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Editorial:

Blurring Boundaries & Building Community through Critical Awareness, Collective Action, & Creative Pedagogies

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What is the role of art education today; what should our preservice teachers know; what do we wish people outside of the field knew about us; how can we advocate for the importance of our work in the face of so much uncertainty in education broadly; how can our research speak to these questions; and how can we possibly tackle all of this with the amount of responsibilities we carry? Serving simultaneously as teachers, administrators, and researchers in our respective universities, we (Amanda and Cala) discuss these questions regularly. At times, it feels like too much, like we are navigating a cacophony of competing interests, tasks, and politics too accelerated to really be heard or to make a significant difference. But, together, we can be heard, and the articles in this issue provide an inspiring spectrum of approaches and examples of artists and educators engaged in active pedagogies for community connection and historical understanding on a local and global level.

Given that art education and art production shape our interaction with the world, including our communities and each other, a better understanding of how these ideas merge needs to be explored. It is this exploration around blurring boundaries and building community through critical awareness, collective action, and creative pedagogies that the articles in this issue of *jCRAE* address. The authors in this issue "explore the processes of production of difference in a world of culturally, socially, and economically interconnected and interdependent spaces" (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992, p. 14). We are living in a time that requires us to reflect on the cultural moment of political polarization, scrutiny of education, climate and food insecurity, cultural divisiveness and unity as well as a resurgence of silenced and marginalized histories.

Garoian (1999) argued that, "Art is a place for exploration and creation. It serves as a liminal space, a neutral zone within which to engage a discourse between binaries, to entertain differing points of view, to create new identities and myths about communities" (p. 137). This volume of *jCRAE* resides in this liminal, non-binary and vital space, amplifying a range of perspectives through material, linguistic, conceptual, and historical inquiry. We decided to split the issue into two sections: 1) History & Advocacy in Communities, Classrooms, and Cultural Spaces; and 2) Contemporary Activations & Creative Techniques for Collective Change & Awareness. This choice may seem counter to the argument for eliminating binaries, but it was actually in an effort to tighten the dialogue we saw emerging between authors.

The first group of articles address a range of questions supporting the need for advocacy and awareness in light of current and historical policies that have shaped cultural norms and created, often invisible, boundaries and inequities. The section opens with archival research on three educational programs in the Southeastern United States by **Christina Hanawalt, Lisa Novak, Emily Hogrefe-Ribeiro, and Ann Marie Satterfield**. *Black Education and Art as Activism in the Southeastern United States during the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements: Archival Research toward Racial Justice* illuminates historical community art programs that serve as inspiring examples for activism and racial justice through creative and collective educational efforts in our contemporary moment.

In a similar vein to the article by Hanawalt, Novak, Hogrefe-Ribeiro and Satterfield, in **Steve Willis & Allan Richard**'s piece *Political Degradation of Human Rights and Art Education*, they argue that an education for all people about human rights can positively impact the education of children, and that the type of character leaders have can inform them of the importance of advancing human rights for all. Their review of history, current affairs and divisiveness in the United States brings them to advocate for a vigorous teaching of human rights in all classrooms.

Advocating for human rights is a prevalent theme throughout this issue, as **Shara Mills** takes readers on a journey through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) advocating for access for all beyond the legal policy, specifically in museums. By excluding the disabled community in museum spaces, we perpetuate the ableist mindset of society which widens the gap around community belonging. In *The Architectural Intersection of Museums and Disability Policy,* Mills pushes for an accepting space within museums that goes beyond the idea of inclusion and encourages a better understanding of the way that individuals interact in these spaces.

Building on questions of human rights, this issue illuminates the need for creating avenues to hear the perspectives of all members of a community, in an effort to develop mutual understanding and informed decision-making. In *Parental Influence on Child Art Learning: Examining Habitus and Social Trajectories in Taiwanese and U.S. Cultural Contexts*, **Meng-Jung Yang** provides readers with a qualitative study that examines how parental habitus in Taiwan and the United States shapes their views on the role of art in child development. Yang draws from social ecological systems frameworks and habitus theories using a cross-cultural approach. Findings reveal cultural, social, and educational factors that influence parental decisions around art, highlighting the importance of parent education and advocacy for integrating parental perspectives into art education policies.

Building on the theme of advocacy, representation, and shifting social perspectives, **Eunjin Kim** outlines a history of educational, cultural, and institutional exclusion of Asian American art and artists in *Omissions and Marginalization: Asian American Representation in Art History and Education*. The article introduces key tenets of Asian critical race theory, along with a valuable literature review of art education studies that illuminate ways to disrupt what has become the status quo by increasing representation and engaging students in counter-storying.

Together, the five articles in the first section of the issue traverse a spectrum of historical and contemporary conditions, highlighting critical questions about institutional policies and cultural practices. Through historical, ecological, and advocacy-oriented research, authors provide important ways to disrupt stereotypes, misperceptions, and omissions by introducing empowering approaches to support cultural inclusion through community engagement.

The second section of the issue builds on the social, historical, and policy-oriented research in the first by providing examples of contemporary art activations and creative techniques for collective change and awareness. In *Nourishing Connections: Fostering Collaboration on Food Ethics Through Art*, **Katja Juhola, Clarice Zdanski, Hugo Peña, Teea Kortetmäki and Raisa Foster** introduce the International Socially Engaged Art Symposium, where an interdisciplinary group of artists, academics, educators, youth, and policy-makers collectively explored food justice through creative, embodied, and dialogic action over a series of days. The performative and event-based nature of their investigation highlights the power of social action to affect the perspectives and potential of shifting understandings that is difficult to capture in more academic forms of writing and public policy.

Similarly, embracing the performative and place-based potential of artistic intervention, **Albert Stabler's** visual narrative uses the ad hoc artifact of the barricade as a framework, taking readers through the practical, political, and artistic uses of found material by communities living in enclosures. Beginning with the street memorial, Stabler briefly describes a number of projects undertaken in his urban high school art classroom that were intended for public display and for which responded to current events. In *Visionary Barricades: Art Class as Memorial Factory*, one finds themself encountering a plethora of ideas that revolve around barricades, found objects, street art, anarchism, and anti-form for which makes the invisible visible.

Further embracing the affective potential of contemporary art practices in K-12 classrooms, **Jody Stokes-Casey's** article, *Troubles and Sweets: Reflecting Critically on Historical Offerings for Contemporary Issues*, discusses the use of critical reflective practice in a preservice undergraduate class to address troubling anti-trans legislation in her home state. While centering contemporary art featuring a historically significant local hero, a drag queen by the name of Sweet Evening Breeze, Stokes-Casey reflects on power dynamics, focusing on joy, and the importance of partnerships in art teacher preparation.

Mirroring the themes of human rights and community building for mutual understanding in the first section, the articles in the second section provide lively examples of ways to use artistic approaches to address conflict by amplifying the voices of all members. In **Rebecca Shipe's** visual narrative, titled *Using Digital Literacy to Transform Conflict into Curiosity: Implications for Art Education*, she touches on ideas revolving around digital literacy, visual literacy, and conflict transformation. Shipe illustrates why digital literacy and the term conflict transformation are valuable concepts to address in the secondary level art classroom. She provides specific activities designed to enhance digital literacy while activating students' curiosities.

Continuing to highlight the power of building relationships and shared understanding in the art classroom, **Alexa R. Kulinski** traces a set of interconnected experiences that occurred over a number of years through the life of three objects that were given to her. In *The Stories Objects Carry*, Kulinski presents a beautiful set of visual narratives that illustrate layered stories, conceptualized through a new materialist lens

to explore the vitality of common objects, weaving together the lives of students, teachers, histories, communities, and the environments we share.

Together, the articles in this issue illuminate our unity, not just among our human communities, but also ways that stories, food, objects, material practices, policies, and language link us together, even in moments of strife and uncertainty. In a way, these articles circle us back to the beginning. They are a collective voice for which artists and educators can be heard and are being heard on a local and global scale. Thank you to all the authors for their deep thoughts, practices, and research. As a whole, we are making change.

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Black Education and Art as Activism in the Southeastern United States during the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements: Archival Research toward Racial Justice

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ABSTRACT
Set in the context of a History of Art Education course in Spring 2021, this article presents archival research highlighting three educational programs in the Southeastern United States that centered art for activist purposes during the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements. The programs include the Freedom Schools in Mississippi, the Urban Mythology Film Program in Georgia, and the Neighborhood Art Center, also in Georgia. The article contextualizes these programs as continuing a trajectory of Black Education as activism that existed throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Amid pressing calls for racial justice then and now, we suggest these programs and their situatedness in history can be powerful resources for art educators with activist aims in the present. Therefore, we conclude the article with six characteristics of art education for racial justice, culled from the three projects, that can serve as critical guidance for art educators pursuing justice-oriented work.

KEYWORDS: Archival Research, Black Education, Art, Activism, Civil Rights, Black Power, Black Arts, Racial Justice, Art Education

In January of 2021, I (Christina Hanawalt) was preparing to teach a graduate-level History of Art Education course at the University of Georgia for my third time. The last time I taught the course was spring of 2019. Like many higher educators, I aim to revise my courses as I prepare to teach each new iteration; yet the year leading up to the spring 2021 semester was like nothing we had experienced before. As

the semester was getting ready to begin, we were still amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, had witnessed pressing calls for racial justice in the face of continued police violence against Black Americans, and most recently, had watched the storming of the United States Capitol building at the incitement of Donald J. Trump in the final weeks of his presidency. Given the significance of these events, course revisions weighed heavier that semester. As was likely the case for many educators, I knew I had to rethink my course content in a manner that would acknowledge the tumultuous experiences the students and I were living through and the ways they were variously impacting each of our lives.

Though not particularly groundbreaking, my efforts toward reckoning with the current moment began with changes to my syllabus, course texts, and platforms for access to course materials. These changes reflected my attempt to grapple with my complicity in the history of racism and centering of White norms pervasive in the history of art education, education more broadly, and the social fabric of the United States. I added a statement to my syllabus that acknowledged my own positionality as an instructor and the biases of Whiteness that exist in both the history of art education (Acuff et al., 2012) and archives (Gibbs, 2012), particularly those we would engage with at the Richard B. Russell Special Collections library at the University of Georgia, a Predominantly White Institution (DATAUSA, n.d.). I also incorporated two new texts, including James Anderson's (1988) *Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935 and Marinella Lentis'* (2017) *Colonized through Art: American Indian Schools and Art Education, 1889-1915*, both of which offer crucial perspectives not addressed significantly in texts specific to the history of art education (e.g. Efland, 1990[1]). Lastly, because a primary focus of the course was to guide students through a historical research project using archival materials and because we were meeting primarily online that semester, I worked with the research librarians to locate digital archival collections. These collections broadened the scope of the research projects students could pursue and the histories represented.

By the end of the semester, what was most striking to me was that I had witnessed nearly every student in the course wrestle with their own subjectivities and with the role of race in their archival research projects, which had not been the case in previous semesters. While the changes I made to the course may have been partial factors in this shift, I suspect that it was the intensity of the social, cultural, and political climate

we were living through that had the biggest impact on how students approached their research. Importantly, as a White art educator with primarily White graduate students, I believe we were all interested in harnessing whatever insights we could about our role in social reform toward racial justice through the historical and archival texts we were engaged with. As White art educators, what could our investigations teach us about the histories of education in the US and the role of art in efforts toward racial justice? What could these inquiries teach us about our own positioning within these histories and how such histories may continue to shape our actions in the present?

Three years later, we are already witnessing a dismantling of many of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts that were spearheaded in response to the Black Lives Matter movement of 2020 (Mosley, 2024). Therefore, though the context is continually shifting, we follow the assertion of Carpenter et al. (2023) who, in their Editorial for the *Art Education Journal*, asserted, as a field, we must move *beyond* a focus on diversity to become racially literate and to develop a more astute understanding of the persistence of racism. Racial literacy, as discussed in the work of art educators Acuff and Kraehe (Acuff & Kraehe, 2022; Kraehe & Acuff, 2021;) and defined by Critical Race scholar Lani Guinier (2004), calls for analytical processes that move away from a perspective that might see racism as solely a problem of individuals to one that understands racism as "an instrument of social, geographic, and economic control of both whites and blacks" (p. 114). Racial literacy recognizes the intersections of race and power, "acknowledg[ing] the importance of individual agency but refus[ing] to lose sight of institutional and environmental forces that both shape and reflect that agency" (Guinier, 2004, p. 115). Events of 2020 such as the Black Lives Matter movement and the pandemic brought this reality to the fore, highlighting the structural forces that have continued to inscribe racial hierarchies in our society despite an illusion of post-Brown equality[2]. Developing racial literacy, then, is a critical component of working toward racial justice.

Just as our understandings of structural racism were being informed by the events unfolding daily that semester, we were also learning from our historical investigations. In particular, our readings and archival inquiries made evident how systems of White domination in the US have consistently shaped education through practices of

1   It should be noted that recent art education texts (e.g. Bolin & Kantawala., 2017; Bolin et. al, 2021) have begun to address these narratives.

2   Guinier's (2004) article explains that the ruling of Brown v. Board of Education to desegregate schools functioned mainly "to treat the symptoms of racism, not the disease" (p.99), suggesting that an emphasis on equality alone was not enough to solve the problems of racism without efforts to dismantle White Supremacy.

public schooling. It seemed that, in real time, the past and present were collapsing to demonstrate the persistence of racism across time and place. Overwhelmed with recognition for the ways Black oppression was both entrenched and ongoing, we felt a certain sense of despair regarding what could be done, yet we also began to see promise in the stories that emerged about the sustained efforts of Black communities to create their own alternatives, including the use of art as a tool for activism. Not only did the Anderson (1988) text illuminate the persistent, sustained efforts of Black communities to create their own sites of education throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but students' archival research also led to materials describing specific programs that used art for activist aims during the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements. These programs included efforts initiated by Black educators to secure their own survival and challenge existing structures as well as those initiated by White educators aiming to collaborate with Black communities in efforts toward racial justice.

In this article, three of the students from the course share their archival investigations of educational programs that were activist in nature and were either art-centered or included art as a component of their curriculum. Similarly to how researcher and educator Gholdy Muhammad (2020) studied the histories of Black literary societies, particularly as tied to liberatory practices, to locate salient qualities that could inform literacy education in the present, we discuss these programs with the goal of discerning characteristics of art education for racial justice that can inform the work of contemporary art educators. Further, as Muhammad (2020) suggests, we see these stories of persistence, resilience, and creative activism as an opportunity to expand narratives of Black education beyond those "steeped in pain" (p. 21). As Muhammad explains, the stories of Black people most often taught in schools emphasize narratives of struggle or suffering, but stories of excellence must be included as well in order to challenge any notion of a single story. With this warning and recommendation in mind, the authors of this article recognized the potential for the archival materials that were emerging through their investigations to highlight inspirational work involving Black communities, art, and activism as important contributions to existing narratives in art education. The first project, described by Lisa Novak, focuses on the role of art at the Mississippi Freedom Schools in the Summer of 1964. The second project, described by Ann Marie Satterfield, takes a critical look at the Urban Mythology Film Program, a film and photography program started in 1968 in Atlanta, Georgia. And the third project, described by Emily Hogrefe-Ribeiro, investigates the forms of art education employed at the Neighborhood Arts Center, a community arts center in

Atlanta, Georgia, that offered programming from 1975-1990. We begin by offering a brief history of Black education in the South[3] to set the historical context for the projects discussed. In addition, each author includes relevant historical context as part of their discussion. We conclude the article with six characteristics of art education for racial justice, culled from the three projects, that can serve as critical guidance for art educators pursuing justice-oriented work.

A Brief History of Black Education as Activism in the South (ca. 1860-1970)

Beginning with the emancipation of enslaved peoples in 1863 and continuing into the Reconstruction era (1863 to 1877) that followed, the history of education in the South is characterized by schooling designed for White populations and the numerous efforts of Black populations to therefore create and sustain forms of education that properly served their communities. These efforts, fundamentally activist in nature, included both the development of formal schooling specific to Black communities and informal approaches to education.

According to Anderson (1988), formerly enslaved people viewed access to education, especially reading and writing, as a fight of oppression. This perspective of literacy, and education more broadly, as a "means to liberation and freedom" (Anderson, 1988, p. 17) was "shaped partly by the social system of slavery under which they first encountered literacy" (Anderson, 1988, p. 17), when reading and writing was, for them, against the law. Anderson points out that no other class of southerners had experienced literacy as something they had to fight for the right to earn. Many who pursued literacy in secret as an act of rebellion became leaders of Black education after emancipation. The correlation between literacy and freedom likely contributed to the drive of Black leaders to become "the first native southerners to wage a campaign for universal public education" (Anderson, 1988, p. 18). Though the schools were segregated, in a matter of ten years, between 1860 and 1870, formerly enslaved Black southerners developed a complete school system. The success of their efforts was evidenced by the fact that "fourteen southern states had established 575 schools by 1865, and these schools were employing 1,171 teachers for the 71,779 Negro and white children in regular attendance" (Anderson, 1988, p. 19). Southern Blacks not only fought for education as a right, they

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3 Given that we have situated this article in the context of a History of Art Education course in which James Anderson's (1988) book served as a new text, we rely heavily on his description of education for Blacks in the South for this section.

also worked with Republicans to build it into the constitutional law of Southern states, all while the planter class worked to oppose them and secure their own economic and agricultural domination.

Although the dominant-class Whites did not agree with education for Blacks, especially a system that could lead to a literate Black working class, they eventually came to realize they would not be able to combat the progress made by the Black educational movement of the 1860s and 1870s; therefore, they shifted their efforts toward *shaping* Black education instead (Anderson, 1988). By the 1880s, Whites from the planter class and abolitionists from the North set out to mold the emerging system of Black education in the South "to teach subservience within a racist power structure" (Stankiewicz, 2013, p. 211). Schools established by Black communities were designed to be sites of pride and sought to ensure that students received the same classical liberal curriculum as students in White schools, but during this period Black schools were forced to focus on industrial training, preparing students for manual labor jobs that would maintain the racialized labor hierarchy of the South. When it came to high schools, a primary aim of White philanthropists was to "transform southern black secondary education into a system of training and socialization primarily for prospective unskilled and semi-skilled workers" (Anderson, 1988, p. 208), thereby limiting the potential for Black southerners to disrupt existing class structures.

One model of industrial education became especially popular through the efforts of Samuel Armstrong (a White northerner) at the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in Virginia (founded in 1868) and his most famous student, Booker T. Washington (a formerly enslaved Black man), who would carry on the traditions of the school by founding the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute in Alabama in 1881 (Anderson, 1988). As Anderson explains, the "Hampton-Tuskegee Idea" sought to avoid confrontations with the Planter class in the South, for example, through "a pedagogy and ideology designed…to maintain within the South a social consensus that did not challenge traditional inequalities of wealth and power" (Anderson, 1988, p. 33). The Hampton model of industrial education as promoted by Washington was firmly "outside the mainstream of black educational thought" (Sherer, 1977, p. 146 as cited in Anderson, 1988, p. 67), but did gain momentum through well-organized efforts between "northern businessmen philanthropists and southern whites" (Anderson, 1988, p. 78). By the early 1900s, the debate over the "proper education of black people" (Anderson, 1988, p. 77) reached a zenith as the young W.E.B Dubois emerged as a leader who would challenge the Hampton model with his proposal for a rigorous form of higher education for the most exceptional Black youth in order to "guide the race's social development" (Anderson, 1988, p. 104).

The development of second-class education for Black students in the South was never overlooked by Black communities, who found ways to provide forms of education more in line with their goals. One way that Black communities fought back was to establish an educational network of Sabbath schools in churches and self-funded, self-regulated, and self-taught private schools, often choosing to keep their children out of schools run by White philanthropists in favor of these self-created educational spaces (Anderson, 1988). Importantly, Anderson notes that attendance at Sabbath schools was not reported in statistics of school attendance, yet research suggests that by 1885, the African Methodist Episcopal church alone reported 200,000 children in their Sunday Schools, where instruction did not just cover the Bible but included spelling, for example. These efforts demonstrate how the impulse towards educational activism not only maintained but often created unique Black educational systems that thrived.

During the Civil Rights movement, the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling of 1954 deemed segregated schools inherently unequal and unconstitutional (Rury, 2019); yet, amid the tumult of the period and struggle for equal education, racial inequality in schooling continued to be a problem, particularly in the South. Despite the national campaign towards integration, Black activists became disillusioned with the goal as they confronted racism in the enduringly White supremacist mainstream educational system. Public schools for Black students were often severely underfunded and under-resourced (Harris, 1993). Black Power advocates argued that the White school system had no expectation for Black children to succeed – a problem that had persisted since Reconstruction. The system approached Black children in integrated schools with a deficit mindset that blamed Black culture, families, neighborhoods, and even genetics for academic underachievement (Williamson, 2005). Activists responded in multiple ways, including through Civil Rights Organizations such as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), founded in 1960, which "engaged poor Southern Blacks in the same project of self-discovery and social transformation to which they had committed themselves" (Perlstein, 2005, p. 36). SNCC developed one of the best-known examples of alternative educational spaces in the Freedom Schools, where activists worked with Black learners to cultivate agency by constructing meaning from their own experiences to incite advocacy toward justice and equality.

Additionally, Black Power advocates of the 1960s and 1970s focused their energy on both formal and informal educational systems, particularly community solutions that emphasized Black-centered materials and students' lived experiences (Williamson, 2005). These schools were liberatory in nature and explicit in their goals for revolution. Perlstein (2005) argues that the Black Panthers' most significant achievement in transforming the consciousness of African Americans was their emphasis on educational agency that offered students "an alternative to the ideologies of racial supremacy and economic oppression that surrounded them" (p. 54), exposing students to the culture of power and inspiring critique of that power. More broadly, African Americans continued to strengthen their own schools, even as they simultaneously attempted to access mainstream, White educational systems (Williamson, 2005).

Education for Black Americans in the South has been a persistent struggle, with segregation and racism creating separate educational systems in which schools for Black students suffered from a clear lack of resources and attention. However, throughout this history there has existed a pattern of rupture and community investment on the part of Black communities who actively and persistently worked to challenge these unequal systems. Schools created by Black Southerners elicited community care, advocacy, and an emphasis on education as freedom from oppression. The push for education came from a unique motivation propelled by the trauma of slavery and the concurrent need for liberation amid nearly 100 years of Jim Crow laws. Instead of attempting to make a White, racist educational system work, community members prioritized activism and local solutions. The three community projects highlighted by Lisa, Ann Marie, and Emily in the following sections were born out of this activist educational lineage.

Art and Activism in the Mississippi Freedom Schools

As a White woman born and raised in Central Europe, I (Lisa) grew up on a diet of American popular culture. The striking images of Black revolutionaries, the social movements of the 1960s and the violent images of segregation permeated much of my youth by way of books and documentaries. During my graduate studies in a small Southern college town, where I conducted this archival research, I found myself surrounded by obvious and not so obvious signs and signifiers of its White supremacist past, living amidst a history that I had previously encountered from a distance but in reality, still knew very little about. Wanting to learn more about the "South" and given that I had a long personal interest in creative disobedience and artist- and activist-run

schools, I decided to focus my archival inquiry on the Mississippi Summer of 1964, with a primary focus on art education at its Freedom Schools. Specifically, I wanted to know how art education shaped the political and activist nature of the Mississippi project that summer; what was taught, made, discussed, and with whom. However, before trying to locate archival documents that would help me find out more about the role of art and art education at the Mississippi Freedom Schools, I considered it necessary to situate Freedom Summer, in which White volunteers from the North alongside Northern and Southern Black folks descended on Mississippi to register disenfranchised Black voters, within a wider historical and educational context. This summer marked the signing of the Civil Rights Act on July 2, 1964, which outlawed segregation in public places and schools, prohibited employment discrimination, and enforced the right to vote (Civil Rights Act of 1964). Weeks before the Act was signed, in June 1964, various Ku Klux Klan members, including the 26-year-old deputy sheriff of Neshoba County, Mississippi, tortured and killed Freedom Summer activists James Chaney, Michael Schwerner, and Andrew Goodman (Public Broadcasting Service, n.d).

Mississippi Schools: A White Space

It had been ten years since the passing of *Brown v Board of Education*, which declared segregation in public schools unconstitutional and tasked school systems to implement programs that would eventually desegregate all schools in the South (supreme.justia.com, n.d). Despite its ratification, however, critics of *Brown* noted that the law, in reality "declined to guarantee that white privilege would be dismantled" (Harris, 1993, p. 1751) and "failed to expose the problem of substantive inequality in material terms produced by white domination and race segregation" (Harris, 1993, p. 1752). Black schools in Mississippi remained substantially underfunded, and Black students were deprived of classes that were available to White students, including art. Some Mississippi districts allocated "$464.49 per white but only $13.71 per black student" (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2017, 1944 to 1954 section) in the ten years between 1944 and 1954. Almost ten years later in 1962, school districts like Clarksdale, Mississippi, continued their segregated funding practices, spending $146.06 on White students while only allocating $25.07 to Black students (Bolton, 2005). However, Mississippi's reluctance to desegregate eventually led the US District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi to mandate school boards to formulate desegregation plans by July 1964 (Dixon, 2020). Following a call for the desegregation of public

schooling, political leaders responded by encouraging citizens to "construct a segregated educational haven" (Bolton, 2005, p. 109) by developing alternative schools for White students. A September 1964 issue of the anti-integration publication *The Citizen* titled "How to Start A Private School!" provided White readers with a step-by-step guide on how to create private schools that did not have to follow the court's rules to desegregate. Little was said in the manual about the role of art education, except that one will "want to make some provision for music and art, and physical education" (Citizen's Councils of America, 1964, p. 15).

With this information in mind, I set out to find materials about the state of art education in Mississippi during the 1960s. Though it was difficult to source documents specific to art curriculum, I did come across a series of high school yearbooks that offered a glimpse of life in Mississippi schools. Photographs of all-white students and faculty, and teenagers with up-dos at celebrations for seniors, including the 1964 Stephen D. Lee High School Voodoo Village banquet in Columbus, Mississippi – a blackface extravaganza, reify the casualness with which White supremacy shaped Mississippi schooling and everyday life (Stephen D. Lee High School, 1964). Lee High was also home to an all-White arts club that collected "new art supplies and used pencils to be sent to a Mexican school…to promote an interest in art at Lee High" (Stephen D. Lee High School, 1964, p. 160) every year. Ironically, while the White students at Lee High mailed their care packages to children they considered in-need to do moral good, Black students in their surrounding communities had few, if any, instructional and art supplies at their disposal (Bolton, 2005). The examples briefly described here are crucial in understanding Freedom Schools as activist-led projects whose purpose it was to supplement and provide "the intellectual wastelands" of Mississippi's Black schools with a "broad intellectual and academic experience" (Cobb, 1963, p. 2) otherwise not accessible to Black students.

Freedom Schools

"The children who came to [Freedom Schools] felt special because there was a school made just for them" (Clemons, 2014, p. 147)

The 41 Freedom Schools drew approximately 2,000 local children and youth, who were recruited from nineteen communities across Mississippi (Bolton, 2005). Historical documents reveal that art was not dismissed as frivolous and useless, but that Freedom Schools "crystallized the value of a cultural approach to movement work,

integrating music, theater, art, poetry and history into the development of political awareness" (Street, 2004, p. 276) among Black Mississippians. In preparation for Freedom Summer, the many volunteers were expected to travel to Oxford, Ohio, for canvassing and teacher-training (Watson, 2011, p. 19). A document titled Council of Federated Organizations (COFO) Orientation Art Workshop Notes dated June 26, 1964, begins by outlining that art can be used "as a medium of expression," "as an approach to the community," and "as a medium of mass communication" (Koppelman, 1964, p. 1). Like a guide for beginning teachers, the workshop notes provided instructions on how to inexpensively produce clay or finger paint, offering suggestions for playful projects that invited students to experiment with nontraditional, natural, and found materials. Projects explicitly called for volunteers and students to get to know the surrounding community, and to "draw upon people to give [them] ideas about the kinds of projects [they] can do, and to come to the center to help teach something they are good at…or to contribute to a program" (Koppelman, 1964, p. 4). Art engagement at Freedom Schools, the organizers imagined, would be a tool for activism and relationship-building, and offer opportunities to closely work with those who lived and worked nearby (Figure 1).

In my search for archival documents related to art curriculum, a footnote in a journal article led me to the Library of Congress website where I found just what I had been looking for: The SNCC Freedom Schools Art Curriculum. This curriculum document listed eight different ninety-minute-long workshops for ten to twelve students with the goal of fostering student self-sufficiency through woodworking, building, and design, and included a graphics workshop, a cultural history of art course, and a social value of art workshop. Importantly, two of the workshops addressed the relationship(s) between art, activism, and everyday life, with art teachers relaying to Freedom students that "[Black] American artists…[were] essential to our understanding of freedom, emancipation, civil rights, assimilation, and the continued struggle for social and political change" (Johnson, 2014, p. 194). While the graphics workshop supported the "printing of communications of community importance" (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, 1964, Graphic Workshops section), the discussion-based *Cultural History of Art* course introduced students to the complex nature of art in society and sought to illustrate to students what may happen "when art blossoms, and when it withers from neglect due to sociological events in that society" (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, 1964, Cultural History of Art section).

The art teachers, many of whom were women (Street, 2004), were also

Figure 1. *Two children color together during Freedom Summer.*

Note. Frame 28: Kids drawing together. From Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party records, 1962-1971, by the Wisconsin Historical Society, n.d. (https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Image/IM97882). Reprinted with permission.

given access to a forty-seven-page recreational manual titled *Something Special*, which included a detailed ten-page section dedicated to best practices in art instruction. Noting that "an atmosphere of creative excitement is always the most important step toward meaningful art instruction" (Council of Federated Organizations, 1964, p. 6), the authors of the manual outlined twelve suggestions for arts teachers, encouraging them to not judge the youth's efforts, to be receptive to ideas that are fostered and imagined by the group, and to complete one project before introducing another.

Art that Serves the Community

The importance of art as a tool for social engagement and community-building was articulated in the objectives of the Freedom School's *Social Value of Art* course, which focused on how "art can serve the community" (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, 1964, Social Value of Art section). According to the curriculum document, sections of the course were to be devoted to the planning and organization of exhibitions and fundraisers, to fostering community pride, and to supporting artists; additionally, the course encouraged coordinating social action groups with art groups, establishing workshops for recreational programs, and ensuring practical training for Black leaders committed to community growth and development (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, 1964).

During the Mississippi summer of 1964, the young Black students at Freedom Schools were "encouraged to express themselves through whatever means were at their disposal and in whichever way they felt most comfortable" (Street, 2004, p. 285). At the end of the summer, some of the drawings were exhibited at Palmer's Crossing Community Center in Hattiesburg, where smiling children proudly displayed their work for the first time (Figure 2). These moments of togetherness were at the heart of Freedom Summer's ethos, giving all participants, including organizers, teachers, community members, adults, and students, the opportunity to enjoy the work of the Freedom Schools' art departments. Liz Fusco, the coordinator of the Freedom Schools, emphasized the importance of arts engagement that summer, noting that "a visible result of the Freedom Summer include[d] the kids' drawings on the walls of Freedom Schools and COFO offices all over the state" (Fusco, 1964, p. 19).

The Urban Mythology[4] Film Program: Activist Art Programming in the 1960s South

In my project, I (Ann Marie) examined the Urban Mythology Film Program, a film and photography program initiated in Atlanta in 1968 by White artist and educator Tullio Petrucci to provide a space for Black "urban youth" to tell stories about their lives (Georgia Commission on the Arts, 1969). Though the name of the Urban Mythology program did not explicitly describe that the program worked with Black youth, in Atlanta as in other cities, the word "urban" had become largely synonymous with "Black." I first encountered this program when I read a 1969 report by the Georgia Commission on the Arts available through the Digital Library of Georgia. The report cited how the Urban Mythology Program used "film and photography as a way of focusing attention on the myths which pervade the urban environment, thus affording children an opportunity to establish an art based on their everyday lives" (Georgia Commission on the Arts, 1969, page 15). In an article about one of the program's initiatives, Project Enlarge, Petrucci expressed his hope for "children to get their own way of seeing onto paper," insisting that "They need to build their own standards, way of looking at things and set of values" (Petrucci cited in Hippler, 1968, p. 2L). Further, the program description explained that, through televising their process and publication of photographs, leaders hoped the students' work "may have a real chance to influence the development

4   Note that the program is referred to as both the Urban Mythology Film Program and the Urban Mythologies Film Program, depending on the publication. I use Urban Mythology, which is the name used in the report where I initially learned about the program.

of American culture" (Georgia Commission on the Arts, 1969, page 15). The Urban Mythology program was widely documented in the media (Figure 4) and was filmed as a television series that won an Emmy in 1969. Additionally, photography by the program's participants was exhibited throughout the country, including in Expo '69 at the Coliseum in New York (Georgia Commission on the Arts. 1969, p. 15).

Figure 2. *Image of children at a Freedom School art exhibit by Herbert Randall, 1964.*

Note. From the Digital Collection at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Photographs of Black students involved in the program were included in the Georgia Commission on the Arts report (Figure 3) and prompted me to become curious about the influences and motives behind this White-directed arts programming for Black youth in the recently integrated South. In the 1960s and 1970s, the integration of schools gave way to tensions surrounding White educators teaching Black students. Black students often protested White teachers teaching Black

history, and as one 1970s Black high school student stated, "We were not listening to any white people, at the time, unless they had shown some solidarity with our cause" (Rury & Hill, 2013, p. 504). Furthermore, during this time period, many White teachers showed hostility to Black students, especially in the South (Rury, 2019). With this context in mind, Petrucci's role in the Urban Mythology program was a point of interest for me. As a White art educator from Georgia educating students of color and working to develop culturally responsive pedagogy in the South, I often asked myself how my positionality affected my teaching and wondered what I could learn from taking a critical look at the efforts of Petrucci and the Urban Mythology program. For example, did Petrucci fall into a White savior trope (Schultz, 2019) or perhaps what Denmead (2019) describes as the pitfalls of "good White creatives" (p. 2) in his analysis of an urban youth art program?

Figure 3. *Image of participants in the Urban Mythology Film Program.*

Note. Image from page 17 of the Georgia Commission on the Arts Report. From the Georgia Commission on the Arts by the Digital Libraries of Georgia, 2024. (https://dlg.usg.edu/record/dlg_ggpd_y-ga-ba775-pa7-ba1-b1969). Reprinted with permission.

The Urban Mythology program was not Petrucci's only involvement in the arts in Atlanta. According to the Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia (n.d.), he was head of the design department at the Atlanta

College of Art from 1963-1968, Chairman of the Visual Arts Committee for the Atlanta Arts Festival, and worked with the Youth Experimental Opera Workshop (YEOW). His role as a White art educator in a program designed especially for Black youth, however, was likely a complex one. Communities in the South were especially resistant to integration of schools, and public schools in Atlanta did not begin integrating until 1961 (Burns, 2011; Georgia Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights, 2007). When they did, the result was middle class, White flight to the suburbs, leaving urban areas to increasingly become characterized by Black poverty (Rury & Hill, 2013). Schools in urban areas were deeply unequal to those in the suburbs, having fewer resources and opportunities to provide their primarily Black students (Georgia Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights, 2007). Black high school students were engaging in protests across the country for greater equity of resources between schools (Rury & Hill, 2013) and pressure from Civil Rights Groups, including the NAACP, influenced Lyndon Johnson to initiate the 'War on Poverty' in 1965 (Rury, 2019). During this time, it is likely that programming for Black youth in Atlanta offered limited opportunities for engagement with the arts.

