potential to represent the artist-leader's subjective self in addition to its capacity to represent the scholar-practitioner's leadership profile, individual growth, inquiry skills, academic accomplishments, identity through reflexive examination, and the relationship with mentors and fellow cohort members.

Consequently, each piece portrays a *human* figure—though one is extremely ambiguous and indefinable through cubic expression. This fact serves as a focal point to represent the extreme obligation that the scholar-practitioner holds as a human being toward humanity and to every individual with whom s/he comes into contact, even those s/he does not initially comprehend. While these particular pieces are works I consider to be among my favorite paintings by Picasso, they serve—through the process of a poetic/aesthetic analysis—a professional purpose as symbols of the work of scholarly practice.

Role of Radical Reflexivity

Cunliffe (2003) purposed that reflexive research “questions our relationship with our social world and the ways in which we account for our experiences” (p. 985). Per se, reflexivity is inherently linked to representation. As Cunliffe stated, “Reflexivity ‘unsettles’ representation by suggesting that we are constantly constructing meaning and social realities as we interact with others and talk about our ex-

periences” (p. 985). Within the reflexive gaze the scholar–practitioner, as thinker and doer, is free to profoundly embrace an aesthetic way of knowing his world by seeking metaphors and metaphorical structures that provide “unspoken” meaning to events and ethical dilemmas that s/he faces. In other words, radical reflexive inquiry is primarily an act of making sense of what goes on in the lifeworld of the one that questions the value of the decisions to be made and problems to be resolved. By considering these issues through an arts-based lens a layer of significance can be explored that is fundamentally “unspeakable” without the aid of metaphorical explication.

Arts-based Inquiry as Sense Making

Intended here are portraits of the scholar–practitioner educational leader as viewed through a theoretical, critical, and aesthetic lens. It is not intended to be a comprehensive or complex analysis or interpretation of Picasso’s artwork in and of itself. Instead these images were chosen because of certain characteristics that I felt personally would exemplify the aesthetic and artistic work of scholarly practice as educational leadership. According to Eisner (2002), our environment is “in its most fundamental state, a qualitative one made up of sights and sounds, tastes and smells that can be experienced through our sensory system” (p. 1). How one experiences that environment is “a process that is shaped by culture, influenced by language, impacted by beliefs, affected by values, and moderated by the distinctive features of that part of ourselves we sometimes describe as our individuality” (p. 1).

The experiencing of a given environment—such as one in which a work of art is sensed or one in which an identity develops—depends on the subjective act of reflexivity on the part of the one experiencing it. As Eisner (2002) states,

Transforming the private into the public is a primary process of work in both art and science. Helping the young learn how to make that transformation is another of education’s most important aims. It is a process that depends initially upon the ability to experience the qualities of the environment, qualities that feed our conceptual life and that we then use to fuel our imaginative life. (pp. 2-3)

This transformation of the private to the public through the reflexive work of inquiries such as portraiture, grounded in ethnography and phenomenology (Cunliffe, 2003; Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997), provide a foundation for the important task of understanding not only the conceptual-practical tensions of the educational leader but also his or her identity as a scholar–practitioner. Paintings (i.e. images) selected for this reflexive inquiry form an outline defined by moral imagination—a representation that is “aimed at transforming the contents of consciousness within the constraints and affordances of a material” (Eisner, 2002, p. 6).

As such, art—or in this case, arts-based inquiry—plays a role paramount to transforming the scholar–practitioner’s conscious awareness of the leader that she or he is or is becoming. Due to the potentialities that could emerge, it would seem a purposeful selection of descriptors is required. These descriptors, which represent areas of the emergent scholar–practitioner educational leader identity, stem from reflection and reflexivity supplied in my doctoral studies and originated through a required portfolio as a means of authentic assessment for candidates’ in the Doctor of Education program.

Areas of the scholar–practitioner’s identity denoted in this reflection are leadership and academic profile, research and inquiry, scholarly accomplishments, the identity of the scholar–practitioner, and importance of mentors and cohorts of colleagues. The first painting presented here, *The Old Guitarist* (1903) from Picasso’s Blue Period, represents the scholar–practitioner’s leadership and academic profile.

