

# ❖ The Arts of War ❖

By

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A PROMINENT educator was inspecting the psychopathic ward of a large, modern hospital. Among the things she saw there were the facilities for treating patients by occupational therapy. She was particularly impressed by the quantity of art and craft equipment. As her guide explained the good results which art and craft therapy had produced, it occurred to her, "If this sort of activity has such a worth-while curative value, imagine how great a preventative value it must have! How much more economical it would be if, while an individual is still a normal member of society, he could be somehow stimulated to take an interest in the arts and crafts."

That value of the arts in helping to preserve man's emotional and mental balance has already been realized in thousands of cases. Many times, individuals are able to work out their recreational and expressive needs by themselves. And at Purdue University an extracurricular group project has, for the past three years, been in operation as part of our Union art program. There is no art school or department in the university and, until the inauguration of this program, there were few campus facilities for art to take a place as a means of recreation for the layman public. However, the chief concern of the Union art program has been the better balanced student, not the art-minded one.

Each year, several hundred students are newly attracted to use the leisure-time opportunities offered in this hobby project, the three Puttering Shop playrooms located in the basement of the Union Building. There they may work in wood, leather, and plastics, paint and draw, do postermaking, model in clay, carve stone, make and fire their own ceramics, construct models, and make charts that will be useful to them in their course work.

A classic with us is the remark of one student: "I started puttering because it was raining outside. Now I putter because I just can't help it." He realized that what he produced was not that mystery of the layman—great art. But it was certainly fun. It filled his personal need for recreation.

We have found that those who have had previous experience with the Puttering Shop art and craft media—except in grade and a few high school classes—are in the small minority. But once a university student has discarded the pseudo-sophisticated notion that such activity is either beneath his dignity or above

his head and has actually tried making something, his product invariably surprises and pleases him.

No registration is required nor is any fee charged those who want to use the shops. Instruction is free for the asking. Students help themselves to the materials stocked in our storeroom. Materials are free with the exceptions of leather, wood, and casting plaster, which are sold at cost. A nominal charge is made for firing pottery in our kiln. The students are, of course, expected to use the supplies and equipment in the shops, otherwise the maintenance of the workrooms would be pointless. However, they keep everything they make.

There are no classes, but weekly Pottery Making nights and Watercolor Painting Parties have been held this past year. There have also been, on certain evenings, meetings of those students interested in Invention and Industrial Design.

NO method of forcing interest in our activities has been employed. Neither is there a rule of compulsory attendance for those already interested. Such means are artificial stimuli and stifle fun. Dogmatic and uninspired public school teachers have already spoiled art for most people by administering it as if it were a medicine instead of a milkshake. More than any other human occupation, this work should be a voluntary attempt at self-expression.

Every creative thought and action is made in an effort to re-design some small part of an individual's physical, mental, and emotional life so that the whole will seem more functional to him and to others. In the Puttering Shops the average student does not go about achieving these ends consciously. But it has happened that a student, putting away his tools or pulling on his coat after an hour's work will realize a little of what has happened to him, and will comment, "I feel so much more like going to class than I did when I came in," or "Gosh! I'm not in the dumps any more. It's funny what this stuff does for you."

Occasionally we have helped individuals whose need for the therapy of recreation was, they realized, a desperate one. We have found, however, that the person who can be made to feel unself-conscious about his need—however much pronounced—plays most happily. To lose himself in an effort to paint as well as he can is enough. Or his need will be filled if, working without hope of profit or prestige, he makes a professional

looking wallet, a pair of gloves perhaps, a record album or a camera case or a desk lamp which he can use or which, to his additional gratification, someone may offer to buy.

"What sort of people use the shops?" is a question that is often asked. The answer is that they are ordinary folk and that from gridiron stars to future forsters there isn't a beret or a Van Dyck beard among them. The kind of dilettantism which it is our place to encourage is almost paradoxically red-blooded and wholesome. The more fashionable we can make arts and crafts among ordinary people, the less prestige it will have among "queers" and esthetes. They do not flourish in such an atmosphere.

