May 2019

Building an Empathetic Society: The Hidden Curriculum of Art

Katherine Randall
Dominican University of California

https://doi.org/10.33015/dominican.edu/2019.EDU.01

This thesis, written under the direction of the candidate's thesis advisor and approved by the department chair, has been presented to and accepted by the Master of Science in Education Program in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education. An electronic copy of of the original signature page is kept on file with the Archbishop Alemany Library.

Katherine Randall
Candidate

Jennifer Lucko, PhD
Program Chair

Jennifer Lucko, PhD
First Reader

Whitney Hoyt
Second Reader

Building an Empathetic Society: The Hidden Curriculum of Art

By

Katherine Randall

This thesis written under the direction of the candidate's thesis advisor and approved by the

program chair, has been presented to an accepted by the Department of Education in partial

fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master's in Science in Education.

Dominican University of California

San Rafael, CA

May 2019

Abstract

Previous research on the benefits of art classes beyond being a creative outlet show that art classes can be a good place for students to practice being a better citizen. However, in the research there is a lack of the student view on completing a socially engaged art (SEA) project and what they learned from it. The purpose of my research was to understand student perception of socially engaged art, as well as to explore the skills learned from art that can help students be socially active in their communities. More specifically, this research shows that art classes teach skills that are beneficial to students in helping them become better citizens and connect with their community. A mixed methods approach was used in order to have a well-rounded understanding of the students' views on art classes and completing the SEA project. Post project interviews with students show that many students were not aware of the potential for art to be a voice for their opinions, and that they were considering how to continue to use their art to speak out for what they believe in. Students also enjoyed participating in an activity that was purposeful, and many felt that completing the SEA project made them practice real life skills. This evidence suggests that implementing SEA projects in the art curriculum allows students a chance to practice being a democratic citizen.

Acknowledgments

I would first like to thank my thesis advisor Dr. Jennifer Lucko. She always had valuable advice, writing suggestions, and critiques on my thesis that helped me work through my project and paper.

I would also like to thank the school, teachers, and students who participated in my study. My research could not have been done without you, and I cannot express just how grateful I am for the teachers and students who let me into their lives for this brief project.

Finally, I must express my very profound gratitude to my mom and to my boyfriend, who both listened to me talk about my thesis and worries for hours. Both of them, with the rest of my friends and family, provided me with unfailing support and continuous encouragement throughout my years of study and through the process of researching and writing this thesis. This accomplishment would not have been possible without them.

Thank you.

Table of Contents

List of Photos

Chapter One: Introduction

"Usually art is just emotions but this attacked something far greater than that" was a concluding thought of a photo student on how the socially engaging art project changed her views on art classes. Her statement caught me off-guard, and it made me reflect on watching her edit her photos to emphasize how trash pollutes the ocean. Later I would go to the Instagram account that this student made for her project and read the moving descriptions of how she took each photo and the effects of trash in the ocean. This student, and many others that participated in my study, found another purpose for their art and began to see how art can be so much more than just creativity.

Today, most high school art classes are solely viewed as a creative outlet space for students and disregarded as a class for teaching useful skills to students. Yet, art's original purpose in public schools was to help students become self-governing democratic citizens through the skills that art teaches, like empathy. Art classes still teach these valuable skills that can help with becoming a better citizen, however students are often not as aware of these benefits or are not even experiencing them. Cuts in funding also mean that students do not have as many materials and access to art classes. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in 2016 only 42% of eight graders in the US took an art class. The NAEP surveys a random selection of eight graders every eight years, and in 2016 there were 4,440 students who took the art survey. This drop in the importance of art is concerning, considering that art is important for communication, resiliency, empathy, creative-critical thinking, analyzing, expressing emotions, play, and so many other skills.

Statement of Purpose

German philosophers and educators including Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Schiller in the mid 1700's believed that art could be used to create more participatory democratic citizens. Johann Pestalozzi created a curriculum based on those ideals, and in 1843 his curriculum was observed by Horace Mann, an American educator. Despite various advocates for the curriculum, the US did not fully adapt the purpose of art in public schools to help create autonomous citizens.

Previous studies that show the skills that art teaches our youth and how it allows them to practice those skills that help with becoming an involved citizen of the community (Siegesmund, 2013; Hyungsook, 2014; Leroux and Bernadska, 2014; Gielen, 2017; Prettyman and Gargarella, 2013). These studies bring up the hidden curriculum of art, the ways it teaches empathetic thinking, creative-critical thinking, and other things like character traits (Hannigan, 2018; Hardiman, 2016; Hyungsook, 2014; Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2013). One way to achieve art education that brings awareness to the students of art's potential is to teach socially engaging art (SEA) projects. SEA can be defined as an "artistic or creative practice that aims to improve conditions in a particular community or in the world at large" (artmakingchange.org). Schools and programs that have implemented SEA projects show that students connect to their communities through art, they practice reflecting on issues close to them, and they are given the chance to find purpose in art while contributing back to the community (Hyungsook, 2014; Siegesmund, 2013; Moxley and Feen, 2017; Cruz, Ellerbrock, and Smith, 2015; Malin, 2015). Most of the literature, however, does not include the student voice on completing SEA projects, nor does the literature include open-ended SEA projects where

students had complete choice in their topics and how they engaged with the community. The central question to this research was: How does socially engaging art affect high school students' engagement with their community? The intent of this study was to understand student perceptions of completing a SEA project and understand how SEA projects can affect student views of art's purpose.

Overview of the Research Design

The purpose of this research was to understand the student view of SEA projects and explore the effect of these projects on high school students' connection to their communities, beliefs in art, and if students believed art could help them practice being good citizens. During the research I held a constructivist worldview and used an explanatory mixed-methods approach. My study took place at a Northern California high school that has a Specialty Art School (SAS) inside it. SAS has multiple artistic classes ranging from visual arts to performing arts to creative writing. There are 1,442 students at Gold Oak High, and SAS students make up 35% of the total student body. My participants were 24 Drawing and Painting 1 (DP1) students and 54 Photography 1,2,3, and AP students who were all a part of the SAS program. I worked with both teachers before, as I did my student teaching at that school, and the DP1 teacher was my directing teacher. I was not teaching the lessons in DP1 for the project, but I observed the class and answered questions from students. In Photography I co-taught the project, but technical questions were answered by the teacher. Before the project began, a small convenient sample of 31 students completed a survey. After the project ended, twenty-one students volunteered to be interviewed about their experiences with the project.

Significance of the Study

I found that students liked doing the SEA project for various reasons including finding it to be beneficial, and enjoying the connection with their community. A significant finding from my research was that the majority of students felt that doing an art project on something they cared about meant they were more likely to be heard by adults and have their thoughts considered. The fact that the students recognized the power of art's voice in empowering them meant that the project was successful in opening their eyes to the possible uses of art beyond a creative outlet.

Students who completed the SEA project liked the real-world aspects to it, mainly that they actually had to contact people about their artwork. They liked the project, they saw the benefits of it, and for many it changed how they viewed the purpose of art. Many students had an empowering experience from completing a SEA project because they were able to create a piece of artwork that voiced their opinions on an issue that they care about. Open-ended SEA projects also allow students to fully practice being democratic citizens, as students will inherently be more invested in creating art on a topic of their choice.

Research Implications

Requiring SEA projects as part of the California Art Standards ninth through twelfth grade would have a tremendous impact on increasing the civic participation of high school students. More art teachers should try a SEA project in their curriculum; it can be open-ended like this one or specific to a cause depending on teacher comfort level, the school climate, and the interest of the students. There are many different ways to implement a SEA project; the important aspect is that students are practicing being involved citizens in their communities.

Another point to note though is that SEA projects do not have to be political to be socially engaged, however in an open-ended SEA project there most likely will be at least one student who is politically focused. During the project, if there is a political piece being made, students need to be supported while having discussions about the topic if it comes up. When holding critique at the end of the project, teachers should remind students to focus on the artwork as art, and not start a political discussion as it is not the time or place for that discussion. I believe that critique at the end of a project should be focused solely on helping students to grow their artistic skills and be focused on how to improve the artwork. However, before critique or after, students should have the support from their teacher that is needed to carry on civil conversations on the projects being made.

SEA projects advance equity for students by allowing them to speak out about topics that are important to them in a visual way. It allows students to contribute back to their communities, and engage with their communities on topics that may affect them. SEA projects allow all students to have a voice and practice being democratic citizens that participate in their communities. These projects also give students a taste of what it is like to help those that need help and donate their time to a cause. It helps them feel like they are doing something good and purposeful with their art. Socially engaging art projects teach students that there is more to art than creativity, and that they can make changes with the power of their art's voice.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

There is a powerful side to art in that it can give a voice to those who have none. Yet, this aspect of art is often overlooked when it is being taught in a standard educational setting. Art too often is thought of as a creative outlet class, not as important as math or science, and unnecessary to fund at all public schools. Many high school students take art as an "easy A" elective course, and never see art beyond being a creative class. Over the years there has been research illustrating how art is beneficial for students beyond being a creative outlet class. Researchers have found that art teaches skills that help students in other subjects and with their lives after school. Interestingly enough, there is a side to art education history that shows that philosophers like Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Schiller believed art informed students of how to become a good democratic citizen. However, the history of art education and the original purposes of art is a topic that is often not looked at.

This literature review touches on the original intent of art education in helping students become self-governing citizens, what art teaches, and art as a part of civil society. It investigates how the study of visual arts has evolved in the U.S. from the original intent of German philosophers, the different programs that have encouraged young artists to use art as a voice, and how socially engaged art can help students connect to their community and practice being a democratic citizen. The original intent of art shaping young minds to become participatory citizens is considered alongside the skills that art does teach and how that can be achieved by having students participate in a socially engaged art project.

The History of Visual Study in the Arts

Before diving into the history of art education, I would like to go over three frames of study in the visual arts. Siegesmund (2013) defines Art Education, Artistic Education, and Aesthetic Education in his article as three ways of framing study in the visual arts. Art education is the form that is believed to help students become better citizens. Art education does this through teaching ways of empathetic thinking and helps shape one's own authentic understandings of the world. On the other hand, artistic education is the technical training of artists in the production of form. In turn, aesthetic education is the appreciation of cultural forms and recognition of art forms across cultures. By understanding these three frames of study through Siegesmund's perspective, it is easy to see how all three frames of study can be used together, and often tie into each other. As such, these are the definitions of art, artistic, and aesthetic education that I will use to understand the study of the visual arts.

The history of visual arts in public schools is important to consider when looking at art as a vehicle for participating in a democratic society. Throughout the history of the arts, people have regarded the arts as either suited for the elite and rich, or only for artisans, slaves, and their children (Efland, 1990). Education in the arts in the Classical Era, around 500 B.C., art was considered not suitable for high born children and deemed an inferior profession (Efland, 1990). It was not until the last third of the fifteenth century in Florence that the artist would be considered a member of elite society (Efland, 1990). However, this split of elite versus working class in the arts would continue and be mirrored in how the US public schools addressed education in art during the early years of visual study. The course of visual study in the US public schools were influenced by philosophers from the 1700 and 1800's. One of these

philosophers was Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), a German philosopher who believed that art could make self-governing citizens (Siegesmund, 2013). He saw aesthetics as a way of thinking, as a cognitive function that helped a person make sense of knowledge and experiences into ideas and representations (Siegesmund, 2013). This is to say, that the aesthetics of art help one to represent knowledge they have and come to understand that knowledge gained from experiences.

Kant's ideas were adopted by Friedrich Schiller in Germany (1759-1827), who in turn thought that art cultivated a capacity for empathy; a skill needed to be a competent citizen. Schiller also coined the term "Anschauung" to describe the awareness of interconnectedness of yourself in relation to the world (Siegesmund, 2013). Anschauung was seen as intellectual attentiveness to how you are in relation to others, not just the world. Aesthetic play in art opens one up to Anschauung and encourages people to have autonomous thinking. Schiller believed that art built upon this skill. He thought that art education could be used to create a participatory democracy rather than remain focused solely on the production of artists (Siegesmund, 2013).

Johann Pestalozzi, a Swiss educator, (1746-1827) developed Schiller's "Anschauung" into a formal curriculum, utilizing art to train habits of mind (Siegesmund, 2013). His curriculum was designed to help students think for themselves, rather than producing good art or designs. Pestalozzi believed that one needed to educate "the head, the heart, and the hand" (Lentis, 2017 p. 5). He thought that education should connect training and life after school in order for students to succeed, a thought that would be later adopted by John Dewey. The curriculum had a very linear frame, starting students with basic line drawing and progressing from there

(Efland, 1990). Pestalozzi would go on to influence other advocates for art education in the US, like Horace Mann and the art crusaders (Lentis, 2017; Efland, 1990). The art crusaders were a group of men who advocated for the use of "a democratic form of art for a democratic society" (Efland, 1990 p. 91). They pushed for the use of Pestalozzian ideas for teaching art in schools. Another influence for these advocates was Friedrich Froebel.

Friedrich Froebel (1782-1852) was a student of Pestalozzi and continued to teach Pestalozzi's curriculum with the idea that one learned best through experience and self-discovery (Lentis, 2017). He primarily influenced art curriculum books written during the Arts and Crafts Movement that began in the 1880's (Lentis, 2017; Efland, 1990). Horace Mann observed a similar curriculum in 1843 being taught by another German educator who worked with Pestalozzi, Peter Schmid. Mann advocated for the arts in public school after seeing the curriculum. Unfortunately, he would not see art in the public-school system in his life time (Lentis, 2017). Horace Mann based his argument for the arts on the improvement of handwriting, essential industrial skills, and because art was a moral force (Lentis, 2017; Efland, 1990).

While Horace Mann would never see art education in public education, his argument would be revisited in the Reconstructive Years in the US. However, during this period the U.S. adapted a blend of artistic and aesthetic education based on the British model of study in the visual arts. In Britain a British emissary to Germany saw a similar Pestalozzian curriculum that Mann observed, but the British were only focused on the artistic education. They viewed it as a way to train workers in the creation of desirable goods to be exported, and this led to the British visual art study as being utilitarian to their national industry (Siegsmund,2013). The

integrated artistic and aesthetic education that the British focused on helped with producing

and exporting textiles, so the U.S. wanted to adopt that framework of art in education (Lentis,

2017). The U.S. before this was not a competitor in exportation of goods, and when the British

pulled ahead in the market, the U.S. decided that the British system of education in the arts

would be beneficial for future industrial workers.

The 1870's Industrial Drawing Movement pushed for a separation between fine arts, for

the rich, and industrial or applied arts for public schools. The industrial arts were based on

aesthetic education and were not meant to show creativity, but to help future workers

appreciate beauty and create more aesthetically pleasing products (Lentis, 2017). Art for the

middle and lower classes was not being used to help them better themselves as individuals and

therefore as citizens, but rather to make them better consumers.

