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Reflective Materials and the Use of Glitter in Art Therapy

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A Thesis
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy
Notre Dame de Namur University

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December 2009
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Abstract

This paper hypothesizes that glitter is an important media in art therapy. This research asked the question, what is the significance and clinical application of glitter in art therapy? Glitter is a commonly used art material and research on the subject matter is absent. The method used was survey research with quantitative and qualitative questions. Seven hundred and fifty eight members of the American Art Therapy Association completed the survey. Glitter has significant meaning in reference to Cathy Moon's theory of materiality, and can be used to bring light to client art work.
Chapter 1: Problem Statement

Art Therapy and Materials

Art Materials are significant to the practice of art therapy because they are the basic tool that are used to allow clients to express themselves. As Dalley (1984) states, "In simple terms, art therapy is the use of art and other visual media in a therapeutic treatment setting" (p.xii). In the art therapy literature, there are many theories that discuss the use of art materials, yet there is a lack of research about glitter.

Judith Rubin (1978), a pioneer of art therapy states that the selection of art materials "alone can serve as an evaluative tool" (p.17). Pat Allen states that, "a lot of fear and resistance gets played out in our attitude toward materials. They can become freighted with intense meaning"(Allen, 1995, p.14). Rubin describes four contributing factors to formulating an evaluative tool for the selection of art materials, including the following: "awareness of stimuli in the environment; curiosity; energy level; and motivation to explore and get involved with a particular medium" (Rubin, 1978, p.17). Rubin's four factors are not categorized for the purpose of describing the use of a material, rather for the mere action of selecting the material.

Lusebrink (1990) describes material selection on a continuum, where at one extreme the client simply takes the closest material to them, and on the other end there is a, "multileveled response to a particular medium which can fulfill the individual's need for expression at that particular time" (Lusebrink, 1990, p. 83). Media can serve as a tool for "experience, self-expression, alternate forms of communication, decision making, and release of emotional energies."(Lusebrink, 1990, p. 85). Thus, the selection of a media and the use of the material can be looked at to provide insight into the client experience.
Barlow, Shupe, and Niswander (1977) propose that control of the media reflects control of oneself and the environment (Lusebrink, 1990). Dorris Arrington (2001), in her book, Home is Where the Art Is, includes a visual scale (see Table 1) of Lusebrink’s continuum from most controlled to least controlled.

*Table 1 Lusebrink’s Media Continuum*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most Controlled</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Lead Pencils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Colored Pencils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Felt Markers (thin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Crayolas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Collage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Felt Markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Oil Pastels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Soft Plasticene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Water Colors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) Wet Clay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least Controlled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

An example of a media that would be the most controlled is a pen, as compared to the least controlled, wet clay. All of the other materials fit somewhere in-between those two extremes, with crayons and oil pastels in the middle range. According to Lusebrink (1990), the control that any given art material can provide can "extend and increase sensory and integrative experiences of the client and provide a learning experience of imposing order on complex information" (p. 85). Specific materials are mentioned on this continuum, yet there are other art materials that are not mentioned, such as felt, pipe cleaners, acrylic paint, and glitter.
Cathy Moon has created a social constructivist theory of materiality which "assumes that while a material has its own unique physical reality, it's significance and meaning is the result of a complex interplay of historical, social and cultural contexts" (as cited in Moon, *Materials and Media in Art Therapy*, 2008, section 5, para 1). The client and therapist are able to come to a "negotiated meaning" of the art material. Each art material can be assessed differently given each individual's past, present, and future experience with the material. This is a mutli-layered analysis of materials, as it addresses many different levels of understanding; aesthetic preference, physical and sensual characteristics, personal associations, associated language, function and utility, evidence in popular culture, and the socio-cultural-historical relevance.

Glitter is an understudied art material and assessing glitter using Moon's (2008) framework will serve to, "determine the particular significance and importance of that material in a particular situation for a specific individual" (section 5, para. 1).

**History of Reflective Materials**

Glitter is a modern day artistic media that can be investigated for its reflective properties and traced to the use of metals, particularly gold leaf paint, in art history. (Metal, gold leaf paint, and glitter can all be classified for the purposes of this paper, as reflective media.)

Glitter is made of small pieces of shiny material (plastic, or metallic foils). For the purpose of this paper, reflective materials are a genre of art materials that reflect light back at the viewer, creating a shine, glimmer, glitter, or sparkle. Material and media are synonymous and singular, and materials and medium are synonymous and plural.

Glitter shares the quality of gold-leaf paint; both have illuminating properties of the art or visual object. Illumination can be viewed in artwork throughout time. In art history, reflective art materials were used in similar ways throughout cultures to convey meaning. For
example. Larmer (2009) states, "Among the first were the Inca, who saw the perpetually lustrous metal as the "sweat of the sun" (p. 41 ), and "the symbol for gold is Au from the Latin aurum meaning 'shining dawn'" (Cramb, n.d.). In the various cultures that used reflective materials, similar properties can be seen. Reflective materials were used to express spirituality, wealth, regality, and myth as is evidenced in Ancient Egypt (Wilkinson, 1984; Janson, 1997); the art genre known as the Illuminated Manuscripts (Wilson, 1994; Brown, 1994; Barstow, Cohen and Kren, 1997); and the modern artist Gustav Klimt (Nebehay, 2008; Hughes 2008).

Need for Study

As previously stated, the use of reflective materials in Egyptian and European art history, convey specific meaning, including myth, spirituality, and regality. Glitter is a relatively inexpensive art media with reflective properties. However, there is no known research or literature of its clinical application in art therapy. The need for this study is to give language to a surreal and ethereal substance, that may 'make people happy' (Reid 2007; Rice, 2008).

This study is to support the belief that art can create understanding and that physically bringing light to a person's experience (as in applying glitter to art work) aids in and growth. The potential benefits of the study are to provide an understanding of the significance of reflective material within client artwork. In addition, it will provide reference for communication about client artwork that has glitter in it. It gives a voice to the media itself; as well as allows art therapists and clients to discuss the use of the media, and possibly to use the media as a therapeutic tool, for providing understanding or transcendence in client's art-work. This research study hypothesizes that glitter has significance in art therapy. The study also
seeks to answer the question: What is the meaning and clinical application of glitter in art therapy?
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Reflective materials, such as metals and gold leaf paint have been used in various cultures (e.g. Egyptian, Western European, Byzantine, Asian, and African) as well by various artists such as Gustav Klimt (e.g. Michaelangelo, and Eastern European Icon Painters). It appears that such reflective materials convey various meanings, including, spirituality, regality, transcendence, and importance. The significance and meaning of art materials is also explored in the field of art therapy using psychological theories of materiality. However, it is interesting to note that glitter, which has reflective properties is not discussed in the continuum of art materials, from most controlled to least controlled (Lusebrink, 1990; Arrington, 2001). Additionally, there is little research in art therapy on the meaning or application of glitter. This literature review provides an understanding of reflective materials and their use in Ancient Egyptian Art and Tombs, Eastern and Western European Illuminated Manuscripts, and the modern art of Gustav Klimt. Next, the literature review, examines the significance of art materials in art therapy in light of theories of materiality (Moon, 2008).

Metals

A substance that was used in artwork that has reflective properties is metal. Lindsley (1998) states, "until humans learned to work with metal, our tools structures, weapons, and decorative objects were all made from mineral, animal, or vegetable materials" (p. 1). In Out of the Fiery Furnace: A History of Metals, Raymond (1984) chronicles the development and discovery of metals throughout the world, in a field of study known as metallurgy, stating, "very early in the history of pottery, metallic ores had come into use for decoration" (p.14). This was accidentally discovered because the civilizations that made metals would fire their pottery and found that in heating some of the raw minerals, metal would come out of it. This process was alchemic in nature. Both pottery and metals appear at about the same time in the archaeological record, and it is now thought possible "that the use of metallic ores to produce
colored patterns on pots, and the heat and fumes in the kiln, may have combined to create conditions for the accidental smelting of metals" (Raymond, 1984, p. 13). The emergence of metals in artwork is separated from metals being used for everyday use, as in tools, and weapons. While there are hundreds of applications for metals that are known in art history, the most prominent of all metals in history is gold.

