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Exploring Social Issues and Value Systems in Contemporary Art Education

By

Charlotte Turner

Under the Direction of Melody K. Milbrandt

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to field test a unit of lessons in which students explore how a variety of social issues and value systems impact the meaning expressed in their artwork. By exposing students to different systems of belief, their historical contexts, and providing opportunities for students to discuss, research and symbolically express meaning I hope to develop critical thinking skills; promote increase the social conscience of teenagers; help students develop critical thinking skills; promote student active involvement in their community at large; encourage social activism; and help students become part of the larger global community. The study utilized pre and post written tests, student artwork, student written responses and an auto-ethnographic approach to document student outcomes. Although evidence of progress was observed there is a need for additional research about ways art education might be used to assist students in the development of a social conscience and awareness of the global community.

INDEX WORDS: social change, social activism, collaboration, innovation, social responsibility and religious/spiritual values, art education, social awareness, value systems, identity, construction of meaning

EXPLORING SOCIAL ISSUES AND VALUE SYSTEMS
IN CONTEMPORARY ART EDUCATION

By

CHARLOTTE TURNER

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Art Education

In the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2007

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2007

EXPLORING SOCIAL ISSUES AND VALUE SYSTEMS
IN CONTEMPORARY ART EDUCATION

By

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College of Arts and Sciences
Georgia State University
May 2007

DEDICATION

This body of work is dedicated to my parents Doug and Nancy Turner in appreciation for their care, encouragement and support in helping me achieve my goals in life.

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I'd like to express my sincere appreciation to the members of the thesis committee: Dr. Melody Milbrandt, Teresa Bramlette Reeves and Dr. Susan Richmond for giving of their personal time and energy to support me in the completion of my Master Thesis. Also, I'd like to thank each of the committee members separately for their individual contribution to my graduate education: Dr. Milbrandt, thank you for being the consummate professional and sharing your expertise in the field of Art Education; Teresa Bramlette Reeves, for giving me the space and trust to pursue new facets of my creative vision; Dr. Susan Richmond, for bringing fresh and progressive ideas to the study of Art History.

Also, I wish to express gratitude to the students participating in the study sharing cherished and intimate facets of self and making it possible to complete the study. And to all the students I've been fortunate to teach for your role in helping me develop as both an artist and educator. Last, but by no means least in importance, thank you to Tony for his faith, patience and support in helping me pursue my goals.

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"The meaning lies within the person, and all that he has become in the history that has molded him, and which he bears within his brain."

Gay Gaer Luce

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

It has been said that arts are the expression of one's identity, one's feelings, and one's culture. According to Lippard (1990), the practice of art making affords different people the opportunity to explore a sense of self and share their experiences with others. Artists represent various aspects of self and the underpinnings of their sense of worth, while working out a sense of self related to community and family through art (Caruso, 2005). The arts communicate ideas, feelings, histories, and cultural traditions transcending geographical boundaries, race, gender, age, and ethnicity. Through art people of different races and diverse cultures seek to share their ideas, feelings, and beliefs. Additionally through the arts society may come to address historical, spiritual political, and social issues. The arts provide the conditions for awakening humanity to the world by providing a medium of knowing, of experiencing, and of learning (Eisner, 2002). Thus, to experience the arts is to learn about oneself and the world.

Eisner (2002) argues that the arts are among the most powerful means of education. Work in the arts generates creative by-products, and give artists a sense of inner connectedness to something greater as well as a means to connect outwardly with the world (Caruso, 2005). Thus, art education can help people grow artistically and intellectually so they can fully participate as citizens of the world (Cahan and Kocur, 1996). Educators can help students