In the 1880's, the Arts and Crafts movement began in Britain to fix the social wounds of

the Industrial Revolution (Efland, 1990). The movement was thought to be a way to reform

society by allowing the natural advancement of the individual and no interference with a child's

creativity in art (Lentis, 2017). Although the Arts and Crafts Movement was not widely popular

in the U.S., from 1900 to 1912, the Arts and Crafts Movement found its highest popularity

(Lentis, 2017). It is important to note that "crafts" referred to artisanship and skilled craft

during this time frame and is not how we think of "crafts" today as a lower form of art. This

movement lost its luster before the first World War. Instead, education in the arts became

focused once again on design to help the American economy through tough times. The use of

crafts, however, continued to help uplift the American population during the war and became a

subject taught for cultural purposes (Efland, 1990; Lentis, 2017).

Meanwhile, John Dewey (1859-1932) believed that the arts were important in teaching critical thinking, active learning, and preparation for the real world (Hardiman, 2016). Vasco d'Agnese (2016) analyzed John Dewey's views on art education and how he viewed art as the most complete form of thinking. Dewey (1916) stated that the arts "are not luxuries of education, but empathetic expressions of that which makes any education worthwhile" (p. 279). He believed that education allowed people to make sense of emotions and experiences, and through art and education we could achieve an enhanced experience of things. Dewey wanted to integrate school and life and believed that imagination made thinking more than a mechanical system (Lentis, 2017; d'Agnese, 2016). What was being taught in Dewey's school, however, was not typical of public schools throughout the United States. Public schools only took on the change in public taste for creativity in the arts from the Arts and Crafts Movement and were losing the mission of the Industrial Movement for art to be utilitarian for the nation (Efland, 1990). Art educators during the second World War turned to using art for cultural purposes and teaching appreciation of beauty. This loss of utilitarianism of art during WW2 reduced the value of art classes to society (Efland, 1990).

Hardiman (2016) argues that art was essential to schooling up until the Cold War, when it was cut from funding because the US tested lower in basic subjects than other countries. After this, the arts in public schools went into a decline until the 1970's in the middle of the Cold War. This was when the arts in education movement that started in the 60's began to press that art belonged in education (Efland, 1990). Efland (1990) states that there is a continual tension in art education between "those intent upon teaching the content of art and those seeing it as self-expression" (page 263). He further goes on to say that leaving children to

just self-expression denies those children of knowledge that could help them with their journey

through art, yet only teaching techniques or history of art increases the probability a student

will lose the sense of being able to realize themselves with art. The balance of letting a child

have creative freedom while teaching the techniques that can further their artistic skill is

something that many art teachers today struggle with. Today, the desire to teach artistic

education or aesthetic education is still prevalent in today's society, while the focus on teaching

art education so that students can practice being good citizens is relatively uncommon.

What Art Teaches

People often advocate for art classes as an academic booster or a creative outlet class.

However, art is more than just a creative outlet. The hidden curriculum of art is teaching

creative critical thinking, empathy, self-reflection, expression of world views and personal

thoughts, and more. Art also plays a role in inspiring children, playfulness, and wellbeing

(Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2013; Clarke & Bastilio, 2018). Instead of advocating

for the arts on the grounds of it boosting grades in other classes, Hetland, Winner, Veenema, &

Sheridan (2013) advocate for art for "art's sake." They conducted a study with five classrooms

showing art is needed in schools not because it might enhance student performance, but

because of what it teaches: habits of mind. Hetland, Winner, Veenema, and Sheridan (2013)

called what was happening in the art classrooms throughout the study as "studio thinking,"

which they broke into two categories: studio structures and studio habits of mind. Studio

structures relates to teaching methods and organization of the classes, and classroom

procedures. Studio habits of mind are what art teaches, and these can be found and used in

other disciplines (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2013). These habits of mind include

observation, reflection, envisioning, expressing, engagement and persisting, and exploring beyond current skill level (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2013). However, there is more to the hidden curriculum of art than what Hetland, Winner, Veenema, and Sheridan discussed.

Hardiman (2016) mentions that participating in the arts positively influences social and emotional skills. Some schools have arts integrated classes. These classes enhance motivation and enjoyment in learning by using art in other academic classes. Hardiman (2016) initially found that fifth grade students in an arts integrated class were performing at the same level as their counterparts who were in regular classes. However, when testing the classes ten weeks later, Hardiman found that the arts integrated classes tested significantly better than the regular classes. Hardiman (2016) believes that the arts promote creative thinking, which leads to students having higher order mental processing. This theory derives from research exploring how the arts improve student learning, as well as cognitive and neurological developments (Dunbar, 2008; Hyde, Lerch, Norton, Forgeard, Winner, Evans & Schlaug, 2009; Hetland, Winner, Veenema and Sheridan, 2007).

Arov and Jogi (2017) emphasize another skill that art teaches: self-regulated learning. An art classroom accommodates students with different learning styles and allows students to express their own personal experiences and skills. Art allows students to generate their own solutions, learn via experimentation, and recognize that mistakes can be a good thing (Arov & Jogi, 2017). These skills allow for students to increase their metacognitive skills like analyzing and reflection. However, Arov and Jogi (2017) found that student choice was necessary for engagement, and that teacher practices often had no direct effect on student motivation.

Engagement in the arts is necessary to reap the benefits, and one way to get students

interested is to create curriculum that is socially engaging.

In South Korea, there is an art program that uses socially engaged art (SEA) to help

North Korean immigrant students to connect with their community (Hyungsook, 2014). The

practice of using SEA with these students also contributes to character education (Hyungsook,

2014). Creativity and character education go together well for students, as art is a form of social

dialogue. In South Korea, SEA connected immigrant students and the community, allowing

them to build empathy for each other. Before using the SEA program, the community

mistrusted the immigrant children, and the children did not feel like they belonged (Hyungsook,

2014). After the program however, the students felt like they were accepted, and welcomed in

the community. Part of why SEA was beneficial was because the practical learning experiences

through art helped with character education (Hyungsook, 2014). Not only was SEA beneficial in

helping with character education, but it also helped build cultural competency for the students

and community (Hyungsook, 2014). SEA and art in general are useful in allowing students to

explore the possibilities of their world and play with the responsibilities they can hold in the

world.

In fact, Clarke and Basilio (2018) explain how art is important for playfulness in students,

which later serves as an adaptive function in adulthood to cope with stress. These creative

classes can help with student wellbeing and self-sufficiency. There are also links to

improvements in confidence, motivation, and social skills for students who take art classes

throughout their school career (Clarke & Basilio, 2018). These skill improvements could be

because art offers balanced thinking and growth mindset (Ingalls-Vanada, 2016). Balanced

learning environments allow students to foster creative, critical, and practical thinking and dispositions (Ingalls-Vanada, 2016). Ingalls-Vanada (2016) suggested that we needed more connected and meaningful learning that uses exploratory, supportive, and balanced thinking. While it may seem contradictory, failure is a part of meaningful learning. Failure is a part of art, and it is important because it shows experience learning (Hannigan, 2018). Art and risk-taking go together, and according to Hannigan (2018), "mistakes fuel creativity" (p. 5). Failure marks learning and helps create resilience. Students are typically reluctant to fail though, and so teachers need to help them understand that failure is part of the process of learning. Hannigan (2018) suggests that valuing risk-taking and creating a trial-and-error culture allows the doors of critical thinking to open.

Another benefit of art classes is that students are provided a space to practice critical thinking skills and reflection. Prettyman and Gargarella (2013) observed Arts Up, a summer camp that brings art education and the community together. They show how the students learn to reflect on issues important to them and learn how to use art to show what is important in their lives. The program Arts-Up partners with non-profits in their area, and then the students create artwork for the non-profits as they learn and practice artistic skills. Art is then used a vehicle to develop social awareness for the students about their community. Moreover, this program allowed students to use artwork as communication for personal and political aspects of their lives. This aspect let student take more active roles in their future and communities (Prettyman & Gargarella, 2013). During their study Prettyman and Gargarella (2013) interviewed and surveyed participating students and alumni of the program and found many agreed that art gave them the confidence to take opportunities and to take risks. Art-Up as a

program was using SEA to educate students on artistic skills as well as community involvement.

This connection of art to help build community and social awareness can help create purpose

for a student (Malin, 2015). Art can help build skills like creative-critical thinking, self-

expression, emotional skills, and help students to understand others. When you add a social

engagement aspect to art, suddenly there is a connection to how art can help students become

active citizens who are engaged with their community.

Art, Ethics, and Civil Society

Art provides people with another way to interact with their community and talk about

social issues. Socially engaged art projects (SEA) and socially conscious art (SCA) are both

curriculum tools that help students connect with social issues and express their own views or

experiences of them. Cruz, Ellerbrock, and Smith (2015) talk about how art classes can be

democratic classes and how SCA is democratic at its core since it allows students to explore and

express personal opinions. Further, Malin (2015) sees art as giving youth purpose. Students

who took art in high school found it helped them connect with others, share their own

understanding of the world and learn about others, and had purpose from art. Malin (2015)

also found that students felt that it allowed them to break free from the norms of social

conformity (p. 273). Art can be used for meaning making, and a sense of purpose can help drive

students to respond to social issues through art. Despite art being able to give students

purpose, not all schools are not using art to create better citizens. Instead, the professional art

world is taking up civic education by showing people what it would be like to be democratically

positioned by creating installations and other spaces (Gielen, 2017).

Gielen (2017) defines civil space and civic place as grey areas that do not define what is allowed and what is not allowed. Civil space is an undefined space that requires collective actions, initiatives, and organizations to create the space. In contrast, civic place is referring to tasks that people do at a defined space. Since civic movements can come to an end when their goal is reached, civic place can be a temporary space of engagement (Gielen, 2017). For example, women's marches are civil space, they require organization and action to take place, whereas civic place is where the actual actions of the march occur. Schools do not typically create civil space for students, but the professional art world is taking up the grey space and giving people that space to practice being a democratic citizen. Public installations can give people a taste of being democratically positioned, and art festivals today often lean towards political discussions and social debates (Gielen, 2017). Part of the reason that art is democratically inclined is due to the fact that artists not only create worlds for people, but also allow people to experience that world (Gielen, 2017). This ability to show people ideas and create experiences for them is why art can be beneficial for civic engagement education.

Meanwhile, LeRoux and Bernadaska (2014) investigated the relationship between arts participation and civil society. They found that art engagement led to more engaged citizens. Using public data from the 2002 General Social Survey (GSS), which is a full probability sample survey, LeRoux and Bernadaska noted that civic engagement was enhanced by all forms of direct arts participation. The GSS survey in 2002 had a 70.1% response rate from adults living in households across the U.S., and there were 1,341 responses for the arts participation questions. In addition, the authors found for audience-based arts and direct participation in the arts, there was an increase of social tolerance (LeRoux & Bernadaska, 2014). The authors

suggested that the creative process puts people more in touch with their emotions, and that a common interest for art brings people together (LeRoux & Bernadaska, 2014). While LeRoux and Bernadaska were unclear how arts participation led to civic engagement, Jere Williams investigated art education and citizenship education.

Williams (2016) explored how art education advances citizenship education. He defined "value adaptive attitude" as the capacity to hold and use a value while being open and adaptive to the changing circumstances relevant to that value. That is, someone must be open-minded about people, places, objects, and beliefs. Art education cultivates open-mindedness and good judgment, and that transfers to civics. Being in an art class gives a student a place to struggle for the "right answer," when most of the time there is only an answer that is better than the available options (Williams, 2016). Williams (2016) argues that "Both ethics and art require us to grapple with vagueness and they afford felt experiences great significance in determining actions" (p. 10). Art requires students to exercise interpretive judgment and evaluative beliefs on what a piece might mean since a symbol can be used one way to mean one thing and another way to demonstrate a different idea (Williams, 2016). In this regard, visual arts can reinforce cultural values of equality, or it can show how inequality has become normal. Art education when used to help students become democratic citizens can give them the space and tools to voice their thoughts and bring them into their communities with open-mindedness about others and their ideas.

Socially conscious art (SCA) used in high school art curriculum informs students on social issues and can motivate them to investigate social issues in their own communities (Cruz, Ellerbrock, & Smith, 2015). Inside Art is a high school curriculum that uses SCA and it helps

foster a sense of democracy in the art rooms. There is increased cultural competence and sociopolitical consciousness in the classes as students examine mature artworks regarding social issues and create their own work (Cruz, Ellerbrock, & Smith, 2015). This learning environment promotes collaboration and civic action in students (Cruz, Ellerbrock, & Smith, 2015). Using socially conscious artists and their work can help student connect to the world around them, just as using socially engaged art can get the students further involved in their community.

Socially engaged art (SEA) can put on that extra layer of instruction and support to give students the space to practice being democratic citizens. Socially engaged art in a high school curriculum can also be used as community-based education (Hyungsook, 2014). Hyungsook's (2014) research concluded that "… socially engaged art practice and character education that can help to overcome social ills, school violence, and avoid ethical crises" (p. 56). Further, creativity and character building are essential to become a democratic citizen, both of which can be developed through art. SEA was beneficial in alternative schools in South Korea for North Korean immigrant students (Hyungsook, 2014). The program allowed students to develop confidence in themselves as citizens of the community that they moved to. When art is used to engage the students in their community it has transformative power and the power to address social justice issues (Hyungsook, 2014).

Part of using SEA effectively is creating well designed projects for students. O'Donoghue and Berard (2014) defined six qualities of socially engaged design for educators, focusing primarily on the arts through their examples. The first quality is that the project addresses environmental and social issues. This can be seen in projects done by Arts-Up, where they

partner with non-profits to have a central theme for the art that the students make during a summer (Prettyman & Gargarella, 2013). The second quality is that the project attends to contextual particularities. This refers to generating solutions, systems, and practices that address community issues (O'Donoghue & Berard, 2014). The example given by the authors was a giant staircase that artists built to allow community members into a park that the city council had fenced off (O'Donoghue &Berard, 2014). The third quality is that the project engages in participative forms of labor that are sustainable. In North Carolina and California there is a non-profit high school called Project H Design that focuses on teaching students how to build community spaces and design socially transforming projects (O'Donoghue & Berard, 2014). The fourth quality is that the project blurs traditional distinctions in the use of art. This could be as simple as printing an activism poster onto t-shirts to wear to a rally. O'Donoghue and Berard (2014) give another example of Park(ing) Day in San Francisco. Park(ing) Day is a day where people can take over a metered parking spot and create a mini park inside it with the goal of showing how urban space can be used (O'Donoghue & Berard, 2014). For the fifth quality, the project should create capacities to know and live. O'Donoghue and Berard (2014) give the example a group of artists cultivating different ways to think about an already existing item like the hook as an object, verb, and concept. The sixth and final quality of socially engaged design is that the project expands pedagogical possibilities. O'Donoghue and Berard (2014) suggest that educators pay attention to the needs of the community. This will allow educators to use the other five qualities to create projects that allow students to participate in their communities.