In as highly technical a school as Purdue, there has been a real need for the mental and emotional playground the Puttering Shops provide. Our students have learned in their classrooms two things indispensable to those who would do creative work either professionally or as an avocation. They have learned to do orderly and qualified thinking. They have also learned to respect materials. Rare are the credit classes where they can learn to think of materials creatively in terms of human wants and needs. In the Puttering Shops they may learn this. Thus the accomplishments of their leisure time may later become of considerable professional value.

It is sometimes difficult for a man to continue in his leisure time to think in an orderly way and with direction. By "puttering" we do not mean to suggest a purposeless frittering away of one's time. If the student lets his capacities for concentration idle during his leisure time, his efficiency in his school routine will be seriously impaired. Conversely, his good playing habits will improve his working habits.

**A**LTHOUGH creative thinking is a process taking place within the individual mind it is not necessarily anti-social. This year, for example, a definitely social organization, The Purdue Student Art Guild, has been formed by a group of students whose interest in art developed mainly in the shops, in actual contact with arts and crafts materials. Their increasing experience at creative work resulted in a mounting curiosity about professional methods and accomplishments. Through the year they have considerably broadened their own enjoyment and understanding of all the arts, and have also helped to foster a wider campus appreciation for them. They have done this by means of a regular weekly series of broadcasts over the University station "to make lively, simple, and timely for you, the arts of man." They have presented a series of particularly outstanding fiction and non-fiction, foreign and domestic films in the Purdue Hall of Music. The purpose of the film series has been, "to increase local critical appreciation for the motion picture, most popular and widely understood of all the contemporary arts."

They have also taken an active interest in the constantly rotating exhibits which hang in the Union

Building. Volunteer committees have frequently hung Union exhibits, and made and distributed posters advertising them. They have prepared two exhibits of their own. The more recent one, "War Art," suggests the uses to which our graphic artists are being put at this time by government, industry, and press in dramatizing the nation's war effort. Upon the occasion of a recent University Convocation lecture on the war, it was given a preview showing at the Hall of Music. In two hours it attracted an audience of nearly a thousand persons. After display at the Union Building the exhibit is to tour rural areas near Lafayette, hanging in schools, churches, libraries, and civic clubs in communities where many people have never seen an art show before.

The Guild has just concluded a survey of student art opinion "to guide us next year in planning campus art activities for your enjoyment." The results of the survey indicate that a large percentage of the total number of students interviewed—about one tenth of the entire student body—have appreciated our past activities and have genuinely sympathetic suggestions to make for the future. They beg for "more education," "more advertising about your activities."

Because we believe that we reach the largest portion of our local audience by means of our Union exhibits, we intend to make a special effort to observe the student's exhibit preferences. The survey shows us that exhibitions of photography, architecture, the print media, the motion picture, and the cartoon will be most popular with our particular local audience. Shows of painting, dress design, industrial design, commercial art, sculpture, crafts, and theater arts follow in that order of preference. It has always seemed significant to us that those exhibits of other subjects than painting and sculpture, which are comparatively remote from daily life, arouse the most curiosity here.

**I**T must be kept in mind, however, that our objective is not primarily to establish a campus-wide participation in art experience of some kind, any more than to make artists of the psychopathic is the objective in institutions where art and craft work is encouraged. The objective is always Man. The value of the arts is invariably that it helps integrate personality by broadening mental and emotional, sensory and social experience. Art appreciation and production is also a valuable means of clarifying human attitudes. Art is not more important than Man. It can rise no higher than its source. It is important only insofar as it is useful to him, stimulating him to think more imaginatively and critically about the world he lives in.

The talents which produced the folk arts—those expressions of whole societies in past eras—are not dead. Incentives still exist for similar creative thinking and doing though they are not the same incentives which impelled our forefathers to create. Contemporary creation will be determined by new materials, new limits on working time, new social pressures. Neither have critical and appreciative faculties de-

clined. These are human qualities having little to do with race or time.

He who ridicules the arts because he has never proved them to be useful in his own life, discounts himself. Unsympathetic parents or teachers may have frustrated his desire. But our artists have not failed him. It is a characteristic of great art that it possesses a kind of appeal at once timeless and universal. That appeal exists to supply those basic human needs which change only in intensity from time to time. Among those needs the one for peace, order, inner harmony must be satisfied if what we know as man's sense of civilized living is to reach maturity. There is also the need to have in continual action an adaptive process that the world's chaos may be brought to some semblance of order for man, its parts rearranged into a more logical and harmonious whole. To do this is the job of the artist in society. All who have eyes to see and ears to hear will not remain unmoved before him.