The Urban Mythology program was funded in part by laws stemming from the War on Poverty, including the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA). Many programs were developed through libraries, museums, and community centers to address community and social concerns using film (Dearlove, 2017), and the Urban Mythology program was among them. In a 1970 hearing to extend the LSCA, director of the Public Library of Atlanta, Carlton Rochell, described the library's actions as a "catalyst in the social revolution" and credited the Urban Mythology program as a project "solving the educational and social ills of [Atlanta]," stating, "The results of this project have been amazing" (Library Services and Construction Amendments, 1970, p. 88).

The Urban Mythology program was also associated with and supported by the Atlanta Postal Street Academies, an organization initiated by Black Civil Rights Activist C.T. Martin to address the growing high school dropout rate among Black youth in Atlanta (Jordan, 2011). These academies operated as storefront schools in urban areas, serving and educating high school dropouts. The program was enormously successful and Postal Street Academies opened in several other cities including Chicago, Detroit, San Francisco, and Washington D.C (Housman, 1970). Today, Postal Street Academies are known as Communities in Schools, Inc., and have garnered national recognition (Jordan, 2011). The collaboration between the Urban Mythology program and the Atlanta Postal Street Academies suggests that Petrucci situated the program within the social justice work already being conducted by Black Civil Rights leaders.

Petrucci's work with Urban Mythology was supported by other members of the Civil Rights movement as well. The program was often featured in the newspaper, *The Atlanta Voice*, which was founded by Black Civil Rights activist Ed Clayton. The newspaper's motto was, "A People Without A Voice Cannot Be Heard" (*The Atlanta Voice*, n.d.) and was created with the intent to provide media coverage of the Civil Rights Movement which was being ignored by the White media. Additionally, in a 1969 article from *The Atlanta Constitution*, Civil Rights leader Julian Bond responded to the success of the Urban Mythology Program by saying, "these photographs present a mirror image of the life of the photographers. Their lenses are their eyes. They have shown here what their days are like: What life is like for them...Their cameras are weapons" (Brown, 1971, p. 62). Given these positive descriptions of the Urban Mythology program by Civil Rights leaders, it seems likely that Petrucci's efforts were aligned with the hopes and goals of Black activists in Atlanta.

Lastly, the Urban Mythology program also appeared to align with a call for new aesthetics articulated by the Black Power Movement's artist, scholar, and activist Larry Neal, who in his 1968 essay *The Black Arts Movement*, called for a Black aesthetic that confronted the dominant Western norm. Neal (1968) states, "...to accept the white aesthetic is to accept and validate a society that will not allow him to live. The Black artist must create new forms and new values...he must create a new history, new symbols, myths, and legends…" (p. 30). Neal's essay was highly influential in shaping the aims of the Black Arts Movement, and perhaps his urging to create new myths for Black people inspired the naming of the Urban Mythologies program, as well as its goal to create photographs and films from Black perspectives that countered rather than reaffirmed Whiteness as an ideal (Figure 4).
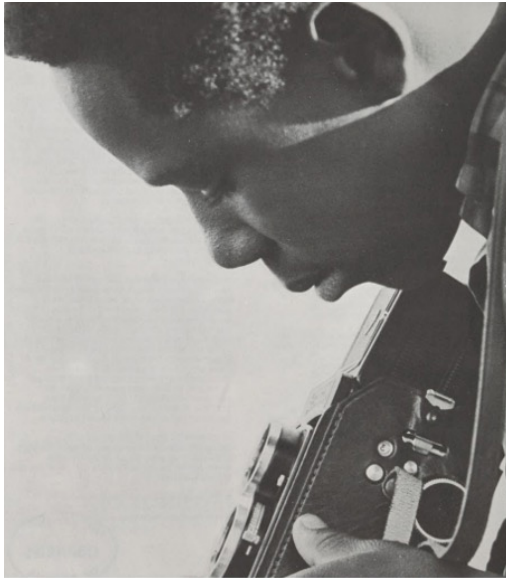
Figure 4. *Photograph of a participant in the Urban Mythology Film Program.*

Note. Image from page 14 of the Georgia Commission on the Arts Report. From the Georgia Commission on the Arts by the Digital Libraries of Georgia, 2024. (https://dlg.usg.edu/record/dlg_ggpd_y-ga-ba775-pa7-ba1-b1969). Reprinted with permission.

During my research, I was able to get in contact with an art student of Petrucci, Tom Pittard, who worked alongside him on the Urban Mythology Program. Also a White artist, he described Petrucci as a "passionate supporter of the Civil Rights movement" (personal communication, June 2, 2024), along with many other White artists during the 1960s. Pittard also stated that he, along with Petrucci and other collaborators of the program, were highly influenced by Joseph Campbell's writings about mythmaking and the arts. Campbell, whose most notable work, *A Hero with a Thousand Faces*, was first published in 1949, asserted that myth-making functions in 4 distinct ways: "(1) the urge to comprehend the natural world in a meaningful way; (2) the search for a marked pathway through the succeeding epochs of human life; (3) the need to establish secure and fulfilling relationships within a community; and (4) the longing to know one's part in the vast wonder and mystery of the cosmos (Feinstein & Krippner, 1988, p.155).

Though Campbell's assertions about mythmaking and its influences on the Urban Mythology Program could be seen as worthy, I wonder if Larry Neal (1968), who called for the creation of new, Black aesthetic and mythology separate from the White mythmaking "of a society that will not allow him to live" (p. 30) would think it were possible to achieve a new Black aesthetic through the direction and philosophical lenses of White people. Did the Urban Mythology Program truly help create a new Black aesthetic? It seems that the Black youth involved in the program had a lot of say and power in what they created, though I also wonder how the presence of their White teachers (Figure 5), no matter how well-intentioned, may have filtered or swayed their final products and the cultural impact of their artwork. This is a tension that White educators, including myself, must continually contend with.

Figure 5. *Youth participants taking part in "Project Enlarge" with instructor David Burns.*

Note. Project Enlarge helps students grow," from The Atlanta Constitution, August 17, 1968 (p. 57). From The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. © 1968 The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. All rights reserved. Used under license.

While the connections between Petrucci's work, the Civil Rights movement, and the efforts of Black leaders and communities seemed largely positive, the photographs of the Urban Mythologies program that appeared in news media were often accompanied by problematic descriptions. Such descriptions often othered the Black male participants, frequently referring to their work as "Ghetto

Photography" (Figure 6) and positioning the White directors as the artist heroes allowing "ghetto students" an opportunity to create art (Brown, 1971, p. 62). Given these descriptions, it is hard to say to what extent the printed images offered counternarratives or to what degree they may have contributed further to the production of stereotypical images of Black lives (Rolling, 2020). Looking back at the program from the present, I also find it difficult to fully assess Petrucci's efforts through the lens of anti-racist art education. It seems possible that his endeavors to align the Urban Mythologies program with calls for action by Black activists and artists positioned him as a worthy collaborator in support of Black creative resistance and justice, and not all images in the media enforced problematic tropes of the Black teen participants. At the same time, Petrucci may have been unaware or even complicit in the ways some media coverage reinforced racist stereotypes. White art educators today might therefore look critically at the complexities of their own efforts toward racial justice to consider the possibility of multiple, even contradictory effects.

Figure 6. *Newspaper clipping with participants from Project Enlarge, titled "Ghetto Photography."*

Note. "Ghetto Photography." Reprinted from Central New Jersey Home News, April 4, 1971, in Newspapers.com. © Central New Jersey Home News – USA TODAY NETWORK. Reprinted with permission.

The Neighborhood Art Center: Black Art Education as Activism in Atlanta, Georgia

While searching the Digital Library of Georgia, I (Emily) came across a group of photographs from a collection titled *Community art in Atlanta, 1977-1987: Jim Alexander's Photographs of the Neighborhood Arts Center from the Auburn Avenue Research Library*. The documentary-style photographs of the Neighborhood Arts Center, or NAC, pronounced "knack" (Tate, 2012), depict Black art educators leading workshops, influential Black artists interacting with the Atlanta community, and the center's slogan "Art for People's Sake" (Tate, 2012, p. 13). I became interested in the creation and programming of the NAC as an activist art educational space in the South. As a White museum educator and graduate student in art education at a Southern university, I am interested in activism and social justice in art museum education, and my curiosity was piqued by this example of arts activism *outside* the complicated space of the established (White) museum system and the city's schools. The NAC situated a community-driven art center within a larger movement of education-as-activism rooted in self-created Black educational spaces in the South. I wondered: how does art education fit within the historical Black investment in educational and community spaces that were sustained through systems outside of (and despite) existing White educational structures?

Jim Alexander's 1980 photograph, *The NAC*, (Figure 7) depicts the center where it began — the repurposed former Peter James Bryant Elementary School in Atlanta's Mechanicsville neighborhood, a predominantly Black community chosen by state officials to be razed for the creation of a highway and the city's stadium (NAC, 1975-1978). The center provided arts education to residents of Atlanta from 1975 to 1990. It was created by public funding allocated by the city's first Black mayor, Maynard Jackson, and a group of local artists. The community-based arts center offered free workshops in dance, music, theater, creative writing, the visual arts (including painting, drawing, photography, and sculpture), and graphic design. Its initial audience spanned the entire community, including children, teens, adults, and the elderly (NAC, 1975-1978), and its legacy stretches into the present.

Figure 7. *Photograph of The NAC by Jim Alexander, 1980.*

Note. The Neighborhood Arts Center. Neighborhood Arts Center photographs series by Jim Alexander, from Archives Division, Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History, Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System, presented in the Digital Library of Georgia. Part of the Emory University Jim Alexander Collection. Reprinted with permission.

Very little scholarly research and writing has been done on the NAC. It is sometimes referenced as a community arts center created during the Black Arts Movement (Smethurst, 2006, 2010), but only one scholar (Tate, 2012) has done extensive archival research on the NAC. This research fills in gaps in existing literature about the regional and local dimensions of the Black Arts Movement in the South, which Tate and Smethurst contend is under-explored and -theorized. While Tate's dissertation provides the first historical analysis of the NAC, there is no scholarly research looking at the organization from an art education perspective. How does the NAC relate to larger art education trends and movements during this time? And, how does considering the forms of art education employed at the NAC as activism coincide with historical trends of Black education as activism in the South?

Community Arts Centers

According to Efland (1990), the arts-in-education movement of the 1960s was known for its "tendency to seek solutions to educational problems

outside of the school, to regard the school itself as *part* of the problem, and to involve community agencies such as arts councils and museums, as resources" (p. 246). As art education expanded into the suburbs during the 1960s and 1970s, the number of art positions advertised in large American cities like Atlanta decreased. Efland (1990) explains, "The larger central cities were facing severe economic problems as more affluent families moved to the suburbs and were replaced by poorer families," and as a result, "school districts economized by cutting back on central staffs that operated at the district level, placing greater reliance on building principals and supervisory functions" (p. 230). This redistribution of educators and funding likely played out in Atlanta during this time and, combined with the arts-in-education movement's interest in community arts efforts, might explain why the city of Atlanta implemented a project like the NAC during the 1970s.

Davis (2010) outlines a history of community art centers that provides further insight into the connections between the NAC and trends in art education. According to Davis, as early as the turn of the century, community-based educational centers developed from settlement houses that helped immigrants in cities develop marketable skills focused on industrial arts like drawing. By the late 1960s, however, artists began creating centers for arts learning in response to cuts in funding for schools and to combat social trends like gang life and drugs "that threatened the well being of…youth" (Davis, 2010, p. 85). In the 1970s, art centers in cities served the purpose of "working to help mend the fabric of schools damaged by the removal of arts education" (Davis, 2010, p. 85). During this time, schools began transporting students to arts centers, perhaps as part of the arts-in-education trend towards arts educational avenues outside schools. Art centers provided art education that had been marginalized elsewhere. In an article written after the NAC's first year of operation, the author describes the center as functioning similarly to the institutions Davis describes. They note: "the Center is mostly used by kids after school and before supper" in a "working class neighborhood without the tradition of enthusiastic adult amateurism that tends to flourish among the middle class" (NAC,1975-1978). In other words, the NAC provided opportunities for arts learning that would have been cultivated in Atlanta's wealthier, Whiter suburbs but might not have been prioritized in the working-class, Black neighborhoods of Atlanta.

Black Arts Movement

Another movement during the late 1960s and 1970s that advocated for the creation of alternative arts spaces emphasizing community

engagement was the Black Arts Movement, which developed as art took on a larger role in the Black Power movement. The Black Arts Movement put revolutionary Black art at the forefront of the political struggle for social, political, and economic opportunity. The movement rejected the common refrain "art for art's sake," and replaced it with "art for people's sake," which emphasized artmaking as "a mutual dialogue between artists and audiences rather than a singular experience focused upon the artist and himself" (Tate, 2012, p. 13). This new phrase became the motto adopted by the NAC, linking the center's cultural values to activism.

Larry Neal's (1968) seminal Black Arts Movement text explains that the Black Arts Movement "envisions an art that speaks directly to the needs and aspirations of Black America" (p. 29). Black artists eschewed the mainstream art community and art museums. Instead, art education mirrored Black Power's emphasis on Black-centered educational content for schools and an active role in the community. Artists worked primarily within their communities, and they were invested in bringing the arts to their neighborhoods (Patton, 1998). The movement emphasized art centers as collective art educational spaces that realized "Art for People's Sake" through their programming, product, and institutional structures (Tate, 2012). The NAC fulfilled this role in Atlanta.

Looking at a 1975 press release announcing the center's opening, it is clear that a Black aesthetic and the arts of the African diaspora were a priority for the NAC. The press release includes workshops in Western European dance and artmaking techniques, but it also advertised African dance, Haitian dance, and silkscreening (NAC, 1975-1978). The NAC emphasized the role of local working and teaching artists in its creation and developed an artist-in-residence program. Its art educational programming brought participants into the arts center for lessons and workshops with notable Black artists, including Romare Bearden, John Biggers, Elizabeth Catlett, Eldzior Corter, Jacob Lawrence, and Hale Woodruff (NAC, 1975-1990). The art and educational mission of the NAC adopted the political activism of the movement, prioritizing Black art traditions.

A focus on community was echoed in a statement by NAC's early director, John Riddle:

> 'People around here,' says Riddle, 'need and want contact with the arts as much as people do anywhere...especially as a

means of recovering a cultural tradition they are in danger of losing completely. The Neighborhood Arts Center can become an important mechanism for focusing the whole community's awareness of itself as a community...When the members of the staff were once asked to define their jobs, they decided unanimously to call themselves 'cultural workers.' (NAC, 1975-1978)

The NAC reached into the community through the implementation of various festivals including Arts Festival Atlanta and the (still running) National Black Arts Festival (NAC, 1975-1990). Outreach programming took the form of writing classes for women at a prison release center and a Jazzmobile program that brought professional Black musicians into the community as a way to create access beyond the physical space of the NAC (NAC, 1975-1978; Priglinger et al., 2014). The NAC cultivated the careers of countless artists, writers, and dancers, including actor Samuel L. Jackson, writer Toni Cade Bambara, art historian Michael D. Harris, and film directors Spike Lee and Tyler Perry (*Memorial Drive*, 2020; *Smethurst*, 2010). Community investment, a Black aesthetic, and a focus on arts education as liberation saturate the history of the NAC.

The NAC, existing from 1974 through 1990, carried a lineage of education as activism, promoting political art education outside of and despite existing, White educational structures. Although there is a lack of existing literature that focuses on Black Art Education, I have looped together the threads of greater art historical trends, the role of alternative arts spaces, the political motivations of the Black Arts Movement, and a historical reference for arts education as activism to argue that Black arts education should be located within the framework of Black education as activism in the South. This arts education was located outside of mainstream arts education structures and was implemented, persisted, and thrived outside of White intervention.

Conclusion

We began this article by situating our research within the context of a course that took place at a particularly turbulent moment in recent history – one that brought racial injustice to our attention through horrifying events such as the death of George Floyd at the hands of police and the disproportionate effects of the pandemic on communities of color, while also prompting subsequent collective action toward racial justice in the form of the Black Lives Matter movement. Additionally, we recognized that our present moment has seen the dismantling of

some of those efforts, producing a different kind of turbulence. What is clear is that racial justice is pressing, and yet the fight is not new.

The creative activism deployed in the Civil Rights era offers a substantial resource for art educators seeking to pursue racial justice in the present, whether in public school settings or community sites. As we described in the introduction, we follow Muhammad (2020), who investigated historical efforts of education as liberation to consider what lessons could be learned. In addition, we build on the work of other art educators who have similarly examined the historical efforts of Black artists-educators-activists (e.g. Bey, 2011, 2017; Congdon, 2017; Grant & Kantawala, 2021; Hardy, 2018, 2022; Stankiewicz, 2013) and White allies (e.g. Holt, 2012; Kee, 2021; Kee & Stankiewicz, 2021). Therefore, based on our historical and archival investigation of art and activism at the Freedom Schools, the Urban Mythology Film Program, and the Neighborhood Art Center, we conclude this article by offering the following six characteristics of art education for racial justice, adapting some of Muhammad's (2020) lessons (pp. 32-35) as the foundation for our own, to serve as guidance for contemporary art educators:

1. **Art education for racial justice was responsive to the social events and people of the time.** Each of the programs highlighted in this article were developed in response to the events of the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements and had goals for addressing social inequalities. They built programming that responded to pressing needs for advocacy and change and brought people in to engage in collective pursuits.
2. **Art education for racial justice encompassed art learning as well as the development of criticality and political awareness**. In each program, participants were engaging in artistic practices, but those practices were situated within the context of a broader focus on learning to read the world (Freire & Macedo, 1987; Muhammad, 2020) and become active agents of change through art.
3. **Art education for racial justice had Black-centered curricula that cultivated personal and collective identities through art learning and making.** Unlike the White-centered curriculum of public schools, the curriculum of these programs was built on the study of Black artists, activists, and cultural workers. With this curriculum, participants could develop an empowered sense of individual and collective identity.
4. **Art education for racial justice prioritized participant voices, ideas, and expressions.** The aim of these programs was not simply to teach technique (though the Urban Mythology Program and the NAC, especially, did seem to offer significant technical instruction), but to bring participant voices, ideas, and expressions to the fore. In all cases, art was seen as a means for participants to contribute to social, cultural, and political arenas.
5. **Art education for racial justice was a collective pursuit that was community-invested and community-embedded**. The programs were outward-facing, extending well beyond any building walls and working with and in communities. Both Black educators and White educators working as allies were embedded in the art and activism of those communities, collaborated with each other and community members, and created shared sites of education and community investment.
6. **Art education for racial justice, when enacted by White art educators, was vulnerable to the possibility of contributing to problematic discourses even while aiming to combat those discourses.** As highlighted by the "Ghetto Photography" image from the Urban Mythology Film Program, racial discourses pervasive throughout society are powerful forces that can negatively shape even well-educated intentions. For example, despite Petrucci's collaboration with Civil Rights leaders and organizations, some photos from the Urban Mythology Program contributed to an othering of Black youth. The fact that a program might embody aims toward racial justice and simultaneously produce harm is a tension that White art educators should be particularly aware of.

In summary, we suggest art educators today consider the efforts undertaken by artists-educators-activists of the past as a valuable resource when developing and implementing their own work toward racial justice. Investigations like the ones we have detailed here can offer powerful examples that can be equally inspirational and cautionary. In particular, we suggest art educators study the historical activism and events that took place in their local context so that those investigations might illuminate the social, cultural, and political discourses that shaped the past and therefore continue to shape the present. Certainly, as White women art educators in the South, we have learned that, in any justice-oriented work we pursue, we will need to remain especially vigilant of the pervasive discourses of racism in which we are embedded and how they might unintentionally shape our practices. Additionally, however, we have also learned that we can look to the activism that is generated from the ground up by those seeking justice in local communities to see where and how we can best

align ourselves and contribute our efforts in the critical work that is already being done—and that contributes to a long history of grueling, liberatory work led by Black communities in this country.

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Political Degradation of Human Rights and Art Education

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ABSTRACT
In this article, we argue that not educating all people about human rights adversely impacts the education of children, world poverty, police brutality, politics, and the environment. We also argue that the type of character leaders have can inform them of the importance of advancing human rights for all. As a practical and specific matter, the advancement of human rights is essential to achieve equality and justice for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and other marginalized groups to promote peace, harmony, and civil rights in society. Peace and harmony should be normal in our schools and communities, but stress and conflict are commonplace, particularly with the rise of Fascism and Nazi influence by the conservative right-wing section of society who want to control educational policies. Peace and harmony lead to empathy to embrace kindness, grace, justice, and equity which directly influences social awareness for human rights. Without human rights, there is an existential threat to the normalization of society and we as art educators should be concerned and vigorously teach these concepts in our classrooms.

KEYWORDS: Civil Rights, Art Education, Leadership

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged us personally and collectively as a society. As a society, it has exposed long-simmering fault lines of unattainable human rights for many that have led to years of economic, racial, political, and social injustice and inequality that have had a tremendous historical impact on the poor that are particularly evident among Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) in the U.S. This impact has manifested itself in protests for Black Lives Matter after the police killing of predominantly Black people but also includes widespread racism and discrimination against marginalized groups.

The division in the federal government reflects the power that the conservative, right-wing politicians seek to control the freedoms and rights of the citizenry, especially women's health care issues, anti-Woke, anti-LBGTQ+ rights, and freedom of educational access to banned books, films, and other aspects of comprehensive education. As reported on PBS (Jul 8, 2022, 6:30 PM EDT), *Florida moves to restrict what schools can teach about systemic racism*,

> A new law in Florida has instituted restrictions on how schools and businesses can teach race-related concepts. The law, called the Stop Woke Act, limits instruction on critical race theory. It's the latest part of Republican Gov. Ron Desantis' extensive efforts to reshape public education and curriculum in the state.

The backlash to racial unrest like Black Lives Matter seemed to have been a White mob that invaded the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, and committed insurrection against their government. On ABC News, Brantley-Jones, (January 16, 2021, 2:57 PM) in the report, *False equivalency between Black Lives Matter and Capitol siege: Experts, advocates* stated that there is limited similarity between the incidents. As reported by ABC News, in her speech during the hearing, Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., condemned the president for "radicalizing his supporters" and "inciting them to willingly join with White supremacists, Neo-Nazis and para-military extremists in a siege of the United States Capitol building." This poses an existential threat to the long-held idea of a multicultural, multiracial, multilingual democracy in the U.S. that should be discussed in every classroom.

Ken Robinson (2011), a popular TED Talk motivational speaker and educator, said that we created the human world we now live in, and we can recreate it. In attempting to recreate the human world, we must first understand the scope of the problem, and this problem is epitomized by two recent events: the Black Lives Matter march and the predominately White mob invasion of the U.S. Capitol. The Black Lives Matter march was in essence a demand for human rights and the White mob invasion of the United States capitol was intended to maintain the status quo of the right-wing president's desire to remain in office even though he lost the election.

Without human rights, there will be no equality and justice for all, and there will always be conflicts that will escalate from time to time. There are many examples of this such as the Israel-Palestinian conflict, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and the history of South Africa's Apartheid state. Human dignity demands that everyone be afforded human rights, and without them, there will be no individual peace and harmony in society since peace and harmony begin with the internal experiences of the individual. Art education is a powerful tool to com-

municate this message and it can be employed to translate this into visual literacy with social media, exhibitions, poster campaigns, and 4-D images.

This paper reflects the ideas of two art educators on the current sociocultural situations in the U.S. and their classrooms. The current sociocultural situation in the U.S. and the topics in their classrooms are focused on a counternarrative of the organized and systematic effort to politically dehumanize human rights. For those who faultily believe that we are already advancing human rights for BIPOC and other marginalized groups, The NEA NEWS in *Freedom to Learn Day of Action*, noted:

> Instead of cultivating belonging, critical thinking, and funding public schools, some politicians across the country are banning books, censoring curricula, and passing state laws that limit classroom lessons on race and gender. The effects are damaging. Teachers, principals, and administrators have lost their jobs; lives have been threatened, and students' freedom to learn, be themselves, and pursue their dreams have been compromised. (para 3)

The political degradation of human rights comes as no surprise given the history of the U.S. After reconstruction, the Black Codes and Jim Crow laws were instituted to continue to disenfranchise marginalized groups in society, particularly BIPOC, and at the same time, advance the legacy of slavery and White supremacy. Marginalizing BIPOC permits the rest of society to do the same or to make those who are marginalized feel inconsequential and subservient. Slavery and White supremacy surfaced in the 15th Century during Europe's Age of Discovery when countries like Britain, Spain, France, and Portugal colonized lands across North and South America and enslaved and exploited BIPOC. The dehumanization of human rights is the legacy of slavery and White supremacy, and this legacy is rebranded as White privilege that is now imbedded in the very systems of the U.S. society preventing the advancement of human rights with devastating human and environmental consequences. The following paragraphs discuss these consequences and provide some reflections on what we as art educators can do to challenge and interrogate the status quo.

Human Rights and Education

Education is supposed to be the equalizer in society, giving everyone, regardless of race or circumstances, an equal opportunity to succeed.

Instead, education advances Caucasian students and marginalizes the academic progress of BIPOC. It is well-documented that there is an ongoing achievement gap between African American and Caucasian students in the U.S. K-12 public education (Jencks & Phillips, 1998). African-American students seem to underperform academically in public schools. Is it that most African-American students cannot learn? This seems to be a misinformation message. How much stereotyping are we willing to blithely accept? According to Steele (2010), many underperforming groups are victims of "identity contingencies" (p. 4) and "stereotype threats" (p. 117). These conditions often determine students' academic status. Some teachers and politicians blame parents while others blame teachers. Most assuredly it is a combination of many things such as poverty and a lingering traumatic history found in many sections of society at large, and we are all responsible in overt and subtle ways. All members of the community, including parents, teachers, politicians, business leaders, and the clergy need to understand this disparity. This pernicious violation of human rights, particularly in education, must be changed to advance equality and justice for all. The NEA NEWS in *Freedom to Learn Day of Action*, noted:

> We cannot, and we will not, allow politicians to grasp and hold on to power by fueling fear and division and limiting our students' access and opportunity to an honest and accurate and complete education,' said NEA President Becky Pringle, in April, during an NEA webinar on the "power of truth," adding that attacks on educators and their unions are driving teachers and education support staff out of the profession. 'It is our shared responsibility to ensure that every student, every educator, and every school is excelling. (para. 3-4)

This change can start in the art education classroom with current event topics that motivate visual research and reflective images among students.

Human Rights and Unemployment

The lack of education poses another serious problem—job uncertainty and its sustainability. Job uncertainty threatens the economic future of those who are not afforded education and human rights. Trilling and Fadel (2009) discussed this uncertain future by chronicling economic changes. With the advancement of technology and the increase of self-serving corporate profits, workers are being replaced by robots to reduce costs. The reality is that automation is the future, and it will continue to affect traditional, blue-collar jobs across the private and

public sectors. Technology is not the enemy, it is a supporting tool for the progress of humanity, but education and social responsibility must be the lighthouse for future developments. Since capitalism cannot function without laborers, if we sign a contract for capitalism, labor needs certain safeguards for the entire system to function properly. We must support those who will experience poverty due to the nature of the capitalist system. Technology does not need to threaten our way of life, but through the lens of corporate greed, it can bring a great deal of uncertainty, fear, and anger to people seeking employment given the unemployment statistics. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics:

> By race, Whites made up most of the labor force (77 percent). Blacks and Asians constituted an additional 13 percent and 7 percent, respectively. American Indians and Alaska Natives made up 1 percent of the labor force, while Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders accounted for less than half a percent. People who were of Two or More Races made up 2 percent of the labor force. People of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, who may be of any race, made up 18 percent of the total labor force. Almost 9 in 10 Hispanics in the labor force were White (89 percent). Another 4 percent were Black, and 1 percent were Asian. (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022)

This uncertainty impacts all people. A consequence of automation and technology makes the future less predictable. What the future holds in one or two decades for our citizens' employment is uncertain. But this phenomenon at the same time can create a dynamic future, developing many possibilities to be innovative and creative in new businesses and to discover different ways to function successfully in this global community (Morgenson, 2009). This dynamic future is not promised to those who are not educated and who are not granted human rights, and this must change by insisting that human rights are taught and practiced in the education enterprise and more specifically in our classrooms.

The unpredictable nature of jobs can motivate fear and hate of BIPOC members. Since fear is a major contributor to negative reactions to otherness, interacting with others who are different is a profound opportunity to broaden understanding, which reduces self-serving sense by familiarizing ourselves with otherness. By changing our art education curricula, pedagogies, and philosophies, we can promote and sustain a clear trajectory of taking care of ourselves, others, and the community. Taking care of self, others, and the community is a way to advance our

collective futures. The Igbo and Yoruba proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child," was made popular in the Western world through Clinton's book, *It Takes a Village* (Clinton, 1996). What the African communities have understood for generations is that it takes the entire community to educate children. However, in our communities in the U.S., the responsibility for the growth and development of children is not so clear-cut, and perhaps this is why we are having this disparity.

The Impact on Education

Are we moving too fast for our own good? Did COVID-19 virtual learning increase stress, depression, anxiety, and agoraphobia in our students? We are all (parents, schools, and governments) responsible for the growth and well-being of our children. None can avoid abdicating their responsibility to provide a safe and caring environment for their children. As Williams (July 28, 2023) reported in *Covid Changed Student Behavior—How Are Schools Responding?*

> Early data on children's mental well-being during (and even before) the pandemic should have been a warning sign. By May 2021, for example, 71 percent of families said the pandemic was negatively affecting their children's mental health, and social isolation topped families' list of unhealthy aspects of the pandemic—ahead of remote learning, excessive screen time, and even fear of the virus itself. It was inevitable that kids brought these struggles—and rusty social skills—back to campus as schools reopened. (para. 10)

Communities, and their respective governments, cannot shirk their human rights responsibilities to provide resources for K-12 school students, especially in art education programs where the topics found in human rights can be taught at every level. Unfortunately, it is common to find funding reduction or elimination of art programs affecting minorities in poor schools. Educating students to be successful is a crucial investment to prepare and advance our communities for an unknown future. To this end, adequate funding for K-12 schools is a collective responsibility; one that requires community leadership and members to meet, discuss, and support equitable strategies to advance a quality education for all, but most importantly, a good education alleviates poverty. Doepke and De La Croix (21 Sept 2007), noted in *Politics and the Structure of Education funding*:

> How is the quality of public education affected by the presence of private schools for the rich? Theory and evidence suggest

that the link crucially depends on the structure of the political system. A large private education sector can benefit public schools in a broad-based democracy where politicians are responsive to the needs of families using public schools, but leads to disastrous outcomes in a society that is politically dominated by the rich. (para 1)

In opposition to the current status of educational restrictions and the right-wing conservative agendas in the U.S., we must continue to shine a light on equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice as quality educational experiences for all students even in the face of contemporary Neo-Fascist and Neo-Nazi rhetoric from Trump and his followers' policies. As noted by Giroux (2022) in *Cultural Politics and the Crisis of Education and Political Agency*:

> The political war on education is now a central project of the menacing thrust toward authoritarianism in the United States. What is new is that the specter of fascism consists of both a right-wing attack to control and eliminate public and higher education as democratic public spheres and the waging of a full-scale attack on those elements of education that enable young people and others to become informed and critical citizens. This is a deeply anti-democratic movement increasingly embraced by states controlled by the Republican Party. The ideological thrust of this war on education is evident in recent remarks by Larry Arnn, who, as the president of Hillsdale College noted that teaching is our trade; and it's also our weapon.

We don't need to weaponize art education but value each person and teach persistence, flexibility, cooperation, and collaboration—the very skills needed in a changing future. Despite the rough terrain in contemporary politics that directly impacts personal educational experiences, we teach real-life experiences and value each person for their abilities and potentialities as they move into the future.

Human Rights and World Poverty

It is unimaginable that so many people are living in poverty when so few families control the world's wealth. In the U.S., there has been an ongoing concern about the inequity of the U.S. tax laws as seen in an excerpt from the Center on Budget and Policy, as Marr, Jacoby, and Fenton noted in their article *The 2017 Trump Tax Law Was Skewed to the Rich, Expensive, and Failed to Deliver on Its Promises*:

> The tax cuts [in 2025] will average $61,090 for the top 1 percent — and $252,300 for the top one-tenth of 1 percent. The law will boost the after-tax incomes of households in the top 1 percent by 2.9 percent in 2025, roughly three times the 0.9 percent gain for households in the bottom 60 percent, TPC estimates.[10] The tax cuts that year will average $61,090 for the top 1 percent — and $252,300 for the top one-tenth of 1 percent. The 2017 law also widens racial disparities in after-tax income. (para 11)

This is a failure to advance human rights to all so people can provide for and sustain themselves. In his book, *World Poverty and Human Rights*, Pogge (2008) reported that an estimated 830 million human beings are chronically under-nourished; 1,100 million lack access to safe drinking water; 2,600 million lack access to basic sanitation; 1,000 million lack adequate shelter; 1,600 million lack electricity; 2,000 million lack access to essential medical treatment; 774 million adults are illiterate; and there are 218 million child laborers. Furthermore, he stated that as of 2004, 2,533 million people, or 39.7 percent of us are living in severe poverty.

Bad things happen when good people say or do nothing. What are we doing personally and collectively to address the situation? These are questions we all need to ask ourselves and our students. Can art education students help by working in food kitchens or delivering meals to physically immobile people? Many college students are helping. From the Farmlink Project homepage, it is noted:

> Each year in the United States, billions of pounds of food go to waste. At the same time, millions of Americans suffer from food insecurity. The Farmlink Project aims to alleviate food insecurity and reduce food waste by connecting farms with a surplus of fresh, nutritious produce to communities in need. We are a group of university students committed to alleviating the ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic. When our college campuses closed in March 2020 in response to COVID-19, many of us found ourselves back at home with the urge to help those struggling in this pandemic. The Farmlink Project was born in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and we have plans to become a long-term and sustainable organization in the fight against food insecurity and food waste. Our team comprises more than 100 students from colleges and universities across the country. (para 1)

The alignment of K-12 schools to this project could provide much-needed financial contributions and volunteer support. We learn much more deeply to be better citizens when we are helping others. This is a valuable life lesson that can be taught in any art classroom. We can envision many art educators initiating projects from a poster campaign to supporting local gardens.