Another thing to keep in mind when considering SEA are categories of project types. According to artmakingchange.org, there are four categories of SEA: change based, issue based, who based, and place based. Change based is trying to make a tangible change in social, political, or economic conditions. Issue based raises awareness about an issue or changes the way it is viewed. Place based affects the conditions of a particular geography. Who based reflects on cultural expressions and the identities of minorities. These categories and qualities of design are important to keep in mind when looking at how SEA can help students be active democratic citizens.

There are some examples of projects that have been done that encompass these design qualities of a SEA project. In one project, students learned how to create ceramic water filters, a project that is change and issue based (Schlemmer, Carpenter, and Hitchcock, 2017; artmakingchange.org). Schlemmer, Carpenter, and Hitchcock (2017) discuss a performance art piece where students learned how to make ceramic water filters to raise awareness of lack of access to water. This uses SEA, and the students got to consider the impact of their work. Projects like this allow students to see the impact of art outside of the normal high school curriculum and helps them see that they can make a change. Schlemmer, Carpenter, and Hitchcock (2017) end their article by stating "Performances such as these afford students spaces to respond to social issues experientially, kinesthetically, and intellectually, and to uphold their rights as learners, creative beings, and concerned citizens of the world" (p. 59).

Another project done in a school setting is the "Empty Bowls" project where elementary students created ceramic bowls to donate for a fundraiser for food banks (Siegesmund, 2013). This project is interesting when considering that it was eventually made mandatory, which took

away the democratic power that the students had found by choosing to make the bowls and donate them. In 2011 however, some students in that class decided they wanted to do something for the tsunami survivors in Japan (Siegesmund, 2013). The students who wanted to participate in that project created their ceramic bowls for "Empty Bowls" (as required) and also made paper origami cranes to sell for the tsunami survivors (Siegesmund, 2013). The blend of artistic and aesthetic education with the desire to help others made art education a leading factor in these students' decisions to be good citizens.

Art education can form empathetic thinking, shape authentic understandings, and use aesthetics to form a self-governing citizen (Siegesmund, 2013). However, schools do not always have the resources to have art classes, and so summer camps and outside organizations can provide art education for students. For example, the summer education program called Arts-Up, discussed above, allowed students the opportunity to create art for a non-profit organization. This program got the students engaged with their community and taught them artistic skills so that they could create a project that met the needs of the community partner. Students gained confidence and found their voice in the program as well. Summer programs can help broaden the scope of who can get involved in the arts, just as outside organizations can.

Moxely and Feen (2017) looked into three different kinds of organizations that use art to address social issues. First, after school art programs help develop artistic skills and give students a space to discuss social issues close to them. Students in these after school programs have a place to go and create art that is meaningful for them (Moxley & Feen 2017). Another space are organizations devoted to the arts and social action that often confront injustice

directly. These organizations are not therapeutic as they do not offer professional therapy and do not necessarily teach artistic skills, but they do allow people to find purpose through art (Moxley & Feen, 2017). The last type of organization uses art to help those who are marginalized to tap into their creativity and express their experiences and aspirations. These organizations are usually therapeutic by offering counseling and can teach some artistic skills. Organizations that allow students and other people to come in and create art can help those people externalize oppression and other experiences (Moxely & Feen, 2017). In each of these organizations the arts can bond people with the goal of making a better society (Moxely & Feen, 2017). Art can also create the space for those who are silenced to have a voice and speak out about social injustices. This blend of bonding and space for those silenced is what lends art well to teaching young minds about how to interact in their communities and be good citizens.

Conclusion

The existing literature shows that art education has value for students regarding the skills it teaches beyond the craft. It also shows a history of art and citizenry intertwined together by giving people a chance to practice critical thinking and self-expression in the same context. Using socially engaging art and socially conscious art in the classroom can help students practicing citizenry through art and find a purpose in art. The literature solidly points out that art builds empathy in students and allows them to learn about each other. It also consistently brings up the role of art in pushing creative and critical thinking skills that students can use in other areas of their life. Another civic benefit of art is that it is a creative pathway to express ideas, opinions, and experiences. This also allows students to practice being democratic

citizens by letting them express their own thoughts, reflect on their thoughts, and reflect on the thoughts of others.

On the other hand, most studies fail to examine how students engage in socially engaged art or socially conscious art and fail to explore the specific effects of SEA on the students. For example, the study done by Siegesmund (2013) points out that the Empty Bowls project became mandatory and took away the democratic voice that the students had, so it no longer had the effect of the choice to be socially engaged through that project. Most studies on SEA also lack student voice and classroom observations. Many of the articles are very theoretical, while research is predominantly surveys and quantitative data that do not investigate what the students are experiencing when participating in socially engaged art. The literature also does not go over how or why teachers/schools decided to implement SEA or SCA based curriculum for art classes. Finally, they do not analyze the process of how that curriculum became a part of the art classes.

While there is an abundance of research on art building the skills to make a better citizen, there is a lack of student voice in these studies. Therefore, this research project examined what students believe art classes are teaching them before implementing a socially engaged art project. After the SEA project, I examined the students' perceptions about art classes again to see if there was a change in their thinking. The purpose of this study was to better understand student perception of socially engaged art, as well as consider how those classes and skills can help students be socially active in their communities. The study also explored how classes that promote risk taking in art encourage students to take the skills learned in art classes outside the classroom. Taking risks in art is how a student can push their

zone of proximal development regarding their creative-critical thinking skills and develop their abilities as an artist. The SEA projects that the students participated in had the potential for students to take artistic risks and practice real life skills. This study analyzed what a student will do and learn when given the opportunity to be engaged in a SEA project and to take the risk of using art as a means of communication for social injustices.

Chapter Three: Methods

Research Question

The first portion of this research focused on high school students' perception on art

classes and socially engaging art. The second part explored the skills learned from doing a SEA

project, and considered how those skills promoted student engagement with their

communities. A SEA project was implemented within art classes that have not pushed students

to fully engage in their community. Overall, the research intention was to understand what high

schoolers take away from SEA and if they would take the opportunity to practice being a good

citizen through art. The research addresses the following central and sub-questions:

Central Question: How does socially engaged art affect high school students'

engagement with their community?

1. What are the students' perceptions of SEA projects?

2. What are the skills that students learn from SEA that help them to engage

with their community?

Rationale for Research Approach

I hold a constructivist worldview and used an explanatory mixed-methods approach for

my research. This focused on student perceptions of socially engaged art and how art class skills

can help students engage with their community. A constructivist worldview relies on the

researcher wanting to make sense of how others see the world and the participants' views of

what is being studied (Creswell, 2018). The constructivist world view focuses on the

participants' meaning making around an event. Previous research on SEA (socially engaging art)

shows that it can help students connect to their communities and find purpose in art. By using a

constructivist worldview for my research, I was able to examine how students perceive SEA and the benefits that the students take from doing a SEA project. The qualitative portion of my research with a constructivist world view will allow me to understand the complex views that students may develop about SEA. This also allows me to understand their background, as that may be a factor in what a student decides to do for the SEA project.

To understand the changes in their views, I did a mixed methods approach, starting my research with a survey. Before beginning a SEA project in their classes, there was a survey to gather information on what the students believed about art classes and was based on a five-point scale. Meanwhile, the questions for the interviews after the SEA project were open-ended to allow the participants to talk about their experiences regarding the project, and to allow them to reflect on the ideas they engaged with during the project (Seidman, 2013).Explanatory mixed-methods use quantitative research first, and then qualitative research to further explain the results of the quantitative research (Creswell, 2018). By conducting my research with a constructivist world view and mixed methods approach, my goal is to understand how SEA can be beneficial to students in art classes, and if students will begin to understand how to use art to connect with their community. Through what I learn about student perceptions on SEA, I hope to advocate for the use of art classes in high school to help students become better citizens through SEA projects and the skills learned in art classes. The idea of using art to allow students to better themselves also connects to a transformative approach for research. Research utilizing a transformative worldview has an agenda to confront social oppression at any level (Creswell, 2018). My research aims to help better students through art, and allow them to practice becoming engaged citizens.

During my research I interviewed students about their experiences with the SEA project. As I learned from the students from the questions I asked, their own self-reflection helped them to realize aspects about the project that they may have left uncovered without the interview. This is the dialogic spiral, where prior understandings are advanced by the speaker becoming the listener and the listener becomes the speaker (Kinloch & San Pedro, 2013). This process of moving back and forth and recalling what happened during the SEA project helped the students who were interviewed to process what the project did for them. The students' answers to my questions helped me to understand their views, but by listening to my questions and answering them, the students came to understand their perceptions more.

Research Design

The school and research participants listed below are referred to through pseudonyms.

The research site is at Gold Oak High School in Northern California in a suburban community. There are 1,442 students at Gold Oak High School and 37.4% of the students are on free and reduced lunch fee (http://www.ed-data.org). Gold Oak High is fairly diverse, with 48% of students being white, 36.7% are Hispanic or Latino, 5.2% are two or more races, 5.1% are Asian, 2.8% are African American, 1.2% are Filipino, 0.8% are American Indian or Alaska Native, and 0.3% are Pacific Islander. English learners make up 8.4% of the student population. Gold Oak High hosts two specialty programs: Innovative Alternative School (IAS) and Specialized Art School (SAS). SAS, program focused on visual art, performing arts, cinematics, music, and creative writing includes 35% of the overall student body at Gold Oak High. These students take two SAS art classes each year; one class is the medium of their concentration and the other class can be a breadth class or another concentration class. Usually the students' first year is

primarily in their concentration discipline, depending on what it is, and after that students take one course from their concentration and a breadth class in another discipline. Some SAS art classes are open to regular Gold Oak High students, and there are two general art teachers serving the rest of Gold Oak High students. While students in SAS are familiar with people coming to tour their program and comfortable talking about their program, the opportunity to engage with their community through their artwork is not always something that the students consider. Part of this lack of awareness may be due to the need for a project that pushes them to do so, and that helps them see that potential in art.

I was a student teacher at Gold Oak High in the Spring of 2018 for the drawing and painting teacher at SAS. I have maintained relationships with the art teachers at Gold Oak High and the administration at the school. After obtaining permission from the assistant principal in charge of SAS to conduct the study, I emailed the teachers to ask them if they would participate in my study.

At Gold Oak High School, all art teachers were invited to participate in the study. I contacted these art teachers via email and phone and have a relationship with the teachers due to having been a student teacher at Gold Oak High last year. Two SAS teachers agreed to participate in the study. The classes participating in the study were selected by the teachers when they agreed to be a part of the study. All three of the classes are a SAS art class where the majority of the students are SAS students in the drawing and painting discipline or the photography discipline. Ms. Rachael Will taught the drawing and painting classes, and her Drawing and Painting 1 (DP1) class participated during third period. There were 24 of students in DP1, and all of them are in SAS. The second class is the SAS Photography class taught by Mr.

Daniel Clarke, who also teaches other digital arts like animation. Mr. Clarke has two periods of photography students that participated. His Photography 1 students in period two had 26 students with two being regular Gold Oak High students, and in third period he had Photography 2,3, and AP students who are all in SAS. Period three of Photography had 28 students total between all three levels. I split my observations between DP1 and Photo 2/3/AP during third period for the duration of the project.

I met with the teachers who agreed to be a part of the project to confirm consent of being a participating teacher and to plan the socially engaging project. Three weeks before the project began, I came into each class period that was participating to introduce myself and the project. At that time, I handed out parental consent forms to the students, and requested that if they wanted to take the survey, be interviewed, or allow me to take photos of their artwork, that they should get their parental consent form in. When I returned to begin the project, I collected parental consent forms and handed out student consent forms to those who turned in parental consent. I continued to collect parental consent forms and student consent forms for the first week of the project.

Before the SEA project took place, students with parental and student consent completed a survey (See Appendix A for the survey). This survey was be a small convenient sample based on who gave permission. The survey concerns student beliefs on art classes and was evaluated on a five-point scale. Some of the questions included asking if students feel that art teaches them more than just artistic skills, or if art allows them to explore social issues that are important to them. Students selected the appropriate answer ranging from "Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree." This survey was completed and collected in class. The survey

served to answer the questions examining student perceptions on art classes are before they

begin the SEA project. Survey answers gauged whether or not students already feel that they

can use art to engage with their community or not. This information was necessary to analyze

whether or not students' perspectives shifted about using art to engage with the community

and talk about social issues.

During the project, I completed observations of the students working in class on their

projects. I took notes on student behavior and reactions towards the project, and challenges

that the students overcome in the project. I also introduced the SEA project to the Photography

classes with Mr. Clarke and went over ideas and inspiration for the students as they needed it.

After that I handed the lesson matrix (See Appendix B for the lesson matrix) to students for

them to organize their art project. Ms. Will's class did not use the matrix I created, as she

already had a project in her curriculum and presented the project herself. This project was

already socially inclined as it was an activism poster project, but Ms. Will and I both developed

a new requirement that the students needed to push their artwork into the community and be

socially engaged through their artwork.

After the project was completed, interviews were completed with all interested

students at a time and place that is convenient for the student (See Appendix C for student

interview questions). I interviewed twenty-one students at the end of the project. Seven

students were from DP1, nine students from Mr. Clarke's third period of Photography 2/3/AP,

and five students from Photography 1. Only three of the interviewed students were boys. These

interviews expanded on the survey to understand how SEA projects helped students to engage

in their community. The questions were opened ended to allow the students to reflect on their

ideas from the project and allow space to follow an idea with more questions. Some of the

questions included asking what the student thought about the project and what they learned

from it. Another question asked the student if they have any of their own ideas for a SEA

project that they want to do now. These interviews answered the question on what student

perception of SEA projects and what they take away from doing the projects. Ms. Will and Mr.

Clarke were also interviewed on their views of how the project went and what they thought it

did for the students (See Appendix D for teacher interview questions). They were asked how

they thought students benefited from the project, and if they felt art classes can teach our

youth to be better citizens. Teacher interviews were a follow up on how they felt about being in

the project and if they would continue to implement SEA projects in the future. While this study

was focused on the student view of SEA, the teachers' views on how it went were just as

important to gather to understand if SEA projects can be more regularly done in classes.

Data Analysis

Survey data was compiled into an Excel spreadsheet and coded for student belief on art

classes. The survey data was coded openly for expected and unexpected codes at first. I

expected to see a high number of students with the belief that art is a creative outlet class, but

fewer who have the opportunity to engage with their community through art. I expected a

range of responses of student belief of what art teaches them.

Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed by the researcher using a computer

program. After transcription, each interview was read by the researcher and open coded to

discover key words or phrases. These key words were organized into categories using concept

mapping until themes emerged. As these themes and connections were made, the researcher

did a focus coding to find quotes and specific examples illustrative of each theme. I expected to have codes relating to student growth, changes in students' perceptions about art classes, and how art can help them be better citizens. I compared and contrasted data from the surveys and data from the interviews to see if there was growth from the project. I also removed "like" and "um" from direct quotes when those words show up more than twice in a quote from a student or teacher interview.

I also took photos of student work to analyze and use as examples of how SEA can help students engage with their communities on societal issues. Each piece was coded for which class it came from and for themes relating to social justice and community engagement. These codes were not included in my concept mapping, but rather provided information on student engagement, student interests, and how they completed the SEA project. These codes were analyzed alongside the interview data.