**Gold**

The National Geographic (2009) issue entitled, *Gold: The True Cost of a Global Obsession*, discusses the impact that gold has had on humanity. The Inca were the first to find gold, and believed it to be the 'sweat of the sun'. Historically, the Spanish went on conquests and founded the New World because of their lust for gold (Larmer, 2009). The importance of gold can be seen from the statement, "for thousands of years the desire to possess gold has driven people to extremes, fueling wars and conquests, girding empires and currencies, leveling mountains and forests" (Larmer, 2009, p. 42). Gold, whose chemical symbol Au, means "shining dawn" in its Latin root (Cramb, n.d.); is known for its beauty and shine. The Pharaohs insisted on being buried in what they called the 'flesh of the gods' (Raymond, 1984). The forty-niners built the American West in pursuit of gold, and the financiers made gold the bedrock of the United States society, following Sir Isaac Newton's advice. (Larmer, 2009) It is evident that gold held such strong significance for entire civilizations, and that it served as the inspiration to create and conquer. Larmer (2009) states, "Nearly every society through the ages has invested gold with an almost mythological power" (p. 42). Peter L. Bernstein (as cited in Larmer, 2009), author of *The Power of Gold: The History of an Obsession*, states that "Gold has always had this kind of magic... But it's never been clear if we have gold-or gold has us" (p. 41).

It is interesting to study the use of such a powerful material in art history, and to look
at its use in three prominent areas that were chosen because of the depth and breadth of description and example. Reflective media will be discussed as related to, Ancient Egypt, The Illuminated Manuscripts, and the modern artist Gustav Klimt.

**Egypt**

Ancient Egypt dates from 5,000 B.C.-30 B.C. and as early as the beginning of the Predynastic Period circa 5000 B.C., the ancient Egyptians had discovered the use of copper, gold, silver, and lead (Wilkinson, 1994). Raymond (1984) discusses the use of copper in Egypt in reference to a statue that, "has survived for more than three thousand years beneath a rocky hillside near the Valley of the Kings at Luxor, on the Nile" (p. 31). Ancient Egypt has the most profound symbolism behind the use of their reflective substances. Wilkinson (1994) states that gold; "regarded as a divine metal on account of its color and brightness (symbolic of the sun) and its un-tarnishing nature (symbolic of eternal life)" (p. 98), was used to depict images of the Sun God Re. The afterlife was an integral part of Egyptian understanding and the finest entombments and mummies were decorated with solid gold, or gilded with layers of gold to pay homage to the divinity of the after life body, and it was believed that skin turned to gold when a person was deceased. (Wilkinson, 1994). Wilkinson states:

In royal tombs of the new kingdom, the kings burial chamber-known as the house of gold, was painted with a gold background. While the name and color of the chamber might seem to suggest the riches of the kings burial, the symbolic significance probably relates to the concepts of imperishability and after life associated with the divine metal. (p. 125)

The ancient Egyptians also believed that,

The flesh of all of the gods descended from the Sun God Re made of gold, and images of the deities were formed from this substance in many cases. The sah or after life 'body' of
the ancient Egyptian was also thought to be of divine nature with shining golden skin, and the masks of the finest mummies were of gold" (Wilkinson, 1984, p. 98).

Silver was highly regarded and also had divine associations, for the "bones of the gods were said to be made of the metal, and was used as a symbol of the moon" (Wilkinson, 1984, p.99). Another substance, Lapis Lazuli, which is a dark blue stone with tiny golden speckles, was used because of its association with heaven. (Wilkinson, 1984) Here, it is shown that the ancient Egyptians used reflective materials in order to pay homage to their deities, and those who were deceased, and reflective materials were key in these depictions. Figure 1 is an image of one of the most famous Egyptian artifacts that was created to pay homage to King Tutankhamen, who died at the age of eighteen. This is an image of his coffin located inside of his burial chamber.

![Figure 1 King Tutankhamen Sarcophagus](image)

This is the most striking and powerful usage of a reflective material, and is the most popular image that is associated with Egyptian culture. Janson (1991) explains that King Tutankhamen's grave was one of the few to remain untouched by grave robbers until modern times. "The sheer material value of the tomb (Tutankhamen's gold coffin alone weighs 250
pounds), which makes it understandable that grave robbing has been practiced in Egypt ever since the Old Kingdom" (Janson, 1991, p. 77).

In, *History of Art*, Janson (1997) describes the monetary value of gold, as well as the importance of the archaeological discovery of King Tutankhamen tomb. This can be linked with Bernstein's, Power of Gold, showing that the most iconic figure from Ancient Egypt was not because of his life span, or quality of his rule, but the wealth of his burial chamber, and the amount of gold that it contained.

**Illuminated Manuscripts**

An illuminated manuscript is a handwritten book that is embellished with brilliant inks and dyes (especially silver and gold). The addition of gold and silver added to the experience of reading a book because the ink glows from the page. Different cultures created Illuminated Manuscripts and many were created in the monasteries during the middle-ages (Brown, 1994). Illuminated Manuscripts can be found throughout the cultures of Western Europe, Islam, Eastern Europe, and Asia. The concept of the illuminated book was not used exclusively in religious context; however religion played such a dominating role that a large portion of works pertain to religion. In addition the religious institutions had enough money to afford the expensive materials to commission works. These books were decorative and "kept the images and idea of civilizations alive" (Wilson, 1994, p. 11 ). Illuminated manuscripts were also used to compile images of "real and imaginary animals", in what is known as a bestiary (Wilson, 1994, p. 59).

The production of an illuminated manuscript could take several years to create, thus an illuminated book was one of the most important objects that a person could own (Wilson, 1994). The illuminated manuscripts have been preserved well, and can be found as collections
in many contemporary museums such as the J. Paul Getty Museum. The book published to show the collection of their Illuminated Manuscripts, Masterpieces of the J. Paul Getty Museum, outlines the illuminated texts and their adjacent stories. The meaning and the process vary greatly depending on the culture, and despite the differences all cultures used gold, silver, and gemstones to decorate the manuscripts, conveying a message that the spiritual texts were important. The manuscript makers expressed this importance by using reflective, illuminating materials. The decorative nature of the pages, as well as the religious iconography can be seen in Figures 2 and 3.

*Figure 2 Hebrew Bible*
Figure 2 is an image from the book of Genesis from the Old Testament, which was created in France in the fifteenth century. The Hebrew for "In the Beginning" is written entirely in gold on this page and gold decorates the page (Wilson, 1994). In Figure 3, there is a similar trend seen in this page of the Koran, written a century earlier. The area that has the most gold is the title area. According to the Muslims, the Koran is the "actual words of God speaking, which are treated as sacred objects, and copying the book of the Koran using gold will earn heavenly reward" (Wilson, 1994, p.19). These images show that two completely different cultures are using the same technique to express spiritual and religious meaning in their respective sacred scriptures.

The manuscript in Figure 4, was created in Northeastern Spain in 1290. It is the Vidal
Mayor, which according to Barstow, Cohen & Kren (1997) "was a new code of law that King James I of Aragon commissioned, determined to make his law the most proficient, and successful" (p. 57). The Vidal Mayor, shows clearly in word and image, that the king's law was applicable "to all the inhabitants of his realm" (Barstow, Cohen & Kren, 1997, p. 57). One can see the use of gold that surrounds the figures. The depictions in this particular image are dealing with issues of finance and credit, and the gold around all of the images indicates that this is happening within the royal courts, giving the page a sense of importance, and regality.

![Figure 4 Vidal Mayor](image)

The Treasure Binding (Figure 5) is a gilt silver and jeweled cover on a thirteenth century German manuscript. Gemstones, gold, and other metals are used in this, Treasure Binding (Figure 5), to indicate the importance of the book. Wilson states that this book most
likely belonged to a bishop, and the figures are depicting the Gospel writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John (1994). From the previous examples of the Illuminated Manuscripts, the use of reflective materials enhanced the experience of book reading, was for wealthier members of society, and expressed spirituality and regality.

![Figure 5 Treasure Binding](image)

*Figure 5 Treasure Binding*

A piece of art such as the Treasure Binding would be known as multi-media artwork to contemporary artists. Gustav Klimt is the most prominent contemporary artist who used gold leaf paint in his works that were associated with spirituality, and his works in Modern Art are also known as multi-media pieces of art.
**Gustav Klimt**

Gustav Klimt is a modern artist who "gravitated to depicting the female form, often taking biblical or mythological subjects as his starting point" (Hughes, 2008, paragraph 9). Klimt incorporates "traditional and modern, figurative and non-figurative" (www.iklimt.com). Klimt lived from 1862-1918, and his use of gold-leaf in his artwork turned his works into 'multimedia' rather than 'straight' paintings. This was provocative and cutting edge at the time and many critics considered his art a craft, as opposed to fine art. Supporters of his work described his works as a "shimmering waterfall of gold-leaf exuberance" (Hughes, 2008, paragraph 1). Klimt did not express reasons for choosing gold leaf paint, during the time period of his work, known as the *Golden Phase* (Nebehay, 1992). Klimt discusses his lack of verbal description as follows:

I have the gift of neither the spoken nor the written word, especially if I have to say something about myself or my work. Whoever wants to know something about me -as an artist, the only notable thing- ought to look carefully at my pictures and try and see in them what I am and what I want to do (Nebehay, 1992, p. 284).