Janice Willis, a secondary English teacher in a public high school, organized and promoted a fund-raiser in her school for the Invisible Children, Inc., which is:

> an organization that was founded in 2004 to increase awareness of the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Central Africa, and its leader, Joseph Kony. We know that those most impacted by violence and exploitation are the ones with the solutions to end them. That's why we partner with dedicated community leaders on innovative programs that empower local communities to protect each other from violence, heal from trauma, and demand justice from their leaders. (para 1)

It was immensely productive for these high school students and their teachers to understand how to help others suffering from poverty in a distant land and the importance of human rights for all locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Human Rights and Police Brutality

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations reminds us that all people have the right to life; liberty and security; to not be submitted to slavery, servitude, forced labor, or bonded labor; to not be subjected to torture and/or cruel, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment. While poverty sometimes leads to inhumane degrading treatment, the legacies of slavery seem to be the primary factor when it comes to police brutality in the U.S. Worth Rises (September 14, 2023) characterizes it this way:

> Slavery is the evil that has loomed over [the US] our nation since its founding. Its racist legacy - carried through Black Codes, Jim Crow laws, Mass incarceration, and police brutality - continues to threaten the li[v]es of Black people and other people of color. The Black Codes and Jim Crow laws in the former Confederate States of America mandated racial segregation that began in the 1870s and has now manifested itself in systematic racial and cultural discrimination throughout society (Fremon, 2000).

There have always been complaints about police brutality from BIPOC communities in the U.S., and historically, these complaints were never taken seriously. Perhaps we citizens could not believe that law enforcement who are sworn to protect our communities are instead violating the civil rights of the BIPOC communities. Some recent examples of civil rights violations by the police are: Eric Garner was choked to death by New York City Police officers (ABC News, 2017); thirty-seven-year-old Alton Sterling was shot and killed by a Baton Rouge police officer (CNN, 2018); Terence Crutcher, whose hands were up and who was unarmed, was shot and killed by Tulsa police (CNN, 2017); and, twelve-year-old Tamir Rice, while playing with a toy gun in a park, was shot and killed by a Cleveland, Ohio, police officer (BBC News, 2014).

These are just a few of the many cases. Did good people say and do something to make sure that justice was served? Now that we know, what is being done? This is a perfect (albeit a bad) situation for discussions in the art classroom that can promote a broader and more sensitive understanding textually, orally, and visually of human rights and police brutality in society. These topics could provide amazing opportunities to organize exhibitions in the school, a civic center, or a public online forum to educate the citizens about their importance and imagine the skills these young artists could develop. Human rights violations, we must remember, are one of the principal causes of the Black Lives Matter movement and part of the turmoil in society.

Human Rights and the Environment

Climate change is most likely not directly threatening affluent people and if it does, they have the resources to mitigate its effect on them. Economically challenged individuals are most likely to live in areas impacted by climate change and their conditions most likely are caused by the lack of human rights. The relationship between human rights and environmental protection in international law is far from straightforward, but we have an obligation and a responsibility to leave an intact environment for future generations of all species. Despite this obligation and responsibility, we continue to burn enormous amounts of fossil fuels for short-term financial gain at the expense of preserving the environment. Kennedy and Tyson (March 1, 2024) present their view in their Pew Research Center article on *How Republicans view climate change and energy issues*:

> Republican leaders have staked out different positions on climate and energy issues. Some, including former President

Donald Trump, have called climate change a "hoax" and downplayed the link between human activity and a warming planet. Others, including some congressional Republicans, have proposed policies to address climate change, such as supporting more nuclear power and the development of carbon capture technology. (para 1)

The rising temperature near the Earth's surface, the melting of the polar ice caps, and the increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere are all integrally related to climate change and habitat destruction. According to *Earth Day*:

> The scientific evidence is clear and irrefutable — human activity is causing our planet to warm at an alarming rate. International bodies of scientists have warned that we have just over a decade to half our emissions to avoid the most devastating impacts of climate change on our food supply, national security, global health, extreme weather, and more. (Earth Day, 2020 & Gates, 2021)

For example, increased carbon dioxide has a disastrous effect on marine life. This is not a political affiliation, but the very survival of our species. According to the NOAA, carbon dioxide in the earth's atmosphere is rising. Carbon dioxide is an important greenhouse gas, however, increasing carbon dioxide causes the ocean to become acidic. Increased acidity interferes with marine life's ability to build their shells and skeletons. The amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has risen by 25% since 1958, and by about 40% since the Industrial Revolution (NOAA, 2019).

The burning of fossil fuels for corporate profit is increasing carbon dioxide in our atmosphere. Strong environmental protection rules must be re-established and regulated for the protection of all species on the planet. There are signs that young people are mobilizing politically to fight to protect the environment. According to the CAP20 website, (March 6, 2024) *The Biden Administration Has Taken More Climate Action Than Any Other in History,*

> From comprehensive legislation to ambitious executive action, the Biden administration has set the United States on a new course of climate action. Not only does this mark a profound break from the policies of the Trump administration, but it also amounts to more action on climate than any other administration in history. (para 1)

As art educators, we must teach our students the awareness of global and local sustainability and encourage the development of clean, sustainable energy, and the protection of the environment. A leading question teachers could ask students is, "What image can you create to generate an increased awareness in the community about climate change?"

Human Rights and the Responsibility of Leaders

Perhaps one of the most important things we can do to ensure the advancement of human rights for all is to select the correct leaders to lead our communities, states, and country given the legacies of racism and discrimination in the U.S. Who might these leaders be? What characteristic traits should this person have to convince us that they can successfully lead this effort? To create the ideal leader, three characteristics that this person should have to be a successful leader are spirituality, humanity, and responsibility (Richards & Willis, 2023). Spirituality is not religious dogma, but the inner capacity to do good and to be kind and benevolent. Humanity is respecting the qualities and conditions of our neighbors across the street and national borders. Responsibility is taking care of self and family, ensuring equality and justice for all, and protecting the environment. This describes someone ready for the responsibility to lead a multiracial, multicultural, and multilingual community of people.

What are the specific responsibilities of this leader when it comes to human rights? What should we see to convince us that this leader is successfully doing the job? The responsibility of this leader, locally, nationally, and globally, is to set the tone for the advancement of human rights and thus, must accept the responsibility to prohibit discrimination based on race, color, sex, language, religion, political opinion, national or social origin, property, or birth. Furthermore, leaders must ensure that all people have the right to life, liberty, and security. To be free from gendered violence; achieve the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; find just and favorable conditions of work; to an adequate standard of living; to social security; and promote children to special protection (endslaverynow.org). While this is the responsibility of leaders in society, these human rights are not always extended to marginalized groups, and as a result, we have turmoil in society.

The Human Rights Tracker is a project by the Columbia Human Rights Law Review supported by Columbia Law School's Human Rights Institute. This list of violations is from that website. Though long, it is an

important view of what the Trump administration did (see Figure 1). Each topic also includes a brief narrative too lengthy to include here. All of this information can be found at https://trumphumanrightstracker.law.columbia.edu/.

The Human Rights Tracker

October 04, 2019 Trump proclamation bars immigrants who cannot pay for healthcare

August 23, 2019 Justice Department argues that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act does not protect LGBTQ and transgender workers against employment discrimination

March 31, 2019 Trump's Justice Department submits legal filing asking the Fifth Circuit to invalidate the Affordable Care Act

March 07, 2019 U.S. government tracked and impeded journalists, attorneys, and activists working at the border

March 07, 2019 Trump Administration asks Pentagon for space to hold 5,000 migrant children

March 06, 2019 US intelligence officials will no longer report the number of civilians killed in US airstrikes

February 01, 2019 Health and Human Services Office currently unable and unwilling to return migrant children to parents

January 25, 2019 Federal workers forced to work during the government shutdown have not been paid

January 24, 2019 Trump administration to start sending asylum seekers to wait in Mexico

December 28, 2018 Trump moves to freeze pay for federal workers amid government shutdown

December 28, 2018 Trump administration suggest mercury limits on coal plants no longer necessary

November 17, 2018 Trump administration gives itself more power to deport survivors of human trafficking and domestic abuse

November 09, 2018 Trump blocks migrants from applying for asylum

November 07, 2018 Trump administration releases federal rules allowing employers to deny birth control coverage

July 31, 2018 Judge rules Trump administration must stop giving migrant kids psychotropic drugs without consent

June 29, 2018 Migrant children allegedly forced to take drugs

June 24, 2018 Parents pressured into voluntary deportation in exchange for their kids

June 17, 2018 Parents deported without their children

June 16, 2018 Over 2,000 children separated from parents at the U.S.-Mexico border between May 5 and June 9

June 11, 2018 Sessions says domestic and gang violence are not grounds for asylum

June 03, 2018 San Juan Mayor calls Trump's 'Total Neglect' of Puerto Rico a violation of human rights

May 23, 2018 ACLU reports abuses and neglect of immigrant children at the border

May 22, 2018 DeVos: Schools should decide whether to report undocumented kids

May 04, 2018 Trump administration distorts data to justify draconian immigration policies

April 06, 2018 Trump administration launches a "zero tolerance" policy separating families at the border

February 09, 2018 New Report Documents Physical, Mental Health Care Deficiencies in New Jersey Detention Facilities

January 25, 2018 The EPA allows increase in toxic air pollutants

January 10, 2018 Trump administration censors climate change content on government websites

January 08, 2018 Trump ends TPS for 200K Salvadorans

January 04, 2018 Trump administration reverses protections for drilling in the Atlantic seaboard

December 01, 2017 U.S. embraces cluster munitions, a weapon banned by 102 nations

November 20, 2017 Acting Secretary of Homeland Security terminates the TPS designation for Haiti

October 28, 2017 Trump signs new counterterrorism operations rules, loosening prior Obama-era constraints

October 13, 2017 New anti-immigrant military policy prevents green-card holders from military service

October 12, 2017 United States notifies UNESCO of intention to withdraw from body

October 12, 2017 Acting HHS Secretary releases Memo directing government agencies to halt "Cost Sharing Reduction" payments to insurers

October 06, 2017 New rules exempt employers from providing birth control based on religious or moral objections

October 04, 2017 Sessions reverses DOJ policy prohibiting employment discrimination based on transgender status

September 29, 2017 U.S. votes against Human Rights Council resolution condemning use of the death penalty for consensual same sex relations

September 29, 2017 Trump significantly lowers the cap on refugees to 45,000 persons

September 24, 2017 Third travel ban indefinitely bans entry of citizens from Iran, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Chad and North Korea

September 22, 2017 Department of Education rescinds the Obama-era policy on how colleges should investigate sexual assaults

September 18, 2017 DHS plans to collect social media information on all immigrants and naturalized citizens

September 14, 2017 U.S. Government denies detainee access to lawyer

September 05, 2017 Trump administration ends Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program
August 29, 2017 Trump administration halts Obama-era equal pay rule
June 16, 2017 Education Department scales back civil rights investigations
May 10, 2017 Attorney General orders tougher sentencing guidelines including re-introduction of mandatory minimums
May 03, 2017 Secretary of State de-emphasizes human rights concerns in interactions with foreign relations
March 29, 2017 Secretary of State lifts human rights conditions on arms sale to Bahrain
March 28, 2017 Trump dismantles federal climate change efforts
March 27, 2017 Trump revokes protections for women in the workplace
March 24, 2017 Department of State issues Presidential permit to TransCanada for Keystone XL pipeline
March 23, 2017 Secretary of State orders "increased scrutiny" and "mandatory checks of social media history" for some visa applicants
March 21, 2017 U.S. does not attend hearing before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
March 13, 2017 State Department invites Anti-LGBT Hate Group to U.N. Commission on the Status of Women
March 12, 2017 Trump pulls U.S. out of U.N. global compact on migration
March 06, 2017 Trump reinstates ban of citizens of six Muslim-majority countries into the U.S. for 90 days and ban on all refugees entering the U.S. for 120 days
March 03, 2017 Secretary of State does not attend annual presentation of State Department's human rights report
February 28, 2017 DOJ requests dismissal of discriminatory purpose claim in a challenge to Texas voter ID law
February 22, 2017 DOJ withdraws federal guidelines that made clear students could use bathrooms matching their gender identity
February 21, 2017 DHS mandates policies that expand arrest, detention, and deportation of undocumented migrants
February 16, 2017 Trump repeals rule restricting coal companies from dumping mine waste in streams
February 14, 2017 Trump cancels a regulation requiring energy and mining companies to disclose payments to foreign governments
February 10, 2017 DOJ withdraws motion to stay in transgender students' bathroom rights case
February 03, 2017 USDA removes animal welfare reports from own website
January 27, 2017 Trump bans entry of Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen nationals for 90 days
January 27, 2017 Trump bans refugee admission for 120 days and indefinitely prohibits entry of all Syrian refugees

January 25, 2017 Trump seeks to block federal funding to sanctuary cities
January 25, 2017 Trump limits privacy rights of non U.S. citizens
January 25, 2017 Trump revives discredited "Secure Communities," paves way for expanded immigration detention and deportation, and orders construction of border wall
January 23, 2017 Trump reinstates and broadens "Global Gag" rule
January 21, 2017 Trump administration advances construction of halted Dakota Access & Keystone XL Pipelines

Figure 1. *The Human Rights Tracker*
https://trumphumanrightstracker. law.columbia.edu/

In the face of such information, we as educators tend to promote knowledge and experience as essential, but civil rights are just the beginning in a world where many people who need help are facing poverty, an environmental crisis, homelessness, non-existent health care, and minimal social support provided by the Trump Administration as evidenced in Figure 1. But as art educators, our contribution to advancing human rights should start with our work in our classrooms concerning humanity through our art education curricula and pedagogy that must temper the harshness, ruthlessness, and abuse seen on the streets and are reported as daily news.

We must teach equality and fairness and hold our students, fellow teachers, administrators, and communities accountable. Our efforts must groom our students as future citizens and leaders alike in the concept of civil rights that advocates for taking care of self, others, the community, and the environment.

Robinson (2007) suggested that through our creativity and ingenuity, we can unite for a common purpose of justice and equity. Mahatma Gandhi noted in his march to equity, to be the change that you wish to see in the world. As we seek to recreate our classrooms, communities, and nation and be the change we wish to see, we cannot ignore the root causes of the turmoil in society. History tells us that the turmoil in society is a sign of its demise, but a significant and comprehensive art education program informs us that everyone must be better prepared for positive socio-cultural responsibilities. These sociocultural responsibilities, if grounded in the tenets of civil rights, would focus on the connections to others so that we are not manipulated by divisive fear-based rhetoric that generates federal, state, and local legislation that denies equality. Divisive fear-based rhetoric separates us in many different ways and is at the core of the lack of leadership to prepare us for

the consequences of a diverse population (Hamid, 2017), but education through the arts can provide us with the experience, knowledge, and understanding to advance human rights.

Conclusion

The political degradation of human rights is a deliberate institutionalized systematic problem intended to marginalize BIPOC and other marginalized groups in society. While individual efforts are made to improve the human condition, they will not be fully addressed until the political dehumanization of human rights is decolonized. Art education is about freedom of thought and expression, and it can challenge and interrogate the dehumanization of human rights. Human rights must be afforded to all of us to sustain a multicultural, multiracial, and multilingual democracy. The violation of human rights for one person is a violation of human rights for all of us because the violation of human rights makes us less safe and can result in conflicts that shatter peace and harmony in society. Each person is created equal and should receive equality and justice in every aspect of their lives, especially in education. This responsibility includes justice and equity for us, our families, our communities and schools, and protecting our environment. Facing the myriads of current right-wing, Fascist, and Nazi aggressions are what we label as *Educational Terrorists*. Education has become the contentious issue of our time, and we must make changes in the foundational curricula and pedagogy that lead us forward with kindness, grace, and gentility as we support civil rights for each person. We must see ourselves as an integral part of something greater than ourselves. We can develop allegiances to support civil and educational actions to advance human rights with priorities for local, regional, national, and global peace, justice, tolerance, and harmony to contribute to enhancing everyone's lives.

Human rights are linked to peace and harmony in society. The legacies of White supremacy, White nationalism, Neo-Fascism, Neo-Nazism, racism, and discrimination are not only depriving BIPOC and marginalized groups in society of equality and justice, but it is depriving us all of the promises of a truly multicultural, multiracial, and multilingual democracy that advances human rights and peace and harmony in our society. In addition, the legacies of racism and discrimination have driven some of us to irrational thinking and actions to maintain the status quo of White supremacy. White supremacy is about White people demanding the right to dominate and exploit people from other races. To this end, the ubiquity of social media and personal agenda fake news is ever-present. There is a strategy that when you say, hear,

or see something enough times (true or not), it morphs into believable facts even when there is no evidence. Regardless of political affiliation or lack thereof, we must consider the erosion of democracy by a single narrative of misinformation. We must be courageous in our questioning of our politicians and our neighbors. We must vote at every level—that's our civil authority. We can also vote with our dollars to support those who are like-minded to reinforce the advancement of human rights for all citizens.

Martin Niemöller (1892–1984) was a prominent Lutheran pastor in Germany. He emerged as an outspoken public foe of Adolf Hitler and spent the last seven years of Nazi rule in concentration camps. His avid opposition to Hitler is reflected in his poem:

> First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a socialist.
> Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a trade unionist.
> Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew.
> Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

As art educators, we cannot embrace the ostrich principle of hiding our heads in the sand. We can no longer acquiesce to the lack of human rights for anyone. Let's start with changing what and how we teach, rethinking the value we place on historical (mis)truths through multiple narratives, and teaching the creative and collaborative endeavors that enhance each student through critical and analytical abilities. Let's rethink and resist the unusable curricula and pedagogy of the past and embrace what has value to bring forward a different classroom practice to advance human rights to secure peace and harmony in all societies locally, regionally, nationally, and globally. We must always remember that education through art can be the catalyst for recreating the human world in which we want to live.

Guiding Questions

- By understanding yourself and the philosophy of peace, harmony, and responsibility, how can you teach human rights visually?
- Can you reduce the fear of practicing human rights and teach this responsibility to your students?
- How can you influence your students' thinking about managing human rights with peace, harmony, and responsibility in your

classroom to enhance kindness, grace, and civility?

- Can you teach your students to investigate how human rights are embedded in an environment that is hostile, toxic, and ubiquitous in BIPOC communities?
- How can you embrace your students' human rights, needs, insecurities, and fears and develop specific student-teacher relationships focused on peace, harmony, and responsibility to emphasize the awareness of human rights?

What strategies can be developed to support courageous artmaking, particularly with students who are not mainstream and have had negative experiences with human rights violations?

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The Architectural Intersection of Museums and Disability Policy

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ABSTRACT
The way in which people with disabilities devise methods to move through the world and faced barriers before architectural modifications evolved based on legislation intersects with the architectural preservation of culturally significant sites, specifically museums. By excluding the disabled community in museum spaces, it perpetuates the ableist mindset of society further by limiting information, creating a disparity in cultural climate and community belonging. How do museums preserve historical significance, while also creating a space for all? In order to devise an accepting space within museums and go beyond the idea of inclusion, people within public spaces need to strive to understand the way that individuals interact with the institution, while adjusting the space in an inherent way to include access for all beyond the legal policy.

KEYWORDS: Museum Accessibility, Historic Preservation, Disability, Cultural Site

There is a ubiquitous struggle that people with disabilities face daily with lack of access to public spaces even after policy was designed to counter this reality, creating a perpetual contemporary fight for accessibility in America. How do cultural sites engrained within a community in America create spaces for people with disabilities since the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act? Where is the intersection of accessibility and function with historic preservation of museums and does it serve or hinder the feeling of belonging for all? Not only is a museum an area that denotes an element of personally motivated erudition, but the space itself is considered a trusted source of information with over 850 million people visiting museums in the United States each year (Pressman & Schulz, 2021). In order to elucidate the reality of this widespread battle within the disabled community for accessibility in museums that is granted to the able-bodied, it is imperative to understand the definition of disability within the scope of policy. This not only dictates the way in which the public perceives disability, but it extends to grasping the drive behind the desperate need for accessibility and the limitations, exclusions, and isolation created in the face of a world not designed with the spectrum of difference in mind.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, the definition is distinctly a legal one versus a medical clarification and serves to cover discrimination for people with mental and physical impairments that impact daily life (ADA National Network, 2023d). There was an intentional shift in the way that people attempted to define disability, as to make it more applicable to the life of every day people that viewed disability as a concept that happened to others, along with distancing the new definition away from the idea that disability is a blemish on society that needs to be corrected. This ideology seeped into the very foundation of every argument for decision-making with constructing accessible spaces because disability became a notion of distance if it was not a personal journey and modifications were conceived as extra. Similarly, this declaration made the statement that it was monetarily unattainable more believable to people in stakeholder positions. Yet, when it comes to configuring an exiting space in a museum, placing a bench in the sake of less works of art is a small price in actuality when the other alternative would be skipping an entire room due to inaccessibility. With the rebranding of terminology akin to 'universal design' shifting to more than just adjustments for people with disabilities, it seemed to meld further into areas of interaction with policy and aesthetics. Thinking practically, are the counters at the information booth low enough for a person to access? When it comes to accessibility within a museum, "the best height for interactives is a range between thirty-six and forty-eight inches from the floor," as it not only allows access for adults, but also children (Pressman & Schulz, 2021, p. 136). Fundamentally, the albeit broad phrase 'accessibility is not as hard as people make it out to be' encompasses the veritable philosophy for adjusting cultural places for access because it narrows down to the singular driving mission behind any museum: what is your true purpose if you are not accessible for your community?

Literature Review

It was essential from the start of researching a sense of belonging in museums to delve into the historical context of what it means to design a place for all people. The act of visiting an art museum is a cultural activity that requires interpretation through lived experiences, transfer of knowledge, and an active collaboration within the space (Christidou, 2016). The design of the space not only affects the agency of the visitor, but it also dictates the narrative interpretation of the entire experience and "people need help and incentives to interact, [to]

increase understanding and acceptance, and to form relationships that transcend generations, social backgrounds, and cultural upbringings" (Wollentz et al., 2022, p. 23). How has disability law and history interplayed with this type of design because with "accessibility and inclusion, environmental access simply means the ability to easily move through and interact with the spaces around you" (Pressman & Schulz, 2021, p. 45)? With the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) being the most prominent regulatory factor of accessibility in spaces, the enactment in 1990 meant that the narrative of accessibility was severely lacking with historical models. A quandary arises about what to do with spaces for modifications and accommodations, especially when it comes to examining places of cultural artifacts because a line is hard to decipher for structural modifications to create an accessible space. Through the research, a relationship was established amid defining laws, what it means to create a design for every single person and how that came to light, the significance of inclusion with the disability community versus an ableist framework, and what it means when the narrative shifts due to lack of information.

Environmental Access means Universal Design

Thinking back to a phenomenological mindset, in order to create a place for people to enjoy, all people need to be able to move around in it to experience every aspect. Prior to the enactment of ADA, there were few examples of what redesigning architecture for people with disabilities in mind was like due to lack of enforcement of previous laws, irregular timelines, and unclear government regulations (Williamson, 2020). The belief moving forward from the application of ADA is centered around the design that is geared to starting with an inclusive strategy, eliminating the need to devise solutions to access as time moves forward. Nevertheless, an issue emerged as one of problematic visions that did not restructure to include building design and construction as a fundamental element of civil rights for people with disabilities, which coincided with disability narrative in the public being used solely as a form of 'inspiration'. Before the 1990s, the presence of access like ramps and concrete to more easily transfer over was considered an afterthought and not included in the original proposal of the buildings, making it visually unappealing to the public and perceived as a more expensive addition (Williamson, 2020).

At first mention, this concept of construction was called "accessible design," but was renamed "universal design" by architect and wheelchair user Ronald Mace in 1985 as a way of rebranding the idea to the general public as a solution for every person; in conjunction, it showcased that inventing areas for people with disabilities should not be considered 'other' because it was not vastly dissimilar than constructing for all (Pressman & Schulz, 2021; Williamson, 2020). By 1997, Mace had collaborated with nine other architects to establish seven defining characteristics of the ideal universal design called Principles of Universal Design: "equitable use, flexibility in use, simple and intuitive use, perceptible information, tolerance for error, low physical effort, and size and space for approach and use" (Pressman & Schulz, 2021, p. 56). The defining theme that interlocks these cornerstones of creating an accessible building is entrenching the idea of access for all within every decision, meaning that it becomes a unified approach engrained in design because not just people with disabilities will utilize the space. By intentionally removing the barriers to accessibility in public spaces, it "provides more choice, equality, control, and independence, and this includes visiting museums and other cultural organizations" (Pressman & Schulz, 2021, p. 3).

Inclusivity in Decision-Making: Limited Access Creates Limited Information

The idea of inclusivity in decision-making unfolded in a two-pronged problem as it stemmed from lack of voice and choice from people within the disabled community, constructing a deficiency of communication towards the advancement of accessible places and absence of access to knowledge for people with disabilities. When addressing approachability within a museum, the question on what qualifies as accessible for organizations arises from best practices for access through the lens of policy, most specifically shaped through ADA. However, who is initially asking those questions within the organization looking to accommodate and who is, in-turn, answering them? Moreover, what schema is shaping the answers and results? If public places go beyond the perspective of what should be considered the bare minimum of following the law to start questioning how their source of knowledge on disability and access intersects, then it would allow for a socially responsive environment that extends access through personal narrative and lived experiences (Richardson & Kletchka, 2022). Without the voice of individuals within the community of people with disabilities, the chronicle of design is limited, incomplete, and follows the historical pattern of creating a space for disabilities as an after-thought, as opposed to seamlessly amalgamating into the architecture of the space.

Conjunctively, this creates access through an ableist framework that limits the type of information presented to people with disabilities, along

with the even more controlled idea that it regulates the information that people with disabilities can interpret due to barriers beyond their control. As museums serve as a meeting place of social and cultural relevancy that "have a role in reducing loneliness and alienation in society by creating and facilitating meaningful social activities," the exclusion through the design of space leads to an inability to exchange meaning through art reflexivity that comes with interpreting material collectively (Wollentz et al., 2022, p. 24). Pressman and Schulz (2021) hypothesized describing an artwork to a person who was visually impaired, creating a scenario that limited personal interpretation and cultural significance by unintentionally not providing certain aspects about the artwork that would actually drastically alter the meaning; "we have limited your access to the meaning of this artwork by controlling the information you receive" (p. xi). Further, every community has a definable culture that permeates the mindset of those within and 'disability culture' has always been ever-present, yet suspiciously missing in historical context from within narratives in research and limited to create a very eugenic characteristic. There is physical evidence of disability throughout time that serves to highlight that disability is human nature, such as "canes, splints, eye patches," but the genuine experiences of these people will always be what molds the culture of community (Williamson, 2020, pp. 5, 189). Access should serve to broaden the conceptual lens to life and bolster belonging, as information historically reachable to the disabled community has been squandered by societal construct in a way that narrowed the scope of knowledge on the disabled community (Lajoie, 2022).

Historical Context

While the idea of access to spaces has evolved in America to become a distinct ideology that revolves around civil rights, Congress passed one of the first federal mandates for accessibility in a government facility with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, with several iterations of laws following before the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990 (Williamson, 2020). With the knowledge that ADA applies to every single public place, regardless of historical status, it dictates that existing cultural spaces prior to January 26, 1993 cannot be modified in the name of accessibility that threatens the historical nuance, unless it is "readily achievable;" it became increasingly clear that where the lines were drawn on spaces is related to federally funded institutions, detailing private and public entities (Salmen, 1998, p. 27). Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 dictates that every person who wishes to participate in a program organized with the aid of federal funding cannot be excluded through the grounds of discrimination; then, this

is coupled with the Americans with Disabilities Act, which proclaims that all museums are required to remove all barriers to participation for visitors with disabilities, regardless of federal funding (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration & Management, 2023; ADA National Network, 2023a). When it comes to state or locally-funded institutions, Title II of the ADA dictates that they are responsible for conducting an audit that leads to self-evaluation on accessibility to the facility. Yet, private entities that fall under Title III: Public Accommodations and Services Operated by Private Entities, like museums, are not required under the law to perform a self-assessment and this is where disconnect occurs between building inclusivity in functional design, aesthetics, and historical spaces. It was worthy of note that the definition set forth within Title III on public spaces is any place that "operations have an effect on commerce, will be regarded as public accommodations," and can fall under the description of discrimination (O'Connor, 2019, p. 29). Another inherent pitfall with checking for accessibility is the transition plan that follows, which is required for Title II establishments, but not for Title III spaces.

There is a checklist through the ADA Standard for Accessible Design website that was constructed along with the Institute for Human Centered Design and the New England ADA Center that is free to the public and lists several categories for accessibility that align with ADA Title III. On the page, it outlines four main areas as priorities for accessibility in public spaces, which are presence of an accessible "approach and entrance, access to goods and services, access to public restrooms, and access to other facilities" (New England ADA Center, 2016). Within those categories, the phrase that kept appearing as a vital component for the success of the checklist was that there was access to spaces and occasions *without* assistance. Can the door be opened with one limb, free of tight gripping or grasping, while also using no more than five pounds of force to open (ADA National Network, 2023c)? In a newly built structure, are at minimum 60% of the public entrances accessible to people with mobility issues? One pressing obstacle is the enforcement of accommodation within a world defined by the ADA legislation because "the primary means of enforcement for access regulations has been individual or class action lawsuits" (Williamson, 2020, p. 190).

Another legislation that impacts historical preservation that came into light in 1966 is called the National Historic Preservation Act, as it was enacted to "modernize the American Landscape" with the precursor being the Antiquities Act enacted in 1906 (Walker, 2019; O'Connor, 2019, p. 28). In summation, there is a lengthy process that a historic site must

undertake if there is a desire to alter the property in any way under Section 106 of the Act; Title III is where this law coincides with ADA and the intention is that this acts as a series of checks and balances for preserving the cultural integrity of the museum as a historical artifact. With these two laws intersecting to reconstruct a level of accessibility that is "readily achievable to the maximum extent feasible," there is a disconnect between how to achieve those goals and which law prevails for accessibility and preservation. This is due to the fact that terminology was not defined within ADA as who carried "the burden of proof" in terms of "readily achievable," along with noting that "undue burden" should be demonstrated by businesses as a reason for not altering exclusionary issues and should not "threaten or destroy" historical substance (O'Connor, 2019, pp. 30-32). There is some legal precedent on what this etymology within the law constitutes in terms of who it falls to, but there is still a disparity in how to create a balance between the two issues when fashioning a public space accessible to all because they both originate from differing intentions and goals.

Along with ADA came a rebranding of sorts for people with disabilities to what the masses viewed as a right ingrained within American values for success and economic contribution, coinciding with the American Dream dogma. The negative connotation of restricting information seeped into every corner of research, including the historical precedent that by providing accessible places it would create a level of autonomy for people with disabilities and result in a "threat to individualism" (Williamson, 2020, p. 4). Once ADA was put into place and the fidelity of implementation was under scrutiny, disability progressed "from the margins of acceptable discussion to a category of legal protections and a political and cultural identity that challenges core American beliefs about individual autonomy" (Williamson, 2020, p. 16). Currently, institutions still struggle with implementing ADA with dependability and use the guise of money and design challenges in mature places, under the framework of ableism, as a means to circumvent accessibility. Barring the philosophy that the law strictly governs the design of a business whether clarity is rampant or circumstantial, the overarching responsibility extends to the institution itself, as it must decide the core beliefs of the organization to be able to answer what it holds more valuable with access or historic preservation.

Current Challenges and Potential Policy

In 2024, the American Alliance of Museums estimated that "more people visit art museums, science centers, historic houses or sites, zoos, or aquariums than attend professional sporting events" and the American public registers museums "a more reliable source of historical information than books, teachers, or even personal accounts by relatives" (American Alliance of Museums, 2024). Yet, there are still more impediments to accessibility in museums than at first glance, such as physical, sensory, communicative, financial, cerebral, and attitudinal barriers (Pressman & Schulz, 2021). There is a stigma present within creating spaces for people with disabilities that accommodations are only limited to people with physical disabilities, specifically people who use wheelchairs, as they were the most visible during the movement towards enacting legislations. This thought-process transcends to redesigning a building and contemporary architecture, serving to "undercut the complexity of disability inclusion by creating the perception that access was 'done' when ramps were built" (Williamson, 2020, p. 11). As so aptly stated by Richardson and Kletchka (2022), accessibility to museums for people with disabilities is "often conceptualized as making accommodations for their visitors," which translates to a limited vantage point of checking ramp access or providing closed-captioning for videos (p. 139). With the enactment of ADA, it removed humanity in recognizing that access was meant for experience and fostered an immediate sense of compliance by designing a limited checklist. Furthering this marginalizing nature of accommodation within museum spaces is the internalized problem that most spaces offer only "professional development on accessibility [that] amounts to an etiquette course that offers lists of special actions to check off as they are completed" (Richardson & Kletchka, 2022, p. 140). Being a truly culturally responsive museum means that the definition of disability is not limited to physical barriers and begins to delve into the spectrum of disabilities by breaking from the ableist ideology with inclusion of the actual community; access should be more than just checking a box for an organization.

As stated within *The Art of Access: A Practical Guide For Museum Accessibility*, there are times where the changing of designs for accessibility can be an easy component to alter, like the shifting of a chair off center for more space or swapping a meeting location to a more open room (Pressman & Schulz, 2021). There are more pressing challenges in evolving a space for universal access and creating realistic outcomes of addressing the problem in an equitable manner. This interlocks in a way with the main problem of redesigning a space, money. This is also why it is necessary to include community partners and the entirety of the organization in addressing identified problems, as they possess a level of commitment in the organization to ensure the success of the business. One of the prevailing arguments in the case of modifying a museum to include accessibility has been that it would be

too costly to eradicate barriers in spaces; "yet, the government's own statistics show that the costs of removing barriers are relatively low" (Davis, 2000, p. 203).

With the idea of incorporating the Principles of Universal Design, constructing museum spaces for all people should be a process with open decision-making and not used as solely all-encompassing (Pressman & Schulz, 2021). Aligning with the ideology of Ronald Mace, he famously provided several examples of how designing for people with disabilities is not intended to instill a sense of dread in added costs to a facility, but more towards how small adjustments that are cost effective and less expensive can make a world of difference in creating a welcoming space for all. He went so far as to note aspects such as "lever-shaped door handles, which were easier for people with manual impairments, but were not visually or conceptually associated with disability" because the idea was for these adjustments to become fully integrated into the way buildings are made moving forward (Williamson, 2020, p. 148). By constructing an environment that answers the question of accessibility for whom and intentionality for all, it cognizes the way bodies move through space and intersects in a way that creates a sense of belonging (Lajoie, 2022).

Another pressing barrier to devising accessible spaces was the mindset of the community structured around disability and accessibility. In direct opposition to pessimism, the Laurent House in Rockford, Illinois built by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1955 is an impeccable example of what can be constructed without the pressing belief of limitations placed on architecture when universal design is considered from the beginning without an ableist framework. Kenneth Laurent was a World War II veteran who used the aid of mobility devices and implored the famed architect to design a house accessible to a person who used a wheelchair, to which Wright designed an open concept with the height of tables lower to allow for every person to be on the same eye level, the hinges in cabinets opened differently, and the doorways were wider, just to name a few design features. This accommodating way of thinking permeated other areas of his builds later on, as evident in the shallow incline of the Guggenheim Museum and all took place forty years prior to ADA; accessibility in design is not challenging when it becomes an innate methodology to promote systemic change (Ahmer, 2021).