connect their everyday experiences, social critique and creative expression to art education. According to Caruso (2005), art education “can become a vital means of reflecting upon the nature of society and social existence” (pp. 5), thus, playing “a significant role in addressing social issues, cultural diversity, and identity making through visual expression” (pp. 3).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to create and field test a unit of lessons in which high school students explore how social issues and value systems impacted the meaning expressed in their artwork. Art education is an effective way to address social issues and values, to help develop a social consciousness in students, and develop students’ critical thinking skills. The study explores the complexity of influences that shape identity, value systems, race and culture. Such an approach to art education may promote social change by emphasizing activism, collaboration, innovation, social responsibility and religious/spiritual values. “Art ties to all cultures and genders, as well as prejudice and privilege. Society uses art as a way to bring people together, tear apart prior beliefs, create thinkers, represent a piece of a heritage or culture, as well as aesthetically challenge our brains” (Gabrielle, qtd. in Noel, 2003, pp.15). Hence, art education can help students identify cross-cultural similarities to promote understanding and develop appreciation of differences attributed to race, ethnicity and cultural differences (Lawton, 2005).

Methodology

I conducted a qualitative study designed to document student learning during the field-testing of a teacher-constructed unit of three art lessons. The art lessons presented focused on students' construction of meaning through reflective inquiry about their own personal and social contexts. Students were asked to address issues of identity, cultural influences and community as they created works of art. Since this study was field-tested art lessons the predicted outcomes remained somewhat open-ended, but the goal of the lessons was to facilitate students' creation of deeper levels of meaning through an exploration of their own personal and social contexts. Models of other artists who have explored similar issues in a variety of ways were presented and a variety of teaching strategies were employed.

Participants

The students who participated in the study are a mixture of ethnicities and personal values. The sample size was small, yet generally representative of the overall mix of cultural, gender and races present in the class (Figures 1 and 2). For the purpose of this study the work of seven students will be used as documentation of student work. The small group of students was comprised of one Caucasian female sophomore; two juniors, one Caucasian female and one Indian female; and four high school seniors, one Latino male, one Biracial female, one Jewish female and one Caucasian female (Figures 3, 4 and 5).

Figure 1. Class Demographics;
Gender: representing total number of students in the class

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	5	25	25
	Female	15	75	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	

Figure 2. Class Demographics;
Race: representing total number of students in the class

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Biracial	2	10	10
	Indian	1	5	15
	Jewish	2	10	25
	Latino	2	10	35
	White	11	55	90
	White/Israeli-American	2	10	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	

Figure 3. Participants:
Age

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16.00	1	14.3	14.3
	17.00	5	71.4	85.7
	19.00	1	14.3	100.0
	Total	7	100.0	

Figure 4. Participants:
Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	1	14.3	14.3
	Female	6	85.7	100.0
	Total	7	100.0	

Belinda, is a 16-year old white female junior. Emma is a 17-year old white female who transferred to our school this year as a senior. Gita is a 17-year

old junior moved to the United States with her mother three years ago. Gita's father recently moved to the United States to join Gita and her mother permanently. Ryan the sole male in the study is a senior 17 years old and was born in Colombia, South America. Ryan was adopted as a toddler from a South American orphanage into the home of white American parents. Ilana is a 17-year old junior and Israeli immigrant living in the States since age 6. Dara is a 17-year old senior born of Jewish parents in the United States. Meagan is a 19-year old senior originally from Columbia, South America and identifies her ethnicity as biracial: a combination of Paraguay Indian and Colombian. Meagan has been living in the United States with her Father, brother and sister since the age of 8 (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Participants:
Race

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Biracial	1	14.3	14.3
	Indian	1	14.3	28.6
	Jewish	1	14.3	42.9
	Latino	1	14.3	57.1
	White	2	28.6	85.7
	White/Israeli-American	1	14.3	100.0
	Total	7	100.0	

Research Questions:

- 1) Does students' investigation of personal/social values in adult artists' work and reflection on their own personal/social values and context assist them in acquiring tolerance and respect for people with a diversity of beliefs and worldviews?