Validity and Reliability

In order to justify the themes that occurred from my research, I used triangulation of data sources to add validity to the study (Creswell, 2018). By using quantitative data to collect student belief before the project, and then qualitative data with observation notes to see how student response evolves over time, I was able to put together a more solid argument for my findings. I also kept in mind when interviewing both students and teachers that their perspective is their truth for the situation (Seidman, 2013). Their comments were valid for them, and so I as the researcher had to take into account their background and positionality when looking at their answers from the interviews. Not only that, but my findings and

understanding of student or teacher answers were shaped by my own background and position.

I was a student teacher at the school site where I am conducting research in the spring of 2018. The teachers that participated in the study were teachers that I worked with while student teaching. I hold an existing bias towards art education as being beneficial due to being an art teacher and an artist. Not only this, but I believe that SEA has the potential to create civic engagement in high school students and help them learn to be better citizens. I was aware of this bias and attempted to analyze the data as objectively as possible. There was also a bias with the school site, as the school was centered around the arts, and held art in high esteem. Since Gold Oak High has the SAS program, which is a third of their student population, the school may be more likely to have students that believe art is beneficial for them as growing individuals.

I may have data bias from some of the students in Ms. Will's class since they know me from guest lecturing at the school in the fall of 2018. I have also been a substitute teacher for this class. The students in this class know that Ms. Will and I have worked closely together, and that she holds me in high esteem. This may make some of the students feel like they need to give me the "answers I want", even if their participation holds no effect on their grades. In both of Mr. Clarke's participating classes, there are some students who were in the classes I student taught last year. In his second period there were three students who were in my classes, and in third period there were five students who were in my classes last year. These students may also feel like they need to give me "answers I want", but they also might be more willing to be honest since they have worked with me before. I will work to make sure that the students know

that I want their truth, even if it goes against what I believed I would find. Keeping this in mind,

students in the SAS class may have more bias towards the arts being useful since they are in a

specialty program for the arts. The students in the regular Gold Oak High art classes may not

have this same bias. This may lead to more growth mindset occurrences in those students

regarding the arts and SEA projects.

Chapter Four: Findings

Art has increasingly become a creative outlet class and is a subject that has funding cut

for public schools because it is deemed unnecessary for academic growth. However, art has

transformative power, and has the capability to allow students to practice using their voice and

opinions in an influential way. Numerous studies show that art has benefits for students

beyond being a creative outlet class, and that art teaches skills that help students become

better citizens. One way for art to do this is through socially engaging art projects where the

students get to practice being democratic citizens and participate in their communities. While

there are many research articles on socially engaging art and how it can benefit students, there

is a lack of the student voice and their thoughts on completing such a project. This study's

purpose was to understand the student view on socially engaging art projects and how those

projects can help students connect to their communities.

Introducing a socially engaged art (SEA) project to the three participating art classes at

Gold Oak High changed or reinforced many students views on art classes, art, and what artwork

can be used for. The majority of students who were interviewed expressed that they were not

aware of the potential for their art to have power and voice. At the same time, classroom

observations during the project showed that although many students engaged with the project,

some struggled with the idea of putting their artwork out for others to see. Yet, while many

students took the easy route of creating a social media campaign using their art, some students

did choose to display their work in public spaces, work with a non-profit, or write to an

organization related to their topic. Taken as a whole, the findings presented below

demonstrate that many students will take the opportunity to be socially engaged when they are

given a SEA project because they have the opening to create an art piece that voices their opinion on an issue that is important to them and then share that artwork through a form of social interaction. In what follows below, I discuss three influences on students' decision to become socially engaged. The first theme that will be covered explores how students found the power of art through this project and discovered that they had a voice that could be heard by others through art. Next, the student connection to a community through the SEA project will be discussed, as well as considering why students were able to form a connection with particular communities. Finally, the third theme will examine the relationships between the structure of each class project, the classroom environment, the teacher's views about the project, and the students' level of engagement with the SEA project.

The Power of Art and Student Voice

Many of the interviewed students had not thought about the potential for their artwork to have a voice before they did the project. They enjoyed doing an art project that felt like it had a purpose and could potentially make a difference. For some students completing a socially engaged art project was a critical moment for understanding the potential and purpose of art.

After they finished the SEA project, students talked about how it either changed their views about the purpose of art or reinforced their views on art classes and how art can be used. While the pre-SEA project survey results showed 46.7% of students strongly believed that art can make social changes and 50% strongly believed they can explore social issues in their art, fourteen of the interviewed students claimed that they had not thought about using their art like this before, with seven students saying that it reinforced a belief they already had developed. Maia, for example, was a tenth grade SAS student taking Photo1 as her breadth

class. Her concentration is Drawing and Painting, and she did the Activism Poster with Ms. Will

and me last year in Drawing and Painting1 (DP1). Maia laughed when she said that the project

had not changed her views on art classes and art, and then explained that "…it kind of

reinforced what I can do with my art…like your art has power because I feel like you just do art

just for art but you don't think about how you can actually do something with it." Eight other

students that were interviewed agreed that the project was a reinforcement for a purpose that

art can have in society. Karey, a senior AP Photo student, mentioned the Activism Poster as

well, and said, "Yeah, like a lot of
people use art as a form of activism
and so like I've always known that
that's one of its purposes." Hannah,
a ninth grader in DP1, had realized
that art, politics, and emotions for
anyone creating art all came
together before she finished the
Activism Poster. Even though it is
Hannah's first year at SAS, she
explained that her views were not
changed from the project due to
"…art classes have always been doing
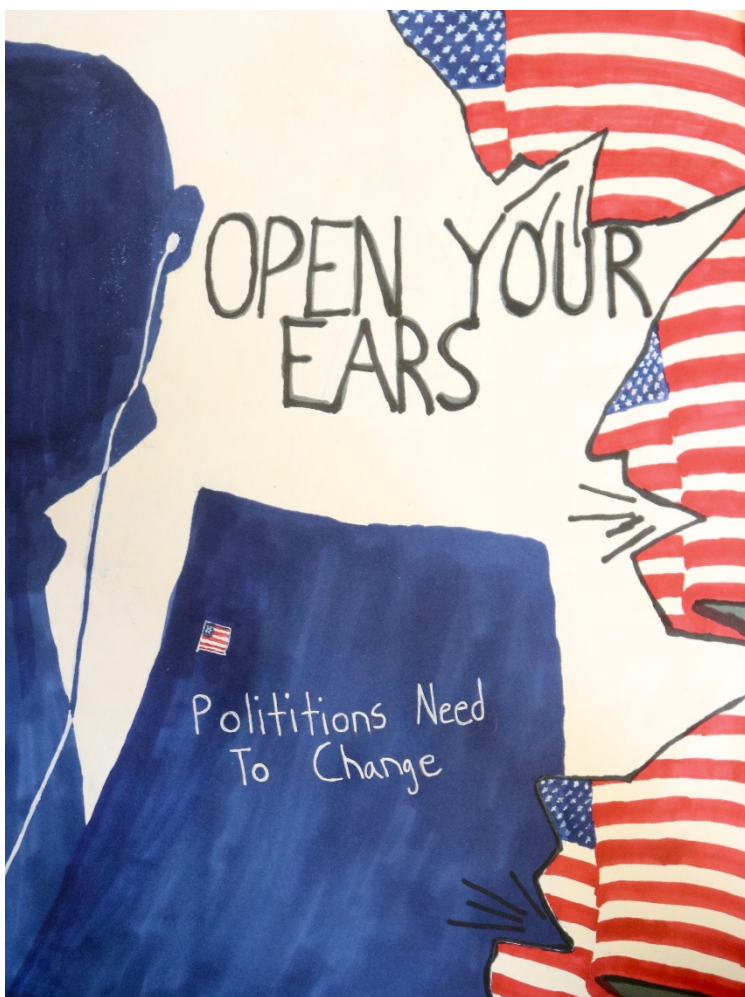art and politics and emotions, they're
separate but they come together, but

Photo 1: DP1 Student's Activism Poster. Marker

those have always just been present in an art class for me." She furthered her thought and said, "And there's some kids who will only do political art ever in art classes, no matter what somehow it will be political." Some of Hannah's peers in DP1 did have political posters, like one student who created a poster visualizing his frustration with politicians not listening to their citizens (see Photo 1). Students like Hannah, Maia, and Karey all have had past experiences with art being political and believed that art can have a purpose beyond a creative outlet before this project.

Other students, however, were impacted by completing a SEA project and began to see another use for their art and what they could do with it. Thirteen students of the twenty-one that were interviewed mentioned a new outlook on art classes and making art. When asked if completing the SEA project changed her views on art classes, Cara in Photography 1 said, "I already thought that [art classes] were important but now I think they're more important and then they-they also help more than I thought originally." Other students mentioned how they were thinking about the power art can have, and how it can be used to persuade people's opinions. Allie in Photography 2 felt that change for her pertained to her thinking for future projects. Even though Allie's experience overall was not empowering during this particular project, as she felt she chose a topic that was not what she was fully passionate about, Allie finished the project with a new thought on art. She said, "Like for what I'll be doing for other projects, I'll think to be more aware I guess um on how-how [art] can make an impact. Even if it's not a direct impact." Her thoughts on how art can make an impact are shared by other students in the drawing and painting class. Rose, a freshman in DP1, mentioned, "I definitely feel more like now that art can really make a big difference, even though it's like maybe

something painted on a wall or canvas, it can have an empowering message, it can really impact you without physically saying anything." Students found that their art can have a message, and that people will listen to them through their art.

While the students echoed that they liked being able to express themselves, it seemed that there was something deeper under that for them. Melissa from the Drawing and Painting class asked how she should answer the questions before I started the interview. I was puzzled, and asked her what she meant, and she asked me if I wanted to hear a specific thing, clarifying that adults often only wanted to hear what they wanted. Melissa was the only student to bring this up directly and ask me what I wanted from the interviews. When I told her I wanted to hear her authentic thoughts and opinions on the project, Melissa smiled, and she said that she could do that. She was not the only student to bring up feeling like adults do not listen to teenagers and dismiss them. Rose expressed that she liked the project because she and her peers:
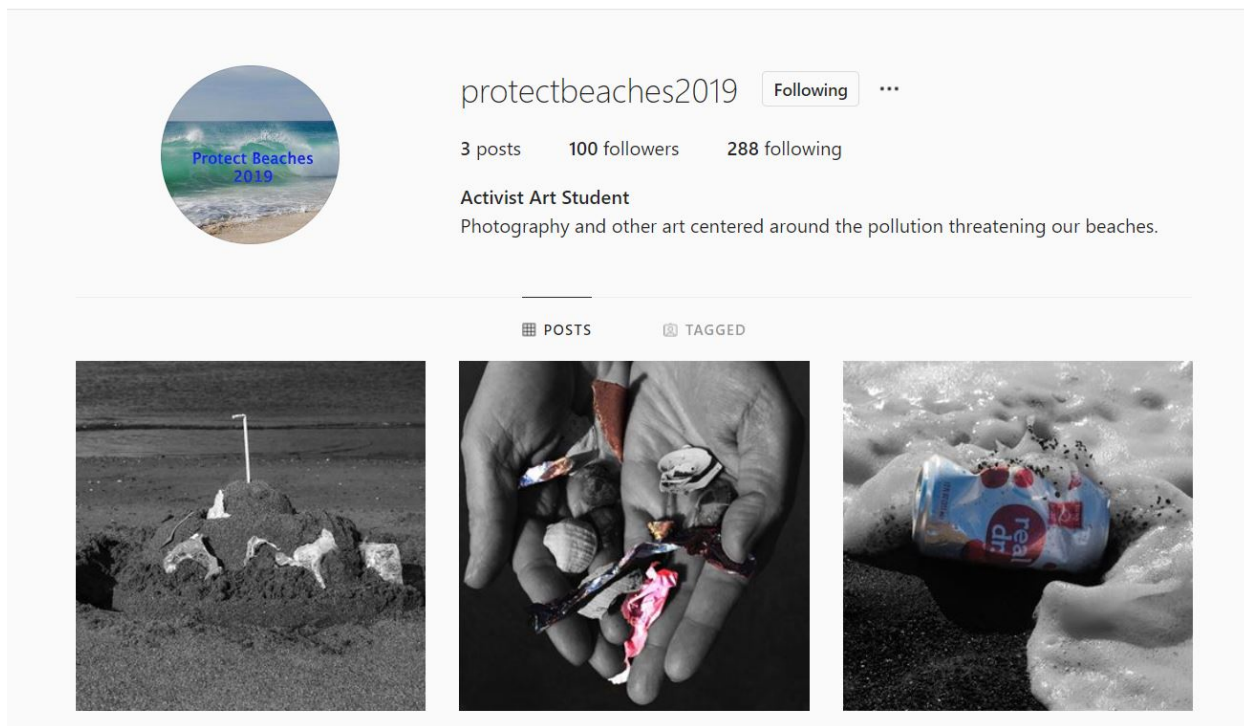
> … got to um, try and like sort of advocate what we care for and what is
>
> important to us, and since we're younger that's kind of hard to do since
>
> many adults don't really believe us or not belittle almost, but like 'oh
>
> you're a child you don't know that'. But it's kind of a way for us to
>
> express ourselves: yes, we do have opinions and yes uh what we say
>
> and are doing can matter, like this stuff- you should listen to what we
>
> have to say.

All the interviewed students explained that they appreciated being able to voice the things they believed in through their artwork in the SEA project. They felt that their art was a

way for others to listen to them despite their age and show their thoughts and opinions on subjects matter as well.

Some students found another meaning for art, and empowerment in what they could do with their artwork's voice. These students found that their artwork could have a voice for those who do not, and that they could use art to convey things that need to change. Vera, a Photography 2 student, used the project to talk about the pollution of plastic and other trash in the ocean (see Photo 2 and 3). In her photos, Vera voiced her concern for the plastic pollution she found on beaches by creating black and white images where only the trash was highlighted by color. She displayed her photographs on an Instagram she created for the project and at the US Army Corps of Engineers Bay Model Visitor Center. Vera's views on art classes changed after completing her SEA project on plastic pollution in the ocean. She said,

> Since art, we know that it's a lot about communicating emotions and it's
> about showing the public sort of what goes on through your mind, how
> you perceive the world, but this was a bit different and it was really a
> battle cry and a call for help on something you're really concerned with.
> Usually art is just emotions, but this attacked something far greater
> than that.