Ultimately, how do museums as cultural institutions address accessibility while preserving historical facets in a way that follows ADA without sacrificing significance? Initially, it is imperative to the preservation of any culturally significant space to define what actually makes it relevant through articulating appearance and structure before engaging in an audit of accessibility. Thus, allowing for the dictation and outline of a plan to implement feasibility of evolving a museum space. By comparing problems in accessibility along with policy to create an action plan, integrating appropriate solutions that prohibit breaking the cultural structure seems more attainable. The idea of modifying a museum space does not have to mean creating access to everything if it compromises the integrity, but be creative in devising a plan that satisfies a welcoming aura that extends to every single visitor. There is an example of this system in the restructuring of the Molly Brown House Museum where the goal was to maintain the historical properties of the home by not only installing a lift to some levels, but also opening up another section of the house not previously viewed because other areas were not able to be reached by elevator; these modifications were coupled with including a tactile experience of the fabrics from areas of the house that are still unreachable (Pressman, 2020). Intriguingly, there was a concept founded within the research that by solely focusing on the restructuring of a space by connoting disability as a "technical problem" that it negates "an integral aspect of the monument's histories;" preservation of cultural sites should be defined as an essential issue for the maintenance of a city and for the populace (Gissen, 2019, pp. v, vi).

Moreover, with the increased knowledge in technology there is access more than ever designable through digital format. This leads into other fields of alterations such as replications and reproductions of spaces that allows for duplication of the experience holistically. Thinking creatively on how to solve a problem that presents modifications is endless when given the time to ruminate on how people with disabilities move through the world using all senses. The most obvious disabilities tend to be the type that people can easily identify and are the most thought of amendment. What about extending consideration beyond sight and touch to other aspects of life, like olfactory senses? There are 17 different manufactured smells that Disney uses in the park system to bolster the immersion of the experience and denote a specific feeling; this same principle of design could also be integrated into museums with accommodations, as it also serves to produce a more all-encompassing experience for visitors (Spence, 2021). Further, this is supported within the ideology of universal design as it interplays with aesthetics as a means of obliging the minimum requirements for access, as "aesthetic experience of the built environment involves all our senses: the sight of color, and form; the echo in a room; the smell of wood; the touch of handrails; the refreshing cool air on the skin, and so on" (Ahmer, 2021, p. 41). For a deeper definition and unmitigated

clarity, accessibility means delving deeper than an answer to access for people with visible or physical disabilities, and a move towards one that speaks to the verity of the holistic human experience.

By creating an intersection on meeting ADA requirements and aesthetic choices, engaging people with disabilities is the next step in devising an inclusive museum space that welcomes all people. Thus, creating an integrated level of decision-making that allows for going beyond what is considered ADA priority to address every potential barrier wholly; "access is a process that takes time, energy, and skill, and sharing authority around decision-making with people who are impacted by such decision is good inclusive practice" (Pressman & Schulz, 2021, p. 34). By incorporating perspectives from within the disability community into active administrative roles, it produces diversity in thought and personal narrative, builds strong community relations through representation, and ultimately impacts the outcome of the visitors to museums; no decision should be made for a community without them present in the room. With the absence of this philosophy, it creates an imbalance where the museum is thinking of what they can do *for* people with disabilities, instead of *alongside* them.

Methods Forward

With clarity, preservation and contemporary architecture of museums should be structured around the idea of shifting values to create a sense of human capacity for empathy in a way that honors the past and expounds on the future. In any museum space, past or present, it is imperative to retain who they are providing access for and be cognizant not to exclude any member of the disabled society by incorporating the change from within the community. With the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the intersection of the National Historic Preservation Act, it opened numerous doors for accessibility that had previously been closed for lived experiences within the disabled narrative, yet branched into a dichotomy of what access means to certain people within a marginalized community. Oftentimes, accessibility through policy promotes a regimented outlook towards inclusion and perpetuates the ableist standard of disability within society; "in spite of the implementation of 'best practices' and accommodations, and although every box has been ticked on the accessibility checklist, disabled people will *not* feel like they belong in a particular space" (Lajoie, 2022, p. 328). With every available resource on sites like The ADA National Network, there is very little material actually needed to be able to complete the bare minimum when it comes to examining the access of a museum (ADA National Network,

2023b). If inclusion is universally defined as access for every person, it stands to reason that every person involved within a museum should be held responsible for enacting the accessibility of the space and include the voice of the disabled community in decision-making. By inclusion of the designated community, it also aids in eliminating the ableist thought of designing a space for people with disabilities as an interference and defies the socially constructed normative idea that disability is a concept limited to a certain population; disability is the one community that every person will eventually become a part of, temporarily or permanently.

Design should not only be perceived as all-encompassing in terms of mobility, aesthetics, need, and purpose, but as a concept that exceeds function and serves a community within a museum space. With the unique intent fostered within a museum's purpose, "increased learning through social spaces is connected to a museum's ability to construct spaces where reflection, physical elements and activities are allowed to play important roles in facilitating learning" (Wollentz et al., 2022, p. 38). David Gissen cognized a valid point when dictating the way that museums are often defined by a social construct of a "romantic aesthetic" because they connote a perceived specific physical experience of the past as a means of garnering knowledge of the world (Gissen, 2019, p. vii). Through the narrowing of the definition of admission to one that revolves around "physical space and access," it not only diminishes the perspective of the disabled community, but it also molds change of access as a one-time fix (Lajoie, 2022, p. 319). There needs to be a push away from the fallacy of 'changing' the past towards one that includes broaching a pluralistic tactic with the representation that it has so continuously erased; thus, redefining the accessibility and function of space through multiple modalities. Pushing further when it comes to the hospitable aspect of a museum building, a spatial area can serve to be a grounding experience and provide an opportunity to "exercise our freedom and agency" when it denounces the alienated aspect of limited accessibility (Lajoie, 2022, p. 330). Over time, with more knowledge of inclusion presented to the public, the fervent hope is that museums come to the realization that engraining accessibility should be an innate quality in decisions, building belonging into the fabric of the community served by the space.

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Parental Influence on Child Art Learning: Examining Habitus and Social Trajectories in Taiwanese and U.S. Cultural Contexts

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study examines how parental habitus in Taiwan and the United States shapes their views on the role of art in child development. Drawing on the social ecological systems framework and habitus theories, it explores parental influences on art education practices. Using a dual-case, cross-cultural approach, the study analyzes interviews, observations, and artifacts from 26 parent-participants with children aged four to seven in art programs. Findings reveal cultural, social, and educational factors influencing parental decisions. Despite cultural differences, both groups prioritize active involvement in their children's artistic development, emphasizing art's intrinsic value for fostering creativity, well-being, and character. The study highlights the importance of parent education and advocates for integrating parental perspectives into art education policies. This research enhances understanding of parental influences in children's art education, emphasizing the need for collaborative efforts to promote art as integral to holistic child development.

KEYWORDS: Parental Support, Parental Involvement, Habitus, Cross-Cultural Study, Early Childhood Art Education, Parent Education

This study investigates how the habitus of Taiwanese and U.S. parents shapes their views on art's role in child development, offering insights for educators and researchers striving to engage diverse parental perspectives. Employing an ecological systems framework[1] (Bronfenbrenner, 1989), the research delves into the nuanced dynamics of this cross-cultural study, exploring how parents' social trajectories influence their habitus[2] (Bourdieu, 2010) and their approaches to parenting. This study utilizes a dual-case, cross-cultural qualitative approach, incorporating interviews, observations, and artifact collection. It investigates two distinct locations: a Saturday art program at Northern Illinois University (NIU) in the United States and an afterschool art program at the National Taipei University of Education (NTUE) in Taipei, Taiwan. Thirteen parents from each site participated in interviews for this research.

The results reveal the pivotal role of resource accessibility, community dynamics, and market competition in both a rural US college town and Taipei. Moreover, parental educational backgrounds contribute to their cultural and social capital, guiding their parenting approaches, while social networks, particularly through social media, shape their parenting philosophies. Despite differences, both US and Taiwanese parents prioritize active involvement, empathy, and transparency in fostering positive parent-child interactions, reflecting a shared belief in the intrinsic value of art in children's development. This study underscores the enduring impact of social trajectories on individuals' perspectives of art education and advocates for increased art learning opportunities in schools and communities.

Context of The Study

Support from parents and engagement with art during early developmental years play a pivotal role in shaping children's habitus and social trajectories. According to Martin et al. (2013), parental support and interactions between parents and children have a greater impact on children's learning experiences than factors associated with schools and communities. Furthermore, parents act as the primary decision-makers in shaping their children's opportunities for artistic learning (Hsiao & Kuo, 2013; Hsiao & Pai, 2014; Parsad & Lewis, 2009). The parent-child interplay and its impact on child development, learning, and behavior are central themes of study for numerous researchers (e.g., de Oliveira & Jackson, 2017; Pino-Pasternak et al., 2010). The influence of parents on their children molds children's values, their sense of artistic identity, their perspectives on art, their interests in art, and the opportunities they have for learning about art outside of school settings (Hsiao & Kuo, 2013; Hsiao & Pai, 2014; Parsad & Lewis, 2009). Children's development of habitus and social trajectory, as posited

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1 Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory provides a framework for understanding human development within the context of various influencing environments. It consists of several interconnected systems that shape an individual's development: the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem.

2 Bourdieu describes habitus as both a structuring and structured element that organizes practices and perceptions of the social world through logical classes. It embodies an accumulated cultural and social position influenced by various social trajectories, such as family, school, and life experiences.

by Bourdieu (2010), is significantly influenced and molded by their parents. Examining the habitus and social trajectories of culturally diverse parents sheds light on the intricate interplay among cultural influences, parenting styles, approaches, and their impact on children's art learning experiences.

Researchers exploring parenting styles in the United States identified six distinct patterns: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, traditional, indulgent, and indifferent (Baumrind, 1987). However, this research predominantly focused on European American families, potentially overlooking non-Western and American ethnic minority parenting models. One researcher argued that, in contrast to individualistic Western beliefs, non-Western societies like Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea tend to reflect collectivist cultural values in their parenting (Heath, 2013), but a study comparing child-rearing values in Taiwan and the United States found that mothers in both groups embraced a mix of individualist and collectivist values (Wang & Tamis-LeMonda, 2003). To gain a more comprehensive understanding of these populations, in-depth descriptions, and case study analysis are crucial. Such an approach not only illuminates the research topic but also fosters cross-cultural reflexivity, flexibility, and sensitivity to multicultural issues among researchers.

Furthermore, research indicates issues within the parent-child relationship and parental attitudes can profoundly impact a child's development during middle childhood (Gavron, 2013). Additionally, children's engagement in home-based literacy and numeracy activities is closely linked to their interactions with parents and their interest in exploration and art-related pursuits, as highlighted by Lukie et al. (2014). Moreover, Chang and Cress (2014) argue that visual art can serve as a means of promoting oral language development by encouraging communication between parents and young children. In essence, engaging children in art and related activities is a significant aspect of their developmental journey.

Envisioning art education as a garden, the improvement of parent education can be likened to cultivating a healthy and fertile soil ecosystem, essential for the successful growth of an individual's artistic experiences, much like nurturing seeds. This research highlights the issue of insufficient cross-cultural, parent-related research within the domain of art education and illuminates parents' educational philosophies and perspectives concerning art education. Therefore, this research aims to explore how the habitus of Taiwanese and U.S. parents shape their perceptions of the role of art in enhancing child

development. This research offers a valuable resource and approach for art educators, individuals involved in art programs, and researchers looking to facilitate effective communication with parents from diverse cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, this study strongly advocates for the significance of parent education within the field of art education.

Theoretical Foundation

To gain a deeper understanding of the nuances in this cross-cultural dual-case study, I utilize ecological systems framework (Bronfenbrenner, 1989) to examine how parents' social trajectories shape their habitus (Bourdieu, 2010), presented in Figure 1. This integration enables me to elaborate on the intricate interplay among Taiwanese and U.S. parents' contextual influences, parenting philosophy, and perspectives on children's experiences in art learning.
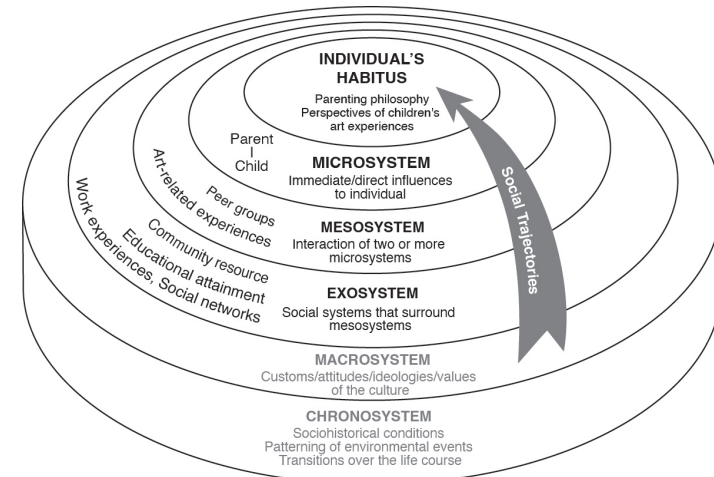
Figure 1: *Integration of Ecological Systems Framework, Social Trajectories, and Habitus (Bronfenbrenner, 1989)*

According to Bourdieu (2010), the habitus both organizes practices and perceptions of practices as well as functions as a structure, categorizing perceptions of social interaction. Specifically, habitus refers to an accumulated cultural and social position influenced by various social trajectories, encompassing social interactions and life experiences. Furthermore, the habitus influences individuals' behaviors and preferences in various contexts, serving as "the intersection of objective social conditions and the set of propensities or tastes that constitute

a lifestyle" (Bogart, 1987, p. 132). Individuals' social trajectories encompass various subfields such as family, school, social networks, and the workplace, each characterized by its unique rules. As Nairz-Wirth and Feldmann (2019) state, one's primary habitus is initially shaped within the family, and their secondary habitus is cultivated by school experiences. Within this context, parents' views on their children's art experiences may be influenced by factors like their cultural and educational backgrounds, social networks, and community structures. Bronfenbrenner's (1989) ecological systems theory offers a framework to understand the complexities of parents' social trajectories. His theory visualizes the ecological environment as nested structures—microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. The microsystem involves immediate influences like the home, affecting individuals through face-to-face interactions. The mesosystem highlights interactions between two or more microsystems, such as those involving teachers, parents, and children. The exosystem includes external social systems, like parents' work and social networks. The macrosystem encompasses cultural norms, political ideologies, and global/national factors shaping development. The outermost layer, the chronosystem, considers the impact of time and sociohistorical conditions on an individual, including life transitions and environmental events.

To analyze how participants' experiences and primary social trajectories influence the construction of their habitus, this research focuses on three aspects[3] of the ecological systems theory: participants' exosystem, mesosystem, and microsystem. The exosystem involves the systems that play a role in shaping participants' cultural and social capital. Individuals' habitus is molded by the capital they possess, including economic, social, and, notably for this study, cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2010). Cultural capital shapes how individuals perceive suitable cultural norms, behave in diverse environments, and make choices related to art preferences. This research delved into four key elements within participants' exosystems: educational attainment, community resources, social networks, and work experiences. The second focus, the mesosystem, comprises two sub-components: art-

related experiences and peer groups, emphasizing the interplay among various settings participants engage in. Regarding art-related experiences, I examined both participants' formal and informal learning experiences, emphasizing the interactions among people involved. Peer groups played a significant role in participants' mesosystem. My attention was directed at the peer groups with whom they had the closest and most frequent interactions, as these dynamics often reflect participants' values and ideologies. The third area of focus, the microsystem, involves the immediate and direct interactions between parents and their children. These interactions encompass how parents respond to their children, the support they provide, and the resulting power dynamics. The support offered by parents plays a crucial role in enhancing children's self-regulation, influencing aspects such as cognitive awareness, task management, and motivation to learn (Heath, 2013).

Examining the participants' exosystem, mesosystem, and microsystem provides insights into their social trajectories, ultimately leading to an analysis of their habitus. As per Bourdieu (2010), individuals carry their habitus, consisting of attitudes and predispositions that influence their judgments and perceptions, when they enter a particular field. This research focuses on two dimensions when analyzing participants' habitus: their parenting philosophy and their perspectives of children's art experiences.

This study delved into two locations: one in Taiwan and one in the United States. The habitus of Taiwanese and U.S. parents encompasses not only their influence on an individual's development but also the changes in their environment over time. The study examines the contexts of parents to illustrate how social trajectories, including their previous educational experiences, cultural and family backgrounds, and community relationships, impact their habitus. Additionally, this research delved into how parents' habitus shapes their viewpoints on their children's experiences in art education. Through an examination of parents' social paths at each cultural site, this research unveiled characteristics and interconnections between the two cultural settings, initiating discussions on the importance of parental education in the realm of art education.

Literature Review

Parents' habitus influences various aspects of child development and contributes to individual differences (Mermelshtine, 2017). Parenting styles and parental involvement profoundly impacts children's

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3　The macrosystem encompasses broader aspects of the social ecological system, including the social norms, attitudes, ideologies, and cultural values that individuals are part of. The chronosystem incorporates the element of time, addressing transitions and shifts throughout an individual's lifespan, such as sociohistorical conditions that reflect developmental patterns and socio-historical changes. Analyzing participants' macrosystem and chronosystem requires a larger scope and longitudinal data collection to accurately describe these phenomena. Therefore, this research focuses on smaller-scale aspects of the ecological systems that directly connect to participants' daily lives, including the microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystem.

rapid cognitive development (Obradović et al., 2016). Research on topics related to parent-child interaction sheds light on how parents' habitus influence children's learning and development. This includes exploring themes related to parents' attitudes and behaviors, parental involvement, and parenting within cross-cultural contexts. Moreover, parental cultural and economic capitals, as well as community engagement and accessibility to community resources, are significant factors that influence children's art learning opportunities.

Parental Attitudes, Behaviors, and Involvement

Parental attitudes and behaviors significantly shape children's responses and well-being, with studies like Rasmussen et al. (2016) and de Oliveira and Jackson (2017) demonstrating the impact of critical media thinking and dispositional empathy. Active parental involvement enhances learning capabilities and fosters gradual progress toward learning independence (Eisner, 2002). Maternal sensitivity, as highlighted by Posada et al. (2016), is crucial for early childhood attachment security, while Pino-Pasternak et al. (2010) found that positive parental socioemotional behaviors correlate with reduced negative behaviors, impacting children's self-regulated learning. Social dynamics also contribute to the emergence of self-regulatory behaviors in children, emphasizing the association between parents' attitudes and the quality of parent-child interaction.

Effective learning environments require fundamental parental involvement and collaboration, as indicated by research studies. Gündüz (2018) found that parental coaching through social networks enhances interactions between teachers, parents, and children, leading to improved academic achievement. Lukie et al. (2014) emphasized the significance of children's interests and collaborative parent-child interactions in shaping literacy and numeracy exposure at home. Positive parent-child collaboration on joint tasks enhances relationships and encourages open expression. Obradović et al. (2016) demonstrated the importance of maternal scaffolding in toddlerhood as a predictor of children's cognitive development, affecting verbal intelligence, performance intelligence, and executive function skills in four-year-olds. Additionally, Szechter and Liben (2007) highlighted the role of parent-child dynamics and home environments in shaping children's aesthetic understanding of art and long-lasting cognitive development.

Parenting in Cross-Cultural Contexts

Various studies offer insights into parent-child interactions and their influence on child development across different cultures. Posada et al. (2016) found that maternal sensitivity fosters trust in children regarding their mother's responsiveness. Conversely, Bornstein et al. (2008) observed differences in emotional availability (EA) across regions and countries, with Italian mothers displaying higher sensitivity than their Argentine and American counterparts. Nevertheless, both studies underscore the positive impact of maternal sensitivity on parent-child interactions and child development. In a different vein, Cheung and Pomerantz (2015) discovered that parental involvement directly contributes to children's values related to school achievement in both the United States and China. Crane and Fernald (2017) highlighted the influence of cultural factors on speech patterns in parent-child interactions. Additionally, Roopnarine et al. (2014) found that ethnic socialization mediated the link between parenting practices and prosocial behaviors, emphasizing the role of social context factors in childhood development. Bornstein et al. (2008) also highlighted regional and gender differences in EA, suggesting that EA varies early in childhood and plays a crucial role in understanding child development, parenting, and the family system.

Influence of Parental Cultural and Economic Capital on Children's Art Learning Opportunities

Parental cultural and economic capital impact children's out-of-school art learning choices. Hsiao and Kuo (2013) revealed that parents with higher socioeconomic status are more likely to invest in out-of-school art programs for their children. Their research tied parents' decisions to factors like socioeconomic status and education level. Hsiao and Pai (2014) noted that urban parents had greater satisfaction with art education in preschool settings. The influence of socioeconomic status on art learning choices may vary. Parks' (2017) research in low-income rural settings showed positive parental engagement and satisfaction with children's learning, emphasizing the need for further in-depth investigations.

Community Engagement and Community Resources

Community engagement enhances public resources. Research by Eckhoff et al. (2011) in an afterschool setting showed that art programs enriched experiences. Parks (2017) found that parental involvement in rural schools, with other factors, empowered parents and supported children's learning. Casto's (2016) research in a rural elementary school highlighted challenges of isolation and lack of partners. Parks' study emphasized parent roles in bridging school and community.

These studies collectively underscore the significance of community engagement and relationships as intangible resources for a higher quality learning environment both in and out of school.

Research Methodology

This study is a dual-case, cross-cultural, qualitative study (Seidman, 2013) using interviews, observations, and artifact collection as the data (Merriam, 2009; Seidman, 2013). This research attempts to answer this question: how the habitus of Taiwanese and U.S. parents influence their perceptions regarding the role of art in enhancing child development. A case study approach was chosen to ensure a deep and contextual exploration of the participants' experiences and beliefs, aligning with the principle of being "anchored in real-life situations" (Merriam, 2009, p. 51). This method offers valuable insights into how individuals interpret their experiences and assign meaning to their experiences (Merriam, 2009). By examining parent-participants' parenting philosophy, parent-child interactions, views on children's art experiences, social networks, and community resources, this approach aims to uncover the attributes of their habitus and understand its construction.

Erickson (1986) argued that individuals who regularly interact with each other have the capacity to create cultural norms governing their social environment. This viewpoint aligns with the qualitative approach advocated by Bogdan and Biklen (2006), which places significant importance on everyday life and human interactions. Erickson (1986) further described this as the "distinctive microculture" (p. 128), highlighting how specific local cultures and traditions develop as a result of daily life experiences and interactions within the community. To explore parents' habitus and their viewpoints on the role of art in promoting child development, researchers need to conduct a comparative analysis of the social ecology in both locations (Erickson, 1986).

Research Sites and Participants

This research encompassed investigations at two sites. The first location pertains to a Saturday art program associated with Northern Illinois University (NIU) in the United States. The second site corresponds to an afterschool art program affiliated with National Taipei University of Education (NTUE) in Taipei, Taiwan. I examined the unique cultural and social contexts of each site and their impact on parents' decisions to enroll their children in the art programs. In this study, I employed purposive sampling to choose participants, as defined by Fraenkel,

Wallen, and Hyun (2011) as the deliberate selection of individuals due to the study's particular objectives. The participant pool consisted of 13 parents from the Taiwanese site and 13 parents from the US site, all of whom had children between the ages of four and seven, participating in the arts programs between November 2018 and Spring 2020.

Data Collection

This research utilized a semi-structured, in-depth interview approach, aimed at understanding the lived experiences and meanings attributed by participants (Seidman, 2013). These interviews described individuals' perceptions, behavior, viewpoints, and attitudes about their surroundings (Merriam, 2009; Seidman, 2013). The interview questions encompassed topics like parents' educational backgrounds, family backgrounds, social networks, and children's art education perspectives. Interviews lasted one to two hours, with some participants engaging in follow-up interviews.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis procedure included two phases. The initial phase of this research, inspired by Saldana's (2009) first cycle coding, involved concurrent data collection and analysis, emphasizing the inseparability of these processes. I used open and structural coding to categorize data into four dimensions: exosystem, mesosystem, microsystem, and habitus. The exosystem included social influences on parents and their cultural/social capital, the mesosystem focused on art-related experiences and peer impacts, and the microsystem examined direct interactions with family members. Habitus encompassed parents' accumulated cultural and social positions influenced by various social trajectories. This approach provided comprehensive insights into the ecological factors shaping parents' perceptions of the role of art in enhancing child development.

In the in-depth analysis phase, drawing from Saldana's (2009) second cycle coding, I synthesized multiple codes from the initial analysis into major themes or narratives using pattern coding to identify relationships and develop new second-level codes. This process entailed analyzing social networks and patterns within participants' relationships, ultimately resulting in the formulation of major themes. Moving to the integrated analysis, I conducted a cross-case analysis comparing results from the two research sites, aiming to build abstractions across cases. This involved re-examining coded categories, identifying related themes, and ensuring consistency across sites while

avoiding stereotyping or overinterpretation. I carefully examined the original data and narrative contexts to accurately reconstruct patterns and themes across the datasets.

Research Findings

Parent-Participants' Exosystem

Community Resources Impact Out-of-School Learning Choices for Children

Community resources influenced parents' choices for their children's out-of-school art learning opportunities. The identification of the US site as a college town further contributed to positive perceptions of the university, fostering a favorable environment for the sole university-supported art program (CW, in-person interview, February 18, 2019). In contrast, the Taipei metropolitan area had a high density of art programs, creating a competitive market that necessitated various advertising approaches (SH, in-person interview, July 15, 2019). Moreover, within the community structure, resource accessibility and the district's atmosphere directly influenced family resource allocation. Resource accessibility, denoting affordable and approachable educational resources, shaped parents' choices. In Taipei, the prevalence of afterschool art classes and focus on English learning and STEM programs reflect parental preferences, driven by the competitive environment (JL, in-person interview, July 11, 2019).

Educational Background and Social Networks Form Parents' Cultural/ Social Capital

The influence of parent-participation's cultural capital was evident in their narratives, particularly among those with educational and developmental backgrounds working in educational facilities. Their knowledge influenced the rationales for the selection of children's out-of-school learning opportunities and their parenting approaches (BG, in-person interview, February 8, 2019). Additionally, parents' social capital, comprising social networks and peer groups in the exosystem and mesosystem, respectively, encompasses a broad array of interactions, including social media, traditional media, and friends. US site participants' social networks included local organizations, workplaces, churches, and homeschool groups (CH, in-person interview, February 26, 2019), while Taipei participants mentioned workplaces, school peer groups, and parent groups (IC, in-person interview, July 12, 2019). Aside from in-person social networking,

social media emerged as the primary information platform for both parent groups, influencing information dissemination and replacing some in-person interactions (JH, in-person interview, February 17, 2019; SL, in-person interview, July 22, 2019). Virtual interactions on social media also served as a repository of information within various groups, shaping collective ideologies in parenting.

Parent-Participants' Mesosystem

Transformation of Attention to Art

Both sets of parent-participants expressed a decline in their passion for art and the time dedicated to it after elementary school. Taiwanese parent-participants cited academic pressures as a reason for abandoning art in middle school (ML, in-person interview, July 14, 2019). Some felt constrained by school and parental interventions. In contrast, US parents noted increased middle school options like peer groups, school clubs, and activities that hindered their artistic pursuits (CW, in-person interview, February 18, 2019). Lack of regular art classes in some schools exacerbated this situation (JH, in-person interview, February 17, 2019). The decline in attention to art persisted into adulthood for both groups; however, participants emphasized that their passion for art, while dormant, had not vanished. Although they engaged less in artistic activities, they still viewed art as essential to human development. Their latent passion found outlets in house decor or supporting their children's artistic inclinations.

Influential Peer Groups in Parenting Perspectives

The parent-participants' peer groups, comprising close friends and family members, significantly influenced their social capital by directly interacting with and shaping their parenting perspectives. These peer groups played a pivotal role in exchanging information, fostering a shared sense of ideology and values (MG, in-person interview, February 21, 2019). For the US parent-participants, their peer groups from families and close friends provided direct support, including financial and childcare assistance. Similarly, the Taiwanese parent-participants relied on core friends for support, forming strong interpersonal connections and utilizing social media for timely communication (SL, in-person interview, July 22, 2019). While these supportive peer groups were valuable, they also introduced peer pressure, especially in competitive school districts. The competitive nature among parents in these groups influenced choices of programs and activities, leading to feelings of falling behind and information anxiety (IC, in-person

interview, July 12, 2019). Social media usage, often overlapping with social networks and peer groups, played a vital role in shaping shared identities and parenting philosophy, emphasizing the need to consider it in understanding how parents develop their social and cultural capital.

Parent-Participants' Microsystem

Parental Involvement: Presence, Empathy, Transparency, and Patience

Both US and Taiwanese parent-participants highlighted the importance of parents' presence as foundational for positive parent-child interactions. While the US parents emphasized being present for emotional support, the Taiwanese participants mentioned engaging in purposeful activities together. Both groups stressed the significance of listening and empathy, allowing parents to understand and respond to children's needs effectively (e.g., JL, in-person interview, July 11, 2019; YW, in-person interview, July 16, 2019). Positive reinforcement was identified as crucial for building children's confidence, particularly evident in art-related activities. Attentive communication and transparency were common factors contributing to positive dynamics, with some US parents emphasizing open discussions on social issues, history, and decision-making (CH, in-person interview, February 26, 2019), while Taiwanese parents focused on transparently communicating household decisions (IC, in-person interview, July 12, 2019). Overall, being present, empathetic, transparent, and patient emerged as key characteristics contributing to positive parent-child interactions, though specific practices varied between the US and Taiwanese participants.

Parent-Participants' Habitus

Parenting Philosophy Emphasis: Capability, Well-being, Empathy, and Physical Wellness

Both US and Taiwanese parent-participants shared parenting philosophies revolving around three dimensions (See Table 1). For the US parent-participants, the focus was on capability, well-being, and empathy. Capability emphasized the importance of children gaining problem-solving skills and learning from mistakes. Well-being centered on emotional development, with art seen as a means of non-verbal expression. Empathy highlighted the desire for children to be kind and contribute positively to the world. In contrast, Taiwanese parent-participants emphasized capacity, well-being, and physical

wellness. Capacity involved cultivating learning attitudes and interpersonal skills. Well-being shifted focus from self-expression to finding a spark for overcoming challenges. Physical wellness stressed the importance of exercise and a healthy diet. Although both cultures shared fundamental values, the emphasis and manifestation of these philosophies varied, with the US placing importance on external behavioral functions like capability, while Taiwanese parents focused more on internal behavioral functions, such as capacity and manners in interpersonal relationships.

US parent-participants [External-oriented behavioral functions]		Taiwanese parent-participants [Internal-oriented behavioral functions]	
Capability	Encouraging exploration	Capacity	Proper learning attitudes
	Developing critical thinking skills		Interpersonal relationship development
Well-being	Self-expression	Well-being	Finding "spark" in life
Empathy	Being kind	Physical wellness	Maintaining physical health
	Being virtuous		Consuming healthy foods

Table 1. *US and Taiwanese Parent-Participants' Parenting Philosophy Components*

Parental Perspectives on Children's Art Exploration

Both US and Taiwanese parent-participants acknowledged the intrinsic nature of children's exploration and attraction to art creation. For the parents, art held intrinsic value, serving as a means for self-empowerment and fulfilling the essential need for self-accomplishment in young children. They viewed art creation as a tool to develop perseverance, courage, creativity, and problem-solving skills. Art, according to the parent-participants, elevated spiritual and cognitive demands (JL, in-person interview, July 11, 2019). Furthermore, they believed that art played a crucial role in enhancing emotional well-being, especially for young children (e.g., CH, in-person interview, February 26, 2019; VG, in-person interview, March 29, 2019; KY, in-

person interview, July 17, 2019; ML, in-person interview, July 14, 2019). Art was seen as a non-verbal communication approach and a means to appreciate and embrace cultural differences. Regarding out-of-school art learning opportunities, both US and Taiwanese parents aimed to provide outlets for cultivating their children's interest in art and skills. US and Taiwanese parent-participants shared reasons for enrolling their children in out-of-school art programs. Both groups underscored the importance of providing opportunities for their children to cultivate interests in art and develop valuable character traits, aligning with their perspectives on art's role in supporting emotional well-being. However, US parent-participants uniquely mentioned the perception of Saturday school as free babysitting, allowing them focused time for other tasks (MG, in-person interview, February 21, 2019). For the US parent-participants, the main motivations included the children's enthusiasm for art and the desire for professional and structured art instruction (MY, in-person interview, July 9, 2019). Regarding Taiwanese parent-participants, they sought out-of-school programs to supplement what they perceived as insufficient in-school art learning. They viewed professional instruction as essential and saw art as a means to enhance fine motor skills and provide broader, more in-depth learning beyond regular school experiences. Both groups emphasized the overarching goal of enhancing their children's development through art learning.

Limitations

This research explored the unique cultural and social contexts of two sites and their impact on parents' decisions to enroll their children in art programs. I acknowledge that several dimensions of these research sites need further exploration, leading to two major limitations. First, the small sample size may not fully represent the broader parent populations of each region. Additionally, due to the research design, this study did not include data on the macrosystem and chronosystem of each site, which would have provided a more in-depth and comprehensive analysis of the cultural contexts. Furthermore, while the two sites share some similarities, they also possess unique demographic and cultural characteristics, making direct comparison and contrast difficult and limiting certain aspects of the analysis.

Conclusion

The parents' exosystem significantly shapes decisions on art learning opportunities for their children. The contrasting environments of a rural US college town and Taipei highlight the impact of resource accessibility, community dynamics, and market competition. Parental

educational backgrounds contribute to rich cultural and social capital, guiding parenting approaches. Social networks are crucial for information exchange, with social media playing a dominant role. These virtual interactions shape parents' parenting philosophy and approaches, transcending traditional social networking limits. These factors underscore the interplay of community, education, and social dynamics in guiding parental perspectives on children's out-of-school art learning.

The mesosystem dynamics reveal a shared experience of declining attention to art among US and Taiwanese parents after elementary school. Both groups emphasized the persistent importance of art in human development. Peer groups emerged as influential in shaping parenting perspectives, providing support but also introducing peer pressure. The competitive nature in certain circles impacted program choices, creating negative feelings.

Both US and Taiwanese parent-participants prioritize active parental involvement, emphasizing presence, empathy, transparency, and patience for positive parent-child interactions. While specific practices vary, the shared values contribute to a supportive microsystem, fostering a nurturing environment for parent-child dynamics.

The habitus of US and Taiwanese parent-participants reflects distinct parenting philosophies. While US parents prioritize capability, well-being, and empathy with a focus on problem-solving skills, emotional development, and kindness, Taiwanese parents emphasize capacity, well-being, and physical wellness, giving importance to learning attitudes, overcoming challenges, and maintaining physical health. Both groups share a fundamental belief in the intrinsic value of art in children's exploration and development. In summary, the parent-participants perceived art as essential to humankind, developing character traits, fostering open-mindedness, and supporting emotional well-being. They advocated for increased art learning opportunities in schools and communities.

This study underscores two key themes in art education. Firstly, it emphasizes the critical role of parent education, stating that parental support and interactions significantly impact children's art learning experiences. The study highlights the need for enhanced parent education, likening it to cultivating a healthy soil ecosystem for individuals' lifelong art experiences to flourish. Secondly, the study addresses the long-term influence of individuals' social trajectories on art education. It contends that parents' social and cultural capital

shapes their children's art learning experiences and opportunities, potentially influencing whether art education can thrive in community settings.