- 2) Does students' investigation of personal/social values in adult artists' work and reflection of their own personal/social values positively impact student construction of meaning through their artwork and aid them in becoming critical thinkers?
- 3) From the teacher's point of view in what ways does varying teaching strategies positively impact student 1) construction of meaning in their artwork and 2) their critical thinking ability?

Data Collection

During the field testing of the lessons data will be collected and triangulated from three sources:

- 1) Teacher observations and reflective journaling (auto-ethnography)
- 2) Student artwork
- 3) Student verbal and written responses, including student self-evaluations

Timeline

The research took place over the fall semester 2006 and the 2007 spring semester of the school year.

Limitations

This study did not allow for a great breadth and depth of study due to the sample size of participating students. The collection of research data was limited to the number of students providing signed release forms to

participate in the actual study. Parental permission and student assent were integral to my ability to present a more complete perspective of findings. Consequently, I elected to include auto-ethnographic reflection in an effort to record the project more fully in the event student generated responses provided inadequate research data.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Multiculturalism and Art Education

While it has been established that art education provides a medium for learning about social issues and value systems, experts are still looking for the perfect approach. Kader (2005) notes that art educators often lack historical and contextual information needed to present lessons of meaningful multicultural value. Kader (2005) asserts art education is troubled by ineffective content and activities in its attempts to present culturally diverse content to satisfy education's requirements for diversity in the curriculum. Consequently, Hochtritt (2005) makes the point that more purposeful teacher education and professional development programs are needed to assist in providing more effective art instruction when presenting diverse cultures in the art education classroom.

Strong, Snell and Tooke (2002) support the arguments of Kader and Hochtritt by observing that modern approaches to Western art do not allow for a depth of understanding of the influences shaping art, hence, with greater diversified instruction students and teachers could benefit. Consequently, more purposeful teacher education and professional development programs are needed to assist in this process.

Generally, art education relies on two disciplines to explore and express multiculturalism: art criticism and art history. Art criticism relates to the unique emotional and intellectual perspectives of the viewer independent of external information. On the other hand, art history is interpretation based upon perceived facts and a shared knowledge of perceived fact significant to

a particular work of art. (Strong et al, 2002). There is a clear imbalance between these two models of art education that experts believe must be altered (Strong et al, 2002).

Art education, according to Eisner (1988), requires concentration on creating experiences to assist students in formulating their individual responses to the multiplicity of culture. This argument is supported by Reid (1995) who encourages analytical inquiry of the social and cultural contexts that provide significance to an artwork and are essential to teaching art appreciation. Critical integration of art education can be achieved by broadening the way students view culture. Mazrui (1990) believes that educators should view culture based on its functions “as lenses of perception, motives for human behavior, basis for identity, value systems, modes of communication, ethnicity and systems of production and consumption” (pp. 183).

In addition to broadening their perceptions of culture, art educators must expand their ideas to include a wider diversity of multicultural ideas. Wasson, Stuhr and Petrovich-Mwaniki (1990) offer six position statements to guide educators. The authors recommend:

- Studying the people, the beliefs and values of the social system that produced the works of art. This process involves the study of the intricacies of the social system and context in order to appreciate the material culture of a civilization.

- Effective mediation through a study of enculturation through a knowledgeable educator; with knowledge of worldviews and the complexities affecting culture, as well as one's individual prejudice to opposing worldviews.
 - Developing culturally relevant art instruction incorporating connections to the student and the student's immediate community.
 - Analysis of the behaviors and circumstances driving a particular group resulting in
 - An analysis of the aesthetics affecting the production of their material culture.
 - The selection of socially responsible curricula to authentically represent the range of cultural and ethnic diversity present within the classroom, the nation and the larger global community.
 - Concentrating on a democratic approach to education, inclusive of the world populace, with regard to the complex circumstances affecting one's social enculturation. Consequently, providing a means to better understand and ultimately articulate the concerns of the global community
- (Wasson et al, 1990).