Photo 2: Vera's Project as a Social Media Campaign

protectbeaches2019 This photo was also taken at ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓ I was inspired by images of children swimming and playing on beaches filled with plastic and other litter, and I decided to create a photograph depicting plastic pollution's negative effect on beach visitors. To produce an image reflecting this contamination, I constructed a sand castle decorated with plastic and other trash items found on the beach instead of seaweed and sea shells. When plastic and other materials are introduced to ocean water, chemicals such as BPA (bisphenol-A) and toxic metals including lead and mercury leach into the water. While lead and mercury have been connected to cancers and complications in the immune system, BPA has been found to interfere in hormone function. When beaches are contaminated by litter, the health of both humans and ecosystems are greatly damaged, and will continue to decline unless our beaches are protected from pollution.

protectbeaches2019 Taking this picture entailed walking along ▓▓▓▓▓▓ in Northern California. I remember visiting ▓▓▓▓▓▓ shorty after a storm, and being haunted by the multitude of plastic objects including bottles, pens, bags, and wrappers littering the sand. When I returned to the beach, I was impressed to see areas designated for wildlife and significantly less trash. However, I was able to recover objects such as a decaying tennis ball, multiple wrappers, plastic straws, and soda cans. Using one of the recovered cans, I was able to capture the exact moment in which a common recyclable object becomes a danger to aquatic ecosystems. Millions of marine animals are exposed to such threats regularly, and litter such as the depicted can could be consumed by whales and large fish. In addition, litter disrupts the natural patterns of animals including hermit crabs, and leach deadly chemicals into oceans which are vital to both humans and marine life. The instant beach litter is exposed to the ocean, the lives of marine animals and the safety of beaches across the world are placed at risk, and the possible ways trash such as a single soda can will harm ecosystems are nearly infinite.

protectbeaches2019 Creating this picture required me to walk along a small beach at ▓▓▓▓▓▓ ▓▓▓▓▓▓ California. While walking along the beach, I was able to find collect several beautiful sea shells, a buried children's plastic shovel, multiple plastic wrappers and odd plastic pieces, and multiple metal screws. This image depicts a horrible future, one in which there is more beach litter than sea shells on beaches. Environmentalists predict that without human intervention, there will be more plastic than fish in our oceans by 2050. If the plastic currently polluting our beaches is not removed, erosion from the ocean will break them into micro-plastics, which are deadly to filter feeders such as oysters. Recent studies have also concluded micro-plastics have reached the Mariana Trench, which is the ocean's deepest point. If the plastic polluting our oceans and beaches is not removed, they will continue to contaminate and destroy all marine ecosystems.

Photo 3: Vera's Descriptions for Her Photos

Vera earlier expressed how the project was empowering for her to complete. She liked that she

had the opportunity to display both locally at the Visitor Center, and globally reach people

through the social media campaign. She wrote descriptive details on how she created each

image, her thoughts as she was taking the photos, and why we need to work on stopping

pollution of the oceans on each photograph on her Instagram created for the project. Vera also got positive feedback on those photos from other people, including an invite to join a team focusing on these issues. She mentioned,

> I felt [the project] was empowering. I know that for my specific issue, it actually left me feeling more hopeful since along the way I was able to discover other people who had done similar things, more photographers focusing on the same issues. And it really did help me, since I thought I was going to be alone trying to fight an uphill battle and displaying my work, but it was a lot easier that I thought.

Vera found empowerment in finding other people who were concerned about the same things, and that there are others who also want to make changes.

Other students were empowered by finding that they had a voice with their art, and through seeing other people react to their photos. In AP Photography, Christy found that she was empowered by witnessing the reactions people had to her photos. She volunteered at the local Humane Society and took photos of the dogs and cats up for adoption that were "special" in that they are amputees, blind, or have special needs and are stigmatized for that. Christy displayed her work in the front area of the Humane Society (see Photo 4). Christy liked combining both her passion for volunteering and working in the community with her art, and said it was "… especially when I was seeing people's reactions to my photos and things like that, it was definitely empowering in that way." Christy held a small Gala at the Humane Society

Photo 4: Christy's Photos at the Humane Society

where people came in to see her photographs, and they were displayed there for a couple of

weeks in the main area where adoptions take place.

Other students found the project empowering to complete because they found they

had a voice. Maria in DP1 said "Yeah and then it kind of made me feel like I had a voice in like a

way to say something. Cause I could actually make something and like share it to other people."

The common link between students like Vera, Christy, and Maria, is that they were given the

opportunity and support to share their work with other people through a form of public display.

The project also pushed for student growth by being "outside the norm" and outside of

their comfort zone. Students brought up how the project was different from their normal

projects. For the Photography students it was especially different in being very loose in what students could chose to do with very few requirements on the actual images that they created. In Photography 1, Edward said, "Yeah I liked [the project], it was a bit hard. It was kinda different, it was much more loosely based, liked we could kinda do whatever with it. I kinda liked that aspect of it, but I also found it really hard to take photos without a very defined aspect, I guess." He was not the only Photography student to bring up that the project was different from others that they had had. Others like Kayla in Photography 2 mentioned that the project had them apply their art to a real-life situation. During the interview Vera expressed,

> Well see for me personally, it really pushed me out of my comfort zone since with standard projects when we're contacting outside organizations it's all hypothetical. So this gave us all an opportunity to really practice our communication skills and also our researching to try and find organizations and places where we could have our work displayed. And I know that I had some difficulty with that, but I also learned more about formal communication which will be a skill that I can use later on.

This project allowed for growth in Photography due to the openness of topic in comparison to their previous projects. However, the Drawing and Painting projects usually have a lot of freedom for student choice and yet the students in that class mentioned that the Activism Poster was different from their other projects. Melissa brought up that this project only required a format, but that they were free to choose their topic. She expressed "...it was a

lot more a personal project", a thought that resonated with other DP1 students. While the DP1

students liked the personal side of the project, they did not bring up being pushed out of their

comfort zone like the Photography students did. Hannah did mention "The only thing is having

[the art] put out into the community, I don't think many people actually want to do that. But

because it's a requirement people are going to" and this was reflected in observing the majority

of the DP1 students not being sure where or how they would display their Activism Posters.

Overall, the Photography students were much more interested in pushing their work out into

the community, whereas the DP1 students were hesitant to do so.

Despite being uncertain about putting their artwork into the community, there was a

desire from the students across both mediums to continue to use art to talk about issues and

engage with the community. Many students felt that they wanted to continue to engage with

their communities through their art, but they did not have a topic for another SEA project. A

couple of students already had their next idea for a SEA project lined up. Christy was asked by

the local Humane Society to help make a film on the animals in the same style that she took her

photographs. Kayla in Photo2 explained that she always enjoyed art and said, "So applying it to

like regular community things is very appealing to me. Especially if it's like to benefit the

community." She also worked with a local animal shelter and was called back to take more

photos of the animals for adoption at that shelter. Some students, like Allie in Photography 2,

were recruited for a project completely different from the one she just completed. Allie was

asked to take headshots for low-income women for their business interviews at a non-profit

organization that provides professional clothing for interviews. Other students, like Hannah in

DP1, did not have a second project solidified but knew she wanted to consider using art to

engage with her community. She mentioned, "I was thinking of doing a piece for my town or something, just because I know an art program like an art club thing for teenagers has done a piece for my community that's like two blocks down from my house and it's pretty cool." Hannah didn't have a specific piece thought out at the time but knew that she wanted to do something creative for her community.

While many students were very engaged with the assignment, it is important to note that student engagement with the project varied according to the class as well as the individual student. While the DP1 students were almost always observed working on the creation part of their project, the Photography students were often seen off-task and not working on their photos. One day at the beginning of a class period, I overheard Hailey, a Photography 3 student, complain "There's a lot of work to this." Mr. Clarke and I had just finished chunking out the project into smaller bites for the students to work through, so when Hailey logged into her Google Classroom for Photography 3, there were new smaller assignments as well as a schedule of when the assignments were due.

Student vulnerability was an aspect that had a significant aspect on student engagement. For example, many photography students were unsure how to do the project without showing their political opinions, versus several DP students who were very straight forward with their opinions and unafraid to express them. Yet at the same time, once the photography students figured out how to create images that they were comfortable with they were willing to do social media campaigns and spread their images in other public ways. The DP1 students, however, were uncomfortable with sharing their work with the public. The vulnerability of the DP1 students may have occurred since they had to create their images from

their own heads and what they create was more personal to them. Whereas the Photo students may have to stage something for their photos, and manipulate the photos to express their thoughts, but the process was different in how the image is created. Overall, however, the students looked forward to working on the project in DP1 and Photography, and many appreciated the skills they had to practice with the project.

For some students, however, there was a significant lack of interest in the project, skepticism about using art to help with social issues, dismay about the lack of materials and time to complete the project, and unwillingness to do something different or push their work into the world. Moreover, since students who completely disliked the project were not willing to complete an interview with me, this perspective may be underrepresented. Karey, for example, in AP Photography mentioned "I don't know how effective [projects] like this are" at the beginning of our interview. She felt that she wasn't making much of difference since she wrote to a cosmetic company that was global and had recently begun using animal testing. Other students, like Hannah brought up that their artwork wasn't going to help the subjects of the piece, but at least it brought awareness to others on the topic. She said, "I liked [the project] but even though I like it, it's not like my art piece is going to actually help starving children in Yemen. It's just, cuz it's not like- it's not actually going to change that, but it is I guess bringing awareness to the twenty-three people in the classroom which I suppose is nice." Hannah had not thought about how she would display her work yet, so she also was only thinking of the impact of her project in her art classroom. Some of the other students in Drawing and Painting also mentioned bringing awareness to their classmates about the topic that they chose. These students were not considering the impact that their posters could have

once they were displayed, and only the impact that they directly had from doing their project critique in the classroom. Overall though, students were given the opportunity to consider another way to use their art, and reflect on the fact that their art can have power and a voice in their communities.

Community Connection Through Art

Student connection, or lack of connection, to their community depended on their project topic, how they presented it, and their own definitions of community and social engagement. Students identified "community" in various ways including their classroom, school, neighborhood, or city. Some students felt the project helped them connect to only their classmates, whereas others felt they connected on every level of the spectrum. Vera was the only student interviewed who felt she had found a global community of other photographer activists. The majority of students, however, who felt that the project allowed them to connect to a community, or that they would be able to make a connection once they displayed their art, were thinking of a much more local community.

In Drawing and Painting1, students like Rose felt the connection to her classroom community. For her and other students, the project allowed them to see different views on topics important to their classmates. This was possible because in Drawing and Painting the students all gather around and do a class critique of their work at the end of project. Rose said, "I thought it was really interesting to see everyone else and see what they care for, and to see like that I can like relate." Rose wasn't the only student from DP1 who talked about seeing what other classmates felt was important. Jasmine thought that the project helped with seeing the problems that her classmates thought about and gave her the chance to think about those

problems in the same way. Jasmine stated, "I got to see how other people think of [their topic] and how I really think about it, like if I really think about what I'm painting or drawing, it kinda helps get me to come to a conclusion about how I think about it." In regards the to project helping Jasmine connect to her community, she said, "[The project] was helpful because- to like see the problems that others think about and to think about them in the same way."

For other students the concept of community prompted them to consider ways to make a school connection. Some of the students, for example, displayed their art on campus in glass display cases in the hallways. Their fellow students at Gold Oak High were able to see the work and could stop to read the artist statement. Interestingly though, students wanted to have more students included in the project. When asked about doing another SEA project Cara in Photography 1 suggested that "…maybe getting more involved with the school, so like we get other people who aren't in [SAS] to try it and see if they like it." Other students in both classes supported the idea of more art classes trying a SEA project in their curriculum. Evelyn in DP1 thought that other students should also have the opportunity to do a project like the one she completed. She said, "I think that we should like- everybody should get the chance to do this. Cuz I feel like it opens people's eyes for stuff that they might not be aware of." Other students emphasized that completing a SEA project could also help other students understand another side of art.

A possible reason for wanting other non-SAS students to participate in a SEA project comes from the community built into the SAS program at Gold Oak. Karey in AP Photography brought up other examples of how the SAS program's various disciplines often were socially engaged with each other. She said,

I feel like either it was last year or the year before, and in Photography we had like a group project where we had to take photos as a group and I feel like that was socially engaged. Umm, then we had to like tell a story. We also worked with the creative writing department and they gave us poems and then we would take photos of what they had written in the poems. And this year it's the opposite. So instead of us taking photos of their poems, um they're writing poems about our photography or photographs. So I think that's really cool, and I like- like the interdisciplinary like working together with other disciplines, I think that's really cool idea. Umm and that- I don't know if that's like- that's not like activism but is like community.

The SAS program also works together in other ways. Photography students will take photos of Music, Dance, and Drama students in the program for their upcoming shows. The Drawing and Painting students sometimes make posters for the other departments, and the Ceramics/Sculpture class will help make props for the plays. Therefore, the community that is built by the program encourages the students to work together. The desire for other classes to also try a SEA project may come from wanting other students to join this artistic community at the school.

Beyond the school community though, there were some students who made a connection to their neighborhood community. Photography students like Christy, Cara, and Kayla all reached out to different animal shelters in the city and took photos of animals for adoption. Christy displayed her photos right in the front area of the local Humane Society, and Kayla's photos went onto the shelter's website. Christy felt that she connected with her community through the project since she reached out to people she had not talked to before. Cara and her project partner focused on animal cruelty, and they reached out to the local
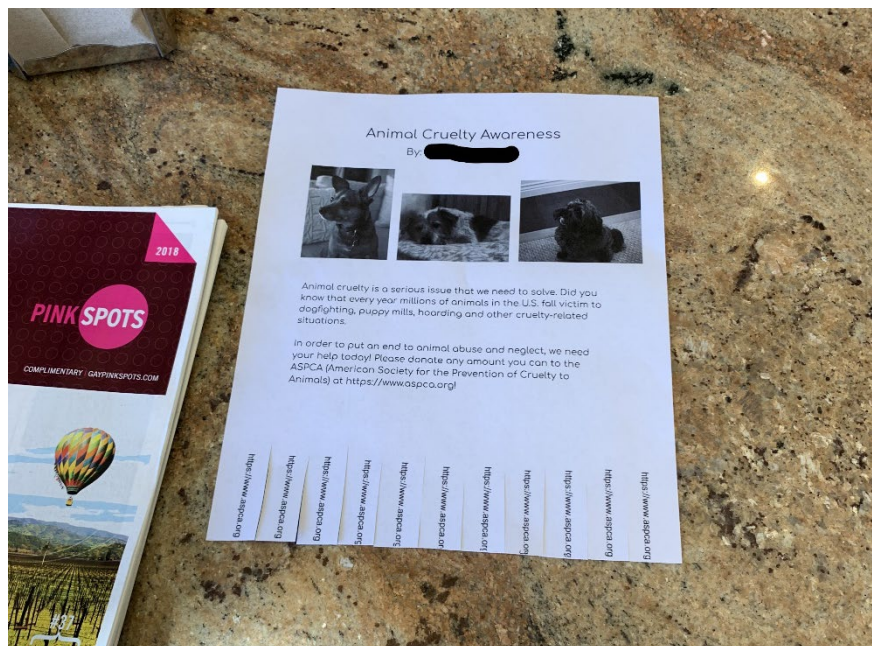
Photo 5:Cara's Flyer at a Local Coffee Shop

Humane Society as well with their finished artwork. She and her project partner created a flyer with their images asking people to help end animal cruelty (See Photo 5). They left their flyers at various places in the city, including a local coffee shop and Gold Oak High. Cara also felt that reaching out to other people like the Humane Society was what helped her connect to the community. Other students who focused on dog racing and the associated cruelty displayed their work at a pet store with an artist statement on their photos. Some students also displayed their work at their parent's work place and set up a mini gallery there. However, students who displayed their projects at their parent's work places

did not seem to connect to this community as much as students who did other forms of public display.