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Omissions and Marginalization: Asian American Representation in Art History and Education

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ABSTRACT
Asian Americans have been historically marginalized and underrepresented in U.S. history and education due to stereotypes and the essentialization of diverse ethnicities and cultures. This article explores the exclusion of Asian American arts and artists through the lens of Asian Critical theory. The near invisibility and misunderstanding of Asian American arts have impacted art education, which remains centered on Whiteness and Euro-Western perspectives. To disrupt the status quo, more artists and art educators are striving to enhance the representation of Asian American arts and address the racism against Asian and Asian American communities. The article suggests two pedagogical approaches: (a) designing an inclusive curriculum incorporating diverse representations of Asian American artists; and (b) creating spaces for students to engage in counterstorytelling. It concludes by urging art educators to incorporate Asian American arts and experiences and foster critical discussions on racism against Asian Americans in the U.S. in their teaching and research.

KEYWORDS: Asian Americans, Asian Arts, Asian American Arts, Marginalization, Asian Critical Theory, Stereotypes, Racism, Counter-Storytelling

In 2020, the spike in racism against Asian Americans during the COVID-19 pandemic sparked national conversations on racial discrimination against Asians and Asian Americans (Ruiz et al., 2023a). According to a national survey of 7006 Asians in the U.S., 57 percent of Asians perceive discrimination against Asians and Asian Americans living in the U.S. as a significant problem, and 63 percent problematize lack of attention paid to race and racial issues the Asians and Asian Americans face living in the U.S. (Ruiz et al., 2023b). Similarly, researchers state that Asian Americans are often disregarded in racial discourses in U.S. history and education (An, 2016; Goodwin, 2010). Asian Americans are misrepresented and overlooked due to stereotypes and essentialization across diverse ethnicities. They are also erased or trivialized in civil social activist movements. These misrepresentations and silencing of Asian American histories and experiences lead to a lack

of awareness and visibility in U.S. society (Rodriguez & Kim, 2018). U.S. schools and art education curricula consistently misrepresent and omit Asian American (art) histories and experiences, instead centering on Whiteness (Buffington, 2019; Sion, 2018).

Recognizing the urgency of including Asian American histories and narratives in art education, this article discusses the erasure and exclusion of Asian American arts in art history and education and provides pedagogical suggestions using the theoretical lens of Asian Critical (AsianCrit) theory. I explore the representations of Asian American artists and arts in U.S. history and education, focusing on the historical contexts, exclusion, marginalization, and the unique forms of racialization against Asian Americans, such as Asianization and strategic (anti)essentialism. Asian Americans are often deemed as perpetual foreigners and a monolithic group without considering the complexity of their ethnic and cultural identities (Museus & Griffin, 2011; Museus & Iftikar, 2014). I also discuss how Asian American artists and collectives resist and challenge racialization against Asian Americans, providing examples of artworks by Korean American artist Byron Kim and Thai American artist Astria Suparak. Finally, I suggest two pedagogical strategies to address the omissions and marginalization of Asian American experiences in art education, calling for art educators to actively include Asian American arts in their teaching and research.

Theoretical Framework: Critical Race Theory and Asian Critical (AsianCrit) Theory

AsianCrit theory originated to fill in the gaps of Critical Race Theory (CRT) for a better understanding of Asian American lives. CRT focuses on examining how race, racism, and power are interrelated. Scholars have been utilizing CRT to bring in voices of people of color in racial discourses and discuss how social systems reinforce White supremacy. Early critical race scholars such as Derrick Bell, Alan Freeman, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Angela Harris, Mari Matsuda, and Patricia Williams stated that "racism is ordinary, not aberrational" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017, p.7) in the U.S. as one of the key tenets of CRT. Although one set of core tenets of CRT cannot be agreed upon by all the critical race scholars, Delgado and Stefancic (2017) suggested a set of widely agreeable core tenets of CRT: (a) ordinariness of racism, (b) interest convergence, (c) race is a social construction, (d) differential racialization among different minority groups, (e) intersectionality and anti-essentialism, and (f) storytelling and counterstorytelling. While CRT can be a valuable tool to center racism and White supremacy in research, there were some limitations in understanding Asian Americans' lives since it fails to

address the complex histories and experiences of subgroups of race. A group of Asian American scholars claimed that the discrimination against Asian American communities differs quantitatively and qualitatively from other marginalized communities as the model minority myth serves as a tool for creating racial hierarchy, and the ways that Asian Americans are viewed as perpetual foreigners lead to the erasure of Asian American histories in the U.S. (Chang, 1993; Lee, 2006; Museus, 2008; Museus & Kiang, 2009; Teranishi, 2010; Wu. 2003).

Accordingly, to address and investigate the complex process and forms of racialization, marginalization, and oppression of the Asian American population in the U.S., Museus and Iftikar (2013) suggested AsianCrit theory based on CRT scholarship. They proposed the seven core tenets not to replace tenets of CRT but to refine and modify them for an acute understanding of Asian American experiences in the U.S. (Museus & Iftikar, 2013; Museus & Iftikar, 2014). The seven interconnected core tenets are:

1. *Asianization* refers to how society racializes Asian Americans by lumping them into a monolithic group, stereotyping them as model minorities, perpetual foreigners, and yellow perils (Museus & Iftikar, 2014; Museus & Kiang, 2009; Sue et al., 2007).
2. *Transnational Contexts* points out that Asian Americans' experiences are influenced by the histories of transnational relations, such as transnational wars, immigration, and global socioeconomics beyond the national borders (Museus et al., 2017; Takaki, 1998).
3. (*Re)Constructive History* goes beyond reconstructing Asian American histories in the U.S., underscoring the invisibility and exclusion of Asian historical narratives.
4. *Strategic (Anti)Essentialism* highlights that Asian Americans are not a monolithic group and can and do actively challenge the status quo. Moreover, it suggests that researchers construct coalitions to engage in anti-essentialist activism by including analysis that generates useful conversation to understand the Asian American experiences of oppression, struggles, and counteractions (Museus & Griffin, 2011).
5. I*ntersectionality* acknowledges the omnipresent and intersecting systems of oppression and rejects the notion that one form of oppression is more noticeable than others. However, it states that purposeful examination of certain systems can facilitate a deeper understanding of complex, multifaceted analyses of the environments, policies, practices, or issues that affect Asian

6. *Story, Theory, and Praxis* suggest bringing in the voices of Asian Americans to deconstruct the dominant discourse, highlighting the importance of counterstorytelling (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Yamamoto, 1997).
7. *Commitment to Social Justice* underscores that AsianCrit theory is dedicated to eradicating all forms of oppression (racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, capitalism, etc.).

As the tenets of AsianCrit theory build upon the core tenets of CRT, AsianCrit theory not only elaborates on the racism against Asian Americans but also provides insights into larger discussions of how racism persists in U.S. society. The article builds on commitment to social justice since the goal of the research is to address the exclusion of Asian American (art) histories in the U.S. to disrupt the dominant narrative. Moreover, story, theory, and praxis and (re)constructive history help highlight the importance of including the narratives and experiences of Asian American artists and arts and justify the reasons why we should discuss further how to include Asian American (art) histories in U.S. education.

The Representation of Asian American Artists and Arts in the U.S.

Artists of Asian descent in the U.S. have continuously engaged in artistic production (Kim et al., 2003; Min, 2020). However, research on Asian American arts has been lacking historically or underrepresented. Asian American artists have been stereotyped as exotic and depicted as passive, submissive, and those who lack agency (Azhar et al., 2021). Their artworks have been deemed merely as Eastern and Oriental, as objects of curiosity preventing viewers from fully appreciating them. "Orientalism" is a term coined by a literary scholar, Edward Said, in 1978, which refers to a set of stereotypes, assumptions, and representations of the Orient (primarily the Middle East, Asia, and North Africa) during the colonial era from the Western point of view (Said, 1979). The idea of Orientalism has affected the way media and popular culture portray Asian and Asian Americans, which racialized the population, deeming them as perpetual foreigners, model minorities, or yellow peril (Sugihara & Ju, 2022). The way Asian American arts are perceived as foreign and Oriental is a distinct form of Asianization.

Moreover, art historian Gordon Chang (2009) notes that Asian American artists who received great acclamation, prizes, and commercial success soon get forgotten over time. He critiques that the aesthetic classification in the U.S. was always racially constrained due to the viewers' assumptions that someone with an "Asian" appearance would express something "Asian." They are still viewed as foreigners and expected to create Asian art. A scholar in Asian American studies, Susette Min (2020), asserts that there is a presumption that Asian American artworks would be about "narrow presentations of identity or a hybrid form that shifts toward or away from "Asian" identity" (p. 3). In her book, *Unnamable: The Ends of Asian American Art*, Min (2018) suggests avoiding limiting the interpretations of Asian American arts with preconceived sets of understandings embedded in a reviewer's perspective or imagination and allowing for various and evolving presentations of the work. According to AsianCrit theory, the way that people expect Asian American arts to have a similar set of themes exploring the "Asian" identity or representational celebration is a form of Asianization and essentialization of Asian American arts. As Min (2020) points out, Asian American arts should be viewed as a heterogeneous discourse rather than a distinct race-based identity category.

Historical Exclusion and Marginalization in Art Education

In addition to examining the representation of Asian American arts in U.S. history, it is important to consider how the historical exclusion and misunderstanding of Asian American arts have impacted art education. Asian American artists and their works are still marginalized and underrepresented in art education (Shin et al., 2023). Scholars in art education have argued the exclusion of people of color in arts and that art is represented as White property (Gaztambide-Fernández et al., 2018; Lawton, 2018). The art practices in art education focus mainly on a Euro-Western-centered perspective, perpetuating the hierarchical superiority of Whiteness (Gaztambide-Fernández et al., 2018).

A review of the literature on Asian American inclusive curriculum reveals a paucity of curricular studies that address Asian American experiences and histories (An, 2016, 2020; Goodwin, 2010; Hsieh & Kim, 2020). An (2016) explicates the reasons for Asian American exclusion in the curriculum through the lens of Asianization, particularly rooted in racializing Asian Americans as perpetual foreigners and model minorities (Ancheta, 2006; Chang, 1993; Wu, 2003). These stereotypes exclude Asian American experiences and histories in school curricula. The exclusion valorizes racial hierarchy, deeming Asian Americans as a right kind of minority, placing them below White and over other races of color. The way that Asian Americans are regarded as an exemplary minority group is through dismissing Asian Americans'

historical activist movements and stereotyping them as those who do not complain about the social system. Simultaneously, the social system denies the civic belongingness of Asian Americans in the U.S., normalizing Whiteness (Kim, 1999). According to strategic anti-essentialism, the dominant oppressive social forces categorize Asian Americans into a position where Asian Americans are not validated either as eligible or socially active citizens of the U.S. (Iftikar & Museus, 2019). The double-edged sword of perpetual foreigner and model minority stereotypes further silences Asian Americans, treating Asian Americans as those who can never be part of the U.S. society but those who excel academically (Iftikar & Museus, 2019). This phenomenon consequently minimizes the attention on Asian American students' needs in learning about Asian American cultures and histories

Acts of Resistance among Asian American Artists and Collectives

Despite the underrepresentation of Asian American art history in the U.S., more Asian American artists are forming resistance through creative forms of art to confront the rise of overt racism and xenophobia against people of color in the U.S. (Kina et al., 2017). For example, Godzilla, an Asian American artist collective formed in 1990, challenged the mainstream art world's perceptions of Asian American identities and culture by exposing Asian American artists' artworks through events and exhibitions to address issues of racism, sexism, gender inequality, and civil rights in the U.S. (Chen, 2021). Also, the Asian American Arts Alliance (A4), a nonprofit organization based in the U.S., supports and promotes the works of Asian American artists by providing resources, networking opportunities, and building community. The organization was founded in 1983, dedicated to ensuring greater representation of Asian American artist groups in various creative fields such as visual arts, performing arts, literature, music, and more. These Asian American artist collectives actively convey their counterstories through curating exhibitions, conducting workshops, and publishing articles in the newsletter, challenging the dominant narratives that focus mainly on Eurocentric practices in the arts field. Story, theory, and praxis help understand their coalition to amplify Asian American artists' stories and experiences, which serves as their resistance against the misrepresentation of Asian American artists and their efforts to eradicate systemic oppressions, including racism and sexism.

Contemporary artists speak about the heightened anti-Asian violence and call for solidarity to speak up about Asian Americans and

Pacific Islanders (AAPI) invisibility and hypervisibility through their artworks (D'Souza, 2021). Their artistic engagements in addressing the racialized experiences of Asians and Asian Americans—by conveying stories through their artworks and forming solidarity—is a form of commitment to social justice.

A Korean American artist, Byron Kim's painted panels *Synecdoche* (1991)[1] signified the portrait of a multicultural world. However, in his recent series, *Mud Root Ochre Leaf Star* (2016)[2], continues to focus on the skin but also bruises beneath it, which is thus less about multiculturalism but rather critiquing the rise of xenophobic and racist circumstances. Kim's artwork engages with transnational contexts, exploring how the local and global contexts impact cultural identities. Moreover, his artworks create a visual counternarrative that questions stereotypes around race and ethnicity, challenging the viewers to consider issues of identity, belonging, and representation.

In addition, a Thai American artist, Astria Suparak, presented a video essay, *Virtually Asian* (2021)[3], revealing the stereotypes signifying Asians through showing them only virtually on the background holographically, with actual characters being almost all White. Suparak's work countered the near invisibility of Asians in the U.S. According to Asianization, labeling Asians and Asian Americans as perpetual foreigners (Wu, 2003) reinforces the racial hierarchy prioritizing Whiteness over other races and ethnicities (Iftikar & Museus, 2019). Suparak's video critiques the exclusion of other racial identities outside of White bodies in media and the standardization of Whiteness through depicting Asian and Asian American bodies in holographs. Moreover, virtual images of Asian and Asian American identities explore intersectionality by presenting some examples of gendered stereotypes. These stereotypes portray Asian and Asian American females as hyper-feminine and submissive and sexually objectify them with labels such as "lotus blossoms" and "geishas" (Keum et al., 2018; Mukkamala & Suyemoto, 2018). In Suparak's video art, female characters adhere to White beauty standards, with slim body figures and Kimonos–traditional Japanese clothing– with Kabuki makeup that whitens their skin tones, further exoticizing them.The

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1 Whitney Museum of American Art website provides details about Byron Kim's Synecdoche [Whitney Artists] 1999-2001: https://whitney.org/collection/works/12073.
2 James Cohan opened an exhibition featuring Byron Kim's Mud Root Ochre Leaf Star (2016): https://www.jamescohan.com/exhibitions/byron-kim2.
3 Astria Suparak's website provides descriptions and video of the artwork Virtually Asian: https://astriasuparak.com/2021/02/02/virtually-asian/.

video further problematizes the internalized racism embedded with "white is right" (Glenn, 2008, p. 298) values.

Likewise, artists resist racism against Asians and Asian Americans in the U.S. by forming solidarity together as a community and individually sharing their counternarratives. They challenge the racialization and marginalization of Asian American experiences and histories in society. Through creative and artistic methods, these artists engage in U.S. "artivism," raising awareness of the omissions and marginalization of Asian American voices and experiences caused by White-centric practices, privileging Whites. Art has the power to transform our ways of thinking, encouraging people to adopt new perspectives and envision different realities (Nossel, 2016).

Pedagogical Strategies to Challenge the Omissions and Marginalization of Asian American Experiences

Understanding the power of art in transforming perspectives and envisioning equitable art education, how should art educators address the omissions and marginalization of Asian American art histories and experiences in their teaching practices? I suggest two pedagogical strategies based on AsianCrit theory: (a) designing an inclusive curriculum incorporating diverse representations of Asian American artists' artworks and movements, and (b) creating spaces for students to engage in counterstorytelling. These two pedagogical strategies are most effective when practiced consecutively, as they allow students to listen to others' stories and express their own thoughts and experiences in connection to the learning. AsianCrit theory notes that Asian American experiences in the U.S. are unique in their own ways, affected by various forms of racialization: Asianization, transnational contexts, strategic (anti)essentialism, and intersectionality. I argue that the constant marginalization of Asian American arts and cultures in education reinforces the stigmatization of Asian Americans as forever foreigners and White cultural gatekeeping (Stabler, 2023; Takaki, 1998). Moreover, as re(constructive) history highlights, educators need to go beyond simply "replacing the majoritarian interpretations of events with ones that square more accurately with minorities' experiences" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017, p. 24). It is essential to actively include Asian American histories and narratives by understanding the unique experiences that different groups have within Asian American communities. While the pedagogical suggestions in this article may apply to the broader issue of marginalization of the histories and experiences of people of color, I focus mainly on addressing and challenging the limited attention to Asian American histories and lived experiences in art education.

Designing an Inclusive Curriculum Incorporating Diverse Representations of Asian Americans

Designing an inclusive curriculum incorporating a wide range of Asian American artists' artworks and movements into teaching concerns a better understanding of the existence of ethnic and racial diversity within the group termed Asian Americans. Art educators can incorporate Asian American artists' stories and artworks that address the issues of anti-Asian racism and the marginalization of Asian and Asian American histories in their art curricula without essentializing Asian American experiences.

To avoid lumping Asian American experiences and the oppressive nature of pan-ethnicity, I assert that art educators make purposeful decisions about which Asian American ethnic groups to incorporate in their teaching based on the student's learning needs and teaching contexts. Introducing artists' artworks presented in this paper in art classrooms, such as Byron Kim's *Mud Root Ochre Leaf Star* (2016) and Astria Suparak's *Virtually Asian* (2021), can help students understand generalizable racialized experiences of Asian Americans in the U.S. However, by focusing on Asian American artists who identify with specific ethnic, cultural, or familiar heritages, the class can discuss the experiences of particular Asian American identities, experiences, and histories without essentializing Asian American experiences. For example, art educators Michelle Bae-Dimitriadis and Injeong Yoon-Ramirez (2023) propose using Asian American artists' works as entry points to explore and investigate the multidimensionally racialized experiences of Asian Americans. They introduce Chinese American artist Kenneth Tam's performance video works[4] and Korean American artist Valery Jung Estabrook's installation piece[5] to discuss the intersectional struggles that AAPI communities face, purposely focusing more on the experiences of Chinese and Korean American communities.

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4   Kenneth Tam's Silent Spikes is a video art piece that explores masculinity, identity, and cultural heritage through a series of performances and narratives. Queens museum offers the video in their YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwXW1HgRNZs.
5   Valery Jung Estabrook's Hometown Hero (Chink) immersive installation (2015-2017) addresses the complex experiences of being Asian American and Southern American. The artist's website provides details about the artwork: https://valerye-stabrook.com/hometown-hero-chink

In addition, art educators Ryan Shin, Jaehan Bae, and Borim Song (2022) share several anti-Asian racism teaching strategies and practices with students in higher education using the artworks of contemporary Asian American artists, Thai and Indonesian American artist Amanda Phingbodhipakkiya, and Taiwanese and Chinese American artist Monyee Chau. Integrating the artists' experiences who share multiethnic Asian identities can generate critical discourse on the issues of marginalization and racialization of Asian and Asian American communities, considering their transnational contexts. The transnational contexts of the artists' stories can illustrate the complex intersections of identity, migration, diaspora, and socio-political relations among different countries of origin, understanding the need to challenge the simplistic, monolithic narratives about Asian American experiences. Nevertheless, as a form of strategic (anti)essentialism, it is imperative for art educators to highlight how the artists' artworks and stories foster solidarity to amplify the voices of AAPI in the U.S.

Based on a better understanding of diverse ethnic and cultural perspectives and experiences within the Asian American communities, art educators can challenge monolithic representations of Asian Americans and foster a deeper appreciation for the complexity of Asian American identities in the U.S. Art educators can choose to bring Asianization as a topic of discussion in an art classroom, or to explore transnational contexts, understanding how arts and artistic movements transcend national boundaries, and how the global historical and contemporary events influence the Asian American lives in the U.S. society.

Creating Spaces for Students to Engage in Counterstorytelling

Another pedagogical approach to transform teaching to attend to Asian American histories and experiences in art education is to create spaces for students to engage in creative art-making practices and discussions as they navigate the Asian American communities' counternarratives. Researchers suggest that providing spaces for students to foster racial and ethnic consciousness and to learn about the systemic oppressions and histories of racially and ethnically marginalized communities can lead to cultivating critical agency to confront racist ideologies (Museus, 2021; Osajima, 2007). Creating an intentional space for students to foster awareness of systemic oppression perpetuating Whiteness through continuous critical conversations and creative art-making can become the foundation of commitment to social justice agendas (Chung, 2014). I urge art educators to recognize the significance of creating spaces to

cultivate a critical understanding of the racialized experiences of Asian Americans in their teaching practices despite the structural barriers presented by existing policies, practices, and norms (Brown & Strega, 2005; Museus, 2021).

As students explore the rich and diverse histories and experiences of Asian Americans through the arts, students can develop a deeper understanding of the cultural and social dynamics that shape multifaceted narratives. The process for students to connect their personal stories and lived experiences with broader themes in Asian American artists' artworks, such as identity, resilience, and resistance, enables them to explore the unique racialized experiences of Asian Americans in the U.S. without promoting a singular narrative. Furthermore, the creative art-making process encourages critical thinking and reflection on the complexities of Asian American histories and experiences and empowers students to articulate their own identities and experiences through artistic expression.

Several art educators have practiced bridging learning about Asian and Asian American artists' artworks and narratives to students' creative art-making practices to reflect on social issues and their lived experiences. Art educators Yichien Cooper, Kevin Hsieh, and Lilly Lu (2022) share a project, *Voices for the Voiceless* (V4Vless), to confront and respond to racial prejudice through art with the preservice visual arts teachers. They introduce three contemporary artists and their artworks that respond to anti-Asian incidents: Lisa Wool-Rim Sjöblom's one-panel series *I Am Not a Virus*[6], Zhi Lin's mixed media illustration[7] that depicts the lives of Chinese immigrant Railway workers, and Ai Weiwei's *MASK* series[8] campaigning for free speech and human rights during COVID-19. After exploring the three Asian and Asian American artists' works, students engaged in discussion to address racism, exclusion, and prejudice against Asian American communities and responded to the issues through creative art-making. In Copper et al.'s (2022) research, the students demonstrated empathy and promoted social justice through their artistic expressions, such as collage and drawing.

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6   Lisa Wool-Rim Sjöblom discusses the experience of the Instagram residency through an interview published in the sociological review website: http://doi.org/10.51428/tsr.iuyd3376.
7   Nevada Museum of Art exhibited Zhi Lin's mixed-media illustration of Chinese railroad workers of the Sierra Nevada: https://www.nevadaart.org/art/exhibitions/zhi-lin-chinese-railroad-workers-of-the-sierra-nevada/.
8   Museum of Modern Art website exhibits Ai Weiwei's MASK series: https://www.moma.org/collection/works/series/421251.

In my teaching practice with Asian American undergraduate students, I designed and implemented an Asian American-centered art curriculum to explore Asian American artists' artworks and narratives and collaborate on digital collage-making to explore their racial and ethnic identities and lived experiences (Kim, 2024). As they engaged in the creative art-making process, they shared their lived experiences and reflected critically on the racialized experiences of Asian Americans, where Asian American voices and experiences are marginalized and perceived as foreign in the U.S. The collaborative digital collage artwork engendered critical conversations among the students as they sought connections and meanings among the elements that represented their lived experiences (Figure 1). Through the collaborative collage-making process, the students mentioned that they felt a sense of community, understood the similarities and differences in their racialized experiences, and recognized the uniqueness of their lived experiences.

Figure 1. *Asian American Students' Collaborative Digital Collage In-betweenness, digital print, 2023. Courtesy of the student artists.*

As stated in story, theory, and praxis, students engage in counterstorytelling through artistic practices, critical reflections, and discourses on social issues, ultimately getting involved in a commitment to social justice. Moreover, by creating a space for students to examine their own lived experiences connecting to their learning about the omissions and marginalization of Asian American histories and experiences, students can discuss the intersectionality of their lived experiences confronting different forms of oppression such as racism, sexism, ableism, capitalism, and more.

Questions for Art Educators to Consider Implementing the Strategies

Incorporating Asian American art histories and experiences in art education requires art educators' critical reflection to ensure that the approach is respectful and authentic and avoids cultural appropriation. Therefore, prior to adopting the pedagogical strategies in one's teaching, I suggest art educators reflect on these core questions:

1. How can I ensure that the Asian American arts and cultural practices I include in teaching are represented authentically?
2. How can I make the Asian American art resources relevant to my students' diverse cultural backgrounds and lived experiences?
3. How do I encourage students to critically analyze the socio-political and transnational contexts that have shaped Asian American arts?

Art educators should remember to engage in reflective practices when incorporating Asian American histories and experiences in their teaching to go beyond mere celebration to foster a more meaningful and critical engagement with Asian American arts.

While the two pedagogical practices suggested in this article may not be applicable to all art classrooms, art educators can adapt them to the specific learning needs of their students and contexts. I encourage more art educators to discuss the histories, contexts of exclusion, and misrepresentation of Asian American arts and cultures in their teaching and research. I suggest art educators access authentic and reliable sources of Asian American experiences in artists' works through museums and Asian and Asian American cultural organizations such as the Asian Art Museum, A4, and the Asian Art and Culture Interest Group in the National Art Education Association. They can access knowledge and insights by engaging with artists and cultural practitioners.

Conclusion

Despite the perpetual misrepresentation and marginalization of Asian American experiences and histories in the U.S., artists and art educators have shared their counternarratives and challenged systemic inequity (Bae-Dimitriadis & Yoon-Ramirez, 2023; Cooper et al., 2022; Shin et al., 2022). In alignment with the concerted efforts, this article suggests two pedagogical methods to pursue the inclusion of Asian American arts and

experiences in art education. These methods draw upon Asianization, (re)constructive history, strategic (anti)essentialism, story, theory, and praxis, commitment to social justice, and intersectionality: (1)designing an inclusive curriculum attending to the diverse representations of Asian American artists and movements, and (2) creating spaces for students to engage in counterstorytelling through creative art-making.

I urge all art educators, including those who do not share Asian/Asian American cultural heritage, such as White art educators, to include Asian American arts, cultures, and experiences in their teaching. Freire (1970/2018) posits that a pedagogy serving the interests of the oppressor, masked as benevolent generosity and treating the oppressed as passive recipients, perpetuates and reinforces oppression. The lack of curricula reflecting the diverse identities of students silences and marginalizes non-White individuals. Therefore, it is critical to listen to and include the narratives and lived experiences of marginalized communities, including Asian Americans, in curricula.

As art educators, we can develop more pedagogical strategies to address and confront the racism against people of Asian descent in the U.S. It is important to avoid including Asian American arts as a token of an act of inclusion, such as featuring it once a year or limiting the interpretation of Asian American arts to being "Asian" enough. We need to engage in continuous discussions about integrating Asian American arts into U.S. art histories and art education and make intentional efforts to create spaces to listen to the voices of Asian American communities and artists to address the marginalization of Asian American (art) histories.

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Nourishing Connections: Fostering Collaboration on Food Ethics through Art

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ABSTRACT
This paper explores collaborative workshops conducted at the International Socially Engaged Art Symposium (ISEAS), concentrating on the convergence of art and science in the realm of food values and ethics. With 20 artists and scientists participating, ISEAS employed arts-based methods to investigate food-related themes within diverse communities. One team, comprising three artists and a food ethics researcher, collaborated with 17 secondary school students in Seinäjoki (Finland). Their three-day event utilised various arts-based methods to address food ethics issues, such as availability, equity, sustainability, norms, and food justice. Integrating scientific and artistic knowledge, the study showcases the effectiveness of conversational art-making, revealing the role of art and science in fostering awareness of ethical dimensions in food production and consumption. The study highlights the potential of conversational art as a potent tool in community projects, as it facilitates dialogue on challenging topics beyond verbal communication. The paper underscores how art and science can collectively engage communities by encouraging transformative thinking and action.

KEYWORDS: Art And Science Collaboration, Art Education, Socially Engaged Art, Art Activism, Food Justice, Participatory Art, Community Art, Food Ethics, Conversational Art

This paper presents socially engaged art workshops centred on food values and ethics. The International Socially Engaged Art Symposium (ISEAS), founded by Finnish artist-researcher Katja Juhola[1], organised a 10-day symposium to address environmental concerns and promote social equality through the collaborative efforts of artists and scientists. With six successful editions organised annually, each bringing together approximately 20 participants, ISEAS fosters a cohesive collective that encourages sharing diverse expertise and collaborative projects within smaller subteams and distinct communities. The 2022 ISEAS edition explicitly focused on food and engaged 97 people in Southern Ostrobothnia, Finland. Four workshops were conducted with people of different ages: primary school students, secondary school students, working-age adults and seniors' book club members. ISEAS has always been an art event that brings together actors from different fields, and the outcomes are explicitly the result of collaboration between multiple actors. The core of Juhola's broader research interests is collaboration between various fields of science and the arts (da Costa, 2008; Scott, 2006).

Food and Environmental Anxiety

The theme for ISEAS 2022 was food, which is crucial for all forms of life. Food production is a complicated process that affects our living conditions, culture, and identity (Lang & Heasman, 2015; Rozin, 1996). Cultural food habits significantly impact human and planetary well-being, and understanding the current situation of food production and consumption is essential in finding solutions and promoting cultural change. The prevalent food values in affluent societies have normalized environmentally detrimental dietary patterns, portraying them as usual and associating, for example, meat consumption with being necessary, normal, natural, and friendly (Piazza et al., 2015). In affluent societies, food has become an increasing source of both pleasure and anxiety (Coveney, 2000), not least due to the rising social media–based presence of diverse and conflicting norms and expectations about how people should eat and look. Simultaneously, the possibility of people achieving adequate nutrition is highly unequal worldwide. Even in wealthy societies, food insecurity–first world hunger–has become a current phenomenon (Riches & Silvasti, 2014). The distribution of wealth is highly unjust in food supply chains, leaving farmers to struggle with profitability whilst multinational corporations become more powerful (Lang & Heasman, 2015). Increasing talk about responsible

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1   Juhola, a doctoral student at the Finnish University of Lapland Faculty of Art and Design, has focused her research on ISEAS https://iseasfinland.com/ since its inception in 2017, continuously developing it in subsequent symposiums.

consumption and ethical food purchasing is partly misleading, since the responsible shopping basket is often the privilege of well-off people in a position to freely decide (Kortetmäki, 2019). The current issues with sustainability and injustice present structural problems that are so complex that they are nobody's fault, making them much harder to understand and address (Kortetmäki, 2019).

Growing food is one of the main reasons for climate change (White & Yeates, 2018) and can thus create environmental anxiety. Panu Pihkala (2017) sees environmental anxiety as a broad phenomenon not limited to a specific age group or cultural status. Pihkala maintains that climate anxiety can appear as a desire to deny the problem or as a general feeling of inferiority. Still, most people cannot influence the issue and just try to live with it (Pihkala, 2017). The present climate and political conditions have left many people feeling shaken, with little or no faith in the future. Young people suffer from eco-anxiety and a feeling of powerlessness to influence their future (Pihkala, 2017). Indeed, food is linked to both pandemics and mental health problems. The language of art may provide another way to access research results and find new keys to understanding compared. Our research findings indicate the significant importance of providing youth with an opportunity to engage in discussions about complex issues regarding the future in the company of their peers, as well as with scholars and specialists.

Emancipatory Potential of Art Education and Activism

Work in ISEAS can be compared to art activism as well as critical-activist research, which aims to create a movement to displace old ways of thinking and thus allow the birth of a new kind of activity; the collective seeks what is possible in terms of what emerges when our taxonomic certainties are deliberately shaken (Rolling, 2013). Gregory Sholette (2022) argues that the early 21st century has been an extraordinary period for art activism, with movements from *Occupy* to *Black Lives Matter* drawing on adherents' artistic skills. In his view, the last time art activism was as vital in protest culture was in the 1960s and '70s. Demos (2017) states: "In this regard, contemporary visual culture at its best can play a critical role in raising awareness of the impact, showing the environmental abuse and human cost, of fossil fuel's everyday operations, mediating and encouraging a rebellious activist culture" (p. 56.). In an era of environmental concern, surrounded by pandemics, wars, and a flood of information, it is clear that these issues need to be addressed. Everyone does it in their way, but each way also has its consequences, of which people must be aware (Pihkala, 2017). By becoming ethically aware and considerate, community members can empower others to address ongoing issues of environmental degradation and injustice, including food inequalities and the ecological challenges associated with current food production and consumption practices. Anniina Suominen (2016) sees opportunities in art education to influence environmental concerns with a participatory, empowering, and activist-oriented pedagogical attitude that challenges individuals and communities to rethink familiar principles, functions, and practices. Suominen claims that art education is most meaningful when it aims at the growth of the individual and society. This thinking is in line with art activism. When we want to change the current situation, art can guide us. Suominen continues that the foundation of art education must be ethics, justice and thinking based on radical democracy.

According to Mira Kallio-Tavin (2020), one of the goals of art education is to develop ethical and critical judgement by bringing students into dialogue with the world and its challenging questions about the relationship between human and non-human animals. Karen Hutzel and Ryan Shin (2022) state that when facing global issues and divisions, art educators must reflect on established views beyond local or regional contexts. From their point of view, despite debates on the impacts of globalization, the global world remains a relevant educational concern. Educating students well means preparing them economically, socially, critically, and culturally for a globalised world. The nurturing of this kind of new ecological citizenship, necessary for cultural transformations, also requires diversifying those modes of communication that are considered legitimate ways to express one's concerns and values in society (e.g. Latta, 2007). Socially engaged art can promote food-related communication and self-expression diversification, thereby contributing to the broader task of building more inclusive communities. Pablo Helquera (2011) suggests that a successful description of socially engaged art is *emancipation*, which means that its participants willingly engage in a dialogue from which they glean critical and experiential richness. To feel enriched after an event, they may even demand ownership of the experience or the ability to repeat it with others.

Conversational Art and EcoJustice in Socially Engaged Practice: Theoretical Foundations and Application in Food-Related Projects

ISEAS's leading theory is conversational art in socially engaged art practice. Suzi Gablik (1995) and Grant Kester (2004) both theorized using conversation in the making of art. Kester argues that conversation is not only verbal but can also be methods, such as action painting,

dance, or improvisation, as occurred with the project the ISEAS (2022) Secondary School Team created around the theme of food. In a conversation with Carolyn Merchant, Gablik (1995) discussed the intersection of science, art, and the ecological revolution, highlighting how our civilization's dominance over nature may lead to collapse and reorganisation, ultimately creating order from chaos.

According to Juha Varto (2017), artistic research is based on creativity and involves the search for new forms. Artistic research is rooted in sensory experiences and the world around us. As Teemu Mäki (2017) notes, it can offer knowledge that cannot be easily verbalised or placed within a literary context. Artistic methods can provide an alternative to verbal conversations, enabling participants to access hidden places and under-utilised faculties. The ISEAS event with Seinäjoki Secondary School students on the theme of food provided the soil for a versatile examination from personal, social, and ecological justice perspectives. EcoJustice education is grounded in a set of theories and pedagogical practices (Foster & Martusewicz, 2019; see also Martusewicz et al., 2014), based on the understanding that humans are deeply dependent on the living network of all diverse and complex systems of more-than-human life. EcoJustice education is based on critically analysing unsustainable values, attitudes, and ways of living in (post-)industrial societies. It aims to revitalise natural and cultural commonalities and conceive of a more responsible relationship with Earth (Foster et al., 2019).