Klimt's, *Portrait of Adele Bloch Bauer* (Figure 6), was commissioned by a Swiss sugar magnate, who was a fan of Klimt, and the husband of the painting's subject. Klimt's graphics are done exclusively in gold and took three years to create. To date this is the third most expensive painting, in the world and sold in 2006 for $135 million; and is the greatest of Klimt's work from his 'Golden Period' (www.stylecrave.com). The ornamentation incorporates elements borrowed from Egyptian and Mycenaean art, and is an example of his use of myth.
The Kiss (Figure 7), Pallas Athene (Figure 8), and Judith (Figure 9) are other prime examples of Klimt's use of gold and reflective materials to portray mythological, spiritual, and regal subject matter. It is important to note that his use of reflective materials to create ephemeral spiritual, mythic, and powerful imagery corresponds with the same use of reflective materials from Ancient Egypt and the Illuminated Manuscripts.
Figure 7 The Kiss 1907 (The transforming power of love and art)

Figure 8 Pallas Athene 1898 (description of royalty and war)
Ancient Glitter: Mica

A substance that has a glittering effect is the mineral known as Mica. The word comes from the Latin word Micare which means to 'shine or gliter'" (Olson, n.d). Evidence exists of the use of mica as far back as the earliest civilizations; in the Nile Valley and India prior to 2000 B.C. (Olson, n.d.). There is also evidence that the Romans used this substance 'to impart a shining whiteness' on the floor of the Circus Maximus, and "the American Indians of the southern Appalachians are known to have used mica in ornamentation at grave sites in the 14th century"(Olson, n.d.) Here it is evidenced that this naturally occurring substance was used to decorate for large events that would have taken place at the Circus Maximus, and was used in funerary rites with Native Americans, in the same way gold was used in Ancient
Egypt for funerary rites. Having discussed uses of reflective materials in art history sets a foundation to begin to look at the use of similar materials in art therapy.

**Art Therapy and Materials**

Art materials have value in art therapy. Dalley (1984) states, "In simple terms, art therapy is the use of art and other visual media in a therapeutic treatment setting" (p.xii). Clients are taught to use new materials, or use familiar materials "to express and work through the issues and concerns that have brought him or her into therapy" (Case & Dalley, 1992, p. 2). A person may respond in different ways to a given material, "depending on his/her awareness of stimuli in the environment, curiosity, energy level and the motivation to explore and get involved with a particular medium" (Rubin, 1978, p. 57). These four parts are not describing the use of the material, but the mere action of selecting the material, which can determine the significance, worth, and quality of a given material.

Lusebrink (1990) describes material selection on a continuum (refer to Table 1), where at one extreme the client simply takes the closest material to them, and on the other end there is "multileveled response to a particular medium which can fulfill the individual's need for expression at that particular time" (Lusebrink, 1990, p. 83). Media can serve as a tool for "experience, self-expression, alternate forms of communication, decision making, and release of emotional energies"(Lusebrink, 1990, p.85).

"Barlow, Sharpe, and Niswander (1977) propose that control of the media reflects control of oneself and the environment. (Lusebrink, 1990, p. 85). Lusebrink describes the continuum: "If an individual needs to have control over the medium and his/her expression, it is most likely that a material will be chosen that will provide this control" (Lusebrink. 1990, p. 83). An example of a media that would be the most controlled would be a pen, and least
controlled would be wet clay. All other materials fit somewhere in between those two extremes, with crayons and oil pastels right around the middle range. The control that a given art material can provide can "extend and increase sensory and integrative experiences of the client and provide a learning experience of imposing order on complex information" (Lusebrink, 1990, p. 85). Dorris Arrington (2001), in her book, *Home is Where the Art Is*, includes a visual scale (Table 1) of Lusebrink's continuum from most controlled to least controlled art material. This complex information is the client's expression and experience of their inner and outer life.

There is a developmental theory of materiality where an "art therapist's goal is to offer material choices that are consistent with the developmental level and physical and cognitive capabilities of the client" (Aach-Feldman and Kunkle-Miller, 2001; Rubin, 1978; Wilson, 1977) (as cited in Moon, 2008, section 1, paragraph 1).

The psychodynamic theory of materiality states that materials are linked to levels of psychological functioning, and are on a scale from fluid vs. resistive depending on particular structural qualities inherent in each material. Moon states, "Because art materials provide a tangible form of emotional sustenance, they are often viewed as a metaphor for food" (Moon, 2008, section 3, paragraph 2). The potential implication of this in relation to transference issues is that the therapist may be seen as the parent/therapist who is beneficent or withholding, who "feeds" the clients materials that are good, nurturing, and plentiful, or bad, unsafe, and insufficient (Beaver, 1998; Betensky, 1973; Schaverien, 1992; Rubin, 1984; Wadeson, 1986, 1995) (as cited in Moon, section 3 paragraph 2).

The Systems Theory of Materiality - The Expressive Therapies Continuum (Kagin & Lusebrink, 1978; Lusebrink, 1990, 1992; Lusebrink et al., 1982) provides a systems approach
to understanding the relationship between clients and materials or media. It correlates materials and media relationship with a sequence in developmental processing and expression. The model proposes four levels, the first three of which are presented as continuums: the kinesthetic/sensory level, the perceptual/affective level, and the cognitive/symbolic level. (Moon, *Materials and Media*, Section 4, paragraph 1). Table 2 describes the continuum, and the final level can be an interplay of the three previous continuums classified in Table 2 as Creative.

**Table 2 Expressive Therapies Continuum**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kinesthetic</th>
<th>Sensory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceptual</td>
<td>Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>Symbolic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Creative*

The Relational Theory of Materiality has many different examples such as, Mala Betensky who describes materials as "live participants in the process of self-expression, acting upon the art makers" (Lusebrink et. al., 1982, p. 112); that is, each material has inherent structural properties that give it a potency of its own, and make it appealing or repellent to the art maker. Betensky (1973) hypothesizes that the structure of a material resonates with the structural quality of the artist's mental experience. Thus, there is a dynamic process between materials, inner mental experience, and the external world.

Don Seiden (200 l) views materials from a relational perspective in which artist and materials are in a complex dynamic. The artist manipulates and shapes the material, but the material can come to be experienced as an extension of the self or even as something that "speaks back," makes its own demands, and influences the artist. (Moon, personal communication, 2009). Clients are in a continual cycle of interpersonal relationship with art
materials.

According to Dalley (1987), "Art materials are enormously versatile, and yet each has particular therapeutic properties" (p. 4). These are largely personalized experiences between the client and the therapist, and the introduction (of art materials) is an intuitive and sensitive one, "made by the therapist through personal familiarity of working with these media and therefore knowledge of their potential effect ... the art therapist, as artist, can facilitate through her own understanding of the art process by offering a new means of exploration." (Dalley, 1987, p.4).

The meaning of art materials is important on many levels. In a phone interview with Cathy Moon (personal communication, 2009) she discussed the lack of literature about specific materials being an influence that caused her to create her own theory of materiality. She presented this work at a lecture at the NorCATA, (Northern California Art Therapy Association), conference in the summer of 2008 entitled From Hair to Footwear: A Contemporary perspective on Materials and Media in Art Therapy. Her lecture provides the following categories as a way to discuss materials, and provides a contemporary framework to discuss glitter:

1) Aesthetic Negotiated Materials - Values or interest are socially constructed
2) Physical Sensual- Direct Experience with the feeling of the material
3) Personal Association- specific time and place evoked
4) Association and Language- negative and positive connotations
5) Function/Utility- Found objects and their function
6) Evidence in Popular Culture
7) Social Cultural Historical Relevance - Changes over time
A therapist can take a particular material and look at it in these seven ways find the "negotiated meaning" of the material, which is an analysis of all of the factors (historical, cultural, associated language etc.) to find significance for any art material. All of the separate meanings combined is a "negotiation" between multiple perspectives

**Caution with Art Materials**

Art therapists need be sensitive to the types of media that are offered because clients may take the media to extremes, if they themselves are feeling extreme, such as throwing paint on the walls, or eating art materials. In many cases the client is experiencing a relationship with the media that either brings out anxiety, or their experience of anxiety is acted out upon the art materials (Case & Daley, 1992, p.57). Setting limits enables the anxiety to be contained. Pat Allen states, "a lot of fear and resistance gets played out in our attitude toward materials. They can become freighted with intense meaning"(Allen, 1995, p. 15).