A fine contemporary American painting or the good functional design of an object in mass production can be as exciting as a good movie, as much fun as a game of golf or bridge. We at the Union have proved that it isn't impossible to make it seem so for our campus audience. It is, of course, impossible to measure quantitatively the good we are doing, for its effect may never appear in a place and at a time it can be seen and evaluated by us.

No obvious curio of his behavior, a genuine art appreciation works subtly in many indirect ways as part and parcel of a man's daily life. It is an eminent example of a recreational interest absorbed into the constitution of a man's total education and experience. It may reveal itself in many curious ways. For instance, those principles of good proportion which we may point out to a student in a Union exhibition of sculpture may be transferred in his mind to apply to the problem of buying—more critically now than he would have bought before—an ashtray, a patterned necktie, or a suitcase.

The showing of a Walt Disney film accompanied by a mimeographed explanatory program at a Guild movie may sharpen an individual's appreciation for Disney's means of simplifying form to heighten expression. This knowledge may be recalled later when he studies the effectiveness of a political cartoon, an ad, or "the funnies" in his daily paper.

One of the greatest personal satisfactions resulting from the leisure-time study of art is the ability on the part of the individual to observe more sensitively the world he lives in. One proof that we have succeeded in helping a former university student to do this is indicated by a letter we have received from her from the eastern city where she now lives. "Last week," she writes, "coming back from the museum, the subway was jammed with afternoon symphony goers and it was the most wonderfully interesting car I've been on yet. I wanted to jump up and down and yell, I was having so much fun looking at the people and the colors and the patterns in the car—

and if it weren't for you it might have been just another subway and a crowd."

At Purdue she had been a well-adjusted, hard working student, but she had a great desire to do things with her hands and made time, finally, to become a frequent visitor to the shops. It was her interest in molding our materials into her ideas that resulted in an increased appreciation for professional production. And as her conversance with professional work developed she began to look at everything pictorially or in terms of whatever media held her interest at the time. The total result in her case was logical and typical of the wholesome interest which has developed in a number—though by no means all—of the students working in the shops.

**A**NOTHER advantage is in increased consumer intelligence, for who, after having personal experience working in materials, will not be more able than before to discriminate between good and poor ones, and between good and poor workmanship?

Whoever directs such a program as the one herein described, must himself be well fortified with patience and sympathy. He should not be easily discouraged, or those he seeks to help may fall heir to discouragement. He must be capable of great enthusiasm. No one can create happily in a listless atmosphere, and novices, so often unsure of their own abilities, are remarkably sensitive to the attitudes of their mentor. Above all, he who is trying to serve people in this way must not strain them to accept more than they are progressively capable of accepting. Just a little help occasionally is enough to keep them developing. Neither must his aim be to capture, "in one fell swoop," a large clientele. He must go after a fellow here and a fellow there. The real interest of a few begets the interest of a few more. The good news travels. The fearlessness to try something new begets itself. Patience breeds patience. Enthusiasm begets enthusiasm.

At the Purdue Union we are working to keep our art program young and supple, to keep its attractions always fresh. As in all the other opinion industries, the point of view which appears in the arts—always spokesmen of their times—will change to interpret the rapidly changing world. And art education, like all other educational programs, must be capable of modification if it is to survive and grow in the years immediately to come.

In no time more than in our own—this period of war, are the arts so critically judged. For when all but the minimum physical essentials of living are suspect, the arts—long regarded by the man on the street as luxuries of the few—are in grave peril of being totally ignored.

But although all civilians are expected to bend their fullest efforts to the nation's war effort, leisure will not entirely disappear. Man's need for play cannot be denied. Will his media for play then be frenzied

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Now that the close of the school year is at hand we find, in looking over our first year's newsletters, that we have accomplished what we set out to do. As a result, the newsletter will continue to vitalize our program each succeeding year.

Contrasting the health and physical education program in the St. Louis County Rural Schools today with what it was four years ago, emphasizes the many changes that have been wrought. We are proud of our children, our teachers, and our program. But while we feel gratified at the past and pleased with the present, we are not satisfied to remain where we are. The future must find us even more equipped to fill a worth-while place in the field of health and physical education. ❧

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## Building Strong Bodies

(Continued from page 445)

for Teachers and Supervisors of Physical Education and Health Education in Elementary and Secondary Schools, Federal Security Agency, U. S. Office of Education, Washington, D. C.