Despite these connections, there were several students who struggled to establish a connection to a community. Eight of the twenty-one interviewed students expressed that they felt the project did not help them connect to their community for various reasons. Five students regarded themselves as not connecting to their community because of the topic that they had chosen. For example, Edward in Photography 1 felt that his photos were more globally based, and that if he had focused on a community-based issue that he would have felt the project connected him to the community. Karey in AP Photography, as well as Melissa, Morgan, and Hannah in DP1 also felt they did not connect to a community because their topics were not focused on the local community. Karey also brought up that if she had done a local cosmetic company or even "… if I would have done like an exhibit, like [Mr. Clarke] had the idea to do one in the [Gold Oak] High School library, I feel like if I did that then I would have said the answer to this question would have been yes." In response, Karey mentioned the effects of both her topic choice, and the fact that she chose to write to the company itself, rather than do a public display.

Allie in Photography 2 didn't feel the community connection because she displayed her photos at her mom's work place. She said,

> I didn't talk to a lot of people about it. Umm, yeah, I mean I talked to my
>
> mom since we put it up at her work. But um, and her boss, but it- Since

it's up there and I don't go there often like it's not as if I can really talk

to someone about it as they passed it.

For Allie, she felt that the connection to her community should come from being able to talk

with people as they saw her work. The fact that she displayed her work and people would be

passing by it did not equate to a connection for her, whereas other students who did public

display found that to be enough of a connection.

Other students simply felt that they had not connected to a community because they

had not displayed their photos yet. Hailey, a Photography 3 student, mentioned, "I don't think

I've gotten that far along to- for me to like feel that yet, but I feel like it will cuz I- we're, what

we're planning to do is to put out photos like in the hallways of our school." She felt that once

she and her project partners displayed their work, that then she'd feel a community

connection. Others simply had not heard back from the organization they contacted and felt

that impacted how they connected with their community. Sierra in Photography 3 focused on

sex trafficking and contacted the local police department asking to display her photos there but

had not heard back from the department. She felt that the city also was not focused on that

topic, and that she wasn't able to connect for that reason.

At the same time, even the students who felt that the project did not help them connect

to their community were not deterred from wanting to continue to use art to potentially

connect to a larger community. They felt that it was something they would continue to try and

do, although like the majority of the students they did not yet have any particular projects in

mind. Moreover, even if this particular project did not help them make a community connection, the students were aware of what it was that prevented them from doing so.

While making a connection to a community was important to this project, an interesting topic regarding community to note was that the students did feel that art classes help them be better citizens. Socially engaging art helps make a community connection because the student is electing to be an engaged citizen in their community. The survey responses indicated that there was a belief that art helped them with being a better citizen, even before the students had completed the SEA project. The survey showed 50% of students strongly agreed that art could help them with being a better citizen, 33.3% agreed, 10% were neutral, and 6.6% disagreed with the statement. Yet, all twenty-one students who were interviewed after the project agreed that art could help them become better citizens. These students listed different things that they thought art helped them with, as well as skills that art taught them that could be transferred into being a good citizen. For example, Edward said,

> I think through art you kinda see things that are wrong with the
> community, and I think through realizing that you can become a better
> citizen. I mean like, it kind of just allows you to see things in a better
> perspective and it allows you to take thing- at least for photography, it
> allows you to take things in and kind of do things on a different level.

Edward's thoughts were echoed by other students about art allowing them to see things from another perspective or allowing someone to see the artist's perspective. One of the students to bring up using art to have others understand her was Evelyn, who is a freshman in

DP1. She responded to the question about art and citizenship by saying, "I feel like yes. Cuz, um sometimes it's just easier to like express yourself with art and to get other people to understand what you're feeling." When asked what art taught her that helped with being a better citizen, Evelyn said, "That everybody has a different point of view. And that um, you need to have the feedback to make it better. Because if we wouldn't have the feedback then everybody would just be the same and like not improve anything." Evelyn and the rest of the DP1 class consistently have a critique at the end of all the projects, and other students who were in DP1 mentioned that the critique helped them to grow as individuals and artists. Critique is also where the DP1 students get to hear what the artist thinks about their own piece and see the art from that perspective, so these students are very practiced in taking a walk in another's shoes.

However, a different angle on how art can help with becoming a better citizen had to do with the public display aspect of the project. Vera in Photography 2 mentioned how the project was empowering and helped her connect to many communities, but she also eloquently talked about the

Photo 6: A Photo Student's Work Displayed at Restaurant

power art can have in making other people in the community be a better citizen. While at one

point she did say, "I enjoyed the project and I thought it was beneficial to me and my progress

in becoming a citizen" she focused mainly on the need for public art that shows topics that the

public needs to see (See Photo 6). Regarding that, Vera said,

> Art usually when it's in public display, it's something that's pretty or it's
>
> hopeful, it's something that you want to see, but art especially in this
>
> project shows people what they need to see rather than things they
>
> want to look at. Nothing is really pretty about all the issues that we're
>
> tackling here, but being aware of these helps people understand the
>
> difficulties of other people or problems that are affecting their home,
>
> their community, and it motivates people to make changes it they don't
>
> want to see it anymore. It really helps them understand the full
>
> magnitude of these problems.

Vera's outlook hit on exactly what the SEA project was supposed to do regarding letting

the students voice their views on any topic that they felt passionate about. In AP Photography,

Christy voiced another skill that art taught her and that this project allowed her to practice. She

said, "Umm I think it teaches you to engage in things that you're passionate about, and in doing

so it helps you have this urge to go out and make a difference in a way." This passion and

engagement to go help others was reflected in other student interviews as well. Some of the

freshmen in DP1 had insightful thoughts on how art was helping them become a better citizen,

including Hannah. Her thoughts on art had to do with how it can help people, and how it can help express yourself. She said,

> I think it can in the sense that you can really- you can really help people with art, like some people don't- I don't know, I think art is a way of expressing yourself and sometimes seeing things through other people's eyes and for people that don't make art it can be harder to express yourself because you don't have another- a second way of showing it other than using your words. And some people aren't even good at that. Like that- creative writing is an art form. So, I think you can help people who don't have a good way of expressing a feeling or an emotion. They can see it. And I think you can pull people together politically, so I think it can make you a better citizen. But it's not like doing art will like, I don't know, it's- It won't get you a reward, but it can band people together I think, and help some people a lot.

All these students felt that they could become better citizens through art. They saw how art could help them with that, and what skills they practiced in art that helped with becoming a better citizen. The SEA project that each class completed allowed each student an opportunity to engage with their community and practice being a democratic citizen by voicing their opinions on a topic they cared about. The students picked their own topics and how they would present them, as well as how they would engage in a community. The project allowed the students to reflect on their topic as well as their peers' topics, and have the chance to see how

others in a community engaged with their project. This community connection through art is a first step for these students on their path to becoming democratic citizens.

Project Structure, Class Environment, and the Teacher

The structure of the project, class, and the teacher impacted student interest and engagement with the project. Both Mr. Clarke and Ms. Will were excited about the project and what the students would create in their respective classes. Each class had a different work environment though, and each teacher showed their enthusiasm in different ways. The projects were also structured differently between Photography and Drawing and Painting. While the Activism Poster in DP1 was a project that Ms. Will had already planned for the curriculum, the SEA project in Photography was new for both the teacher and students. The students and Mr. Clarke both appreciated having a different project from the norm, and Mr. Clarke liked that it was "new, fresh, and pertinent."

Mr. Clarke used the lesson matrix I created, and together we worked through the project and presented it to the students. This was a completely new project for Photography, and one unlike what Mr. Clarke had done before. We both were not sure how to present it, and so it evolved as we taught. The project for the Photography students was very open and loose as to what the students could do for their topic, how to take the photos, and how to present the photos. Students for the first few days in Photography 1 were hesitant to ask questions, and there was a good amount of confusion in Photography 2, 3, and AP as to what they were doing the first couple of days. Mr. Clarke's enthusiasm, however, definitely helped many students start to get excited about the project. Students were also allowed to work alone, in partners, or small groups for the project, but each student was still responsible for their own photos.

Overall, the class structure was loose; Mr. Clarke would talk to the students for a few minutes, and then the students begin talking loudly and many would begin to stray off-task. In fact, during the second week of the project, the students were largely off-task when Mr. Clarke had a family emergency and there was a substitute for an entire week.

One of the noticeable differences between Photography and DP1, even before Mr. Clarke had to leave for the week, was the on task versus off task work ethic. Every time I observed DP1 during third period, the students were on task as they created their Activism Posters. If a student needed a break, or finished early, they would switch to a previous project that was not finished, or a personal drawing project. However, during both Photography 1 and Photography 2/3/AP most students were observed to be off task at some point during the project. Photography 1 typically had about thirteen students off-task, or half of the class. Sometimes there would even be up to eighteen students who were watching videos online, taking online quizzes, or playing video games. In third period, the same numbers of approximately one half to more than half of the students were typically off-task during Photography 2/3/AP. Some students in either period would work part of the time, and then be off task the rest of the period. Others went back and forth during the whole period. In the end, students did have work to turn in, but the way the Photography classroom ran was so different from the Drawing and Painting classroom. This led to many Photography students completing their projects in hurry, which resulted in their understanding of SEA being less than their peers who worked hard and were excited by the project.

When I brought up that the fact that the Photo students were often off task, Mr. Clarke shrugged and chuckled. He had mentioned early into the project that only 5% of his students

have all their photos done well before the due date and that the majority only finish right

before. Time in the Photography classroom seemed to be a paradox for the students.

Frequently Photography students told me that they wished they had more time for the SEA

project. Yet at the same time, they were often off-task. Regarding time for the project, Mr.

Clarke said,

> Yeah, it's so hard to tell though, because with the game playing you
>
> know it's like 'really? You know, why aren't you spending time on this?',
>
> you know, why are you playing games? So I think their thought is that
>
> most of it is done outside of the classroom. You know, the source
>
> photos of course, and um the editing is done in class, but kids have
>
> Photoshop at their beck-and-call too now, so they can work at home.

Mr. Clarke would rather that they work in class on editing their photos, however, at the

end of the day, if the students finished their work, he had no problem with the off-task

behavior. Time was also necessary for students to develop questions and to get the source

photos they needed. A lot of the students needed to go off-campus to take their photos, and so

they were, in fact, restricted to completing their photo shoots after-school and the during the

weekend. Due to this requirement of the photography class students were accustomed to using

the period as a free time to surf the web or do other class homework. Mr. Clarke admitted, "So

the video game playing is a side-effect I think, you know, of not being able to shoot or

whatever." He liked having the mini assignment for the SEA project, however, since these kept

the students thinking about how to put their art out in the community, what options were

available, and what template they should use for letter writing. While these small assignments helped with engagement, the students finished those assignment quickly, so they only kept students engaged with the class for so long each day.

On the other side of the hallway, the Drawing and Painting 1 (DP1) class taught by Ms. Will ran efficiently and smoothly in terms of students being on task. While the overall classroom structure in Drawing and Painting is also loose, there is a structure and expectation to how students will behave. I suspect the lack of computers also helps. Students can listen to their music while they work and chat with their peers, but they are expected to be working on their project while doing so. This project was also not new to Ms. Will. This was her third year teaching the Activism Poster project, and the only thing different this year was adding in the social engagement part by asking students to put their artwork out into the public in some form. While the students in DP1 were limited to the format of a poster, they were free to choose their topic and how they would create the poster. When introducing the project, Ms. Will showed various examples of activism posters including Rosie the Riveter, Uncle Sam, and Shepard Fairey's "Make Art, Not War" poster. She was careful to try and not show her political views, and despite it looking like the students were actively listening to her introduction, there were some students who were not interested at first in the project. I was not there for the comment, but when I came into the class, Ms. Will mentioned that a student commented about how they had to listen to her political views again for another period at the beginning of class. She had a discussion with the whole class about how that was not what the project was and was not her intention. The issue was resolved before I got to the class, and the rest of the project ran smoothly.

Another difference between Photography and Drawing and Painting was that Mr. Clarke was always reminding the Photography students that they had to make their work public in some way. Ms. Will did not remind the DP1 students as much, and so at the end of the project many had not considered how to do so, where to display or send their work, or even researched organizations related to their topics. Towards the end of the project, Ms. Will began prompting the students more frequently to consider how they would engage their art with a larger community and gave the students various options for doing so, including the Youth Poster Contest being ran in the county, writing to an organization, newspaper, or a senator or governor, and displaying their work on campus or somewhere in town. Yet by the time the students were ready for their class critique, only a few had ideas of what they would do, and only Melissa had reached out to different organizations about having her poster about empowering young girls displayed with the organization. Maria had decided to enter in the Youth Poster Contest, and many of the students mentioned considering the contest during their critique. Students went on Mid-Winter break after the project, and Ms. Will said that she would be pushing them to put their posters out more when they returned because she felt it was important for them to have that experience.

Both Mr. Clarke and Ms. Will liked their respective projects and what they did for the students, and they will both be using the projects again. Ms. Will commented that she liked the social engagement addition and would be keeping that with the Activism Poster project for next year. When discussing if Ms. Will would continue to teach SEA projects, she said, "I think [asking the students to display their artwork] makes it more relevant and more powerful and so I want

to keep that part of it next year." Mr. Clarke loved the assignment, but was debating about whether he wanted to teach it immediately next year, or wait to cycle it back in.

Mr. Clarke liked that the SEA project taught real life skills and professionalism for his students. He felt that it was beneficial for getting the students to think outside the box, getting them a little out of their comfort zone, and allowing them to practice real life skills. The fact that the students had to complete their own research on where to display and how, as well as student choice in their topic, was another aspect that he enjoyed. Mr. Clarke also felt that the project was good for him as well in mixing up the projects and thinking about schedules and other assignments for students to do with their projects. He also thought that the project hit on all the six "C's" that Gold Oak High teaches: collaboration, communication, critical thinking, conscientious learner, cultural competence, and character. Mr. Clarke added,

> Professionalism too, you know because they were reaching out to these
>
> organizations. Um, working together with other, collaboration you
>
> know. Poise. Maturity, you know, quite a few adjectives. Um, cultural
>
> competence, you know again, a six "C" but kind of- those are drilled into
>
> us. Um creativity, it's not a six "C", but uh it should be. Um, character,
>
> you know all that stuff.

He felt that the project allowed them real world practice with having to write letters to people, figure out what they needed to do to display (e.g. printing their photos) and work on creating art with a voice. The skills that Mr. Clarke listed as the benefits of the project were also skills that he thought helped students become good citizens.