Socially Engaged Art

Socially engaged art is a form of art where the process of creation unfolds within and among communities. It goes beyond merely producing objects, as the artist aims to address or improve social conditions. Creativity is harnessed within a social context to effect socio-political change or provide educational opportunities (Helguera, 2011; Thompson, 2015). Socially engaged art, and more specifically conversational art, activated within the context of EcoJustice could enable people to think about and work out the complex nature of food, the dysfunctionality of the current food production and consumption systems, and trying to eat *right*. Foster (2022) highlights the potential of socially engaged art to facilitate encounters with otherness and promote acceptance of diversity. In the ISEAS 2022 interventions, the collaboration between art and science on food ethics provided a platform for students to engage in activist art and raise their voices on the issue.

Nato Thompson (2015) describes socially engaged art as offering physical engagement spaces over time, creating "prolonged encounters of difference and affinity that transpire in the world and between people" (p. 145). These engagements between people through art are an essential way of creating new conversations. It is meaningful to understand conversation's power and value in socially engaged art forms. By using playful practice, it is possible to create a new kind of creative pedagogy that considers the surrounding natural world and our lives equally, where art can be used to visualise otherwise invisible life-sustaining networks. Art-science activism and pedagogy can build new communities and open new corridors (Flynn & Reed, 2019). In ISEAS, a collaboration between artists and scientists, youth were allowed to discuss and implement their ideas in an environment where scientific knowledge meets the freedom of art.

A Case Study Using Arts-Based Research to Explore How Conversational Art Can Develop Greater Awareness and Understanding of Current Global Food Issues and Encourage Communication

The underlying methodology in the Seinäjoki Secondary School case study was arts-based research (ABR). ABR produces research material with the help of art. Patricia Leavy (2019) states that art has the potential to be immediate and lasting. With that, she means that art can grab our attention and change our view of life. It has the potential to affect our intellectual consciousness as well as our emotions. Researchers engaging in art use art as a way of knowing. The methodology can also be used to analyse tacit information. Art–especially conversational art (bodily movement or chaos painting as described in this case study)–can go deeper into our feelings than verbal conversations. In the 21st century, artistic research and ABR have become widely established and accepted in academia (e.g. Barone & Eisner, 2012; Leavy, 2015, 2019; McNiff, 1998). Jaana Erkkilä (2017) states that each artist has their area of strength which can be on a theoretical level or seen in, for example, the use of colours whilst painting. When talking about the task of art, artist-art researcher Teemu Mäki (2017) emphasises *all* the arts, not just the visual arts. This methodological choice was part of a broader study that Juhola has carried out in creating ISEAS and having organised four interventions with the same theme of food, while ISEAS has been held six times since 2017 with various themes and many kinds of interventions.

ISEAS promotes an equitable exchange of expertise between science and art. Over the years, ISEAS has facilitated discussions on

environmental issues and themes of equality within 17 communities, involving several hundred individuals. The significance of ISEAS extends beyond its international nature and cross-cultural exchange of ideas; an immersive and intensive mode of operation characterises the symposium. Previous studies have highlighted the fruitful synergy between art and science, which has the potential to inspire novel modes of thinking (Juhola, 2018, 2019, 2020a, 2020b, 2021; Juhola & Moldovan, 2020; Juhola et al., 2020; Juhola et al., 2022; Raatikainen et al., 2020). Participation in ISEAS offers a comprehensive experience that fosters the emergence of shared understanding. Through modest communal living, participating artists, food professionals, and food researchers share time and space with other ISEAS artists and scientists, creating opportunities for dinner table conversations that facilitate the exchange of ideas and perspectives. The symposium provides diverse activities encouraging social interaction, including sauna baths, nature walks, joint conversations, yoga mornings and late-night dancing (Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 2. *One of the Daily Dinner Table Discussions. Food Researcher Anu Hopia Presents her Research Area (Image: Fabio Cito, 2022)*

Figure 1. *Morning Joint Exercise, Which Is Voluntary for All ISEAS Participants (Image: Fabio Cito, 2022)*

The ISEAS structure follows these methodological steps: collaborative planning between art and science to integrate ABR methods in socially engaged art, participatory work, reflection, and artistic analysis. This approach is exemplified by the artworks created by ISEAS artists, which are based on socially engaged projects, such as those conducted with secondary school students. ABR is a methodology that can be used by researchers without artistic studies. Still, in the ISEAS Secondary School subteam, three out of four members were professional artists, who analyzed their experiences with the ISEAS project and created artworks at the Lapua Art Museum based on these experiences.

In 2022, the collaborative nature of the workshops fostered a deeper understanding of the complex social, cultural, and environmental factors contributing to the food theme. The artistic results of the ISEAS art workshops with the students were exhibited at the Lapua Art Museum in the autumn of 2023 until the end of January 2024. The symposium documentation, including video and photo documentation, recordings of discussions, produced artworks and exhibitions, and various forms of participant reflections, constitutes a rich body of research data. All participants signed written release forms granting permission to use their research, including photos and videos. Participants understood that the works of art would be exhibited in the art museum and that articles would be written about the event. The vibrant environment of ISEAS, resembling a camp-like setting, provides a platform for artists and natural scientists to come together to cultivate innovative approaches.

Studying Food Ethics with the Help of Art and Science among Seinäjoki Secondary School Students

This paper focuses on one of the interventions during the 10 days of ISEAS 2022. More specifically, it examines the collaborative work between the art-science ISEAS subteam and 17 secondary school students over three days in August 2022 in Seinäjoki, Finland. Three days of workshops were conducted by an international, multidisciplinary team composed of members whose work and philosophies matched the aims of ISEAS 2022. Before going to the school, the team spent several days designing activities that suited their fields of expertise. Hours of brainstorming and reformulating ideas resulted in a unified, cohesive approach that could also embrace unpredictability.

These workshops were intertwined with other artists and researchers associated with the ISEAS collective, emphasising the interconnectedness within the broader framework of ISEAS itself. The three-day workshop at Seinäjoki Secondary School, addressing food values and ethics, utilised diverse arts-based methods (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Leavy, 2015, 2018; McNiff, 1998; Suominen et al., 2017). Led by a team of artists and researchers, including Finnish multidisciplinary artist and researcher Raisa Foster, Finnish food system researcher Teea Kortetmäki, Chilean dancer and choreographer Hugo Peña, and American artist and art educator Clarice Zdanski, the intervention incorporated body awareness tasks, movement practices, visual arts and philosophical research. Exploring food-related values and ethics (Rawlinson & Ward, 2017) involved discussions, writing, movement, performance, painting and drawing.

Research Process

The first workshop started in the gym, with a "Silent Circle" (Figure 3) and icebreaker and movement exercises led by Foster and Peña. The table and tablecloths were then brought out to the centre of the gym, and the group moved freely around them using movements and gestures from previous exercises (Figure 4). They also engaged in drawing and colouring activities led by Zdanski to express their thoughts and feelings. The movement-based practice continued with the food ethics researcher reading passages from her research on food justice aloud in Finnish.

Figure 3. *Day 1 of the Workshops as Foster and Peña Start the Introductions, With Students, Art Teachers and ISEAS Team Members Participating in the Exercise (Image: Fabio Cito, 2022)*

Figure 4. *Day 1 of the Workshops: Dance Sequence With Tables, Chairs and Tablecloths (Image: Fabio Cito, 2022)*

For the second day's work, the students were divided into smaller groups to go through the station circuit. Each station was rotated every 20 to 30 minutes, with separate gyms for Foster and Peña to conduct movement and contact exercises. Foster asked the young people to express norms and expectations they personally encounter about food

on Post-it notes, revealing demands and expectations arising from family values, social, political, identity, health, and appearance-related concerns.


Figure 5. *ISEAS Exhibition at the Lapua Art Museum, Our Shared Food. The Image Includes Foster's Video Installation Because We Are Told To and Zdanski's I Am What I Eat – Chaos of Emotions (Image: Anna-Kaarina Perko, 2023)*

The students' notes highlighted the various requirements young people must navigate with regard to eating-related norms found on social media or from family members (Figure 5). Examples included: "Don't eat before going to bed," "Avoid saturated fats," "Don't snack," "What was the food at school like?" "Take more food," "Soft drinks ruin your teeth," "Do not talk with food in your mouth," "Why don't you eat bread anymore?" and "Taste everything." After the writing session, the group improvised a performance vignette where one student stood in place with an expressionless face and other students affixed the Post-it notes onto their bodies and read the sentences aloud. These Post-it notes illustrate the complexity of how people perceive and think about food and the various (also conflicting) demands that young people must navigate.

Figure 6. *ISEAS Exhibition at the Lapua Art Museum, Our Shared Food. The Picture Includes Peña's Two Artworks: Video Installation Empatia and My Commitments (Images: Hugo Peña, 2022)*

In Peña's workshop, students were prompted to create original graphic content on topics such as food, exclusion and inclusion, using their bodies as a means of expression. One exercise involved writing letters to marginalised individuals, embodying the words through movement, and capturing expressions on mobile phones (Figure 6). The goal was to encourage connections beyond familiar circles, while fostering imagination and empathy. Students were not given prior information about particular cases of injustices but, rather, called to think about the case they address by themselves. Despite varied responses, the exercise effectively stimulated imagination, emotions, and reflections on privilege, emphasising the need for students to contribute to addressing inequality. The workshop provided a unique opportunity to raise awareness and instil a sense of restlessness for positive change. Kortetmäki utilised a circle to distinguish food-related privilege/disadvantage and asked students to draw inclusion and exclusion to stimulate contemplation and make the justice concept more relatable to students (Figure 7). The task successfully elicited diverse responses, and Kortetmäki saw it as a way to make marginalised individuals more visible, countering the invisibility often linked to injustice. Students did not receive prior information about food in/justices, as Kortetmäki wanted to see what kinds of cases students came up with themselves, but when the drawings were briefly discussed in each group, Kortetmäki provided some concrete information about existing injustices regarding, for example, unequal access to food.
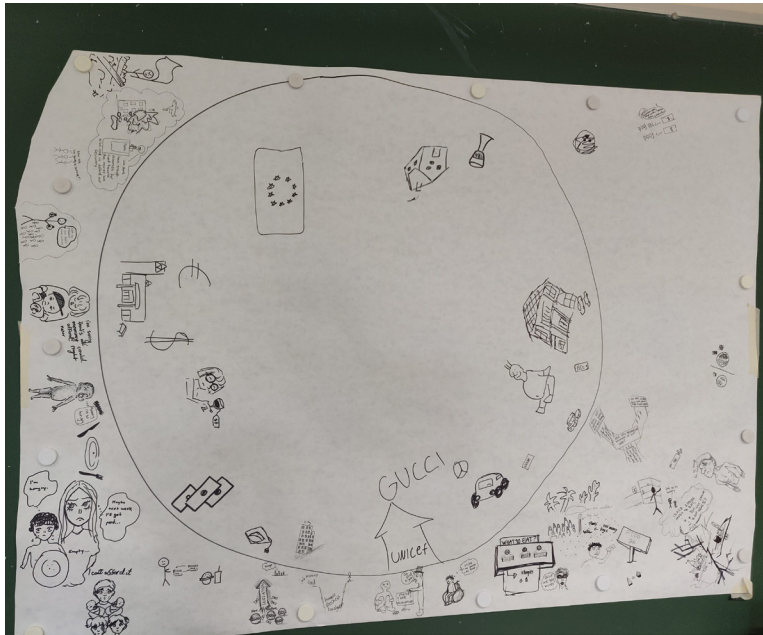
Figure 7. *In the Picture, Students and Kortetmäki Are Drawing Ideas About Factors That Create Inclusion and Exclusion in the World (Image: Tuula Muhonen, 2022)*

Zdanski's Chaos Painting Workshop drew inspiration from mid-20th-century action painting, emphasising the act of creation over the final product. The workshop aimed to capture the chaotic emotions related to nourishment and respecting bodies, humans, creatures, and the environment using various art materials. Students covered tablecloths chaotically on both sides, enriching the complexity of the images reflecting their thoughts and feelings. The seemingly haphazard images are especially gripping when illuminated, which allows the intricate details in the layers upon layers of drawing and painting done on both sides of the translucent non-woven fabric to be revealed, thus confronting viewers with deep-rooted emotional issues associated with food justice on a global scale (Figure 8).

Figure 8. *Students Involved in Chaos Painting (Image: Fabio Cito, 2022)*

The final ISEAS workshop featured filmed performances, a highlight integrated into the *Our Shared Food* exhibition at the Lapua Art Museum. One performance involved an inclusion/exclusion game symbolising social inequality, where participants formed a circle, leaving a few outside. Filmed from above with a drone (Figure 9), it provided a unique perspective. The workshop concluded with all participants forming a circle, observing silence, and expressing their emotions in one word, adding a reflective and poignant conclusion to the event.

Figure 9. *On the Final Day, Foster Leads Students in a Game of Inclusion/Exclusion, Where Those Who Form the Circle Must Keep the Others out (Image: Fabio Cito, 2022)*

Figure 10. *From the Our Shared Food Exhibition at the Lapua Art Museum, Two Students From Seinäjoki Secondary School Participated in the Opening and the Panel Discussion for the Finlandia Fair Food Games Video Artwork. Foster Subsequently Recorded a Sports Commentary-Like Narrative About Global Competition Related to Food Justice (Image: Anna-Kaarina Perko, 2023)*

Integrating Art and Science for Food Ethics: Insights and Recommendations from ISEAS 2022

The workshop focused on food-related values, beliefs, and ethical matters, including food justice–a vital aspect of environmental justice and sustainability movements that seek to ensure equitable access to nutritious food for all whilst advocating for fair conditions in food production and trade. After the event, Juhola solicited feedback from the participating students and teachers. The feedback was mainly positive and underscored the significance of the theme and the results achieved. One participant shared:

I chose this red paper to write down my feelings because it often reflected my emotional state during the project: anger, guilt, bitterness, and sadness. I experienced these emotions when discussing inequality, the world's grievances, food-related ideals, and rules. During the project, these feelings were released in the Chaos painting section and writing Post-it notes. (Anonymous participant, 2022)

Another participant commented:

The experience was good and positive in every way. And I don't regret joining the project. The project was very versatile, and a lot of different types of things were done in it. Some were pleasant, and others were not. The whole thing left positive feelings. (Anonymous participant, 2022)

The exhibition at the Lapua Art Museum showcased the artistic analysis by ISEAS artists of their socially engaged experiences with secondary school students (Figure 10). Foster and Peña further developed video works from the material of their workshops, whilst Zdanski highlighted the paintings created by the students as they were and included a small model of an installation on the theme of inclusion/exclusion that had figured in the brainstorming process. Both approaches are correct and equally valuable in socially engaged art exhibitions. The exhibition, organised a year after the workshops in the same area, also continued the reflections of the young participants. Two students who attended the opening also participated in a panel discussion, emphasizing the new and meaningful role of art in conveying information.

In the ISEAS 2022 interventions, art and science collaborated on the theme of food ethics, highlighting the importance of inclusion and exclusion in our current state of living conditions. Our work with Seinäjoki Secondary School students led to recommendations for organizing socially engaged art projects. To address our research question "How can conversational art be used as a tool to develop a greater awareness and understanding of current global food issues and to encourage communication on them?" This study affirmed and illuminated that art professionals from various fields collaborate with natural scientists to foster discussion and inspire action in addressing environmental concerns. The strength of art lies in its ability to surprise. The creative process involves embracing chaos and acceptance at each stage. Innovation requires exploring new territories and adopting novel approaches.

As a result, we suggest the following elements in your ABR approach:

1. Explain the concept in advance, highlighting the value of art and the unexpected.
2. Embrace improvisation and be willing to adjust plans as needed.
3. Include various artistic disciplines:
   • Use bodily movement, choreography and performance art for ice-breaking activities.
   • Integrate performance art with scientific material to make it engaging.
   • Employ visual arts to create environments, set scenes and give form to ideas.
4. Use diverse ARB methods for expressing emotions and thoughts.
5. Foster conversations.
6. Respect all participants.
7. Collaborate with authors and teachers.
8. Document activities and gather feedback on interventions.

Conclusion

ISEAS in August 2022 invited artists and researchers to collaborate on the theme of food, promoting interaction and exchange. The participants, organised into groups, engaged in arts-based activities and dialogues that address the connections of food to environmental issues, climate change, and social justice. This article focused on one of the teams, three artists and a food ethics researcher, who collaborated with 17 secondary school students from Seinäjoki. Their three-day event applied various artistic methods to explore questions of exclusion and inclusion within the context of food justice. Through this collaboration, students expressed their views on challenging topics that may be difficult to express verbally.

Creating a socially engaged art-science event embraces the is related to its possibility for it to grow larger than itself. As Lea Kantonen and Raisa Karttunen (2021) state, the process of socially engaged art or artistic work generally cannot be predicted. Goals and expectations can be set for artistic work, but the final result or effects cannot be known or determined. When actors from various art fields and people from different cultures and disciplines are brought together, something new will inevitably turn out, and this has been the case with ISEAS since its inception. ISEAS activities are intensive and short-term, and even though ISEAS teams spend a great deal of time together planning their

interventions within local communities, improvisation always plays a key role in the actual performance of these interventions. Improvisation allows finding something new and unexpected (Levine, 2013). With ISEAS, the unexpected is expected.

This case highlights the potential of art to act as a collaborative framework between artists, researchers and communities and advocates its inclusion in school curricula. The dynamic nature of art allows new perspectives to emerge, and non-verbal expressions such as movement and colour can effectively convey complex concepts. Activist art fundamentally seeks to bring about change by expanding our ways of thinking and improving our understanding of our relationship with nature. More research is needed on making cooperation between art and science part of everyone's curriculum.

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Visionary Barricades: Art Class as Memorial Faculty

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ABSTRACT

With the ad hoc artifact of the barricade as a framing motif, I discuss practical, political, and artistic uses of found material by communities living in enclosure. Beginning with the street memorial, I move to briefly describing a number of projects undertaken in my urban high school art classroom and intended for public display, all of which responded to current events and many of which used found materials.

KEYWORDS: Barricade, Found Objects, Street Art, Public Art, Art Education, Anarchism, Anti-Form

A Brief History of Tactical Repurposing

The formless ethos of fugitivity, expressed in tactics of both military and cultural resistance by groups lacking power and capital in zones of colonial enclosure, like the Gaza Strip, a South African bantustan, or a neighborhood in Chicago abandoned by capital, can be summarized in the barricade. Catherine Malabou (2023) states that "Anarchism always assumes a retrospective glance." "To come back," she continues, "amounts to inventing" (p. 218). A structure that serves a simple and consistent purpose in urban conflicts, the barricade requires remembering what is at hand, and what can be creatively repurposed. This is done in the service of mutual aid, which, following Kropotkin, Malabou describes as "the social response of nature" (p. 219) to the evolutionary struggle for survival. Mutual aid is the direct and local provision of essential needs, of food, shelter, care, and security, in lieu of official neglect and in opposition to official extraction. In this essay, I hope to show how my students and I collaborated on expressive projects that echoed the guerrilla barriers that attempt to reverse the repressive terms of enclosure.

In his history *The Insurgent Barricade*, Mark Traugott (2010) locates the origin of barricades in 16th-century Paris, but notes that their importance began with proletarian uprisings in 19th century Europe. As formerly rural populations recently displaced into cities, urban workers were reinventing forms of pastoral social life within congested

quarters populated by the output of industrial production—including an abundance of barrels, the root of the word "barricade". Barricades were crucial to Europe's liberal republican revolutions of 1848, as well as in the Paris Commune of 1871, in which anarchists formed a sizeable contingent. Radicals built barricades in the 1905 Russian Revolution, the Spanish Civil War, the Warsaw revolt against the Nazis, and the student-led uprising in Paris in 1968. Barricades became more widely documented outside of Europe after this period, appearing in conflicts in Nicaragua, Argentina, Tunisia, Iraq, and Haiti.

It is worth mentioning that the improvised guerilla ethos of the barricade has been appropriated to serve a wide range of interests. A range of militant factions, including the Islamic State, have made use of found materials in concocting improvised explosive devices as a tactic of insurgent warfare. And counter-insurgency forces have learned much from popular uprisings, not only in the use of steel, razor wire, and concrete barricades, but also in tactics of "kettling," extemporaneous formations of armored police used to contain and intimidate protestors. And reactionary movements, like the secessionist landed bourgeoisie in America, made use of battle tactics borrowed from conflicts with Indigenous groups (after denouncing them in the Declaration of Independence), famously dressing up as Natives when throwing tea in the Boston Harbor. This incident also recalls the regalia of avowed patriot Jacob Chansley, known as the Q Shaman, who stormed the U.S. Capitol along with hundreds of rioters in January 2021, and the improvised battle gear sported by attendees at the Unite the Right rally in 2017.

In a less combative vein, Cubans have coped for decades with the poverty enforced by the U.S. trade embargo by sharing resources and skills, engineering everyday machines from available materials, including homemade fans, motorized bikes, battery chargers, and radio antennas (Oroza, 2012). This could also be seen in the wider Latinx homemade aesthetic of rasquachismo, which Charlene Villaseñor Black (2022) defines as "a DIY aesthetic… that employs recycling and repurposing and valorizes color, baroque excess, and creative reuse" (p. 2). This aesthetic is exemplified in Chicanx low-rider car culture (low-rider cruising was finally re-legalized in California in October 2023). Such ingenuity is common among people caged in prisons, jails, and asylums; the incarcerated artist Angelo worked with the artist collective Temporary Services (2020) to create a booklet documenting some of these prison contraptions, entitled *Prisoners Inventions*. Many artistic installations have recalled the formlessnesss of barricades, starting with Allan Kaprow's Happenings and the Italian Arte Povera

movement, and later artists including Doris Salcedo and Thomas Hirschhorn. Others sought to find ways to inexpensively make urban terrain more hospitable for unhoused people, as in the warming tents that Michael Rakowitz designed in his *paraSITE* project, or the portable storage and shelter units created by Krystof Wodiczko. Assemblages by both professional artists and everyday people in constrained circumstances are linked to the barricade as acts of para-architecture. These makers conjure an ad hoc fortress or domestic space in reaction to a pre-existing denial of safety or comfort for practical and/or aesthetic purposes. In my own under-resourced art classroom, I tried to infuse this spirit of recalcitrant ingenuity into our creative work.

Public Remembrances

As a White teacher making non-functional public artworks with Black and Brown high school students on the southeast side of Chicago for many years, I sought to avoid irresponsible appropriation and to reconceive recognizable objects in order to gesture at forms of mutual aid, collective remembrance, and solidarity against forces of repression. Making use of memory, sometimes following the tradition of the street memorial as a site-specific para-architectural monument and marker, was what for me linked my projects to more direct acts of historic resistance.

Figure 1. *Image of Altarventions guerrilla project installation, January 2010: papier-mâché sculptures on plywood base with candles and laminated label, placed outside a suburban elementary school in the snow beneath a tree.*

Figure 2. *Image of Altarventions guerrilla project installation, January 2010: papier-mâché sculptures on plywood base with candles and laminated label, placed outside a suburban transit station in the snow.*

In the winter of 2009, artist Mike Bancroft and I had our students create papier-mâché images in black and white to remember someone they lost, and we assembled these into altars. In January 2010 we drove up to the near northern suburbs, and placed these altars, accompanied by lit candles and a laminated message, at strategic public spots in wealthy majority-white areas (Figures 1-2). One year later, Mike and I worked with my students to create a monumental sculpture of stacked translucent 50-gallon barrels cast from packing tape and plastic wrap. We lit them from within and adorned them with stuffed fabric organs and ceramic bones, and accompanied them with an audio track and signage. This monument was placed in a community garden near the school where I taught, whose soil had been made toxic by unremediated byproducts of the area's earlier industrial heyday (Figures 3-4).

Figure 3. *Image of Brownfield Towers installation, January 2011. Image shows a tower of translucent barrels with lights inside, festooned with fabric intestines and ceramic bones. Night view in a community garden space in South Chicago in the snow.*

Figure 4. *Image of Brownfield Towers installation, January 2011. Image shows a tower of translucent barrels with lights inside, festooned with fabric intestines and ceramic bones. Daylight view in a community garden space in South Chicago in the snow, including a laminated informational placard attached to the chain link fence.*

Temporary Structures

One of our projects that both recalled the barricade and addressed the issue of housing was the very first collaboration we undertook with Mike Bancroft (Figures 5-6). For this 2008 project, entitled *Piñata Factory*, my students made hundreds of piñatas using balloons with forms inspired by the hybrid biological creations of artists like Natalie Jeremijenko, Brandon Ballengée, and Eduardo Kac. Mike and I went out on a bitterly cold weekend in Chicago, and at three locations underneath the Kennedy Expressway, threw these piñatas over a chain link fence that had been set up to prevent unhoused people from finding shelter under the overpass. We also left packaged foil blankets at the bottom of the fence, emblazoned with a Piñata Factory logo. We were able to get some coverage for this project on the local NPR station.

Figure 6. I*mage of Piñata Factory installation, December 2008. This is a detail of the same installation as above, in which foil packets labeled with the logo "Piñata Factory" and containing plastic blankets can be seen at the base of the fence.*

Back in 2005, the Plan for Transformation was well underway. This was a rehabilitation plan the Chicago Housing Authority had introduced in 2000 that involved the demolition of all high-rise public housing in the city. As a class, we heard from current and former public housing residents, journalists, faculty members, and a representative of the CHA (Figure 7). We made drawings that memorialized the fallen buildings (Figure 8), and created floorplans for possible new residences (Figure 9), which we showed at a month-long exhibition.

Figure 5. *Image of Piñata Factory installation, December 2008. About 40 or 50 colorful round papier-mâché sculptures can be seen piled behind a chain-link fence blocking access to shelter in an underpass beneath the Kennedy Expressway in Chicago.*
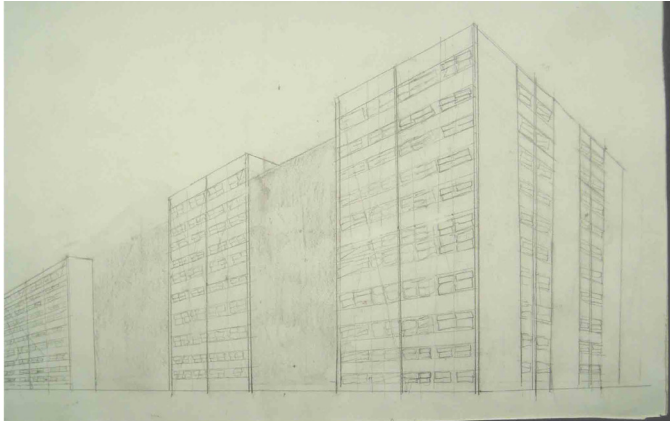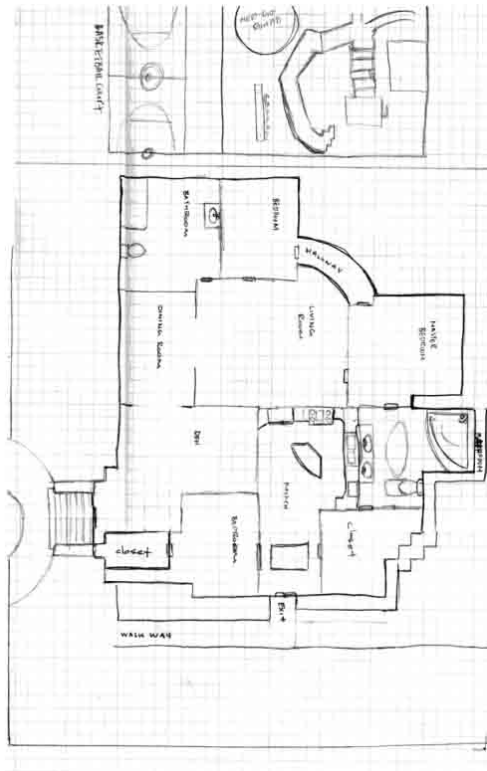

Figure 7. *Image of my high school art classroom in fall 2005, with my students watching and listening to a presentation by Chicago public housing resident, journalist, and organizer Beauty Turner.*

Figure 8. *Student's two-point perspective pencil drawing of Chicago's now-demolished Cabrini Green public housing project, fall 2005.*

Figure 9. *Student's overhead plan-style drawing of an imagined ideal public housing space, fall 2005.*

We returned to the theme of housing in 2013, again informed by Rakowitz and Wodiczko, when we created an inflatable set of house-like structures, with information printed on flyers and painted directly on the structures that informed viewers about a planned multi-million-dollar lakefront real estate development that could affect property values in the neighborhood. We placed these tents outside for an end-of-the-year festival day where kids could crawl around in the tents, and adults could take some information (Figures 10-11).

Figure 10. *Image of multiple inflated tents (that could be entered and exited), on display on the side of Bowen High School, in spring 2013, intended to share information about the Lakeside plan, for a large nearby residential development project.*
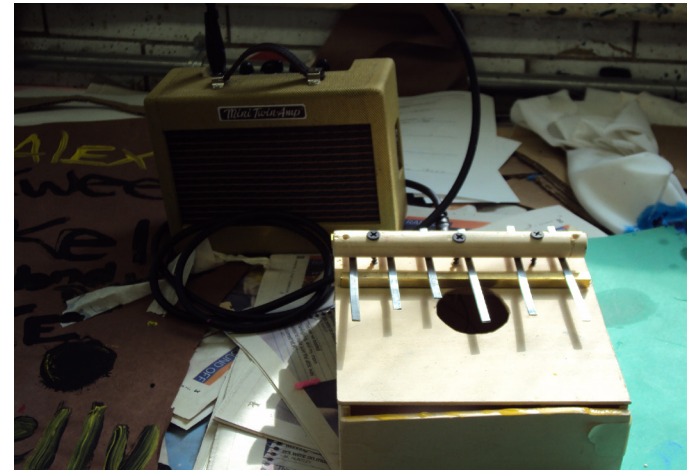

Figure 11. *Detail of one of the inflated structures above, with messages painted by students on the roof, including "125,000 homes," "Use the $ for something important," and "Don't make us leave!"*

Sonic Guerrillas

Homemade musical instruments have been an important element of folk culture throughout the Black diaspora. Informed by my collaboration with artist Matthew Steinke, we studied and emulated the history of jug bands in projects creating "canjos" (banjos employing cans as resonators) in 2006 and 2007, using large cans from the cafeteria along with lumber and guitar strings to create instruments with percussive and melodic qualities (Figure 12). Again connecting with Matthew, we then learned from the scrap-based electrified *likembe*, or thumb pianos, that were played in Congo by bands such as Konono No. 1 (Perry, 2010; Stanton, et al., 2012), and took apart rakes and soldered piezo pickups to create our own versions of this invention as a smaller amplified *mbira*, which we played and recorded through a small amplifier (Figure 13).

Figure 13. *Image of a not-yet-painted student-made amplified thumb piano, or mbira, attached to a miniature amplifier, from spring 2011.*

For a 2012 learning unit and installation related to the War on Terror, as well as military recruiting in high schools, my students created wooden facsimiles of automated artificial limbs and drones, and used ceramics to emulate various possible examples of IEDs, the improvised explosives mentioned earlier that were commonly encountered by American soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan (Figure 14). We also created examples of camouflage and created collages modeling the many varieties of hijab worn by Muslim women in different societies, images of which often appeared in Western pro-war propaganda. At the exhibition we met with American veterans who were disillusioned as well as traumatized by their experiences of occupation and combat in the Middle East.

Figure 12. *Image of a collection of canjos (string instruments made from cans, wood, and guitar strings) on a display table at the Hyde Park Art Center in Chicago in spring 2007, accompanied by information sheets, contact mics made by students, and portable cassette tape recorders.*

Figure 14. *Image of an installation of student work at the Southside Hub of Production (SHoP), featuring colorful wooden models of limbs, drones, and camouflaged IEDs, from fall of 2012.*

Figure 15. *Student-made multicolored poster from fall 2009, using spray-paint stencils and rubber block prints. The poster is on white paper and features a black night stick, with gold badge prints reading "No more beatings" and orange and brown text reading "Stop police brutality."*

Police Barrier, Do Not Cross

Lastly, we also created numerous posters that directly objected to violence locally and nationally, often in response to police brutality and racist attacks (Figure 15). A Chicago police commander named Jon Burge, who graduated from the high school where I taught, was publicly known to have personally overseen the tortured confessions of well over 100 young Black men over the course of decades, many of whom had been released from prison based on their testimony regarding torture. He had been protected by State's Attorney Richard M. Daley, and later shielded by the statute of limitations, but was finally indicted for perjury in 2011. My students decorated prison jumpsuits with patches about justice and grief, which were worn in front of the courthouse where Burge was tried by activists with the anti-carceral group Tamms Year Ten (Figure 16). The following year my students also learned about Burge, and created a public display of papier-mâché masks to honor his victims, loosely modeled on European torture masks (Figure 17).

Figure 16. *Activists with the group Tamms Year Ten, wearing orange jumpsuits with student-designed patches at a rally accompanying the first day of the spring 2011 perjury trial of Captain Jon Burge.*

Figure 17. *Student-designed torture masks for a spring 2012 display at the Southside Hub of Production (SHoP) that shared information about torture experienced for years by Black Chicago residents at the hands of officers reporting to Captain Jon Burge.*

Scrap cardboard, Styrofoam, and paint were the materials we used to construct an eight-foot battle robot with a taser and a nightstick for arms, and a security camera for a head, as part of a public show I co-curated with another art teacher in 2008 entitled "School as Prison" (Figure 18). Styrofoam and artificial hair and various other found objects were used for a project remembering and discussing the legacy of Michael Jackson after his death in 2009 (Figure 19). And we used lots more cardboard and paint for freeform memorials that students created for an exhibition in a vacant lot that took place in 2012 (Figure 20). Drawing materials, paper, cardboard, and paint were used to create maps and icons of the neighborhood for another exhibition we mounted in 2011 (Figure 21).