6. Material on nutrition—Nutrition Division, Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, Washington, D. C.

7. Material on community organization, Recreation Division, Office of Defense, Health and Welfare Service, Federal Security Agency, Washington, D. C.

8. Materials on fitness, Office of Defense, Health and Welfare Service, Federal Security Agency, 544 Pennsylvania Suburban Station Building, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

9. Children Bear the Promise of a Better World, Series of 12 pamphlets, Children's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington, D. C.

To insure the best results from a broad standpoint of health, we need, in addition to exercise, *adequate nutrition* and *regular medical examinations*—the latter will be harder and harder to get because of the dearth of medical men but we can always safeguard ourselves by never letting people exercise to the point of exhaustion and always stopping before the precipice. Dr. Dill of the Harvard Fatigue Laboratory, an outstanding expert in this field, encourages us by saying:

Parents frequently believe sports and games harmful to their children. Nature, however, has provided a safeguard; the competitive spirit that leads young men to play to the point of collapse is not developed until late adolescence. Young boys play until they become tired; when play becomes unpleasant, they rest. There is evidence for this in laboratory experiments: young boys running on the treadmill will stop before their blood lactate has reached high levels. It is the young man of high school and college age who pushes himself to extreme limits.

**W**E open the year short-handed and while this is going to be embarrassing to us from the standpoint of putting on an adequate program, we must be proud of the fact that the government has

seen fit to call upon so many of our people for services in this emergency.

The ultimate success of any nation at war for peace, depends upon the physical strength and endurance of its people. Whether in the front lines or on the assembly lines, whether in the homes of America or in our classrooms, our people must be physically fit; they must be strong and able to endure. We face a test today upon the outcome of which we have the answer to the question—"Can American Democracy Survive?" ❧

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## Arts of War

(Continued from page 471)

and directionless, or one that will provide some orderly variety from his vital professional routine? If it can be something to stabilize and rejuvenate him, he will surely be better fit to continue that routine. The arts have this actual and potential value for all of us, whether they function in some organized recreational project, or as an independently developed interest of our leisure.

Recreation has in common with the arts, the ability to re-create, to refresh, to construct and broaden human experience, and to furnish a means of relief from human tensions. The greater are those human tensions which dismalyze and disintegrate, the more important creative recreation becomes. Thus can the arts be put to good use in this time by helping to dissolve those strains, irritations, and hysterias which, always present in civilian life in normal times, are heightened by the dislocations which occur in the lives of all of us in wartime. For these reasons let us consider the arts not as "the arts of peace" only.

It is imperative too, that we look beyond current needs and try to visualize a future not too far distant when we must be prepared to do the great task of national, perhaps of world reconstruction. In that period the men who have been trained not only to obey orders and to read and recite from the textbooks of things that have been done, but who also *know how to dream of things that should be tried*, and act upon those dreams, will be the leaders of that time. They will be the foremost among our material resources. We at Purdue believe that we can do a small part in keeping such creative and appreciative abilities alert by supplying means for participation in the arts during the recreational hours of our students.

The ability to create is the chief means by which men can be distinguished from animals. The opportunity and encouragement given to man to respond imaginatively to original thought and action of power, is the chief means by which we can distinguish free men from slaves. These principles are, of course, given no credence among the leaders of totalitarian governments. But when we weigh them carefully, they are revealed to us as the basis for the democratic point of view. They are typical of our particular kind of civilization. They are to be cherished. To protect

them, we are now at war—for this is a cultural as well as a military war. Our offensive must be cultural as well as military, too.

"To promote the arts takes manpower, time, materials—all resources which, in themselves, will never stop a tank or down an enemy plane."\* But let us all beware that in discarding the "non-essentials" of wartime as we call them, we do not allow to perish those aspects of our democracy which define it.

"We burn the books, silence the violins, blackout line and color at our own peril. The soul of civilization will have died even though our cities are not scarred by bombs and our civilian bodies are left unscathed." What will our victory mean then? \*\*

Irwin Edman, "No Blackout for the Arts," *New York Times*, April, 1942.