During her interview, Ms. Will explained that students like the chance to explore

something they care about and use art to express deeper emotions. She liked the project since

it let the students practice empathy and gave them a chance to do something that they really

care about and voice their beliefs. She believed students will be inherently more invested in

their work if they get to do something they care about. Art classes are a good setting to practice

empathy, which is a skill that Ms. Will sees as fundamental for anyone to become a good

citizen. She said,

> Empathy I think it, you know everything sort of falls under that
>
> envelope, but you- like critique, being able to critique and to receive
>
> critique is- is in anything, not just art, in anything is essential to growth
>
> and evolution, and- and if we are unwilling to see our flaws or see our
>
> mistakes then we cannot grow and I think that- that is an enormously
>
> difficult skill to learn. But the fact that we do it in art every day, um it
>
> really gets them comfortable, it gets students comfortable with
>
> practicing that and I think- So I think that falls under that umbrella.

Ms. Will also felt that self-expression was important for students to figure out other

ways of communication and help them educate themselves in their own ideas. Resiliency in art

was another skill that Ms. Will thought was important for students to learn. She said,

> I give students an idea for a project right, and I say you know like 'this is
>
> just the seed, take it wherever you want to go', it requires them to
>
> practice being resilient and I think that that's a skill a lot of kids are not

taught these days. And so I think that being- being creatively resilient is

also something that art teaches kids too. 'I really want it to look like

this, but I can't figure it out, how do I figure it out?' And we work

through it and we try and figure it out and if it fails then that's okay, we

know that we can do this, this, and this to re-work it, right. Or get there

another way or whatever, and I think that that problem solving is not

something that kids are encouraged to do enough and- and in art it- you

have to, it's required in order to like make a piece that you can be proud

of.

While both teachers felt that the project was immensely valuable to the students, they

were somewhat skeptical about the power of the project to transform the students'

perspectives on the power of art. Mr. Clarke said,

It's difficult to say whether or not students will continue to use art to

express themselves socially. I would hope so, but I kind of doubt it.

Often times it seems, 'out of sight, out of mind.' However, I think the

more we depart the usual assignments in favor for these out-of-the-box

moments, the better in terms of the students coming back to these one-

off assignments.

Ms. Will's sentiment was similar in that she felt for some students it would stick and be

a critical moment for art, and for other students that they would forget the project. She was

glad that it at least made the students aware of the potential, "but whether that means they're

going to be like activists, then I don't think that is necessarily going to be a thing you know."

This comment was made in response to my question on if she thought the project was a critical

moment for students regarding art and social engagement. The project was more valuable to

her in that it let the students create a piece of artwork that they truly believe in and let them

practice using their voice through art.

Conclusion

In both classes with either version of the SEA projects, the students appreciated the

chance to create something that they were passionate about. Students from both classes

brought up a range of issues that they felt passionate about from gun control (See Photo 7),

animal abuse, animals in shelters, pollution, rape and consent (See Photo 8), sex trafficking,

saving the bees, plastic in the ocean,

preserving a historic landmark in the town,

preserving national parks, homelessness,

closing the political divide, addiction to

technology, suicide awareness, and

inequality in general. They thought about

the best ways to represent the topics that

they picked and worked to create moving

artworks to talk about the issue. When

given the chance to work on topics that

they care about students can create

amazing work and are more likely to be

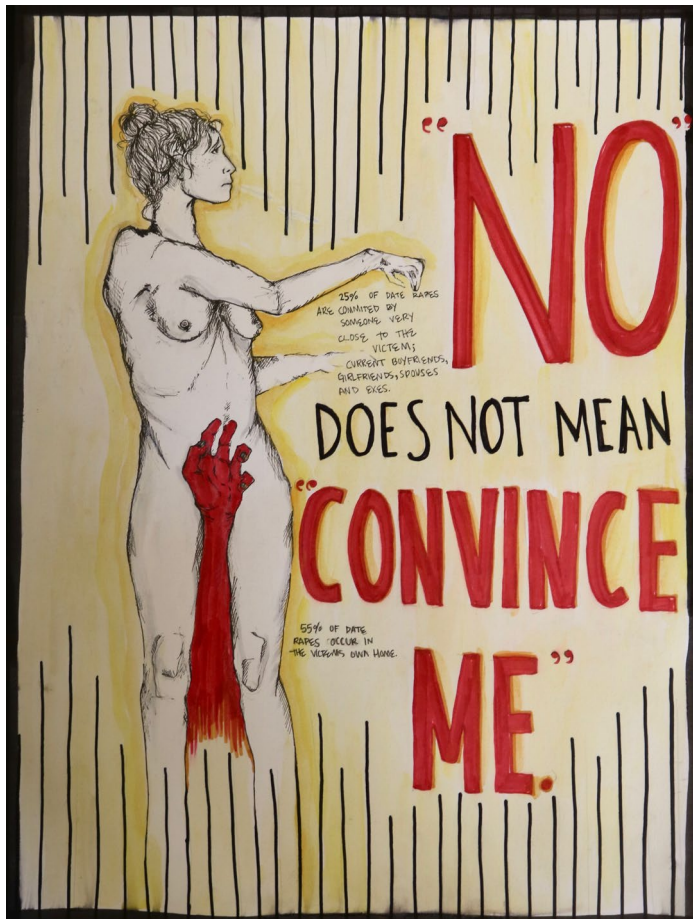*Photo 7: Maria's Activism Poster. Pencil, Colored Pencil, and Marker*

engaged with it. Overall the students liked creating art that they felt had a purpose and could give them a voice to express their views. Many students accepted the opportunity to engage with their community through a socially engaging art project, they liked the change of pace in their art class, and the skills that they had to practice to complete the assignment.

Photo 8: A DP1 Student's Activism Poster. Marker and Pen.

The skills that the students had to practice lined up with the skills that Mr. Clarke and Ms. Will brought up

regarding what they thought art taught students. An interesting thing to note was that students from DP1 talked about critique helping them be better at identifying their feelings and emotions, as well as getting to see other's perspectives and understand them. Meanwhile the Photography students brought up the six "C's", patience, and learning to be open-minded instead of emotions. Mr. Clarke felt that his students brought up those things simply because he taught to the six "C's" and that they were a go-to for him. Ms. Will brought up that drawers and painters were a different kind of creator than photographers. Either way, the students seemed to reflect their teacher's belief of art and how it was beneficial for them. The teachers both had other influences on the students, like their work ethics and preparedness for

displaying their work. In general, older students took the opportunity to display their artwork publicly or write to a company or senator. Younger students took the easy and "safe" route of social media campaigns, although some did display publicly. It was surprising that some of students in the SAS program did not see art as teaching them skills beyond artistic skills. Ms. Will suggested that it might be too close to them right now as freshmen and sophomores; that the students need more time in the program to see that, and I would agree seeing as the seniors in AP Photo could list skills easily.

Overall, the project was a success in showing students another purpose to art, giving the chance to do a project they may have already wanted to do, and to practice being a democratic citizen. These findings show how SEA affected these high school students' engagement with their community. The students took the opportunity to be socially engaged because they had the choice in their topic, how they would present their topic artistically, and how they would display their artwork. The student perception of SEA was also positive, and the students who were interviewed reflected on the skills that they learned during the project. They also talked about wanting to continue to use art as a tool to communicate their thoughts and beliefs on topics that are important to them, as well as engage with their community through art. The SEA project opened up a new avenue for art for these high schoolers, and while it does not mean that they will necessarily become activists, the students have had this small taste of being involved in their community.

Chapter Five: Discussion

All twenty-one students who were interviewed after completing the SEA project felt

that they were able to practice being a democratic citizen through the project. The SEA project

made students aware of another use for art and the power of art as a voice. This SEA project

was constructed so that students could create art that allowed them to express their views on

topics that they find concerning (Cruz, Ellerbrock, & Smith, 2015). SEA projects allow students

to also have a chance to create things to help others, like the Empty Bowls project in

Siegesmund's article (2013). SEA projects are successful in helping students to practice

autonomous thinking and engagement in their communities due to how SEA enlightens art.

Hyungsook (2014) said, " Art considered as a form of social dialogues and as a forum for

participatory practice, has provided an interpretation of citizenship that is democratic and

community centered" (page 58). SEA projects allow for student practice in participating in their

communities and engaging with topics they feel strongly about. Both the teachers and students

found the project to be beneficial in allowing the students to practice skills like empathy that

allow students to become participatory citizens in their communities.

Many students felt that art teaches them skills that help with being a better citizen, as

did the teachers, though the teachers had a more eloquent and full view of these skills. Ms.

Will, the drawing and painting teacher, firmly believed in empathy being a main condition for

becoming a good citizen, and that her students were good at practicing empathy. Siegesmund

(2013) brought up empathy in his own article on art education, claiming that, "An aesthetics of

empathy is a necessary condition to the possibility of creating new, more open and just social

relationships" (page 304). His views on art education and its original intent to help create

democratic citizens may not have been echoed by the students and teachers, however the students did feel that art could help them with citizenship and being active in the community.

Further, students agreed after the project that art can give them a sense of purpose and it has a purpose beyond a creative outlet (Hyungsook, 2014; Malin, 2015; Prettyman & Gargarella, 2013). Prettyman and Gargarella (2013) mentioned in their article that, "Many teens today feel as though they have limited opportunities to prove to society that they can make positive and meaningful contributions to their communities" (page 2). Some of the students that interviewed with me reflected on this point about feeling like adults do not listen to their ideas because they are still kids. The students who participated in the SEA project thought that their thoughts and ideas would be heard by adults through their artwork, and that helped the students see the power of art's voice.

Implications for the Literature

For some students, this project was a critical moment in thinking about what art can be used for. The SEA project that these students completed was also different from the other SEA projects in the literature. The projects that were done by each class were more open-ended and had more student choice than the projects studied in prior research. The projects from the literature were focused on teaching the students to practice empathy for their community by completing a specific task, like the Empty Bowls project that Siegesmund (2013) wrote about where students created a ceramic bowl that would be part of fundraiser for food banks. The open-ended SEA project where the students had the choice of a topic that was important to them allowed these students to practice their democratic voice. Open-ended SEA projects are not a task to be simply full-filled, but a time to practice voicing what the students believe in.

The democratic agency in the lesson is taken away when a project is prescribed and mandatory in what the students create.

While the open-ended SEA project allowed students to see the power of art, my study also illustrated the reasons why the students valued SEA projects. The previous literature shows that SEA projects can be beneficial for the students and the community, but there was little student voice showing their thoughts on the project. I found that students did find it helpful, and they liked the choice they had in their topic, how they would present the topic, and how they would make their community connection. They appreciated the challenge and the sense of empowerment they gained from the project, and the chance to have a conversation with their community.

Open-ended SEA projects allow students to fully practice being a democratic citizen. The students had to research their topics, find organizations or companies related to their topics, ask to display their project somewhere public, or write to a government official or the newspaper. This particular SEA project allowed for professional development, and overall the students liked the chance for communication growth with the community. At the same time, the findings demonstrate that teacher support and scaffolding are critical for keeping the students on task and ready to do any of the forms of display in the community.

Implications for Practice and Policy

While the project was massively successful, I would recommend only doing a SEA project like this one once a semester or once a year. The amount of planning done by the teachers, and the amount of research that the students must do is a lot. However, the students found the project to be beneficial, and the teachers liked the real-world aspect to it. There are

many ways to do a SEA project, but the most important thing that helps students connect with

a community is their choice on how to engage with the community. Forcing students to donate

their artwork or forcing them to write a letter does not let the students practice being

democratic citizens. Allowing them to at least choose how they want to participate in the

community, and the student choice in topic, is what made this project successful in allowing

students to explore this side of art.

However, considering that many high schoolers will only take one art class during their

four years as an elective course also means that they would not continue to develop their skills

in art or participate in another SEA project. Something to consider for schools where students

are more likely to take multiple art classes while in high school is scaffolding the project for

different developmental levels. The Photography 1 students who participated in the study were

held to the same expectations as the AP Photography students, and having a different

expectation for the Photography 1 students could have helped them with stepping out of their

comfort zone. For schools that do not have a program like SAS there may need to be more

scaffolding showing different ways to be socially engaged, teaching lessons on socially engaged

artists, and perhaps even starting an art club that focuses on SEA projects and allows students

who are not in an art class the opportunity to do a SEA project.

Schools should allow art classes to do SEA projects, and give a space for students to

display their work where other students will see it. Some students will elect to display their

work at the school because that is a community that they are comfortable with or a community

they think will be impacted by their work. This allows students to interact with a community

that they feel comfortable with, and can then work up to moving out of their comfort zone and

displaying their artwork publicly outside of school. This also is a way for younger students to practice being a democratic citizen without the pressure of creating something that they feel is worthy of being in the public.

Not only should schools help create the space for SEA projects, but SEA projects should become a part of the California Art Standards for Nine through Twelfth grade. Projects like this one have real-world applications, like writing a letter to a company or governor or organization, as well as planning how to display their artwork, and writing about their artwork. It allows students to practice using their voice in a visual way. The current California Art Standards for Nine through Twelfth grade does not have a standard centered around students making real connections to a community through their artwork. There is a standard in the "Advanced" standards that students create a work that expresses their opinions on a matter, and that they create a display with their art, but there is no standard similar in the "Proficient" standards. There is also no standard around creating art that has the potential purpose to help others or society, which would what the SEA project would mainly fall under. There should be a standard focusing on art's original purpose to help create an empathetic citizen who can use creative-critical thinking skills to help others.

SEA projects allow students to practice using their voice in a visual way in order to enlighten others on an issue, illustrate a possible solution, or talk about things that people do not want to see such as mental illness, abuse, and social justice issues. With a project like this SEA project that is open-ended, students have the choice of what they would like to create for a topic that they care about, and they then share it with a community so that others can see their views. These projects can be focused on a particular subject, but the democratic values of the

lesson will come from the students having a choice in how they complete an art project on that subject. When considering a project that focuses on a specific subject, be sure to still allow for multiple options to complete the project. This way, students still have choice in what they create and choose a cause that speaks to them. This will also ensure that the students still get to practice empathy for another group, and learn how their artwork can benefit others without the project becoming a utilitarian task to fulfilled.

Limitations of the Study and Directions for Future Research

There were limitations to my project that affected the data and findings. One of these limitations was the short amount of time I had for data collection. If I had another semester to collect data, I would have involved another school that does not have an art program like SAS. A school that does have a program like SAS in the study would have allowed for the perspective of students who do not have a bias towards art. Since SAS is program that the students apply to get in, they all have some belief of art being important to them. These students are also mostly middle-class and white, and the school site shows a positive bias towards the arts by having the SAS program. Having another school in the study would have allowed for more diversity as well in the students' background and other demographics. It may have showed more change in the students' beliefs about art after completing the SEA project. The views of other art students who are not in a program like SAS would show what the majority of students in high schools would experience from completing a SEA project. Future research centered around a low-income school where students may not have as many artistic resources, and the effect a SEA project would have on those students is needed.