The Old Guitarist

The old man in Picasso’s painting is not necessarily meant to symbolize the scholar–practitioner leader as an individual. Imagination, I believe, can move us deeper into an aesthetic analysis of the colors and contrasts of the aging musician and his environment as depicted in the piece. Picasso paints his elderly subject with the subject’s instrument of choice—the guitar. The guitar is an appresentation of sounds of quality and quantity—music is both a method and measurement of qualitative chords with notes and quantitative measures with rhythms. While the canvas is silent, if an astute observer *listens* to the strokes of the brush, the glide of the artist’s hand, an almost audible strum, soft and subtle, can be heard from the distant past. This is the sound of purpose, of meaning, of reflection, of wisdom, of lived experiences. The old guitarist exudes experiential data—what has been seen, what has been heard, what has been felt and tasted—from his tired, sad face. His grey hair and wrinkle skin tell a story of many hardships and the lonely hours of dark blue nights.

This symbol of lived experiences represents an element necessary to the work of the scholar–practitioner leader. In all actuality, leadership cannot happen without experience—without reflecting on past experience. Whether these experiences can be interpreted as good or bad is not our concern. Many bad or *blue* experiences lead to good outcomes—a dark past can make the light of the future much brighter—an academically “unacceptable” school can become a beautiful institution of learning and teaching for the whole child. However, the relationship between experience and leadership cannot be ignored. While many young inexperienced men become solid managers, take troops and platoons into battle, and become entrepreneurs, these things are accomplished through techniques, positional authority, or innovation.

Experience only provides the wisdom to discern the nuances of these strategies and make them useful in authentic and aesthetic leadership. Experience is gained through education, employment, scholarship and research, through internships and practicums, travels and immersion—in short, through a commitment to lifelong learning and continuous observation and reflection. If time is, as Heidegger (1962) purports, “the transcendental horizon for the question of Being” (p. xvi), then the understanding of every ontological question needs to be arrived at through experience. One’s educational philosophy, one’s leadership profile, one’s teaching and research statement, one’s social interactions with others can only evolve over time with meaningful experience.

In *The Old Guitarist* the subject holds his guitar upright and close to him as though he is embracing or caressing another human being. In this pose we can form extensions to issues of equity and care. We can visually extract his care and his awareness of humanity in his motionless figure just as in his face we can observe the marks of oppression, injustice, and the brokenness of our world. His head is turned downward, a symbol of prayerfulness and meditation, respect to others, and passive resistance. He is seated as one who rests from strife and stress, worry and war. In effect, his traits are those of a sacrificed messiah on a musical cross, having given up his soul on the sidewalk altars of the impoverished city streets. His unheard ancient songs would be ballads of forgiveness and forgottenness vocalized in a thick but pleasant and almost unintelligible Castilian accent.

Just as the educational leader is often alone in his or her endeavors to right social injustices or stand in opposition to inequitable policies, the old guitarist is absorbed into the darkness of his blue surroundings, isolated and misunderstood. Like the scholar–practitioner he is often a stranger in a strange land—even more so when he plays his melodies to his own people.

Ma Jolie, Woman with a Zither or Guitar

The next movement of the scholar–practitioner composition is one focused on the melodies of research and inquiry. To portray this as the hub of theory and practice, I have chosen Picasso’s *Ma Jolie*, otherwise called *Woman with a Zither or Guitar*. This cubist oil painting is both abstract and esoteric, representing one of the numerous women and loves of Picasso’s life, Marcelle “Eva” Humbert. For the scholar–practitioner research and inquiry are a romantic affair. While there is sufficient room for both quantitative and qualitative endeavors, the scholar–practitioner generally chooses the one yet often strays with the other in the act and art of *bricolage* (Jenlink, 2006). We may lean on statistics and covariance but explore the more sensual explications of academics and society through phenomenology and the composites of intimate ethnographic liaisons, seeking thick, rich descriptions of the world.