While there are great benefits to providing clients with art materials, new or familiar, there are also certain limitations that need be mentioned because of the significant risk that may occur when the wrong choice of art materials is made, such as, the activity becomes extremely messy, with water, sand, or paint spilling and running everywhere; the client uses the whole bag of clay; defacement of the tables occurs; the client ingests the paint or mixes all materials together (Case & Daley, 1992, p.57). Kramer (1975) discusses the importance of using caution with materials;

As Therapists we are more accustomed to failure than to success. We are used to seeing paintings of volcanoes become a mass of red and black because explosive feelings were not depicted but acted out. We see carvings end up as pieces of wood because the act of cutting unchains aggressive drives that cannot be confined within a given shape. Before
our eyes, drawings turn into angle of half-erased lines because ambivalence paralyses the
capacity for making decisions (p. 57).
Therefore, setting limits and having an inherent understanding of each art material is vital.
Case and Dalley (1992) state, "These kinds of issues need to be thought about and very soon
become second nature to the art therapist already familiar with the various properties of art
materials," (p. 23). It is important for art therapists to study and experience art materials
personally in order to understand their properties and use.

Knowledge of when to introduce a particular medium is also important in this
communication. Art materials are enormously versatile, and yet each has particular
therapeutic properties. The introduction of paint, sand or clay at a specific point in therapy
may be crucial.

Many times one hears of a situation where a patient is 'stuck' in the sense of not making
any significant change, and when offered another medium immediately becomes in touch
with deeper feelings which were previously buried. This introduction is an intuitive and
sensitive one made by the therapist Therefore, as art therapists we must address ourselves
to the whole art process (Dalley, 1987, p. 4).

It is interesting that on one hand Case and Dalley mention that the selection of the
materials is such an important sensitive and delicate choice, and a few paragraphs later it
states, "It is not necessary to list all the types of materials that will be available in an art
therapy room" (Case & Dalley, 1992, p. 105). It is necessary to think about all of the art
materials, and to think given the depths of meaning previously mentioned, one must be
informed about the implications of what all materials mean to the client and to the therapist. A
therapist must have understanding about the particular media that he/she chooses to work
with. The media that are specifically talked about are ... "clay, felt tips, paint and finger paints" (Case & Dalley, 1992, p.105), and these are the only four case studies found on any given material, Case & Dalley (1992) continue:

... artists considering training will already have experienced the different qualities of various mediums making their own art work and will be familiar with the usual range available for client's use. Each art therapist will make available as wide a choice as is possible, depending on the environment and resources. (p. 105)

It is interesting to note that in all of the literature addressing art materials in art therapy, glitter was not discussed.

**Glitter**

Glitter is a medium that has that same reflective property that metal, and mica offered to our ancestors. It has a variety of applications, and can be found within glues, and crayons. Glitter can be bought loose in tubes and jars, and comes in a variety of colors, shapes, and textures. Glitter was first produced in 1934, by Henry Ruschmann. His company, Meadowbrook Inventions, is the leading supplier of glitter to date. ([www.meadowbrookglitter.com](http://www.meadowbrookglitter.com)). Another world supplier of glitter is the Art Institute of Glitter, which is located in Arizona.

The Webster's dictionary definition of glitter is: "a) to shine by reflection with many small flashes of brilliant light b): to shine with strong emotion c) to be brilliantly attractive, lavish, or spectacular ; also : to be superficially attractive or exciting" (2004, p. ? ) The Encarta World English Dictionary expands the definition further, "1) to look bright or expressive 2) to exhibit liveliness and charm 3) to be characterized by the presence of somebody or something glamorous. Glitter can be used as a noun or as a verb. Other words
found in the thesaurus are gleam (verb), sparkle (noun), tinsel (noun), dazzle (noun), twinkle (verb), and glisten (verb)” (2004). The definitions of the word glitter provide insight into the meaning of the material.

**Glitter in Art Therapy**

Glitter is a material that is, depending on the client population, used as an art material in the practice of art therapy. It is a material that has meaning and is often times not taken seriously because of its childlike nature but it seems to make clients happy, as in the case of a woman named Amy Rice (2008) who was part of a fine arts art therapy program at a Community Mental Health facility, S.P.A.N. Rice has an art therapy blog, and one entry tells the story of her refusing to provide any art materials that seemed childish. Rice "took away the Crayola markers, the wax crayons, the painted macaroni noodles, the latch hook kits, the coloring pages, and the glitter" (Rice, 2008, para 3). She wouldn't provide glitter because she was an advocate for finer art materials in the art therapy room. She worked with clients for two years using finer art materials so as not to "infantilize" the people who have mental disorders and cognitive impairment, since they experience judgment based on their development and the stereotype of being "lower functioning" individuals throughout their daily lives. She took her art therapy group to an art show that had an art piece entirely made out of glitter and there one of clients said using a sad tone, "We used to have glitter at our program" (para. 5). Rice reports changing her opinion of glitter and other childlike material by stating, "My intentions had been good, but in limiting their access to glitter, by declaring what were adult supplies and what was childish, I had taken away a choice, and as adult artists they deserved to be able to choose glitter" (Rice, 2008, para 5).

A reference to glitter was made in the Washington Post (2007), as well. The title of the
article was Brush on Paint, Swirl in Some Glitter, And Suddenly Everything Looks Better. In this article a child battling cancer says to her art therapist, "Pink Glitter Please", where the journalist comments that for just a half hour while working with art therapist, Heather Stemas, this little girl could "forget how bad she felt." The journalist makes reference to glitter making "Everything Look Better", but does not go on to say anything more (Reid, 2007).

One final example is an art therapist, Wanda Sawicki who states, "if participants are feeling down, she will introduce neon paint and glitter to lift the mood," going further to say that "the glitter bottles go like crazy at Wellspring" (Laidler, 2004, para. 2). Sawicki works with cancer patients at the Wellspring London and Region Centre and again it states that glitter has the potential to lift mood, in the same way that Reid's article (2007) said that glitter made the little girl, "forget how bad she felt". The previous three examples are small examples of the use of glitter specifically in art therapy, which describes the need for more research on the use of glitter in our field.

**Conclusion**

Given the body of research and theory about materials in art therapy, and the art historical reference to the use of reflective materials, glitter may have significant importance that art therapists have not addressed. This thesis hypothesizes that glitter is a significant media in art therapy. It also seeks to answer the question: What is the meaning and clinical application of glitter in art therapy?
Chapter 3: Methodology

Glitter may have significant importance that art therapists have not addressed. This thesis hypothesizes that glitter is a significant media in art therapy. It also seeks to answer the question: What is the meaning and clinical application of glitter in art therapy? The purpose of this research is to gain a greater understanding of the use of glitter in art therapy. The research design is survey research with both, quantitative or qualitative questions.

Participants:

The population was members of the American Art Therapy Association, or AATA. There is a personal membership fee that one must pay to gain access to a listing of all art therapists who are members of the organization, therefore the inclusion criteria for participants are those listed in the 'Members Only' section of the database, which means that these professionals, or students have paid their dues to be a member of AATA. A database was made of all of the people who belong to AATA, which allowed the researcher to send the survey a large number of people.

Instruments:

In order to assess the significance and meaning of glitter in art therapy a survey was given that was created by this researcher (Appendix A). The survey included continuous, or Likert scale, categorical scales such as yes or no question or multiple choice answers, and narrative questions. These items were based on Cathy Moon's (2008), base categorical framework of how to assess an art material. The questionnaire contained 30 items, 28 continuous scale and categorical scale points and two open ended questions. By using both quantitative and qualitative data the researcher sought to acquire more accurate data about the use and significance of glitter in art therapy.
Procedure:

1) Participants were sent an email (Appendix A) asking to be a part of a research study, the e-mail mentioned that by clicking on the link they were giving their informed consent.

2) Participants could decline filling out the survey, by not clicking on the link.

3) When a participant chose to click on the link, they were directed to a survey created by this researcher on survey monkey.

4) Participants answered questions, by clicking multiple-choice answers, or typing for open-ended questions. (Appendix A).

5) All data is kept confidential and will be used for research purposes only. Participants did not include their name, however, some participants chose to personally contact the researcher for a multitude of reasons. For these participants their data is still kept confidential, and answers cannot be attributed to anyone in particular, however these participants are not entirely confidential.

Data Collection:

Participants were sent an email that asked for involvement in an online survey about the use of glitter in art therapy. The participants were told that clicking on the link was informed consent. There are no risks involved in this survey, and the benefits are to gain greater knowledge of an art media that is not generally discussed in an academic way. The location of this survey is on the internet.

Data Analysis:

The survey was separated into two separate types of questions, quantitative and
qualitative. The quantitative answers were entered into a database for analysis. The quantitative questions were analyzed tabulations in 'Yes or No' questions and demographic information. The qualitative questions asked participants to describe personal reflection, or personal experiences with the use of the media. The qualitative questions were analyzed based on the Tesch (1990) following the coding procedure:

1) Get a sense of the whole. Read through all the transcriptions carefully. Perhaps jot down some ideas as they come to mind.