Figure 18. *Installation of our collaboratively student-made school surveillance robot, from the Hyde Park Art Center education center mini-exhibition "School as Prison," spring 2008.*

Figure 19. *Student-made Styrofoam bust of Michael Jackson, using Styrofoam, artificial hair, and scrap fabric, fall 2009.*

Figure 20. *Student-made memorial sculpture, made of cardboard and papier-mâché, painted with tempera and acrylic, with a cross and the words "RIP Abel" modeled three-dimensionally, from spring 2012.*
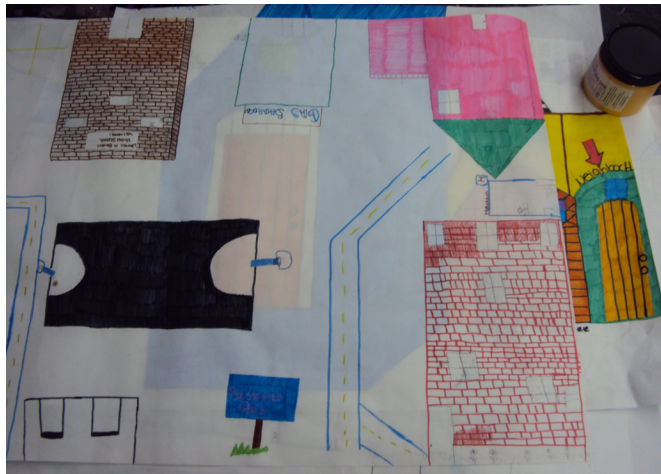
Figure 21. *Student-made collaborative map of the neighborhood surrounding Bowen High School, displayed at the Southside Hub of Production (SHoP) in Hyde Park, spring 2011.*

In 2007, six Black teenagers were arrested in Jena, Louisiana for their participation in a fight stoked by racial tensions instigated by nooses being hung on a tree at the local high school, and our students printed postcards that were mailed to local and Federal officials related to the case (Figure 22). We learned about the history of assassinated Chicago Black Panther leader Fred Hampton and created posters and cards related to the 2012 murder of Trayvon Martin for a 2013 pop-up exhibition on police violence (Figure 23). These recalled many of the posters made in May '68, which also drew on the contemporaneous visual culture of the Black Panther Party and the work of Minister of Culture Emory Douglas. My own personal artwork often made use of the memorial form, including a piece dedicated to a student who died violently (Figure 24).

Figure 22. *Student-made Jena 6 postcard print, featuring the words "Jena 6" and a felled tree, fall 2007.*

Figure 23. *An array of student-made postcard-size prints hanging on strings in the window of the pop-up exhibition "Black and Blue," from spring 2013. Prints show images of police brutality, and convey messages such as "Fred Hampton," "The right to remain black and blue," and "Don't just convict anybody."*

Figure 24. *A collaborative piece responding to the gunshot death of a student, with a miniature figurative sculpture on a life-size plywood cross that I made, accompanied with a remembrance drawing by one of the deceased student's friends.*

Tangible and Incorrigible

Physical expressions of grassroots resistance comes in many forms, with the barricade as one particularly significant example. I want to acknowledge that the examples from my classroom were led more by me than by my students, and were inspired by artists and motivated by budget limitations rather than channeling some grassroots organic force of political critique. Nonetheless, students were energized and motivated in working on these projects, which had clear links to some of the histories, struggles, and expressions of their families and communities. I am hopeful that this series of projects gave my students a sense of the many distinctive strains of socially-engaged material culture that creates a loose visual thread connecting the experiences of poor and colonized communities throughout history and around the world.

Writing about barricades in 2015, David Gissen stated that "the detritus of contemporary urbanization offers the material with which to pose another world" (p, 362). Through finding new uses for mundane heirlooms left behind by ancestors, corporations, and institutions, people may undertake an anarchist aspiration to build up and celebrate local assets. The key lies not in trying to restore a dismal and decaying past, but in seeing in the past some sparks of what could ignite an overhaul in contemporary circumstances, transcending mere survival. "In any case," says Malabou, "anarchism wouldn't take being restored to itself, since its past exists only in the future" (pp. 219-220).

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Troubles and Sweets: Reflecting Critically on Historical Offerings for Contemporary Issues

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ABSTRACT
Implementing critical reflective practice, an art education professor details the design of a preservice undergraduate-level learning module to address troubling anti-trans legislation in their state. While centering contemporary art featuring a historically significant local hero, a drag queen by the name of Sweet Evening Breeze, and resisting a didactic or progress narrative, the author reflects on power dynamics, centering joy, and the importance of partnerships in art teacher preparation.

KEYWORDS: Critical Reflective Practice, LGBTQIA+, Preservice Art Teacher, History, Local History, Policy

Art teacher preparation programs are tasked with continually shifting their curriculum to meet the challenges of an ever-changing political climate. Particularly in the United States, the rapid increase of anti-LGBTQIA+ laws are cause for alarm for higher education programs, pre-service educators, and K12 teachers. The rushed pace and intentional rumor mill of misinformation generate crisis as an omnipresent narrative in our contemporary historical moment (Roitman, 2013). The fear, anxiety, and urgency of crisis narratives leave educators primed to react and poised to censor themselves and their curricula to protect their jobs, themselves, and their students (Lavietes, 2022; Modan, 2023). Amidst this and the process of curriculum planning for an undergraduate art teacher preparation course, a soft whisper from the specter of Sweet Evening Breeze carried messages of possibilities and of Black, queer joy embedded in local history and contemporary art.

In this paper, I will reflect on a learning module I designed inspired by a mural of James Herndon (1892-1983), a historical figure from Lexington, Kentucky known best by his drag name, Sweet Evening Breeze, "Sweets" for short. Sweets was famous to mythical proportion and rendered as historical legend for her unabashed evening strolls through downtown as a woman in her dresses, makeup, wig, and signature parasol, for his longstanding employment as a hospital orderly and his generosity as a fundraiser for his church that served local Black communities, and for their hospitality in creating safe spaces, particularly in their home, for LGBTQIA+ folks in Lexington. Since 2021, her likeness in a three-story monochromatic purple mural raises a glass to history, joy, and pride in the work *Mother of Us All* by the artist Gaia (Figure 1).

Sweet Evening Breeze became an anchor for my course curriculum design as I questioned how to address our state's anti-LGBTQIA+ policies and their relationship to art education. The *Mother of Us All* mural inspired and coaxed forward an abundance of creative strategies for navigating through contemporary policies and moved away from the message of constrictive crisis. Sweets lit a path for my love of research into histories of place, my curiosity to learn from marginalized histories, and my desire to create meaningful curricula in support of future art educators. Through *critical reflective practice* (Hood & Travis, 2023), I describe the design, implementation, and outcomes of centering joy, local history, and contemporary art in a university course for preservice art teachers.

Figure 1. *Gaia, Mother of Us All, 2021, Mural in collaboration with PRHBTN in Lexington, KY. 161 N. Limestone St Lexington, KY. Courtesy of the artist Gaia.*

Critical Reflective Practice

Art educators Emily Hood and Sarah Travis (2023) state, "A critical reflective practice involves careful observation of the power dynamics

of the socially situated self with others in everyday interactions" (p. 28). Therefore, in utilizing critical reflective practice as a methodology, it is important to include my positionality within professional and personal social contexts. As a professor with academic freedom, I am in a position of power and privilege to determine curricular emphasis and course design. Situated within the academy, I have access to resources for research and benefit from the authority of the institution to connect with community fairly easily as partners in pedagogy and scholarship. I recognize that I can leverage such privilege and power towards learning opportunities for my students and for myself.

As a white, cis-gendered, straight woman shaped by a rural, protestant, and conservative upbringing in the US South, my practice of *becoming* (Byrne, 2021; Deleuze, 1997; Manning & Massumi, 2014) an art educator and an ally is always in negotiation with un/re-learning. While resisting didacticism and progress narratives, critical reflective practice offers a centering of praxis and an exercise to uncover pluralities of meaning from the pedagogical experience of being an instructor and a learner. Hood and Travis (2023) provide five non-linear components of engaging in critical reflective practice: intention, flashpoint, description, consciousness, and transformation. Within these components, a critically reflective practitioner notices often uncomfortable phenomenological moments of realizations (flashpoints), thoroughly documents the moments (description), and makes decisions to engage with them (intention) towards a deeper understanding of encounters with critical awareness, specifically around intersectional issues such as race, gender, class, ability, and other sociocultural identities. The phrase *stay with the trouble* from Donna Haraway (2016) similarly describes the work of critical reflection in practice. In this paper, I will attempt to stay with the trouble implementing a critical reflective practice as I unfold the details of the learning module I designed for my course.

Troubles

Kentucky Senate Bill 150 (SB150), passed in March 2023, is an omnibus anti-trans legislation banning affirming healthcare, bathroom access, and pronoun use. As CJ Daniels (2023) reported for local news, "The bill bans gender affirming care for anyone under 18; bans schools from teaching anything about gender expression, sexual orientation or gender identity and also allows teachers to ignore a student's preferred pronouns" (para. 5). SB150 is among an alarming number of bills in other states enacting similar legislation designed to continually repress marginalized individuals and communities. This slew of legislation is

a demarcation of our contemporary moment, which will become part of its historical framing.

History demonstrates that exclusion and marginalization are tools of oppression. Designed as a perceived threat to societal norms or ideologies, moral panics like the contemporary anti-trans movement succeed in generating crisis (Roitman, 2013) and instilling uncertainty and even fear towards the rise in authoritarian politics (Avery & Mondon, 2023). As a result, public servants like educators become caught in a culture war and moral dilemma, with choices like supporting and caring for marginalized communities or facing mob-like panic and the threat of losing your career (Carter, 2023; 2024). These historical and contemporary moments are troubling and confusing.

Intention

As a professor with teacher preparation as a major part of my job responsibilities, I often grapple with how best to support my students as learners and future educators. In my teaching practice, I strive to neither ignore nor center panic-generating crises, but instead to offer tools and make space for critical analysis and *emergent strategies* (brown, 2017) towards a better experience for future art educators, their students, and as citizens of our state and country. The process of curriculum design, course preparation, and of continually becoming an art education professor and an ally to marginalized communities generate questions and troubles including: what will it mean to engage with increasingly 'illegal' subject matter in a teacher preparation course? Are my tools, both teaching and personal, adequate to address the concerns of students in their own journeys of becoming? What do I do to prepare my students?

Through an intentional engagement with critical reflective practice (Hood & Travis, 2023), I attempt to dissect some of these questions. On the first question of (il)legal knowledge in educational institutions, I rationalize that, at least at the current moment, university professors are protected by academic freedoms in ways that are not always afforded to practicing public school teachers. It is critically important to utilize academic freedom to model inquiry, research, and teaching practices. It is also vital to recognize the students in the course, who will be teachers, may not be afforded the same freedoms. Therefore, the curricular design for my course must hold space for troubling the limitations and testing the *pliability* (Lucero & Lewis, 2018) of engaging critical practices in their future classrooms. In my initial speculations on engaging with increasingly illegal subject matter, I determined that

it will likely mean that regardless of the curriculum design, we won't arrive at conclusive and maybe not even satisfying answers; and yet, we may better understand our roles and responsibilities within the context of current and future spaces for art education. The possibility decidedly makes the pursuit worthwhile.

With the second question, I have enough teaching and personal tools to know that I don't have enough tools! I began to reflect on the skills and scaffolding that may need to happen to create a well-designed curriculum and facilitate a meaningful experience with the throughline of contemporary art. As someone new to the history and city of Lexington, Kentucky and who does not have the lived experience of being a member of the LGBTQIA+ community, I was unsure of how I might utilize my teaching and personal tools to specifically address SB150 and its ramifications for arts educators in my art teacher preparation course. Through the practice of staying with the trouble and continually reflecting on these questions of curricular design, I recalled something that a graduate student I worked with taught me the semester before—that a queen from Lexington's past called Sweet Evening Breeze took famous strolls around downtown where she was well known and maybe even accepted by the community. Starting with Sweets, I began to work on answering the third question, to unpack what I could do to support and prepare my students as future art teachers.

Flashpoint

In 2021, artist Gaia finished his mural *Mother of Us All* in collaboration with PRHBTN, an arts organization that commissioned around forty large public murals in Lexington between 2012 and 2022. Featured across the United States and in several countries, Gaia's work aims to portray and celebrate marginalized histories and local heroes from underserved communities specific to the places the murals are located ("Sweet Evening Breeze" blows, 2021). *Mother of Us All* is a contemporary artwork portraying Sweet Evening Breeze, a historical, marginalized LGBTQIA+ figure specific to Lexington, Kentucky. The mural provided an in-road to design my course curriculum. Observing Sweets' monochromatic purple salute within the mural prompted a pedagogical flashpoint (Travis & Lewis, 2023), which in this case was a welcoming sensation sparking curiosity, wonder, and joy. Travis and Lewis (2023) articulate that flashpoints are "educational moments" that "unexpected[ly] rupture our everyday practices and plans" in "often disturbing ways" (p. 345). However, they argue that along with postcritical phenomenologies of education, art education offers flashpoints both aware of critical-structural inequalities and offer joyful opportunity for "acts of collective embodiment in and against the conditions of our radically dystopian times" (p. 346). In other words, art education offers opportunity for creative avenues that celebrate collectivity. As an educator, I began to connect how the story of Sweets which encompasses both joy and systemic criticality could guide preservice teachers towards an exploration of past and present within art education.

Sweet Evening Breeze

Sweet Evening Breeze was well known during her time and their popularity continues to the present. Many anecdotes of their life are documented across the internet, preserving his story for contemporary and future audiences. She is featured in the Faulkner Morgan Archive (Sweet Evening Breeze, n.d.). In addition, the documentary film *The Last Gospel of the Pagan Babies*, highlights stories of Sweets (Donohue, et. al., 2017) and a forthcoming book by Maryjean Wall will further unpack the intersectionality of identities and local histories entwined with Sweet Evening Breeze's life (Blackford, 2022). In this paper, I will share a few stories of Sweets to establish their significance in the local history and culture. I do not know the preferred pronouns of James Herndon— Sweet Evening Breeze; different sources use different pronouns. For example, Sweets briefly appears as a character in Cormac McCarthy's (1979) novel *Suttree* referred to as "Her. Him. It." and "That thing" (p. 412). I choose a more respectful approach to Sweet's pronouns and use he, she, and they interchangeably to represent Sweets throughout this paper. I imagine she would appreciate the ambiguity and slightly disarming affect it may have on readers. Perhaps uncertainty through queering the norm was a tactic Sweets utilized to navigate a difficult period of history for someone like them. As Michael Fjordson (2016) states, "In a time when being gay, black, or trans-anything was most often met with general hostility at best (especially in the south), Sweet Evening Breeze was openly, unapologetically all of the above" (para. 3).

Based in Lexington, Sweets worked most of his professional career as a hospital orderly "as a man in pants" and was very active in his church "sometimes dressed as a man" serving as a significant fundraiser for the Black community of his church (Blackford, 2022, p. 1C). She also "enjoyed playing the piano, dressing up in women's clothes and makeup, and entertaining at his house on Prall Street" (Rapchak, n.d., para. 3). Their gender ambiguity, conspicuousness, and, notably, their generous contributions to multiple communities within the city

earned them historical and contemporary recognition. The Prall Street house still stands, and historical record notes its offering of a safe space to many, especially including LGBTQIA+ identified people. The endearing title, *Mother of Us All*, given to Sweets in a 1970 photograph by John Ashley of Sweet Evening Breeze, and after which the 2021 Gaia mural is also named, indicates the position of Sweets as the initiator of Lexington's drag scene and of someone who provided safety and care as a matriarch within queer communities. However, Jonathan Coleman, Director of the Faulkner Morgan Archive, notes that there is a general mythos of Sweets being unaffected by violence stating, "she wasn't [relatively safe]; there are plenty of stories about her being assaulted or her home being vandalized that show up in the paper. So that's a myth but she did seem to be less bothered" (quoted in Blackford, 2022, para. 9). In other words, Sweets was not without troubles like gendered and racialized violence especially common for their time but found ways to navigate and support others facing similar discrimination. The historically marginalized, local hero who was Sweet Evening Breeze is presented through a celebratory mythos of unapologetic authenticity of self and rebellious anecdotes of queering the norm and is memorialized in contemporary public art.

Description

The Sweet Evening Breeze in the purple mural raised their glass to the viewer and prompted my flashpoint. To describe it, I met the rendered gaze of Sweets in the right moment so that my questions of curriculum to support art teachers and their navigation of discriminatory laws inspired a connection with local history and current practice. It was an 'aha!' moment that prompted excitement and spurred curiosity. Gaia's mural and the historic Sweets offered a flashpoint, an anchor point, and permission to bravely embrace the opportunities arts educators are afforded and to imagine better and more joyful ways of being in the face of troubles.

Partnerships and Process

Being new to Lexington, my local historical and cultural knowledge is limited, but through my connection to a major university and the generosity of local artists and scholars, there are an abundance of resources available. Partnerships are critical to construct the learning module which considers how local contexts inform curriculum development and affect the experience of students in a secondary art class. Rather than didactic learning objectives and specific takeaways, the unit offers experiential learning opportunities and connections to

partners within and adjacent to art education, prompting students to ask questions and consider the impact of the module's content on their art teaching practices.

Framing the unit are articles by Nicole Marroquin (2018a, 2018b) whose work with art teacher Paulina Camacho Valencia and their high school art students in the Pilsen and Little Village neighborhoods of Chicago engaged histories of student activism for educational rights and opportunities in their local community. Their work inspects troubles from the past, previously buried history to the contemporary students, in which Black and Latinx students in the late 1960s and 1970s organized uprisings towards better access to education; diversifying the teaching staff; pushing against dilapidated facilities; inadequate, culturally irrelevant curricula; and systemic racial discrimination. By centering historic student activism, Marroquin and Camacho Valencia prompted their high school students to engage with history as it models the role of young people in creating and sustaining change. Their project unpacked histories of student activism within their school and community to demonstrate the importance of youth voice and empowerment. Their students utilized artmaking to juxtapose historic and contemporary images in collages, video making, and installation. Marroquin and Camacho Valencia's model of connecting local history with contemporary art towards social justice and culturally affirming histories within art classrooms gave insight to my students as they considered their curriculum development assignment and the political contexts of anti-LGBTQIA+ policies.

Near the end of our unit of study, funded by the University of Kentucky's School of Art / Visual Studies Visiting Artist Series, Camacho Valencia provided deeper insight into the articles we read and worked directly with students in my course. She presented additional projects for high school student engagement with histories of activism, strategies for planning and instruction to support learning needs of secondary-level art students, and offered examples of several contemporary, conceptual, and performance artists encouraging students to consider a range of arts making practices in their lesson planning. The Marroquin articles and the in-person visit from Camacho Valencia offered models for scaffolded curriculum and instruction with a focus on history and social justice in high school art classes.

Local partnerships insured historical, cultural, and local specificity to guide students. Of great significance was the Faulkner Morgan Archive. Founded in 2014 with collections from two queer Kentucky artists, Henry Faulkner (1924 – 1981) and Robert Morgan (1950 –), the Faulkner

Morgan Archive is comprised of oral history interviews and artifacts covering 200 years of LGBTQIA+ history in Kentucky. The collection serves to preserve, share, and educate about queer histories in the state through intentional collecting, exhibitions, lectures, and accessibility. When researching for local, marginalized heroes, the Faulkner Morgan Archive was essential for the artist Gaia to create the *Mother of Us All* mural and is credited alongside the artist's signature. I hoped to learn more about the mural, the archive, and how they are resources for local art educators. Through an email exchange, the Executive Director of the Faulkner Morgan Archive accepted my invitation and request to share with my students the scope of the archives and the key role the visual arts play within it. They and the Assistant Executive Director of the archive spent a class period with us sharing some of the fascinating stories housed in the Faulkner Morgan Archive, including, for example, the role of some of the first documented settlers Robert Craddock (d. 1837) and Peter (Pierre) Tardiveau (d. 1817) who from their noted "life time friendship" and side-by-side burial sites (King, 1988, p. 2) were most likely a part of the LGBTQIA+ community. Further, the Executive Director generously provided access to digital images from the archives that the class used for making collages as a part of our unit of study (Figure 2).

Figure 2. *Jody Stokes-Casey, Sweet Evening Breeze, 2023, collage of archival images from the Faulkner Morgan Archive, 4 x 6 in.*

With serendipitous timing, the Faulkner Morgan Archive published their first book, *Pagan Babies* (2023), and released it in conjunction with an exhibition of the same name at Institute193, a local contemporary art gallery emphasizing works from the modern South (Figure 3). Pagan Babies is the facetious name given to a group of "rebellious, free-spirited, sexually adventurous" (Nance, 2023, xv) artists from the mid-1970s into the 1980s within the eccentric social sphere of the local artist Robert Morgan. The book and exhibition feature a series of photographs by John Denny Ashley of the Pagan Babies. As a part of our learning module, I organized a field trip for my class to visit the *Mother of Us All* mural by Gaia and to Institute193 where the Gallery Manager provided a tour of the *Pagan Babies* exhibition and answered students' questions about the artwork and the reception of the work within the community—which was overwhelmingly positive.
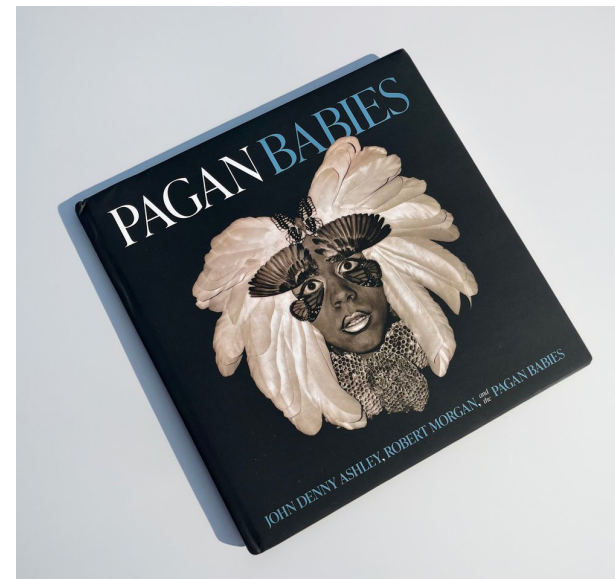
Figure 3. *John Denny Ashley, Robert Morgan, and the Pagan Babies, Cover of Pagan Babies book published by Faulkner Morgan Archives in conjunction with the Pagan Babies exhibition at Institut193, 2023.*

Further, I reached out to The Fairness Campaign, Kentucky's LGBTQIA+ advocacy organization founded in 1991, inviting them to be a partner in the learning module. The Fairness Campaign's coverage, particularly through social media channels, around the anti-trans Senate Bill 150 shows how they are deeply familiar with the ramifications of the bill

and its effects within educational spaces. Generously, the Executive Director joined one of our class sessions via Zoom. He explained the implications of the bill, helped to unpack rumors about it, discussed efforts to repeal the bill, and offered suggestions on supporting all students within the classroom and school. This partnership was invaluable to not only make the bill more transparent, but also to demonstrate how the activism of The Fairness Campaign provides resistance strategies and examples of how to participate in the democratic process for emerging educators.

Each of the partnerships within this learning module highlighted the role of art and art education as connected to local history, contemporary art, and education policy. Articles and guest artists offered examples for preservice art educators to consider, contextualize, facilitate arts experiences, and design instructional strategies to address equity and diversity within their lesson and curriculum planning.

Implications

As I consider the implications of the learning unit through the method of critical reflective practice, several considerations surface including the positionality and privacy of students, resisting a progress narrative, and the necessity of community. In the roles within our respective fields, the community partnerships within this learning unit and myself as the course instructor, are supported within our workplaces to engage with LGBTQIA+ histories and human rights. However, within the contexts of legislation that denies care and recognition of marginalized people and that systemically impacts spaces of learning, the preparation of educators to enter potentially antagonistic spaces and situations is tenuous. As result, any publications or presentations that feature this learning unit must consider the privacy of my students in the course, not only as a responsible conduct of research, but also for their emerging careers amongst potential threats of anti-LGBTQIA+ legislation in the classrooms they seek to enter.

Handal and Lauvas (1987) argue that personal experiences, transmitted knowledge, and core values are critical elements that influence a teacher's reflective practice and therefore inform their implementation of practical theories within their teaching. Throughout the learning module, I planned moments of reflection that ranged from private and anonymous writing to in-class discussion. The private writings were prompted at the start of the unit. Students were asked to reflect on their feelings and make themselves aware of their potential biases before engaging with LGBTQIA+ histories and contemporary issues. The

goal of these prompts was to ask students to examine their core values and to provide an opportunity to situate themselves within the role of a future educator. The rest of the learning module was designed to offer personal experiences and content knowledge through readings, artmaking, and partnership lectures.

Except for those private writings, in-class moments of reflection provided assessment information and feedback on how the learning module was being received and interpreted by students. Using components of the DEAL model for critical reflection, which stands for Describe, Examine, and Articulate Learning (Ash & Clayton, 2009), students considered the module's content, objectives, and what they were gleaning from the experience and shared their reflections through class discussions. At the end of the learning unit, I asked students to contribute comments anonymously to a shared document and reflect on the learning experiences and community partnerships. I received their permission to share their anonymous reflections in the form of publication and presentation.

Consciousness and Transformation

The last two components of critical reflective practice are consciousness and transformation. For the reflective practitioner, critical consciousness emerges from intentional "observation, awareness, and attentiveness" (Hood & Travis, 2023, p. 93) of power dynamics within the classroom. Transformation is a conscious effort of the educator to alter their teaching practices through the work of reflection and awareness. Utilizing a lens of critical reflective practice, I recognize in writing about the learning module my impetus is to share only quotes that reflect transformations such as the students' awakening consciousness or a narrative of progress resulting from participating in the learning activities. Instead, I seek to stay with the trouble by celebrating learning and growth while accepting the complexities, incompleteness, and continuing questions that emerge within the reflective responses and my everyday practice as an art educator.

Students approached and ended the learning module from multiple perspectives. For example, in illustrating a struggle at the beginning of a unit, one anonymous student shared, "Going in I wanted to try and be more open minded about the art and the history we were learning about. It was nice getting to see another side of history, but also challenging, just because of my personal experiences and beliefs, to understand another side of art being portrayed as a movement that can be seen as controversial both today and back then." It's a little unclear what

the student's specific meaning is, particularly at the end of the quote. There is an apparent hesitancy and desire to distance oneself through the phrasing "another side," and yet a desire to be "open minded" and engage with the content. As the quote is anonymous and among a larger document including multiple students' reflections, there is no certain, documented conclusion about how the student's experience ended: if they were successful in their goals of open-mindedness or if they were able to converge the "sides" as they understood them. However, as instructor, I am aware of students who exhibited discomfort and made efforts to check in with them individually, sharing and reminding them of my own processes of becoming and un/re-learning. I am also aware that the students communicated outside of class through group text messages and individual friendships. Reflection and discussion often happen within those spaces where I am unable to bear witness. Still those spaces are critical to students' learning experiences as it is a part of the class community that they have cultivated together.

The necessity of community is the most significant implication emerging from this learning module. By community in this use of the term, I am referencing the relationships and learning that occurred from reflecting and learning together. The students within the class participated in community both within the classroom with me, the instructor, and outside of the classroom with one another. Our classroom community expanded and shifted with each guest presenter as representatives of varying overlapping professional and personal communities to which they belong contributed to the unit learning objectives by sharing their expertise. Through the partnerships, students had the opportunity to create connections within and outside of the classroom. Within the unit we visited the *Mother of Us All* mural, *Pagan Babies* exhibition, and with partnering community organizations, which students described as immersive, a class bonding experience, and a connection to local history. One student anonymously shared, "It was reassuring to know that there is support not only within the art ed community but with external organizations who support teachers who don't agree with [SB150]. I have a better idea of where to turn for resources or support." As the instructor of the course, I learned alongside my students about local organizations and the resources they provide which I can now take into other aspects of my learning, teaching, and research practices, possibly aligning with the transformation element of critical reflective practice.

The *Mother of Us All* mural by Gaia operated as a flashpoint of inspiration and anchor within the unit. The work of public art created a bridge between our efforts to stay with contemporary troubles and historic marginalized communities of Lexington as represented by Sweet Evening Breeze. Between the historic and contemporary connections, overlapping and emerging communities formed around the common goals of this learning module: to ask questions, consider the impact of politics and policies within arts education spaces, and suggest solutions for preservice art educators preparing for their future teaching placements.

Conclusion

As I critically reflect on the planning and facilitation of this learning module, I recognize that through the students' willingness to engage and the generosity and hospitality of community partners, we stayed with the trouble, but more importantly centered joy. From stories of LGBTQIA+ histories in the Faulkner Morgan Archive, the celebratory *Pagan Babies* exhibition and book, and a vibrant purple mural of Sweet Evening Breeze, the images and artworks that surrounded our study created a joyful visual culture within the learning module. The students in this course (and I as instructor) grew our communities of practice to support our work as current and future art educators.

The activism of the Fairness Campaign and the clarification around SB 150 rumors highlighted the importance of being informed educators. The readings and visiting partners offered examples of art educators facilitating historically informed and culturally responsive learning experiences that students were able to visualize and adapt into their curriculum designs. The experiential learning and collaborative partnerships throughout this module resisted a didactic approach and left outcomes to be open, emergent, and personal to each student. One anonymous student explained, "The in-class activities and discussions were extremely helpful in sparking ideas on how to design curriculum / projects / activities, to research and learn about the community's history, and to use that learned knowledge to then have students formulate their own ideas on the history. I like that through the idea of discovering hidden knowledge and secret stories it engages students in a way that gets them to want to go find out more on their own."

Preservice educators seemed to recognize the role of history and local contexts towards shaping curriculum that recognizes student choice in artmaking and opening space for personal explorations of identity as connected to history and culture. While many of our learning activities centered joy, students and I attempted to reflect critically and meaningfully utilizing the DEAL model and by situating ourselves and core values as they impact our current and future pedagogical practices.

Sometimes reflections highlighted ongoing frustrations and troubles where solutions and suggested ideas continued to be unsatisfactory. As an anonymous student shared, "In the end, I dislike the idea that someone's everyday experience has to be secretly incorporated into education in order to speak, discuss, or make art from it." Agreeing with the student, I continue to open space in preservice art education courses for creative problem solving and community building. With local histories as anchor points, art teachers may facilitate inquiry between the past and present in search of strategies and inspiration for navigating troubling times.

Through a critically reflective practice, I will return to questions raised through the design and implementation of this module and be open to opportunities for making space within curriculum for emergent and experiential learning. As Sweet Evening Breeze offers examples of ambiguity and authenticity by caring for others through community building, she gives us permission to not have all the answers and carry on anyway.

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Using Digital Literacy to Transform Conflict into Curiosity: Implications for Art Education

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ABSTRACT
This visual narrative illustrates why digital literacy and the term conflict transformation are valuable concepts to address in the secondary level art classroom. The author provides specific activities designed to enhance digital literacy while activating students' curiosities.

Using Digital Literacy to Transform Conflict into Curiosity: Implications for Art Education

In the following visual narrative
(Carpenter and Tavin, 2012; Madrid-Manrique, 2020),
I describe why digital literacy and the term conflict transformation are
important concepts to address in public schools.
I will also present specific activities designed to enhance digital literacy
while activating students' curiosities.

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What is Digital Literacy and Why is it Important?

Digital literacy is a fluid concept that scholars continually redefine as their understanding of the digital landscape, how literacy is identified, and the relationship between these two factors are rapidly changing. Despite the innate complexities that surround our understanding of digital literacy, I will refer to digital literacy as the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and access to resources that individuals need to succeed in the digital world. This includes locating, evaluating, and using digital information with intention and efficiency as well as creating and communicating information using digital technologies.

Digital literacy, as opposed to the more conventional concept of reading printed text, is essential for thriving in contemporary society. While distinguishing between traditional offline reading and new literacy, scholars point out that digital literacy involves assuming the roles of investigator, author, and editor rather than just the reader (Barone, 2021; Castek et al., 2015; Coiro, 2003; Coiro, 2021; Hammerberg, 2004; Lankshear & Knobel, 2006; RAND, 2002). This requires a significant increase of cognitive energy as readers must identify relevant search terms, vet a webpage's reliability, and cross-reference multiple sources in order to locate the information they are seeking.

Furthermore, the way that members of contemporary society receive information has dramatically shifted over the past two decades. The digital world requires additional critical lenses, complicating the ease with which we acquire and analyze information. For example, Hobbs (2017) describes how algorithmic personalization "uses data from the behaviors, beliefs, interests, and emotions of the target audience to provide filtered digital content, targeted advertising, and differential product pricing to online users" (p. 521). In other words, algorithms that track our digital presence intentionally curate the information and advertisements that appear in our online pursuits. Studies have shown that online search results will differ for each individual because these results depend on what the internet knows about the person conducting the research (Hobbs, 2017).

Art educators are well-aware that digital images can be easily manipulated. Altering a digital image no longer requires expertise using Adobe Photoshop or other sophisticated software. Advances in technology now enable users to manipulate imagery on their smart phones with free applications or tools built into their phone's camera. Videos can also be edited more easily with intuitive technology designed for the common user rather than a trained video editor. These advances in technology allow art teachers to incorporate digital image manipulation into their curriculum without relying on expensive hardware and software.

As shown, the way that people make meaning from the digital information they encounter differs from traditional offline reading of published texts. This involves knowledge, skills, and behaviors that require educators' attention in order to prepare future generations to be productive contributors to a contemporary, democratic society rather than passive victims of profit and power-seeking forces that influence the way information is disseminated in the digital world.

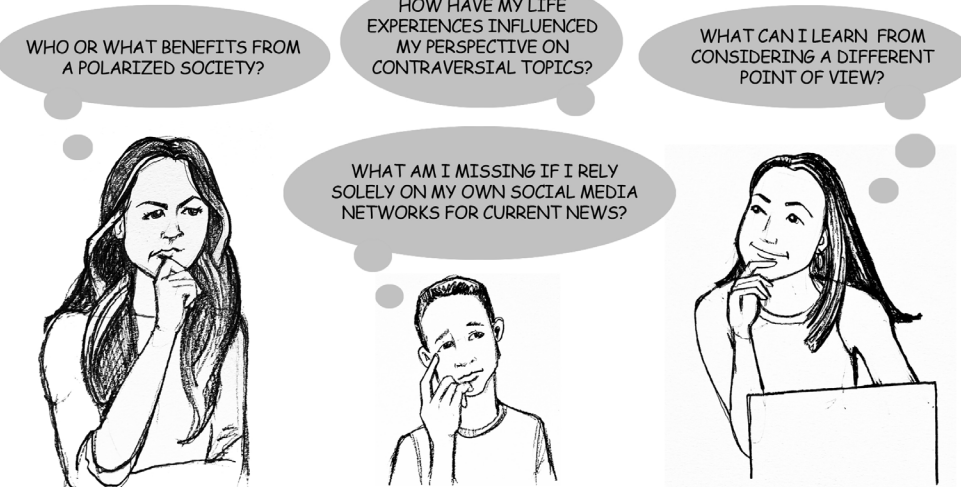## What is Conflict Transformation and Why is it Important?

Based on the work of J.P. Lederach (1995), conflict transformation refers to handling opposition with optimism. Rather than trying to eliminate or control conflict, conflict transformation involves recognizing conflicts as opportunities for personal growth. This broad concept relates to nearly every area of life and can be applied to multiple disciplinary fields. However, for the purpose of this visual narrative, I will describe how conflict transformation relates to allowing information that conflicts with our existing understanding to activate our curiosity and imagination. More specifically, we will explore how digital literacy practices can provide opportunities for conflict transformation to occur while strategically engaging with online content.

Scholars have recently emphasized that civil discourse is a key component of a healthy democracy (Journell, 2019; Lee, 2018; Noddings & Brooks, 2017; Steyer, 2020; Zimmerman & Robertson, 2017). This involves the ability to engage in respectful dialogues with those who hold opinions and perspectives that differ from our own. Zimmerman and Robertson remind us that well-informed individuals often disagree on controversial topics and experts must routinely and respectfully deliberate unresolved questions. Although it may not always be easy, activating the ability to sincerely consider other points of view promotes intellectual character and curiosity. More specifically, discussing controversial issues that stem from differences in moral judgements are often the most difficult to address because consulting expert authorities on moral issues is problematic. Instead, individuals should critically evaluate the origin of their belief systems and recognize how discussions with those who hold different beliefs can enhance the quality of their moral judgements (Zimmerman & Roberts, 2017). Noddings & Brooks highlight that democratic communities are dedicated to continual self-improvement. Rather than simply perpetuating its existing customs, democratic communities should aim to sustain healthy qualities and suggest ways to improve less desirable traits. This involves embracing opportunities to refine our current perspectives by deliberately considering why others hold different points of view (Noddings & Brooks, 2017).