Upon first glance *Ma Jolie* seems more abstract and less cohesive than the woman hidden in the shadowy hues of browns and blacks. With a cautious, reflective gaze and analytical consideration one may ascertain the vague figure of the zither-playing femme nestled within the cubic helter-skelter that covers the canvas. For the researcher this is often the case: the subject is there, present, before our eyes, but the meaning is aloof, hidden. In other words, the sign is visible, tangible, but the signified is not so obvious. The research questions must be designed to extract the essence underlying the behaviors and the being; the methodology draws out the synthesis of the subject and its image through a scientific and profound act of inquiry.

Within the field we find that the form of the woman, like truth, is not intact; she is represented with a hand here and a fist there, a shock of hair in this space and a set of eyes in another. It is the observer's responsibility to collect the data that make up the woman and her guitar, to mentally (re)arrange them in an understandable order, and to then report his or her findings and conclusions. In this case, the complete woman and instrument present difficulty and reality and the problematically beautiful; the way in which Picasso revealed these aspects of her existence is not easily accepted within the culture of our normalized way of viewing the world.

Girl Before a Mirror

Picasso is attributed to having said, "I have a horror of people who speak about the beautiful. What is beautiful? One must speak of problems in painting!" Recognizing a problem—or problem posing—is a Freirean (1970) concept related to the ability of reading the world. It is also of major importance to the reflective work of scholarly practice. For this reason, I have selected Picasso's *Girl Before a Mirror* as the artistic representation for scholarly or academic accomplishments. What is an accomplishment? What is success? What is achievement? Is it what is defined by standardization and routinization? Is it defined by accountability and *No Child Left Behind* (now the *Every Student Succeeds Act*)?

Accomplishment can only be discovered in self-reflection or reflexive-subjective study. The cogitations of the meditating *Ego* must be brought into the picture. Consideration of the collage produced from many *successes* and the valuing of lessons in the form of *failures* have formed the context of one's life and learning. Successes are often merely failures that are perceived as good at a given moment in time; and likewise, failures can effectively lead to personal improvement and self-actualization. When Picasso's "Girl" looks in the "Mirror" she does not see what she *is* but instead perceives an alter image of herself. Perception is said to be reality—but only psychologically. The physical reality of the *Girl Before the Mirror* stands in a soft light, in shapely and smooth artistic lines on the left-hand, the

image perceived on the right is dark and surreal, a confused reflection riddled with self-doubt and failure.

Scholar–practitioners recognize the importance of perception nevertheless work to reveal the reality. Their obligation is to illuminate, to “seek to record and interpret the perspectives and experience of the people they are studying, documenting their voices and their vision—their authority, knowledge, and wisdom” (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. xv). It is through the reflection and meditation on life, self, and subjects of study that the scholar–practitioners engage in a criticality that does not seek to define but rather seeks to challenge accepted definitions. The girl gazes into the mirror and asks, “What is it that *I* see? Is it what *I* perceive or is there something more than what the superficial divulges? Is there something more—something *essential*? Is there something else beneath the reflected image? Do I see *myself*—my *world*—as *I* am—as *it* is? How does my fellow human being see *me*—*it*? Am I beautiful? Am I problematic? What is beautiful?”

Self Portrait 1972

Facing death, Picasso painted a somewhat disturbing self-portrait in 1972 (he died in 1972). The face in the portrait is haggard, unshaven, wide-eyed, and almost simian in features. The eyes, as with most of Picasso’s paintings, are offset, uneven; one is reddened. A section of the left-hand side of the head is missing, representing Picasso’s unrepresented “right hand” (which is visible in the photo associated with the art); the white shadow of the unseen right hand supports the serene forehead of a man engrossed in deep thought. The image is one of autobiographical revelation and auto/ethnographic material. Moreover, it depicts the significance of reflexivity for the educational leader and the turning of the critical lens upon one’s self.

Picasso sees neither himself nor the world as others see them—he sees things merely as they *are*. Humanity at large chooses to not see the world as it exists but subconsciously views the world as it is preferred and as it is readily understood. The Pablo Picassos and the Salvador Dalis of the world dare to look into the problematic and often surreal spirit of existence and paint it in its authentically disturbing and distorted realness. The product manifests in asymmetrical faces and melting clocks. *Surreality* surfaces in reality through their perspectives illustrated in images that are raw and real and rife with humanity.