2) Pick one interview- the most interesting, the shortest, and the one on top of the pile. Go through it asking yourself, "what is this about?" Do not think about the substance of the information, but rather its underlying meaning. Write thought in the margin.

3) When you have completed this task for several informants, make a list of all topics. Cluster together similar topics. Form these topics into columns that might be arrayed as major topics, unique topics, and leftovers.

4) Now take the list and go back to your data. Abbreviate the topics as codes and write the codes next to the appropriate segments of the text. Try out this preliminary organizing scheme to see whether new categories and codes emerge.

5) Find the most descriptive wording for your topics and turn them into categories. Look for reducing your total list of categories by grouping topics that relate to each other. Perhaps draw lines between your categories to show interrelationships.

6) Make a final decision on the abbreviation for each category and alphabetize these codes.
7) Assemble the data material belonging to each category in one place and perform a preliminary analysis.

8) If necessary, recode your existing data (as cited by Creswell, 1994, pp. 142-145)

**Risks:**

There are no risks involved in filling out this survey as the questionnaires are voluntary and can be ended for any reason at any time.

**Benefits:**

Art therapists may have a greater understanding about the use of a media that is frequently used, but is not researched. This will give a greater understanding to the use of the reflective material of glitter in order to possibly use it as an assessment tool, or as a tool for treatment.

**Confidentiality:**

Every effort has been made to protect the human participants involved. Survey Monkey is set up so that confidentiality is ensured, and the researcher will not be able to identify any participants.

**Protection of Human Participants:**

Confidentiality and the protection of human participants will be maintained in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the American Art Therapy Association (AATA), American Psychological Association (APA), Art Therapy Credentials Board (ATCB), and the Notre Dame de Namur University Institutional Review Board (NONU IRB.) Survey answers will be anonymous and confidential, and basic human rights will be protected. Data will be stored for three years (seven years if published) and then appropriately destroyed.
Chapter 4: Results

Restatement of Hypothesis

This research study examines the use and significance of glitter, in order to see the inherent meaning and clinical application of a commonly used art material. Different aspects of glitter were studied in the survey in order to get preliminary data, using Cathy Moon's model of the Negotiated Meaning of an art material. The research study hypothesizes that glitter has significance in art therapy. The study also sought to answer the question: What is the meaning and clinical application of glitter in art therapy?

Overall Summary:

The hypothesis that glitter has significance and is an important material in art therapy can be assumed to be correct because of the number of respondents to the survey, as well as the depth of responses that were given for the open-ended question in the survey. Art therapists were mainly Caucasian females between the ages of 25-50. Most members of the American Art Therapy Association have Master's Degrees in art therapy. Most art therapists consider themselves artists, and have used glitter in their own art-work and also have provided glitter for clients. Art Therapists agree that the choice of glitter should be on a client-to-client basis and not depending on particular diagnoses. Art therapists have not studied glitter in their art therapy training, and feel that the study of glitter is important in art therapy training. Glitter has thematic meanings such as; positive associations that express feeling good and bringing light to art work. It also has meanings corresponding with spirituality, wealth, tackiness, cultural iconography, drama, and holidays (Table 3).
Data Analysis

Demographics:

Three thousand four hundred and twenty four people were sent this survey. Eight hundred and forty five participants began the survey, and seven hundred and fifty eight participants completed the survey. One hundred and thirty of the emails bounced back, due to problems with email addresses. All responses will be used in this analysis even if respondents did not complete the entire survey, and a total number of responses will be listed for each question.

![Age Distribution Bar Chart]

*Figure 10 Age*

In Question 1, 845 survey respondents answered the question, "What is your age range?" The majority were between the ages of 25-39 years of age, with three hundred and
sixty people. The next largest age range was between 40-54 years of age, with two hundred and thirty nine people. Therefore, the majority of opinions about glitter were from respondents between the ages of 25-54.

Figure 11 Gender

Of the 845 members of AATA that answered, 790 were female, and 54 were male, with one identifying as transgender. From this sample of art therapists almost 94% of members of AATA are female.
All 845 participants responded to Question 3 with a majority of seven hundred and seventy six responding as Caucasian. Therefore, the majority of this data is from Caucasian Females (refer to Figure 11). 18 respondents answered the "Other Please Specify". Two of these 18 people specified that they were Human Beings; two responded with mult-racial; four responded with Jewish; and others responded with categories that were not given such as Russian, Carribean non-hispanic, Carribean, and Greek.
Question 4 was asked in order to determine how many respondents are art therapists, or art therapists in training. 832 answered this question and thirteen dropped out of the survey at this question. 809 are art therapists or art therapists in training, and 23 are not. Therefore the majority of respondents have worked with clients, or are training to be able to work with clients.
715 people of the 832 people responding have or are working on Master's Degrees in Art Therapy, which is 85.9 percent. The other largest group is the Other (please specify). These respondents have an array of differing degrees. Additional degrees specified are as follows: *art therapy with psychology; pastoral counseling; business administration; Early Childhood education; MFA degrees; social work*; and differing levels of certification in art therapy. Five people said that they did not have any training in art therapy at all. This is important to answer the question of how glitter can be used in clinical application. Since the majority of people answered that they held Master's Degrees in art therapy, it is clear that these respondents have experience with clinical work in art therapy.
The level of art therapy certification was posed, and 832 responded to this question. 328 (39.4%) respondents are Board Certified Registered Art Therapists; 192 (29.1%) are Registered Art Therapists, and 163 (19.6%) are graduate students in art therapy training.
612 of the 832 responded that they had never studied glitter in art therapy training. This is important to note because the majority of respondents trained in art therapy (Question 4 and 6) and only 227 (27%) responded that they had actually discussed glitter in their training.
Of the 832 responses, 515 respondents (61.96%) noted that in their personal opinion it is important to study glitter as an artistic medium. 317 (38.1%) do not believe it is important to study glitter.
This question was asked to get a baseline to see if those taking this survey use art materials for their own purposes. 821 responded in which 759 (92.4%) self identified as artists; 24 (3%) were not artists; and 38 (4.6%) were not sure.
This question was asked in order to see what the general opinion of glitter is and to discern whether a person has a general like or dislike for the art material. Out of a total of 821 participants, 396 (48.2%) stated they enjoy glitter; 277 (33.7%) were neutral; and 148 (18%) participants responded that they do not enjoy glitter.
Figure 20 Frequency of Use in Personal Artwork

821 responded to this question and 451 (54.9%) of respondents answered, “I have used glitter a few times”. 256 (31.2%) responded “never” used glitter, and 102 (12.4%) responded “often” use glitter.
This question was asked because it was a common comment about the use of glitter amongst fellow art therapists. A majority of respondents 510 (62.1%) are not annoyed when glitter gets on their clothes, and 311 (37.9%) are annoyed when glitter gets on clothes.
628 people out of 821 (76.5%), responded that they like to look at people's art work that has glitter in it, and 193 (23.5%) respondents do not like to look at art work that has glitter in it.
Respondents have seen an almost even range of populations in their work (Children (87.4%), Adolescents (88.5%), Young Adults (75.3%), Adults (84.8%) and Elderly (56.5%). The elderly was the population that had the fewest responses. The respondents have a general sense of working with all populations, and have some sort of experience with all age ranges, which gives the respondents knowledge of using art materials with clients.
Figure 24 identifies the clinical population according to the diagnoses that the participants have seen in their art therapy practice. Depression is the most common diagnosis (92%); mid life crisis, 26%; Alzheimer's, 40%; medical, 47.2%; schizophrenia, 59.5%; domestic violence, 59.9%; Oppositional Defiant Disorder, 64%; Developmentally Disabled, 64.6%; Crisis, 68.7%; Personality Disorders, 71.1%; Substance Abuse, 73%; Sexual Abuse, 77.2%; Bipolar Disorder, 78.6%; Grief/Loss, 80.5%; ADHD and Spectrum was 80.6%, PTSD or Trauma, 83%; Anxiety, 89.1%.
Out of 758 participants, 479 (63.2%) "sometimes" offer glitter to clients, and 124 (16.4%) "never" offer glitter.
Children (76.8%) and Adolescents (73.4%) are most frequently offered glitter, and elderly populations (27%) are offered glitter the least.
Out of 758 responses, 73.4% of art therapists "offer glitter to all clients, regardless of gender", and 12.9% would offer glitter to a female more frequently than a male.
Figure 28 Where is glitter on the media continuum

In Question 24 a media continuum from least controlled to most controlled was given, and 46.4% of participants responded that glitter would fall in-between least controlled and somewhat controlled. Least controlled was the second largest category (29.3%) which gives a total of 76% of participants agree that glitter does not have much control as an art material.
758 participants responded to Question 25, and 50.3% responded that glitter is not too messy to offer clients, and 35.5% are neutral. Therefore, messiness is somewhat of a factor in offering clients the art material of loose glitter.
Out of 758 responses, 8.4% have directives specifically associated with glitter. In Question 27 participants were asked to respond with specific art directives, if they answered "yes" to Question 26. The following is a list of quotes from the responses that explain art directives where glitter is a necessary art material:

- "decorate your art/book/mobile"
- "write your name in glue and put glitter on it ..."
- "paint a rock, and embellish with glitter, rhinestones, and feathers"
- "magic paintings"
- "holiday directives"
- "self-esteem projects"
- "directives that are meant to explore spirituality"
- "collage, and card-making"
- "paper dolls"
- "whenever a need for stimulation, or lightening the mood is needed"
- "personal mandalas"
- "expressing external qualities"
- "designing a private sanctuary or island"
- "Mask making"
- "all children's projects"
- "making tomados, or snow globes, as a metaphor to control life's storms"
- "Fourth of July art directives"
- "princess crown, magic wands"
- "if used to work on control: slowly pour the glitter, or if working on range of motion with someone who has limited mobility by shaking glitter in a pan."
- "use a plastic hollow ball and fill it with words and images and glitter to reflect experience of joy"
- "glitter and sand paintings"
- "wood sculptures"
- "to portray atmospheric conditions"
- "use when a client gets stuck so they can be more expansive in their creativity"
- "ask clients to make an award for themselves to build self-esteem"
The largest section was the "Other" responses. Participants most frequently responded that the use of glitter is not necessarily about the diagnosis, but rather on an individual assessment of client needs and capacity. Glitter should not be used when a client is feeling "out of control, or lacks boundaries to be able to handle a loose medium." This shows that art therapists most often use their clinical assessment capabilities in order to accurately provide clients with art materials.
Out of 768 responses, 393 said that they have not discussed glitter with clients or colleagues, and 365 said that they have discussed glitter with clients and colleagues.
Question 30 asked participants to "Rate what you would be attempting to express by using glitter." 0 = Never 1.5 = Sometimes 2.5 = Always

Reflection (1.8), Spirituality (1.84), Regality (1.81), Wealth (1.75), and Understanding (1.54) are close to Sometimes (1.5), which means that participants are sometimes attempting to express these qualities. Participants are Always attempting to express Fantasy (2.16) and Fun (2.29) when using glitter.
**Qualitative Data (Questions 13 and 23)**

Question 13 asked, "When you use glitter in your own art making, what are you attempting to express? If you never use glitter please type "NIA" in the space below."

Question 23 asked, "Name three words that come to your mind when you think of glitter."

The answers were analyzed according to Tesch (1990). Similar words were grouped into categories and then distilled further into themes. Table 3 includes the themes with examples.

*Table 3 Themes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive Association</td>
<td>Light - <em>twinkle, glow, bright</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feel Good- <em>happy, carefree, energy</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Precious- <em>special, important, wealth</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spiritual- <em>ethereal, mystical, celestial</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child- Like- <em>childhood, school days</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feminine- <em>Girly, Little Girls</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>Color- <em>pink, rainbows, red</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relating to Art- <em>expression, contrast, mixture</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Glue - <em>additive, glitter glue</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Metal- <em>metallic, silver, gold, silver</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Associations</td>
<td>Messy- <em>uncontrollable, sticky, all-over</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative- <em>dishonest, hate, overkill</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tacky- <em>cheap, kitsch, gaudy</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eyes- <em>Eye Hazard</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Worldly</td>
<td>Fantasy and Magic- Fairy Dust, pretend. dream-like Celebration and Holidays-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>confetti, fireworks, festive Movement- freedom, dancing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>Occurring in Nature- <em>stars, snow, sand</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nouns that reflect <em>light-jewels, glass, mirror</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4 contains the themes from questions 13 and 23 and organized into Moon's seven categories for determining the negotiated meaning of an material.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moon’s Categories</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Aesthetic Negotiated Materials- Values are socially constructed</td>
<td>Positive Association Negative Association Other Worldly</td>
<td>Feel Good &amp; Spiritual Tacky Fantasy and Magic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Physical Sensual- Direct Experience</td>
<td>Physicality</td>
<td>Physical Sensation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Personal Association- specific time or place evoked</td>
<td>Positive Association Other Worldly</td>
<td>Child-like Fantasy &amp; Magic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Association and Language</td>
<td>All Themes</td>
<td>All categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Function and Utility</td>
<td>Positive Association Artistic</td>
<td>Light Color, Glue, &amp; Metal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Evidence in Popular Culture</td>
<td>Fame</td>
<td>Pop Culture and Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Social Cultural Historical Relevance- change over time</td>
<td>Other Worldly leads to Fame</td>
<td>Spiritual leads to Dramatic Descriptive &amp; Pop Culture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

The results have shown that the use of glitter has significance in art therapy, and the meaning and of the use of glitter in art therapy is a multi-layered analysis that uses the knowledge of theory and clinical application.
Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this research study, as mentioned in the theoretical rationale, was to explore the hypothesis that glitter has significance in art therapy and that the use of glitter has inherent meaning for clients and art therapists. The rationale for exploring glitter derived from the historical reference in art therapy and various cultures that reflective materials held meaning, such as spirituality, wealth, and importance in art history (Wilkinson, 1984; Janson, 1997; Wilson, 1994; Brown 1994; Barstow, Cohen and Kren, 1997; Nebehay, 2008; Hughes, 2008). The reflective material, glitter, was specifically researched as it is an accessible material that has reflective properties, and is used with various clients and groups in art therapy.

The use of glitter in art therapy is an important topic, as hypothesized. Given the number of respondents to the survey and the depth of responses in the open-ended questions it can be seen that glitter has significance in art therapy. Glitter and other reflective materials could be studied more in art therapy training.

Theoretical Implications

An example of a theory that can be used to arrive at meaning and significance for glitter as a material is Cathy Moon's (2008) social constructivist theory. There are seven different categories that one can look at to arrive at a negotiated meaning of glitter in art therapy and the meaning of glitter can be addressed using this framework (Table 3).

Moon's (2008) first category is the "Aesthetic Negotiated Materials-Values or interest are socially constructed" (p. 34). The values that are socially constructed about glitter are similar to references in art history that reflective materials expressed spirituality, regality, and wealth. (Wilkinson, 1984; Janson, 1997; Wilson, 1994; Brown 1994; Barstow, Cohen and...
Relective Materials 62

Kren, 1997; Nebehay, 2008; Hughes 2008) The qualitative results of the survey indicated similar qualities as the reflective properties in art history, namely, Spirituality, and Wealth which were categorized as Precious, and Spirituality (For a full list of the specific words that are in the themes see Appendix B).

Moon's second category, "Physical Sensual-Direct Experience with the Feeling of the Material" can be linked to Lusebrink's media continuum (Table 1, p. 2). The scale from the least controlled to the most controlled organizes art materials structurally on a continuum. Glitter was determined to be on the least controlled end of Lusebrink's continuum (Figure 28, p. 61). Glitter was also described as being messy (Table 4). The physical sensation of glitter was also described as: grainy, flakes, rough, gritty, tiny, delicate, and sharp (See Appendix B).

Moon's third category in the social constructivist theory of materiality is "Personal Association- specific time and place evoked." In the qualitative results glitter was associated with Child-like (e.g. Kids, Children and Adolescent) and Celebration and Holidays. These two themes are an example of a personal association where a specific time and place are recalled with the use of an art material.

Moon's fourth category, "Association and Language- negative and positive connotations," includes the negative and positive connotations of glitter (see Table 4). The Positive Associations reported about glitter, were themes of Feel Good and Precious. Negative associations included themes such as Tacky and Messy. The associated language gives the art material meaning, and the analysis stems from the language associated with the art material.

Next, Moon (2008) describes the "Function/Utility-Objects and their Function". One
of the functions of glitter is related to light. Words such as bright, shimmer, twinkle, illuminate, glow, and electrify are examples of the function of glitter, or the function of any reflective material. This is linked to the Literature Review and the use of gold leaf in the Illuminated Manuscripts, Gustav Klimt, and ancient Egyptian art. The function of reflective materials is directly related to its utility. Therefore, the fact that glitter is reflective, which is its action or function, allows it to be used in art pieces to reflect light. Glitter has meaning and significance in art therapy because of its physicality and make-up.

In the sixth category, "Evidence in Popular Culture", Glitter has many associations with pop culture, exemplified by words such as Hollywood, Bowie, Mariah Carey, Barbie Dolls, Abba (Appendix B) as well as the dramatic descriptive words such as; glitzy, fancy, flamboyant, dazzling, and seductive (See Appendix B Table 5). This is most interesting to note, because these dramatic words are associated with actors and the general entertainment history. In modern civilizations entertainers are equivalent to ancient civilization's experience of gods and goddesses. Art materials that reflect light portray a sense of reverence.