While preparing to facilitate discussions on potentially controversial topics with students, teachers should determine how to establish and enforce ground rules that support a safe, respectful learning environment. Setting up these expectations from the beginning will provide a point of reference to guide students' interactions. When prompted with, "What ground rules should teachers establish when facilitating difficult discussions with students?" the Gemini-generated text provided a helpful list for teachers to adapt to suit the context of their classroom (OpenAI, 2024; see https://drive.google.com/file/d/1F1Gtar37hT3U6eZnPUMnz_W0iGvB4Y8/view?usp=sharing for full transcript).

Informed by both lived experiences and the collective wisdom generated by research, people commonly recognize how the information we receive through various media channels and the way that we process this information is rapidly changing. Exposure to reasonable perspectives that contradict our own diminishes as technology and social media perpetuate a distorted version of reality based on what we want to see and believe is true. This promotes the polarization of societies as individuals restrict their sources of information to media that support their existing point of view. Therefore, activating a conflict transformation mindset positions individuals to embrace discomfort while recognizing the learning potential generated from experiencing cognitive dissonance. Addressing this topic provides opportunities for students to explore how uncertainty can breed a sense of curiosity that welcomes complexity rather than seeking simple truths.

WHO OR WHAT BENEFITS FROM A POLARIZED SOCIETY?

HOW HAVE MY LIFE EXPERIENCES INFLUENCED MY PERSPECTIVE ON CONTRAVERSIAL TOPICS?

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM CONSIDERING A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW?

WHAT AM I MISSING IF I RELY SOLELY ON MY OWN SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKS FOR CURRENT NEWS?

How Can Art Teachers Support Digital Literacy and Conflict Transformation?

Teachers can model and support the attitudes and behaviors that support conflict transformation. When encountering a perspective that differs from our own, we must not only acknowledge the personal life experiences that have influenced our beliefs, but also respectfully consider how contextual circumstances have shaped another person's point of view. This is one way that encountering difference can stimulate curiosity. Rather than avoiding this conflict, intentionally listening to an opposing perspective and trying to understand why they see an issue differently can activate a pleasurable feeling of intellectual inquiry. In addition, resisting the impulse to immediately reject ideas that challenge our sense of truth involves strengthening our self-control, a character trait that will benefit other areas of social and emotional well-being. Carefully listening to the reasoning supporting another viewpoint not only helps us to empathize with others but can also open our eyes to new questions that might inspire intellectual and creative growth.

The following activities are designed to promote digital literacy while activating students' curiosities.

Instructional Strategies and Activities

Curiosity Activity #1: What is the Source and Purpose? [1]

When encountering online information that both supports or conflicts with our existing point of view, it's important to critically question the content's source and intended purpose to avoid believing misleading information. In order to identify and better understand how and why facts are presented inaccurately online, Hobbs (2017) provides a helpful infographic that divides misleading information into ten categories and provides the defining characteristics that distinguish each. These categories include: propaganda, clickbait, sponsored content, satire and hoax, error, partisan, conspiracy theory, pseudoscience, misinformation, and bogus news. After viewing the infographic, students can find examples that fit into the different categories and then answer questions such as: Who created this message? Were they creating this message to make money? To inform (or misinform)? As a form of political or social power? As a joke or a form of humor? Or because they truly are passionate about the issue (see para. 13)?

As they further investigate the content of the image, students might respond to questions that address the following four areas:
Technique: What symbols and rhetorical strategies are used to attract attention and activate an emotional response? What makes them effective?
Means of communication and format: How does the message reach people, and what form does it take?
Representation: How does this message portray people and events? What points of view and values are activated?
Audience receptivity: How may people think and feel about the message? How free are they to accept or reject it (see para. 29)?

Extension Art Making Activity:
Using digital tools, students are then challenged to design a propaganda tool that communicates an opposing point of view on one of the topics. They should identify the target audience and describe how their content and composition choices might effectively persuade this audience.

Curiosity Activity #2: How Do Media Sources Use Images Strategically? [2]

Students review the media bias chart provided at allsides.com ("AllSides media bias chart," n.d.) that ranks common media outlets by their degree of political bias. Students collectively or independently determine one or more current, controversial topic(s) and locate several images on different media websites that portray a different perspective on the topic. Students use visual analysis strategies to describe how each image might communicate a different message based on its content and composition. As shown in the example provided, these visual analysis strategies involve responding to specific questions in the following categories: context, content, message and interpretation, and critical thinking. Students will identify the target audience, compare and contrast the visual characteristics shown, and speculate on why these choices are appropriate for their target audience.

Curiosity Activity #3: What are They Thinking? [3]

Exercising conflict transformation often involves trying to understand what causes people to hold beliefs that conflict with their own. This activity allows students to imagine various ways that people might interpret the situation shown in a given image. Students, either independently or in pairs, locate an image that relates to a current controversial topic. Each student creates a thought bubble that shows what one of the people in the image might be thinking at that moment. This can be done using digital tools or with physical paper. Students contribute this to the class's collection, select a different image, and create a thought bubble for a different character in the image. Students submit this new contribution and select a different image. This time, they are challenged to generate a thought bubble for a character that shows a different perspective than the one currently shown. Finally, students view the entire class collection of images with corresponding thought bubbles and participate in a reflective discussion.

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Endnotes
[1] https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HcH_M-BKfh6Rjt8Q0ysBdljyK32CueBz/edit?pli=1
[2] https://docs.google.com/document/d/1PtnleuyY3yIpkAgOZMfBJkZDuy1tJgZl/edit
[3] https://docs.google.com/document/d/12Fy0I7tvBPEN23o7n6G7T6jdmhKkL55U/edit

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The Stories Objects Carry

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ABSTRACT
In this article, I describe an exploratory visual narrative inquiry in which I examined the stories held by three objects that were given to me during my time as a PK-12 public school art teacher. Using a methodology of following the trail, I use a combination of comics-making and narrative writing to story and re-story these three objects. This exploration revealed that how we go about storying objects matters, as it can either limit or expand how we view the active roles objects have in our lives. Ultimately, this work sketches the contours for how we can use storying and re-storying to further inquire into the vitality of objects and unlock the stories they carry.

KEYWORDS: Objects, Narrative Methods, Visual Methods, Comics, Teaching Experiences

New York-based artist Rose Salane explores how objects that she buys (such as rings and coins) at New York City Metropolitan Transit Authority auctions have the power to speak about the individuals who once owned and carried them (Ozer, 2022; Salazar Moreno & Wiland, 2022). Through her artmaking practice, Salane seeks to better understand how these objects can retell personal histories, reflect themes in society (such as value, loss, and reclaiming), as well as trigger more questions and stories. Salane stated, "Objects and their movements become access points or pinholes and ways for me to approach things I was not always available or alive for" (Ozer, 2022, para. 4). For Salane, these pinholes are gateways to reveal larger narratives. For example, Salane's 2022 artwork *64,000 Attempts at Circulation* shows how the various objects that individuals attempted to use as currency reveal, document, and store stories of social and urban transformations as well as desires of society. Salane's artmaking practice exemplifies how artists recognize objects as vehicles that carry meaning, values, and stories.

As demonstrated by Salane, objects can be a productive site for artistic inquiry. In this article, I describe an exploratory visual narrative inquiry in which I investigated the stories held by objects in my possession to see where they may lead and what I could learn. This inquiry was guided by the following questions, 1) What stories are embedded

within the objects in my possession? and 2) What does the process of storying objects reveal and conceal? I begin with an overview of theory that informs this inquiry including material culture studies, storying objects, visual and verbal storytelling, as well as new materialism. I then discuss the methodology I used for this inquiry before presenting my visual narrative and analysis. I conclude with a brief discussion before outlining the implications of this inquiry and possibilities for storying objects. Ultimately sharing this work is my attempt to sketch the contours for how we can use storying to further inquire into the agency of objects and things in our lives.

Material Culture Studies

The study of objects is often associated with material culture studies. Bolin and Blandy (2003) defined material culture as "a descriptor of any and all human-constructed or human-mediated objects, forms, or expressions, manifested consciously or unconsciously through culturally acquired behaviors" (p. 249). Therefore, material culture studies is an interdisciplinary field that examines the relationships between humans and their things including the production, history, preservation, and interpretation of objects (Blandy & Bolin, 2018; Dudley, 2012). This includes studying how objects construct, acquire, and change meaning and value.

Studying objects can reveal how they play an active role in mediating meaning and experiences as well as reveal how they can function as metaphors in and for our lives (Blandy & Bolin, 2018). Additionally, studying objects can help us see how they have social lives and biographies that evolve through exchange (Serig, 2011). Inquiry into objects also teaches us that meaning is not necessarily inherent to objects; instead meaning is contingent and in flux, and objects possess multiple and even contradictory meanings influenced by many variables (Burkhart, 2011). Ultimately examining and researching objects can help us learn more about ourselves, others, and the world around us. Therefore, objects can be a productive place to engage with critical questions and dialogue (Baxter & Wilson McKay, 2011).

Storying Objects

Objects are companions in our life experiences (Garber, 2019) and are valued for their financial worth and/or personal significance (Blandy & Bolin, 2018). They carry memories and enable the production of narratives that define and illustrate our own histories, identities, and values (Bey, 2012; Witcomb, 2012). In other words, our lives and iden-

tities are shaped by the stories we tell, which in turn are shaped by the objects we collect, display, and exchange (Blandy & Bolin, 2018). Therefore, storying objects is one strategy to examine and better understand these artifacts of material culture.

Blandy and Bolin (2018) stated that sensory contact with objects often triggers the memory of specific life stories, which if told, then trigger in others the memory of their own life stories. In compilations such as the short film *Objects of Memory* (ERRATICA, 2017) and Sherry Turkle's (2007a) edited volume *Evocative Objects: Things We Think With*, individuals presented and discussed an object that was significant to them. While these objects initially elicited recollection of personal experiences, larger themes emerged such as objects representing life events, objects as a means of connecting to a role model or loved one, and leveraging objects to come to terms with the past. This work exemplifies how objects are more than just things we accumulate. Coupled with stories, objects shape how we view and understand the world and our place within it (Turkle, 2007b).

Visual Narrative – Combining the Visual and Verbal in Storytelling

As humans, we lead storied lives—stories and storytelling are central to our lived experience and how we come to understand the world (Bach, 2007; Lewis & Hildebrandt, 2019). However, scholars problematize the limitations of language and verbal narratives in expressing the full potential of what objects can do (e.g., Witcomb, 2012; Shin & Yang, 2021). This is because experiencing objects involves more than words—it involves a synthesis of visual, tactile, and other sensory experiences (Blandy & Bolin, 2018; Garber, 2019).

Visual narrative inquiry is an intentional and reflective process in which the inquirer explores and makes meaning of experiences both visually and narratively (Bach, 2007). This stems from the recognition that incorporating the visual into stories adds layers of meaning (Bach, 2007). Additionally, since stories can be written, read, and heard in multiple ways it is important to give attention to the different forms that narrative can take (Guyotte, 2014; Johnson, 2004). Placing visual and verbal narratives on equal footing can fill in the gaps each leaves behind while also acknowledging and accounting for the complexity of narrative interpretation (Johnson, 2004; Sousanis, 2018). For example, comics is a multimodal narrative artform that blends words and images in a deliberate sequence that can control, bend, and/or resist linear time (McCloud, 2006). Comics are open to multiple interpretations and

often invite readers to enter, reflect, and make connections they may have not seen before (Sousanis, 2018). Therefore, comics-making can be a viable means to explore the potential of storying objects in ways that productively combine visual and verbal forms of narrative while also accounting for other sensory experiences.

New Materialist Considerations of Objects

Scholarship on material culture studies, especially as conceptualized in art education, prioritizes human agency and activity (Blandy & Bolin, 2018). However, some material culture scholars (e.g., Dudley, 2012; Walklate, 2012) and art educators (e.g., Garber, 2019; Hood & Lewis, 2021; Shin & Yang, 2021) have begun to embrace new materialist ideas. These scholars recognize the blurred lines between humans and objects, as well as account for the ways humans and things come together to constitute and express each other. Elizabeth Garber (2019) defined new materialism as "a theoretical integration of materiality as it affects people, systems, and things, with our understanding of nature, society, and subjectivity" (p. 9). New materialists recognize the materiality of objects, beings, discursive practices, and social structures and their interaction or "intra-action" (Barad, 2003). In essence, new materialism sees things not just for what they mean, but also what they do (Hood & Kraehe, 2017).

Like other new materialist scholars, political theorist Jane Bennett (2010) called for a shift in focus away from the human experience of things to focus on the active role all (human and nonhuman) material bodies have in our daily lives. Bennett contends that "without proficiency in this countercultural kind of perceiving, the world appears as if it consists only of active human subjects who confront passive objects and their law-governed mechanisms" (p. xiv). Turkle (2007b) uses the term "evocative object" to name the dynamic relationship between things and thinking. Despite the human-centered tendencies of storying objects, Turkle (2007c) suggests that storying the evocative object can be a process of defamiliarization which allows us to explore how objects have multiple and fluid active life roles.

While Turkle's (2007a) compilation is a bricolage of singular evocative objects, collectively these stories come together to show how objects can reveal wider social relationships. Turkle's discussion of relational webs and networks closely relates to new materialists' calls for greater awareness of the interconnectedness and inseparable entanglement of all material bodies (Barad, 2003; Bennett, 2010). However, this entanglement of being and knowing does not erase power differentials (Gamble et al., 2019). While Bennett's (2010) vital materialism seeks to flatten ontology and displace human causality, Karen Barad (2003) recognizes the asymmetrical nature of relations through a performative account to acknowledge the role humans play in the intertwined practices of knowing and becoming.

A Methodology of Following the Trail

As established in the literature on material culture studies and new materialism, objects can be a dynamic site of knowledge production. Some scholars suggest that following the trail of objects can help reveal the active roles objects have in our lives (e.g., Bennett, 2010; Shin & Yang, 2021; Turkle, 2007b). As a method, following the trail requires that we pay special attention to what materials, objects, and things lead us to see, hear, feel, remember, and learn (Bennett, 2010; Shin & Yang, 2021). Following the trail has potential to productively align with visual narrative inquiry. This is because visual narrative inquiry is open to possibilities and imaginings that may overlap and intersect in nonlinear and organic ways (Bach, 2007). And most importantly, there are no static categories in visual narrative inquiry; instead, one perception leads to another perception (Bach, 2007).

In this experimental inquiry, I adopted a methodology of following the trail to write and draw my visual narrative. Guided by my initial question (what stories are embedded within the objects in my possession?), following one object led to another and then another, resulting in a narrative that recounts the stories associated with three objects that were given to me during my time as a PK-12 public school art teacher. I think visually, and often use drawing to aid in my writing process. Specifically, I gravitate towards comics-making because it comes as second nature to me, especially when telling stories. Creating my narrative was an iterative process in which I went back and forth between sketching portions of my comic and writing my verbal narrative. Through this process, both approaches to creating my narrative informed one another. The comic shows each object and key moments that the object prompted me to remember. The written narrative expands upon my comic to provide more specific detail about the moment I was given each object, the story of the person who gave it to me, and the impact they had on me. In the following section, I share excerpts of this narrative in which I weave the comic and written narrative together to illustrate my narrative-creation process.

Following the Trail – The Stories Objects Carry

My journey began as I questioned, what stories are embedded within the objects in my possession? As I looked around, I noticed how many of these objects serve as artifacts of the near and distant past—objects that hold family history, stories of being rescued from the trash, or fond memories of my childhood (see Figure 1).
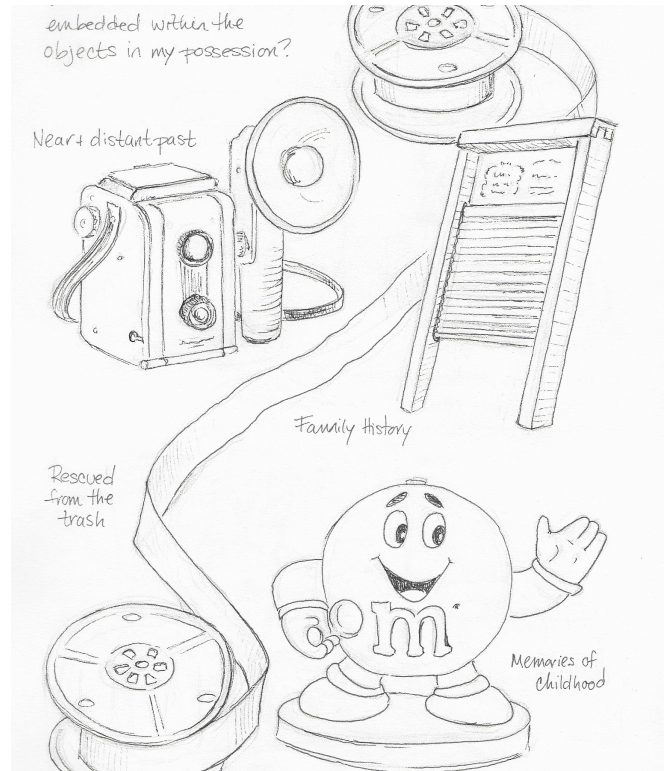
Figure 1. *Page from my comic showing drawings of an old camera, a type-writer ribbon, a washboard, and a m&m dispenser that hold family history, stories of being rescued from the trash, or fond memories of my childhood.*

Other objects that surround me are artifacts from my eleven years as a PK-12 art educator, most of which consist of artwork and objects gifted to me from past students and colleagues (see Figure 2). Looking at these objects, I wondered, why do I hold onto these objects? In what ways do these objects tell the story of my teaching, the relationships I formed, and the lessons I learned along the way?
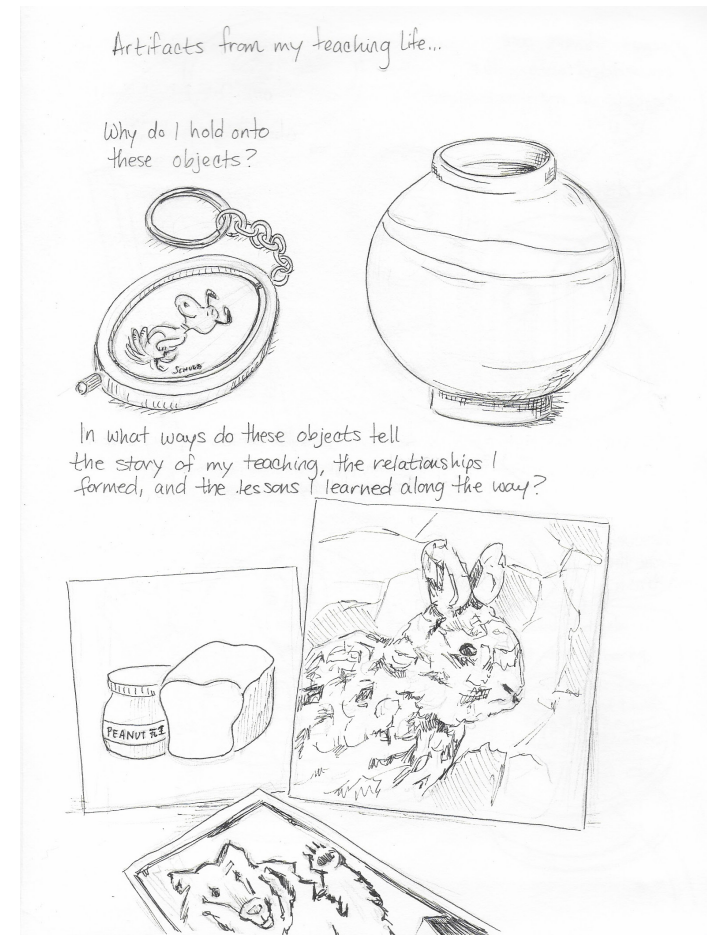
Figure 2. *Page from my comic showing of artifacts from my eleven years as a PK-12 art educator, most of which consist of artwork and objects gifted to me from past students and colleagues.*

There are three objects which hold vivid stories that exemplify the richness of my teaching experiences: a wooden giraffe sculpture, a Bob Ross plushie doll, and a rotary phone (see Figure 3). Alone each object tells the story of the individual who gifted them to me.

Figure 3. *Drawings of a wooden giraffe sculpture, a Bob Ross plushie doll, and a rotary phone.*

The wooden giraffe sculpture holds the story of Matt whom I first met as an eighth grader. A few weeks into the semester, Matt who had just returned from a family vacation, handed me a wooden giraffe sculpture. He told me how he saw it when he was on vacation, thought of me, and decided to buy it for me as a gift. I was moved.

As I drew the giraffe and the moment Matt gave it to me, I recalled the qualities he possessed. I drew memorable interactions I had with him that school year and reflected on what prompted such interactions (see Figure 4). I recalled how Matt occasionally requested that I have more patience for his classmates. Matt wisely pointed out how his classmates were grappling with their impending move to high school where they will be granted more freedom, yet also bear more responsibility. From Matt, I learned to have even more patience and compassion for my students.

Figure 4. *Page from my comic that I created as I recalled memorable interactions with Matt.*

As I continued drawing what came to mind, my thoughts and pencil went to three years later when I was transferred to the high school. I recalled the moment Matt showed up at my classroom door, beaming with a smile ear to ear. Matt excitedly told me he heard that I was teaching at the high school and asked his guidance counselor if he could be enrolled in my Digital Media class. I then drew another memorable moment. Later in the year, Matt stopped in my classroom to show me the finished portfolio he used to apply to college. He included several artworks he created in my class, including the artwork he was most proud of, his text portrait of Bob Ross. As I drew this point of Matt's story with his Bob Ross portrait, I was reminded of my time with another student who gifted me a Bob Ross plushie doll (see Figure 5).

I vividly recalled the June of my last year teaching at the middle school. The bell just rang for students to proceed to the next period, and I stood outside my classroom door greeting my eighth-grade students as usual. Claire arrived and nonchalantly handed me a gift bag, quietly stating, "You were always my favorite" as she continued walking into the classroom. I reached into the bag and pulled out a Bob Ross plushie doll! I excitedly looked over to Claire and thanked her. Claire explained how she saw it in the store and thought of me. I suspected that this was because Bob Ross had been the subject of a running joke with my eighth-grade class that semester.

Figure 5. *Page from my comic showing my memories of Matt in high school which led me to make connections to the Bob Ross plushie doll and Claire.*

By that point I had known Claire for nine years. I drew snapshots of my recollections of the time I first met Claire as a kindergartner and then later as a middle schooler. I recalled her creative spirit, the personal artwork she showed me, and collaborative projects she completed in my after-school sculpture club. I then recalled and drew how I witnessed Claire's growth and transformation into high school, as Claire transitioned to Chad and began using he/him pronouns (see Figure 6). As the year progressed, I witnessed Chad form new friendships, quickly finding a supportive, like-minded group of friends in the same social circle as Matt despite their three-year age difference (a crossing of paths that I did not realize until this writing). I recalled how my pride and admiration for Chad grew enormously that year. While he encountered many challenges during his first year of high school, he grew immensely as a person.

From Chad, I learned how it is such a gift to be an art teacher. His story exemplifies how I was able to connect with and get to know my students. And by having the opportunity to teach the same students year after year—and in my case, teach some students from kindergarten through high school—I was able to witness and be a part of their personal and academic growth over an extended period.

Figure 6. *Page from my comic showing my memories of Chad which led me to make connections to the rotary phone and Gary.*

Chad's story led me to recall how I acquired an old rotary phone. It was just before school one morning when my colleague Gary burst into my middle school classroom carrying a bag. "I found one! Here you go," he exclaimed. I got up from my desk and walked over to see what he was talking about. It was a black rotary phone. Gary remembered our conversation a few months earlier when I showed him my grandparents' old telephone table that I refinished. I mentioned that I was searching for a rotary phone like my grandparents used to have to put on top.

I first met Gary when we both taught at the elementary level. However, I did not really get to know him until he was transferred to the middle school where we shared the same lunch and hall duty posts. Looking back at my drawings, I realized how Chad was influential in helping me get to know Gary. Chad's regular visits while Gary and I were on hall duty sparked laughs and conversation between all of us. As time went on, I came to see Gary as a supportive figure who I could go to for advice or to share a funny story. Looking back, Gary came into my teaching life at the right time. I needed to learn to roll things off my back and to find laughter in frustrating experiences. Gary was the person I credit with giving me those skills. His lessons and advice gave me the foundation to find the strength to navigate the journey that laid ahead for me.
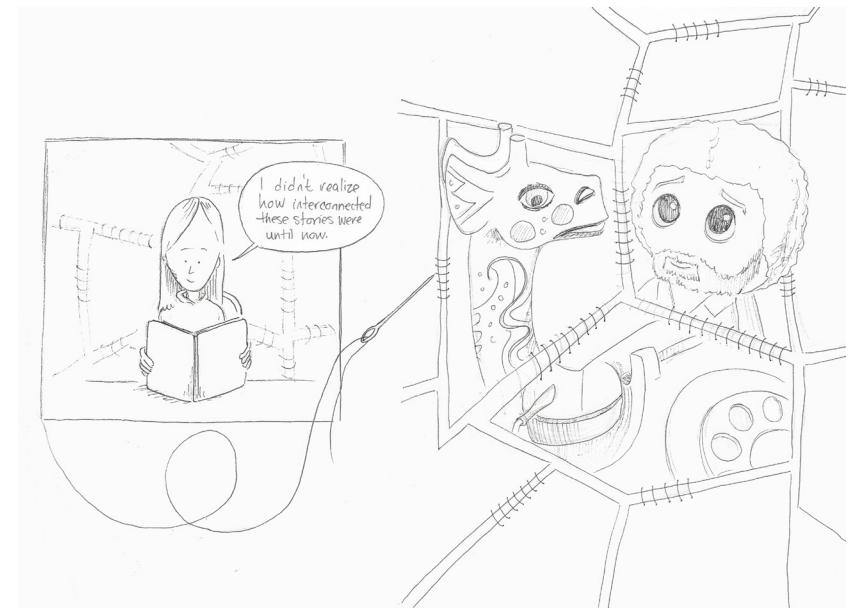
Figure 7. *Page from my comic showing pieces of the wooden giraffe, Bob Ross plushie doll, and rotary phone stitched together.*

While the wooden giraffe sculpture, Bob Ross plushie doll, and rotary phone each came into my life at three different moments, from three different individuals, they all come together to begin forming the narrative of my teaching experience. And although we have all gone our separate ways, these objects still bind our stories together (see Figure

7). These objects are a reminder of the individuals who gave them to me, the stories we share, as well as who I was at the time. Collectively, these objects and embedded stories reveal how we are all connected to one another.

Retelling the Story as Narrative Analysis

While my initial visual narrative recounts the interwoven stories of the individuals who gave me those objects, I wondered why I was pulled to recount those particular stories. In other words, why did I choose to draw and write about those objects and not the many others in my possession? While following the trail is an important first step, Bennett (2010) emphasized how lingering in moments with objects can open us to see their material vitality. Visual narrative inquiry is a recursive process that entails searching and re-searching—that is, visual narrative is a continual reformulation and not a definitive end (Bach, 2007). Therefore, the initial narrative that I created is not a means to an end.

There are many approaches to analyzing narrative (Bleakley, 2005). Holistic narrative analysis is one such approach and entails a process of synthesizing ideas and experiences through narrative (Bleakley, 2005). In other words, the researcher thinks with and retells the story to let themes emerge (Lewis & Hildebrandt, 2019). As a result, I analyzed my initial visual narrative by reformulating and retelling the story of how I created my initial narrative. In this analytical retelling, I was guided by my second research question: what does the process of storying objects reveal and conceal?

By revisiting and retelling my story of creating the initial narrative, I lingered with the objects and story in an attempt to be more open to the influence of their material vitality (Bennett, 2010). In other words, through this retelling, I sought to uncover why and how I was pulled to write and draw about those three objects. In the following section, I share excerpts from my retelling using the same woven format as my initial narrative. This retelling gives attention to my sensory experiences with the objects and how this intra-action played a significant role in guiding the development of my initial narrative.

Following and Lingering – A Retelling of The Stories Objects Carry

I sat at my desk with my laptop and visual journal open. I had just finished watching the short film *Objects of Memory* (ERRATICA, 2017) and was prompted to create a narrative about the objects in my pos-

session. I looked around my small apartment. It was an assemblage of materials, objects, natural daylight, and the sounds of the downtown traffic below, among many other things. I noticed the array of objects that I had strategically placed around my apartment as décor when I first moved in. This was an attempt to make this temporary living arrangement feel homier. As I pondered over which object to select, I felt the urge to turn and look over my right shoulder. The afternoon light poured through the western facing windows. The acrylic paint on a multicolored wooden giraffe sculpture glistened in this light, calling for my attention. Following this call, I got up from my desk and picked up the giraffe. I noted how lightweight it felt and wondered what kind of wood it was made of. My tactile and visual attention then shifted to the raised painted designs.

Figure 8. *Page from my comic that documents the wooden giraffe catching my attention and my tactile interaction with it.*

As I walked back to my desk, I recalled how this giraffe trinket has stayed with me and followed me throughout various career and life events. I placed it down on my desk and I started making an observational drawing (see Figure 8). My eyes and hand moved along the contours of the giraffe. As I did this, my mind wandered, recalling the moment I received the giraffe as a gift. I recounted other moments, drawing them as my comic organically grew. I then shifted my attention to my computer and started to write. As I wrote, I looked to my comic and giraffe for guidance, but also let my thoughts wander, following wherever they took me.

As I finished writing, another object sitting at the edge of my visual periphery called for and caught my attention. This time it was the Bob Ross plushie doll. I walked over to the white bookshelf it was perched atop of and picked it up. As I stroked the soft, fluffy brown material that made up the doll's hair, a flood of memories came over me. I decided to follow this object's trail and continue my narrative, letting it lead my thoughts (see Figure 9). I drew and wrote just as I had done with the giraffe sculpture, visually and verbally documenting what came to mind.

Figure 9. *Page from my comic that documents the Bob Ross plushie doll catching my attention and my tactile interaction with it.*

Figure 10. *Page from my comic that documents the rotary phone catching my attention and my tactile interaction with it.*

As I sketched and wrote about the Bob Ross plushie doll, I felt another object call for my attention. This time it was the black rotary phone that was sitting atop a chestnut-colored telephone table behind me. I answered the call. I got up from my desk and walked over to the phone. I stuck out my index finger and began to rotate the dial—*swoosh*. I pulled my finger away and listened to the rhythmic purring as the dial returned to its starting position. The phone and I repeated this call and response. Each time I started at a different number and when I let go, the phone purred in response as it returned the dial to its resting position. As I dialed, I recalled the circumstances that led this phone to come into my possession. I drew and I wrote (see Figure 10).

In the initial narrative, I wrote about how each object comes together to begin telling the story of my teaching experience. However, as I finish this retelling, I begin to see more clearly the assemblage of nonhuman materials that directed my attention to these particular objects and how my sensory experiences with them played a significant role in triggering my memory, which in turn, guided the development of my initial narrative. Yet, this also leads me to wonder, what are both narratives missing? Or more specifically, what is not accounted for?

Discussion – Revealing the Assemblage

Our lives are woven stories (Bach, 2007). And while we may compose our own narratives, other humans and nonhumans shape our experiences. In this visual narrative inquiry, I followed the trail of three objects. This trail was ultimately guided by each objects' proximity to one another and placement within a wider assemblage of nonhuman materials, many of which are still beyond the purview of my awareness. However, this assemblage was only temporary, contingent upon that moment in time. This means that the meaning and significance of these objects will continually shift with the passing of time and change in location (Turkle, 2007c). Should I return to story these objects again, the narrative will likely be very different.

The combination of comics-making and writing complimented one another, helping me to follow the trial of the three objects. Additionally, comics-making and writing prompted me to linger so as to notice and document more than what I was initially consciously aware of. As noted by Sousanis (2018), working with images can bring out what is beyond the purview of our awareness. For me, this was enhanced and made clearer by additional narrative writing.

This exploration only begins to scratch the surface of revealing the power of objects. My initial visual narrative gives special attention to how these objects came into my possession and why I hold on to them. It also highlights instances where narrative paths crossed and connected, as well as the lessons I learned along the way. However, this initial narrative explicitly tells a story that centers humans including myself, my students, and my colleague. More importantly, it places the objects and other nonhuman materials in a secondary role. In other words, my initial narrative does not explicitly account for the vitality of objects and things—instead it only acknowledges them as conduits for unlocking the interwoven stories of our lives.

The process of analysis through re-storying prompted me to linger in my comics and writing, thereby revealing how I unknowingly began to account for some of the nonhuman influences on my initial narrative. My analytical retelling in comic form begins to account for the active role the giraffe, the bob ross plushie doll, and the rotary phone had in forming my initial narrative. It also begins to account for the influence of additional nonhuman materials such as my apartment, my visual journal, and a bookshelf. My written analysis more explicitly accounts for some of these additional nonhuman materials, but only does so because I used the comics to guide my writing. However, my narrative analysis also falls short of fully acknowledging the vitality of these objects and other nonhuman materials—and perhaps more importantly, my narratives do not let the objects speak.

Implications and Possibilities

As mentioned in the introduction of this article, sharing this work is my attempt to sketch the contours for further inquiry into the agency of objects and things. Thus, this experimental visual narrative inquiry has revealed implications for how art educators create narratives about and with objects in teaching and research. Examining objects from the lens of material culture studies informs us about how objects construct, acquire, and change meaning and value. Storying objects is one strategy used in material culture studies to help us better understand how objects shape the ways we view the world and our place within it. However, material culture studies, like art education more broadly, has a humanistic lineage, thereby limiting what and how we can learn from and with objects.

Shifting our perspective to follow the trails of objects and letting them speak can better account for the active role objects play in our lives

while also expanding possibilities for what we can learn from and with objects. As Shin and Yang (2021) suggested, agency analysis is a first step, but we can do more to analyze distinct agencies and follow their potential. Specifically, while storytelling is a human endeavor, we can integrate new materialist perspectives to make a conscious effort to let objects lead us on the trail as we become narrators of their vitality. However, this does not come without challenges. In an interview, Rose Salane said the biggest challenge of creating artworks such as *64,000 Attempts at Circulation* is figuring out how to let the objects talk (Ozer, 2022). This is a challenge that I also encountered in my exploration.

Stories can help us to see the world in new ways, and yet "they can never offer the definitive way of seeing it" (Lewis & Hildebrandt, 2019, p. 16). Therefore, how we go about storying objects matters as it can either limit or expand how we view the active roles objects have in our lives. The recursive process of storying allows us to build on prior stories, create new stories, or relive them in new ways (Bach, 2007). This means that storying and re-storying objects using different forms of narrative can perhaps lead us to find new ways to honor objects' vitality and unlock the stories they carry.

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