Like Picasso in 1972, each of us faces death. And death has many faces. Daily we die—emotionally, spiritually. The scholar–practitioner educational leader gives him-/herself to theory and practice, to research and writing, on the cross of academia and student achievement. This philosopher-educator gives him-/herself to creative and critical endeavors that prepare today’s young to be tomorrow’s entrepreneurs, educators, and engineers. We challenge others and ourselves to look

beyond the mirror, beyond the accepted image, into the reality of our spiritual selves, pushing the edges of the normal, ever looking beyond, ever questioning the status quo. At the end of the day, the scholar–practitioner hopes to look within. S/he embodies a messiah–martyr concept that is “despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3 NKJV). It is with weight of revelation concerning the state of affairs that the scholarly practitioner endeavors to effect change in the face of adversity.

For this individual, there is no difference between death and sacrifice. Both are a complete giving up of one’s *Self*. Picasso gave himself to a life of art, of blurring boundaries. In an academic sense, the scholar–practitioner does the same. The scholar–practitioner dies daily to the cause of social justice, equity, and care, taking on the role of co-emancipator—of *Paraclete*—coming along side of the oppressed and dying, as a co-struggler in the battle for life, liberty, and democracy. The scholar–practitioner leader disregards personal comfort for the sake of the moral and ethical. Incidentally, *Self Portrait 1972* was the last of Picasso’s series of self-portraits.

Self Portrait 1907

Although not the first of his self-portraits, Picasso’s 1907 work was completed during his work on the more famous *Les Femmes d’Alger (O. J. R. M.)*. The final rendering of the latter painting, depicting nude females, is a *pentimento* of earlier work of two masculine figures. Upon reflecting on himself as an artistic and authentic being, Picasso was able to allow the true image of natural expression to surface and reach its destined state of perfection. Without the pause to reflect on the youthful and wide-eyed self he was at that time the final product may never have evolved.

So it is with the educational leader. Recreation always precedes re-creation. The work of the scholar–practitioner involves re-creating environments in which the *Other* can face the privileged and undemocratic practices that marginalize her or his *becoming*. Poverty and lack of privilege rob youthfulness and smother hope. Picasso’s self-portrait is an attempt to capture for perpetuity the face of childlike optimism—the work of the scholar–practitioner is no less. Although the essay, the editorial, the published research, the new theory, the application in practice may go unnoticed for a century or more, it remains etched into the consciousness of an ongoing dialogue of faith, hope, and humility, and an unending debate of why and how to educate and inform a much desired democratic citizenry. Dewey (1916) states,

Certain traits of character have such an obvious connection with our social relationships that we call them “moral” in an emphatic sense—truthfulness, hon-

esty, chastity, amiability, etc. But this only means that they are, as compared with some other attitudes central:—that they carry other attitudes with them. They are moral in an emphatic sense not because they are isolated and exclusive, but because they are so intimately connected with thousands of other attitudes which we do not explicitly recognize—which perhaps we have not even names for. (p. 357)

Picasso's earlier self-portrait is a work of morality—not based on religious convictions or legal structures or societal mores—but founded on the individual. It is an authentic painting in the youthfulness and innocence and naivety that it displays. The young man in and of himself does not possess the needed wisdom of leadership, but he harnesses the power of hope. Without hope wisdom is powerless. The scholar-practitioner looks into him-/herself at any stage of development and embraces the hope and juvenescence needed to stand, to reflect, to paint the world as it is.

Gertrude Stein

Jewish in her culture, hermetic in her nature, open in her sexual orientation, complete in her complexity, Gertrude Stein's rhythmic stream-of-consciousness essays were attempts to get at the meaning of the unrealized *life-world* of the displaced and were the literary counterparts to Picasso's cubism. She represented a maternal femininity and a strong pseudo-masculinity which attracted many artistic geniuses of her day: Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Matisse, and Picasso included. The scholar-practitioner's love for diversity and difference is embodied in this quote: "Out of kindness comes redness and out of rudeness comes rapid same question, out of an eye comes research, out of selection comes painful cattle" (Stein, 1997, p. 4). Stein's critical genius, her love of creativity, and intimate relationship with Picasso are undeniable. Her place in this reflexive study is one representing mentorship and collegiality. Picasso's portrait of Gertrude Stein symbolizes a scholar-practitioner's love and respect for his/her mentors and leaders, those who have instructed and guided, advised and fostered.