The last category of Moon's theory is "Social Cultural Historical Relevance which Changes over Time". Glitter does not have the exact meaning that reflective materials especially gold leaf paint, had in art history. Its depth of meaning is expanded from spiritual, regal, and wealthy as seen in the Literature Review, to Celebration and Holidays, and Fame (Table 3). Although glitter has meanings of spirituality, and preciousness, it is not the primary association. This variety of meaning demonstrates that glitter does not have the same properties exactly of gold leaf paint. This is an example of how meaning can change over time and that meaning and significance are living, dynamic and dependent on cultural experiences and expression. Discussing theoretical implications of glitter using Cathy Moon's
criteria has provided a foundation for this research, to discuss the clinical implications.
Clinical Implications

Although Moon's (2008) model is theoretical, it lends itself to clinical application. The theoretical analysis above provides evidence of general meanings and significance in art therapy for glitter. Knowing these expressive qualities provides guidance into the clinical application of glitter.

It is assumed that the action of reflecting light can be used to help people feel happy because of the fact that the two most popular words themes are light and feel good (Table 4). The data, therefore supports the assertion that glitter can make people feel better (Reid, 2007; Laidler, 2004). It may be therapeutic to use glitter with diagnoses such as depression, or those experiencing grief and loss, to lift moods.

The next topic of importance when determining the clinical application of glitter is that art therapists agree that certain precautions need be taken when using glitter (Figure 28, Continuum; and Figure 28, Precaution) due to its uncontrollable nature, but not for the quality it has of reflecting light. If glitter is used as an additive in glue, for instance, it becomes more manageable, and therefore less regressive, which may be a better option for use with a client needing more control. As stated in Dalley (1987), the introduction of any art material is an intuitive and sensitive one "made by the therapist through personal familiarity of working with the media, and therefore knowledge of their potential effect" (p. 4). The data supports that art therapists are indeed making these sensitive decisions more frequently on a client-to-client basis and from their own personal experience with glitter (Figure 28: Other Category). For instance, loose glitter may not be the best material to use for a client who is actively psychotic, or experiencing difficulty managing emotional control, but may be the most beneficial to a client who is discovering spirituality.
Glitter can also be used in order to create fantasy and fun with adults, in order to possibly discover or find their inner or child. This is seen in the data in the theme of Fantasy and Magic (Table 4). This means that playfulness, fairies, or the angelic realm, may come to mind for a client when using glitter, and may help with feelings of being stuck, or feelings of boredom.

The theoretical aspects of glitter can be directly applied to the clinical application of glitter. These implications make it apparent that glitter has significant meaning, and can therefore be used clinically. Education about the use of glitter in art therapy training would benefit art therapists.

**Educational Implications**

It was determined that glitter has important position in the theoretical implications, such as helping people to feel good and bringing light to an art piece. Glitter also has clinical implications such as helping people to explore spirituality or find light and hope. It is recommended that the use of glitter as an art material be taught more frequently in art therapy training programs. The significance of glitter can be added in courses about art materials in art therapy. Addressing glitter in training will be a foundation for more research about the use of reflective materials in art therapy.

**Limitations**

Upon completion of this study, some limitations became apparent, and are as follows:

1) This survey was only sent to art therapists in the AATA database, a wider demographic may have yielded different results.

2) All people who began the survey did not complete the survey.
3) The majority of responses are from Caucasian females.

4) Online survey research does not provide interaction, and actual physical experience with glitter.

5) The setting of the experiment is important to consider as a variable. All the participants took the survey online, but as various times, in multiple locations, over a period of weeks, under different personal circumstances. This could have affected the data collection depending on circumstances in each particular setting of each survey respondent.

**Conclusion**

Cathy Moon's (2008) social constructivist theory of materiality is useful in assessing the importance of art materials as they apply to theory and clinical application. Future research and study into the meaning and significance of art materials would be useful to provide art therapists with more tools and education. Further study of glitter and reflective materials would be beneficial to the field of art therapy, including the following possibilities:

1) Research from a cross-cultural perspective about the use of glitter, to see if it has the same meanings for other cultures.

2) Since glitter has the potential to "lift a person's mood", and has a spiritual element, research could be done with glitter and depression, trauma, or grief and loss.

3) Research art therapy training programs that include the study of reflective materials.

4) Further historical research about other uses of reflective materials.

5) Additional research on the meaning of art materials in art therapy, using the social
constructivist theory of materiality (Moon, 2008).

References


Arrington, D.B. (2001). Home is where the art is: An Art Therapy Approach to Family Therapy, Charles C. Springfield, IL: Thomas Publisher LTD.


Overlook Press.


Illustration References


Pallas Athene, Judith, and Daena images retrieved from http://www.canvasreplicas.com/KlimtGallery2.htm
Appendix A Email and Survey

*American Art Therapy Association Members*

I am a graduate student in the Art Therapy Psychology Department at Notre Dame de Namur University. I am conducting survey research on the use and application of glitter in art therapy. This survey will take approximately five to ten minutes to complete. Since glitter is an understudied medium in art therapy your willingness to complete this survey will contribute to a greater understanding of art materials in our field.

By filling out this survey, you are giving informed consent to participate in this research. All answers and participants remain strictly confidential. The closing date for the survey will be 10/21/2009. Your participation in this research is truly appreciated! Please click on the link below to be directed to the Glitter Survey:


If you have any questions feel free to contact me at, xxxxxxxx@gmail.com Thank you for your time and input.

Signed,

Amber Mazza

Graduate Art Therapy NDNU
GLITTER SURVEY

Demographic Information

1) What's your age range?
   a. 18-24
   b. 25-39
   c. 40-54
   d. 55+

2) What is your gender?
   a. Female
   b. Male
   c. Transgender

3) Ethnicity/Check all that apply
   a. Native American
   b. Asian
   c. Bi-Racial
   d. Hispanic/Latino
   e. Pacific Islander
   f. African American
   g. Caucasian
   h. Other (please specify)

Educational Information

1) Are you an Art Therapist or in training to be an art therapist?
   a. Yes
   b. No

2) What educational degrees do you have?
a. Bachelors Degree
b. Master's Degree
c. Doctorate (Ph.D., Ed.D., Pys. D.)
d. Other
e. None

3) What Art Therapy Degrees do you have, or are you currently working on?
   a. Bachelor's Degree in Art Therapy
   b. Master's Degree in Art Therapy
   c. Doctorate
   d. Other (please specify)

4) What level art therapist are you?
   a. Graduate Student in Art Therapy
   b. ATR
   c. ATR-BC
   d. NIA

5) Did you ever discuss the therapeutic use of glitter as an art material in your art therapy training?
   a. Yes
   b. No

6) Do you think it is important in art therapy training to incorporate the use of glitter as an artistic medium?
   a. Yes
   b. No
Personal Information

1) Do you consider yourself an artist?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Not Sure

2) Do you enjoy glitter?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Neutral

3) If you create art, how often do you use glitter in your own art work?
   a. Never
   b. I have a few times
   c. Often
   d. Always
   e. NA

4) When you use glitter in your own art making, what are you attempting to express? If you never use glitter please type "NIA" in the space below.

5) Do you get annoyed when you use glitter and it gets all over your clothes?
   a. Yes
   b. No

6) Do you like to look at art work that has glitter?
   a. Yes
   b. No

7) Do you consider yourself an Extrovert or Introvert?
   a. Extrovert
   b. Introvert
   c. Not Sure
Professional Information

1) How many years have you been practicing Art Therapy?
   a. 0-5
   b. 6-10
   c. 11-15
   d. More than 15

2) What populations have you worked with? Please check all that apply.
   a. Children
   b. Adolescents
   c. Young Adults
   d. Adults
   e. Elderly

3) What types of diagnoses have you seen in your populations?
   a. ADHD and Spectrum
   b. Alzheimer's
   c. Anxiety
   d. Bipolar
   e. Crisis
   f. Depression
   g. Developmentally Disabled
   h. Domestic Violence
   i. Grief/Loss
   j. Medical
   k. Mid Life Crisis
   l. Oppositional Defiant Disorder
m. Personality Disorders
n. PTSD and Trauma
o. Schizophrenia
p. Sexual Abuse
q. Substance Abuse
r. Other (please specify)

4) Do you offer glitter as a medium to your clients?
   a. Never
   b. Sometimes
   c. Often
   d. Always

5) What are the populations you would offer glitter most frequently? Check all that apply.
   a. Children
   b. Adolescents
   c. Young Adults
   d. Adults
   e. Elderly

6) Which gender do you or would you offer glitter to more frequently?
   a. a male
   b. a female
   c. I offer glitter to all of my clients regardless of gender
   d. I never offer glitter

7) Name three word that come to your mind when you think of glitter.