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## Studies and Measures

(Continued from page 447)

this difference. But the weight of evidence at the present time favors the view that the return to normal is more speedy in trained persons than in the untrained.

The return to normal becomes slower with age (Massing).

### Pulse Tests of Fitness

The fact that the pulse rate behaves differently in trained and untrained persons renders it possible to distinguish the physically capable from the physically incapable by means of a study of the pulse. Of course the results of such study are not absolutely conclusive, as we already know. But we have decided to get along as well as we can with the pulse rate only and to try to make up for lack of apparatus by our scrupulous care in making observations and our cautiousness in interpretations.

Let me now present to you three pulse tests which experience seems to indicate may be of value in testing cardiovascular fitness.

1. The pulse-ratio test as recently modified by Tuttle and Dickinson, 1938. The standard exercise is that of stool mounting. The stool is 13 in. high. The subject sits in such proximity to the stool that when he rises he is in a position to begin the work. As soon as he rises he proceeds to work as follows: At the count 1, the left foot (if the subject is right handed) is placed upon the stool, at 2 the right foot is placed upon the stool also. At 3 the left foot is placed upon the floor; at 4 the right foot also is placed upon the floor. This is a complete cycle. These cycles recur at the rate of 40 to the minute until 40 cycles have been performed and one minute has elapsed. Immediately after the 4th count of the 40th cycle, the subject sits down and at once his pulse is taken for 2 minutes. The number of beats in 2 minutes divided by the rate of the resting pulse preceding the exercise is the pulse ratio.

In the interests of a uniform procedure, the subject may be given a few practice trials before the actual test.

He should also be instructed to assume exactly the same posture on reaching the top of the stool, and his stance on the floor should be uniform; he should keep his elbows bent at a right angle and held against the sides of the body but not stiffly.

It may be of interest to the observer to know the time required for the pulse to reach normal. This can be found by recording the pulse at  $\frac{1}{2}$  minute intervals following the exercise. (Tuttle, 1931, Tuttle and Dickinson, 1938.)

The reliability coefficient has been determined by Henry and Farmer, 1938, to be .82.

2. The Russian test, which I saw being applied to dancers at the Physical Education Institute in Leningrad. I quote "I had been urged to attend the dancing class of Gorlova because there I would see medical control in operation. This dance series (plastic and gymnastic) is strenuous and the class (7 men and 17 women) is in its first year in the dancing school, hence the presence of a doctor and the routine of pulse taking. . . .

"The doctor gives out a pink slip of paper and a pencil to each member of the class. He then takes his watch and calls the beginning and the end of a period of 10 seconds, each member of the class counting his own pulse meanwhile. Then this is entered by each on his own pink slip. This procedure is repeated at intervals during the dance, the slips and pencils being placed during the intervals on the floor of the stage within easy reach of the students standing on the floor of the dance hall. One woman wore continuously a Riva Rocci (blood pressure) cuff for special examinations and some others squeezed a dynamometer at stated intervals. The smallest woman in the class left her pulse record where I could read it. It ran 14 before, then 16, 25, 22, 17, 24 for 10 seconds during the dance." (Dawson: *Soviet Samples*, 1938, pp. 495-6.) This last would correspond to rates per minute of 84-96, 150, 132, 102, 144.

3. The third test does not quite measure up to the simplicity of the other two, for it requires a manometer. Moreover, this is a test which I cannot recommend except for experiment. You may find it useful or you may not. It is the so-called "40 mm. test, fatigue test," or "endurance test" and is performed as follows: Empty the lungs as completely as possible; fill the lungs fully but without great distension; blow against the column of mercury, raise it to 40 mm. and keep it there as long as possible. The duration of the effort is observed and also the pulse rate counted for periods of 5" throughout the effort. Like the Schneider test (1920), this test was originally devised to determine the condition of aviators and was used with great satisfaction by the Royal Air Force in the first World War. Of all their respiratory and circulatory tests, this one proved the most delicate. The fit pilot usually holds for about 66 sec.; the minimum allowed is 45 sec. If he cannot hold for 45 sec. he is sure to be found wanting on medical grounds. During the effort the pulse either rises gradually to 96 or 108 depending upon the time the breath is held or it rises

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