According to Wagner-Martin (1995), "A deep bond developed between Gertrude and Picasso, and . . . next to his mother and Fernande, Gertrude became the most important woman in his life" (p. 72). As Picasso painted the portrait of his companion the scholar-practitioner leader *homages* the work of his/her predecessors, professors, and former teachers. Wagner-Martin continues:

Because Picasso found Gertrude enigmatic and his own style somehow inadequate for the vision he had of her portrait, he could not finish the [portrait of her]. Telling Gertrude he could no longer "see" her, he painted out the head while he went to Spain for the summer. That autumn he painted a new head and face . . . to give the face unmatched eyes and surreal angle that distort its

otherwise realistic effect. When Picasso invited the Steins to see the painting, Gertrude was pleased: it was of the new. It expressed the same kind of difference she aimed for in her writing. (p. 73)

Often the protégé sees his/her mentor in an impossible-to-paint lighting. However, the light in which the mentor is perceived is a poetic one—simultaneously symbolic and actual. The mentor is the ideal—the unrealized goal. It matters not that the mentor has his or her own imperfections. The imperfections are human and natural—authentic. The design, the destination, the duty are what matters. Giving a face and eyes to the work at hand, realizing the impossible, going above and beyond the pattern that the mentor has presented and reaching out for a new and improved self, becoming a mentor—these things are the stuff of leadership. Scholarly practice, while not limited to, includes all of these. As Wagner-Martin describes, “Picasso’s painting of Gertrude became the icon of both her and his own ‘gloire.’ As she said, ‘For me, it is I . . . and it is the only reproduction of me, which is always I’” (p. 73).

It is with reflection on this portraiture that scholar-practitioner remembers his or her Gertrude Steins of life. Without these individuals, models and mentors, there would be no phenomenon of scholarly practice—there would be no reflective—no reflexive—self today. These individuals are the complex, hermetic, polyrhythmic doorways to that which the scholar–practitioner is (becoming). Without them there would be no self-portrait. Without these individuals there would be no new generation of researchers, there would be no new cohort of life-long learners.

Conclusion

Picasso is attributed with having said, “An idea is a point of departure and no more. As soon as you elaborate it, it becomes transformed by thought.” Aesthetically, art begins, not in the paint, not in the canvas, and not in the conceptualization brought about when the paint soils the canvas. It is born in the mind of the artist—before the artist ever commits the first brushstroke or mark of charcoal to the woven cloth. Art is therefore an apt metaphor for reflection in leadership. Like artistic endeavors, the scholar–practitioner finds a metaphor and meaning not only in the work of artists but in his or her own reflexive inquiry.

Through integrating, synthesizing, and evaluating one’s development through leadership practice, research and inquiry skills, academic accomplishments, growth, and mentoring/collegiality, the identity the scholar–practitioner emerges and continues to emerge. The six Picasso paintings presented these aspects of scholarly development frame the identity of the scholar–practitioner educational leader as an agent of social justice, equity, and care. The scholar–practitioner

educational leader manifests in the figures of classroom teachers and lecture hall instructors, college professors and school principals, university presidents and school district superintendents.

Scholar–practitioners hold an obligation to be reflective and reflexive leaders who consider not only the politics of the community but also the needs of the individuals that form that community. They shape and are shaped by the nexus of democracy and art, aesthetics and authenticity, experience and education. They are the catalysts of equity and ethics and the moral advocates of care and justice. As such it is necessary that they frame their epistemological and ontological understanding of leadership and learning through consideration of the context and lived experiences of those they serve. Their work is one of meaning making and mindfulness. They are the artist and their agency the art.

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Charles L. Lowery is an Assistant Professor of Educational Administration at Ohio University. He teaches courses in the principal preparation and doctoral programs with a focus on the leadership theory, organizational culture, and politics and policy in education. His major research interests include moral literacy in leadership and metaphors of leadership for P20 educational settings. As well, his study focuses on the identity of the scholar-practitioner educational leader as a moral agent of democracy, justice, care, and critique.