8) Where do you feel that glitter would fall in the media continuum from least controlled to most controlled?
   a. Least Controlled
   b. In-between least and somewhat
c. Somewhat Controlled

d. In-between somewhat and most

e. Most controlled

9) Do you think glitter is too messy to use with clients?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Neutral

10) Do you have specific art directives that glitter is a necessary medium?
    a. Yes
    b. No

11) If you answered yes to the above question, please describe an art directive that glitter is a necessary medium. If you answered no, please type "NIA" in the space below.

12) What diagnoses would you not use glitter with? Check all that apply.
    a. ADHD and Spectrum
    b. Alzheimer's
    c. Anxiety
    d. Bipolar
    e. Crisis
    f. Depression
    g. Developmentally Disabled
    h. Domestic Violence
    i. Grief/Loss
    j. Medical
    k. Mid Life Crisis
    l. Oppositional Defiant Disorder
    m. Personality Disorders
    n. PTSD and Trauma
o. Schizophrenia
p. Sexual Abuse
q. Substance Abuse
r. Other (please specify)

13) Have you ever discussed the meaning of the use of glitter in a client's art work; either with the client, or with other professionals?
   a. Yes
   b. No

14) Rate using Never, Sometimes, Always what you would be attempting to express by using glitter for the following words.
   a. Reflection
   b. Spirituality
   c. Regality
   d. Wealth
   e. Fantasy
   f. Understanding
   g. Fun
## Appendix B: Themes

**Table 5 Themes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Bright, Brightness, Light, Brilliant, Glistening, Shiny, Shine, Sheen, Sparkly, Shimmer, Twinkle, Glittery, Light-Scattering, Sprinkle, Reflection, Reflective, Mirror, Luminosity, Glow, Luminous, Radiance, Iridescent, Glowing, Light- Catching, Illuminating, Flash, Highlight, Light-Catching, Refraction, flashy, we can turn the lights on, electric, electrifying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel Good</td>
<td>Fun, Happy, Carefree, Silly, Joy, Excitement, Glee, Whimsy, Smile, Enjoyment, Joy is real and attainable (hope), Laughter, Positive, Playful, Whimsical, Play, Lighthearted, Sweet, Vay!, Wow, Enjoyable, Delightful, Fabulous!, Free, Wild, Freeing, Smile, No-Holds-Barred, Crazy, frivolous, pleasure, energy, life, energized, vibrant, alive, lively, exuberant, uninhibited, chaotic, spontaneity, Health, nourishing, inviting, warm, likeable, nice, make nice, satisfying glossy look, group, multi-faceted, spontaneous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messy</td>
<td>Dust Buster, Cleanup, Vacuum, Messy, Uncontrolled, Difficult to Control, Out of Control, Difficult to Manage, Uncontrollable, Uncontained, Everywhere, Sloppy, Sticky, poor boundaries, unmanageable, dirty, un removable, No- Holds-Barred, floor, all over, lingering, diffuse, chaotic, lack of structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>annoying, frustrating, obnoxious, pain, difficult, inappropriate, dislike, hate, chaos, dangerous, unhealthy, evil, spawn of Satan, vulgar, virus, depressed, immature, yuk, ugly, annoyance, awful, herpes,spawn of Satan, controversy, forbidden for use in my daughter's elementary school, an eye hazard, hate, can cute your eyes if rubbed by mistake, a pain, get it out of my sight!, no, chaotic, over stimulating, overwhelming, overly stimulating, overkill, control, dishonest , mask, covering up, cover up, masks, false, a cheap trick, clingy, un-gratifying, compensation, resistance, shortcut, needy, deflective, superficial, false, fake, avoidance, wasteful, distraction, forbidden, ersatz, undistinguished, useless, distracting, pointless, unnecessary, caution, limiting, challenging, Gauche, defended, deflection, defensive, cover-up, diversion, compensation, interloper, impermanent, unattached, somewhat temporary, instant gratification, fleeting, stereotype, trauma, hard, disintegration, anxious, unusual, excess. self indulgent, complicated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Theme Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attention and Decoration</strong></td>
<td>Attention Focusing, Eye Catching, Attention Getting, Attention, Focus, Attraction, Attractive, Standing Out, Stands Out, Visually Arresting, Enhancing*, accentuate, attention seeking, emphasize, appealing, interesting, amazing effects, emphasis, self-confidence, overt, action, outside, finesse, expressive, expression, impact, decorative, embellish, embellishment, decorated, decorate, Gilding, Adorn*, decoration, ornate, decor, accent, complete, finishing touches, effects, additive, extra, enhancement, depth, alossy, polish, loud, expansive, finishing touches, adds dimension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fantasy and Magic</strong></td>
<td>Magical, Magic, Pseudo-Magic, Fantasy, Fantastical, Fairy-Dust, Fairies, Princesses, Make-Believe, Pretend, exotic, unreality, rainbows, wonder, amusement park, rainbow, Dream-like, dream, dreamy, wish, Love, Moon-struck, serendipitous, enchantina, ethereal, adventure, imaginative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feminine</strong></td>
<td>Feminine, Princess, Pretty, Girlish, Diva, Barbie Dolls, Princesses, Fairy-Dust, Fairies, Mariah Carey, Beauty, Beautiful, Vanity, Seductive, Exotic, pink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Precious</strong></td>
<td>Special, precious, jewels. Adorn, ornate, important, diamonds, gold, jewelry, Treasure, expensive, exquisite, royalty, Wealth, Expensive, jewels, gold, diamonds, jewelry, expensive, Rich, power, excess, unique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Color Association</strong></td>
<td>colorful, gold, pink, rainbows, rainbows of color, rainbow, flecks of gold, red, gold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tacky</strong></td>
<td>Tacky, Cheap, Kitsch, Gaudy, Cheesy, Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child-Like</strong></td>
<td>Childlike, Kids, Adolescent, Children, Youthful, Camp, Juvenile, Free, Pretend, Childhood Innocence, Regressive, immature, school days, amusement park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological terms</td>
<td>Over stimulating (Experience with Clients), Prohibited in Hospital Setting, Crazy, they have so much fun using it!, poor boundaries, regressive, borderline, manic, histrionic, Depressed, personality disordered, unmanageable, glitter glues is always requested by my rehab girls, doesn't work with psychosis, dissociation, fragmented*, directive specific, anxious, attention seeking, transfonning, transition, transcenence, process, Change, transpersonal, emotions, lack of structure, self-confidence, hypnotic, control, transforming, Cocaine, substance abuse, trauma, comlicated, resistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>spiritual, mystical, spirituality, spirit, ethereal, serendipitous, moonstruck, love, enlightening, ephemeral, celestial, eternal, inspiration, unknown*, Dream-like, dream, dreamy, enchanting, transfonning, transition, wonder, transcenence, process, Change, transpersonal, ethereal, hypnotic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebration and Holidays</td>
<td>Explosive, Fireworks, Confetti, Holidays, Festive, Celebration, Wild, Mardi-Gras, Christmas, Christmas Ornaments, cards, Crazy, Party, Carnival, Greeting Card,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relating to art</td>
<td>folk art, Lost art Form, crafty, craft material, craft, Un-artistic, collage, Gilding, directive specific, art, contrast, mixture, creativity, expressive, masks, expression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related to physical</td>
<td>fragments, grainy, texture, Flakes, rough, tactile, grit, gritty, sharp-edged, loose, pieces, multiplying, fine, small, little, tiny, delicate, hard, difficult, sharp, pokey, Tactile, particles, sensory, sticky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sensation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown category</td>
<td>new, inhalant, inhaling, nostalgic, memories, subtle, native, resilient, containment, containing, easy, simple, camera, use sparingly, persistent, wonderful mess, reaction formation, static, refreshing, mastering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glue</td>
<td>glitter glues is always requested by my rehab girls, never dry (glue), glitter glue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occuring in nature</td>
<td>Stars, Snow, Sand, Deep Space, Sparks, Liquid, Wet, Dust, Fluid, Night and Day atmosoheric, Saturn, celestial. splash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop culture</td>
<td>Hollywood, Bowie, Mariah Carey, Barbie Dolls, Entertainment, Abba, Kylie Minogue, Wal-Mart, trendy, Gary (as in Gary Glitter, glam rock super star and convict)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal reference</td>
<td>metallic. Metal, Gilding, flecks of gold, silver, gold nouns that reflect light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nouns that reflect light</td>
<td>Glass, Mirror, Sugar Crystals, Jewels, diamonds musical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical</td>
<td>Jazz, Jazzy, Jazzing, Funk*, loud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Era</td>
<td>Retro, 1970's, Seventies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement</td>
<td>Dancing, Movement, Moving, Freeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyes</td>
<td>eyes, an eye hazard, can cute your eyes if rubbed by mistake</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>