A second limitation pertains to the amount of student interviews and lack of student view of those who may have disliked the project. I would have also pressed for more student interviews to get a more rounded view of the project. This would also include encouraging students who may have not liked the project to voice those views during an interview, and explain what they did not like about it. The negative student view would help improve future projects, and help teachers understand if there was another way to engage those students.

Yet a third limitation was due to the limited amount of time for data collection and the inability to check back in with these students to see if the project has had an impact on using art as a voice for them. This would have showed the extent to which the SEA project was a critical moment for these students in considering different purposes for art. Future long-term research is needed to focus on the long-term effects of participating in a SEA project, as well as research that examines multiple classes that have experience more than a single SEA project in order to determine the impact on the students over the years.

I would have also liked to get more mediums of art involved, such as a ceramics class or even a performing arts class. Researching multiple mediums could explore the versatility of the SEA project to adapt to different types of art, and consider if any medium of art can be socially engaged. Involving other mediums of art would have also gained the perspective of those art students and teachers. Considering that there was a difference between the drawing and painting students and the photo students in what they took away from the SEA project, there is the potential for research to examine if different mediums of art teach different skills. There also needs to be research on different mediums of art than photo and drawing and painting.

An addition to the study that would have brought in another view was that I did not visit the places where the students publicly displayed at and talk to people viewing the artwork. Had I had the time to go to these places, the study would have gained the community's view on high school students creating artwork that fulfilled a SEA project. This would have showed how the community perceived the idea of high school students voicing their views on potentially controversial subjects. Future research on the community's view of high schoolers using art to talk about these topics is needed to complete the dialogue of a SEA project between high school students and their communities.

Lastly there was the limitation that I am an artist and an art teacher. I believe that art is beneficial for everyone, and that it can create a community that is helpful for the students in expressing their thoughts and opinions. I think that art can really help students with connecting with others and a community. I also believe that art can bind communities together. These biases may have affected my findings by influencing how I read the data I collected and how I drew conclusions on that data. While I made sure to keep my biases in mind while collecting and analyzing data, they still may have an influential aspect in how I perceived my data.

There is other potential future research to add to the literature of socially engaging art projects. One of these possibilities would be to investigate the difference between an open-ended project like this one, and one that has a goal like the Empty Bowls, in order to determine the impact of each style on students. This would allow the research to explore if students still learn the democratic lesson from the project if the project is more specific, and if there is an ideal way to teach SEA projects to increase the benefits of it. Another interesting view point to investigate concerning SEA projects would be to focus on the administration of a school and

investigate how they feel about students displaying work that may be controversial on campus or in community. Finally, future research could be on a school-wide SEA project, either open-ended or focused on a topic or medium, that is open to any student and having the school have a gallery night for those students. There is still much to explore with SEA projects and how they can help students practice being democratic citizens.

What this research project explored was how high school students were impacted when completing a SEA project, and their perceptions of the project. The student view of what SEA projects and art teaches them was examined as well, and found to mirror what previous academic literature suggested. Which was that art teaches skills like empathy, critical-creative thinking, communication, analysis and critique, observation, and open-mindedness. This project was different from those in the literature, as it was completely open for student choice. The open-ended project allowed for students to fully practice being an engaged citizen because the students were able to choose their topics and how they engaged with their community. The SEA project empowered multiple students and inspired them to create art that vocalized their thoughts and opinions. The students found the project to be beneficial for them, they enjoyed connecting with and giving back to a community, and the power of their artwork's voice. This project was a stepping stone for these students' development in becoming engaged citizens, and has the potential to empower many more students. Art has transformative power, and SEA projects can help art return to its roots of building an empathetic and autonomous society.

References

Arov, H., & Anna-Liisa Jogi. (2017). Supporting learning skills in visual art classes: The benefits of

teacher awareness. *Revija Za Elementarno Izobraževanje, Vol 10, Issue 2-3, Pp 145-162

(2017),* (2-3), 145. doi:10.18690/1855-4431.10.2-3.145-162(2017)

Art making change. (2017). Retrieved from http://artmakingchange.org

Clarke, T., & Basilio, M. (2018). Do arts subjects matter for secondary school students'

wellbeing? the role of creative engagement and playfulness. *Thinking Skills and

Creativity, 29*, 97-114. doi:10.1016/j.tsc.2018.06.005

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research designs: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed

methods approaches* (5th ed.) SAGE Publications.

Cruz, B. C., Ellerbrock, C. R., & Smith, N. M. (2015). "I have never witnessed students so

engaged": The art of democracy in schools. *Art Education, 68*(6), 9-15.

d'Agnese, V. (2016). Art and education in Dewey: Accomplishing unity, bringing newness to the

fore. *Education and Culture, 32*(2), 80-98.

Dewey, John. Art as Experience. New York: Perigee, 1980 [1934].

Efland, A. (1990). *A history of art education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Gielen, P. (2017). Artistic constitutions of the civil domain: On art, education and

democracy. *International Journal of Art & Design Education, 36*(2), 134-140.

doi:10.1111/jade.12146

Hannigan, S. (2018). A theoretical and practice-informed reflection on the value of failure in

art. *Thinking Skills and Creativity,* doi:10.1016/j.tsc.2018.02.012

Hardiman, M. M. (2016). Education and the arts: Educating every child in the spirit of inquiry

and joy. *Online Submission,* Retrieved

from https://dominican.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx

?direct=true&db=eric&AN=ED576188&site=eds-live

Hetland, L., Winner, E., Veenema, S., & Sheridan, K. M. (2013). Making the case for the

arts. *Studio thinking 2: The real benefits of visual arts education* (pp. 1-8) Teachers

College Press.

Hyungsook, K. (2014). Socially engaged art practice and character education: Understanding

others through visual art*, International Journal of Education through Art*, 10(1), 55-69.

doi:10.1386/eta.10.1.55_1

Ingalls Vanada, D. (2016). An equitable balance: Designing quality thinking systems in art

education. *International Journal of Education & the Arts, 17*(8-11), 1-21.

Kinloch, V., & San Pedro, T. (2013). The space between listening and storying: Foundations for

projects in humanization. In D. Paris, & M. T. Winn (Eds.), *Humanizing research:

Decolonizing qualitative inquiry with youth and communities* (pp. 21-41) Sage

Publications.

Lentis, M. (2017). Colonized through art: American Indian schools and art education, 1889-

1915. (pp. 1-29). Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press.

Leroux, K., & Bernadska, A. (2014). Impact of the arts on individual contributions to US civil

society. *Journal of Civil Society, 10*(2), 144-164. doi:10.1080/17448689.2014.912479

Malin, H. (2015). Arts participation as a context for youth purpose. *Studies in Art Education: A*

Journal of Issues and Research in Art Education, 56(3), 268-280.

Moxley, D. P., & Feen, H. (2017). Organizing for arts-based social action in the helping

professions. *Journal of Cultural Research in Art Education, 34*, 116.

National Assessment of Educational Progress. (2016) Retrieved from

https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/arts_2016/

O'Donoghue, D., & Berard, M. (2014). Six qualities of socially engaged design: Emerging

possibilities for K-12 art education programs. *Art Education, 67*(6), 6-10.

Prettyman, S. S., & Gargarella, E. (2013). The power of art to develop artists and

activists. *International Journal of Education & the Arts, 14*, 1-15

Schlemmer, R. H., Carpenter, B. S., & Hitchcock, E. (2017). Socially engaged art education:

Practices, processes, and possibilities. *Art Education, 70*(4), 56-59.

Seidman, I. (2013). *Interviewing as qualitative research* (4th ed.) Teachers College Press.

Siegesmund, R. (2013). Art education and a democratic citizenry. *International Journal of Art &*

Design Education, 32(3), 300-308. doi:10.1111/j.1476-8070.2013.12023.x

Williams, J. (2016). Art education with attitude. *Journal of Social Science Education, 15*(4), 7-13.

doi:10.2390/jsse-v15-i4-1491

Appendix A

Student Beliefs of Art Survey

The purpose of this survey is to investigate art classes and student belief of what art does for them. Please take your time to reflect and answer truthfully. Please *DO NOT* put your name on this survey to ensure confidentiality.

1. Grade:
    a. 9th
    b. 10th
    c. 11th
    d. 12th

2. How many art classes have you taken in high school?
    a. 0-1
    b. 2-3
    c. 4-5
    d. 5-6
    e. 7 or more

3. Are you enrolled in [SAS]? If Yes, please state which program(s).
    a. Yes: _____
    b. No

Please answer the following according to the scale.

5 = Strongly Agree

4 = Agree

3 = Undecided / Neutral

2 = Disagree

1 = Strongly Disagree

4. I feel that art is a creative outlet class.   1 2 3 4 5
5. Art classes teach me more than just artistic processes.   1 2 3 4 5

6. Art teaches me and/or lets me practice:

    a. Critical Thinking Skills   1 2 3 4 5

    b. Self- Reflection   1 2 3 4 5

    c. Self-Expression   1 2 3 4 5

    d. Expression of Social Issues   1 2 3 4 5

    e. Social Tolerance of Others   1 2 3 4 5

    f. Empathy   1 2 3 4 5

7. Art allows me to explore social issues that are important to me.   1 2 3 4 5

8. There are creative ways to help with social issues.   1 2 3 4 5

9. I believe art can help with making social changes.   1 2 3 4 5

10. I am given chances to engage in my community through art.   1 2 3 4 5

11. Art helps me connect to and understand others.   1 2 3 4 5

12. I can see art classes helping me be a better citizen.   1 2 3 4 5

13. Art is empowering for me.   1 2 3 4 5

Appendix B

Name:

Class:

Medium (circle one): Drawing/Painting, Photo, Digital Media, Multimedia

		Change Base:	Issue Base:	Place Base:	Who Base:
Category		Tangible change in social, political, or economic conditions. Ex.) Legislative art and cultural organizing	Raising awareness about an issue/changing the way it is understood. Ex.) Pop justice	Affect conditions of a particular geography. Civic goals (health, safety, economic growth) Ex.) Creative place-making and civic practice	Reflect on cultural expressions and identities of people excluded from the mainstream. Ex.) Community based art, participatory art, and work generated in specific cultural traditions
Subject	Local	Environment: Environmental issues local to the community. Some broader issues having to do with CA are drought, wildfire, air quality, and loss of native fish.	Minority Rights: Minority rights are the normal individual rights as applied to members of racial, ethnic, class, religious, linguistic or gender and sexual minorities; and also the collective rights accorded to minority groups. Women's rights and LGBTQ rights are examples.	Animals: Animal rights that are local can do with animal shelters, farm animals, and local wildlife. Quality of living and over breeding are also examples of local animal rights.	Social Justice Issues: Social justice issues can be defined by two categories, although they are often co-dependent: Inter-Social Treatment and Unequal Government Regulation. Inter-Social Treatment involves treatment of a group(s) of other people based on personally-held biases and prejudices. Unequal Government Regulation involves laws and regulations that purposefully or otherwise create conditions that obstruct, limit, or deny a group(s) access to the same opportunities and resources, relative to the rest of society.
	Global	Global environmental issues are looking in environments not local to us. Deforestation of rainforests is an example.		Global animal rights may have to do with animals losing homes due to deforestation or being hunted for trophies. Quality of living is also an example for global animals, as well as extinction.	
Execution		Public Display: Arrange to display at a local store or place of business or in display cases at school. (researcher can help with this)	Social Media Curation: Arrange artwork on a social media platform with a short artist statement explaining the art.	Activism: Use your art during a protest that has do with your subject, write a letter to a company or a senator about the issue and include your art, or write to the newspaper and include your art.	Public/Group Partnership: Partner with a local non-profit or an organization based around the issue you wish to address with your art. Possibilities include donating the finished art to the organization or selling your artwork and donating the money. (researcher can help with this)

Choose at least one quality of socially engaged design:

1. Addresses Environmental/social issues
    - Ex) Activism posters about environmental or social issues, designs of eco-friendly homes or products.
2. Attends to contextual particularities: generation of solutions, systems, and practices that address community needs.
    - Ex) A public sculpture of a functional staircase allowed the public to access a park fenced off by a city council member.
3. Engages in participatory and sustainable labor
    - Ex) Design and build a local or school garden.
4. Blurs traditional distinctions
    - Ex) "Park(ing) Day" in SF is a day where people can take over a metered parking lot and make a tiny park inside it to show how urban space could be used. Printing an activism poster on a shirt could also be an example of blurring tradition.
5. Creates capacity to know and live: Work towards solutions of problems or imagine new ways of being in the world.
    - Ex) Explore and illustrate the many definitions/uses of an everyday item like a hook including ones that do not yet exist.

Focus: What are ideas for what you chose in the matrix and the quality of SED, and draw five thumbnails/plan what you are going to do below.

Appendix C

Interview Questions/ Students

1. What are your thoughts on the socially engaging art project? What did you learn from the project?

2. How did this project allow you to use your skills to contribute to society?

3. What does it mean to be an engaged citizen? In what ways did this project allow you to practice being a democratic citizen?

4. How has this project changed your views on art classes?

5. How did this project helped you connect to your community?

6. Would you ever use art outside of a classroom assignment to engage with your community? Why or why not?

   a. Do you have an idea for another SEA project locally or globally?

7. How does art help students become a better citizen?

   a. Can you think of specific skills that art teaches you that helps you be a better citizen?

8. Is there anything else that you would like to add about the SEA project?

Appendix D

Interview Questions/ Teachers

1. What are your thoughts on the socially engaging art project? Do you think students fully took advantage of the opportunity?

2. Do you feel like this project was beneficial for your students? Why or why not?

   a. Do you think that the students felt like they were contributing to their community with the art they created?

3. Will you consider doing this project or one like it again? Why or why not?

   a. Do you have an idea for another SEA project for one or more of your classes?

4. Can art classes help teach our youth to be better citizens?

   a. What skills do students learn from art that helps them be better citizens?

5. Is there anything else that you would like to add about the SEA project?

Appendix E

**DOMINICAN
UNIVERSITY**
of CALIFORNIA

December 17, 2018

Katherine Randall
50 Acacia Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901

Dear Katherine,

On behalf of the Dominican University of California Institutional Review Board for the
Protection of Human Participants, I am pleased to inform you that your proposal entitled
Building an Empathetic Society: The Hidden Curriculum of Art (IRBPHP application
#10724) has been approved.

In your final report or paper please indicate that your project was approved by the
IRBPHP and indicate the identification number.

I wish you well in your very interesting research effort.

Sincerely,

Randall Hall, PhD
Chair, IRBPHP

This thesis, written under the direction of the candidate's thesis advisor and approved by the Program Director, has been presented to and accepted by the Department of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education.

Katherine Randall, Candidate   May 14th, 2019

Elizabeth Truesdell, Department Chair   May 14th, 2019

Jennifer Lucko, First Reader   May 14th, 2019

Whitney Hoyt, Second Reader   May 14th, 2019

An electronic copy of the original signature page is on file with the Archbishop Alemany Library