In addition to adopting a multicultural orientation to teaching in general, Andrus (2001) believes art educators must exhibit the attitudes, experience and knowledge of the material culture associated with various societies in order to encourage the development of students on all levels.

In order for educators to provide a better understanding of multicultural art education, Kader (2005) suggests that they include the following information in their lessons:

- Physical location associated with the origins of the artwork
- Terms associated with the culture to present concepts
- Significance of the people associated with the creation of the art
- Historical/cultural context in which the art was created
- Visual cues and larger ideas associated with the imagery
- Influences affecting the society during the time in which the work was created

permit connections between past and the present, as well as changes that have occurred over time that affect the way we currently interpret the artwork (Kader, 2005).

Approaches to Multicultural Art Education

Sleeter and Grant (1999) and Banks (1999) illustrate various approaches to teaching multicultural education, such as recognition of diverse cultural contributions and critical pedagogy of culture, of the hegemonic practices with schools and society. Gaudelius and Spiers (2002), view the school environment as a smaller representation of society – in which children are exposed to diverse cultures, social ideas and opinions. They advocate an issues-based approach to multicultural art education in which any social issue such as culture, race, gender, class,

ethnicity, ability, religion, sexual orientation, age and community can be utilized in art education. Social, political, and cultural issues provide frameworks which educators can teach art, interpret art, and make art (Gaudelius and Speirs, 2002).

Moreover, art educators can assist students in making connections to their attitudes toward their immediate community and build an understanding of how this shapes their connection to the larger community. This understanding will impact students' awareness of their role in the future of the global community (Lawton, 2005). Billings asserts (Gaudelius and Speirs, 2002) that an issues-oriented approach, which focuses on the visual representation of an area of concern and its conclusion makes art education more meaningful as it connects art works to real-world experiences.

Another approach to multicultural art education is the "arts-based approach that challenges students to address [social issues and value systems], while enabling art aesthetic understanding of the issues" (Noel, 2003, pp. 16). It focuses on making art a meaningful process connected to a larger goal in society, leading to change within oneself, as well as society (Noel, 2003).

The arts-based approach involves students' in direct art experiences. Experiencing the arts can move [people] to imagine, to being open to possibilities, to become wide-awake to the world (Greene, 1993). Eisner (1992) argues that "acts of creation" (pp. 594) by students enable them to understand social concepts and issues. The arts-based approach allows the

movement of acts of creation "from the artist's personal experience of aesthetics to development of an ethical point of view" (Billings, 1995, pp. 22).

Furthermore, the arts-based approach utilizes the constructivism theory of learning. The elements of constructivism consist of learners who construct knowledge for themselves; each learner constructs meaning independently and collectively as he or she learns, therefore, this process of learning is absolute (Hein, 1991). Constructivism focuses on the learner's thinking about learning and not on the subject to be taught. Constructivists believe that knowledge is based on what is constructed by the learner.

Noel (2003) believes that creating art works may be a way of learning and responding to social issues; through creating a work of art our thoughts and emotions can be affected by facing significant issues in society. (Noel, 2003). Noel's review of Hicks asserts that creating artwork enables the student to "take seriously the political nature of the empowerment that education offers to students" (Noel, 2003, pp. 18).

The arts-based approach to multicultural education, therefore according to Noel (2003), will "engage students in a multicultural critical pedagogy which challenges them not only to examine their own beliefs about society, but also to create the artistic vision that will inspire others to take up the project of social transformation" (Noel, 2003, p.18).

Furthermore, Haynes (1995) states, "understanding better where we are

culturally will allow aspiring artists to create powerful and persuasive images of where we might be headed" (p. 50).

Connecting and Multicultural Education

Goldberg (2001) suggests general principles that highlight the connections between learning through the arts and the goals of multicultural education. These principles within multicultural art education goals provide: expanded expressive outlets and learning opportunities for students whose learning styles tend toward the visual, spatial, kinesthetic, and auditory; a stage for building self-esteem through allowing students to make real-world connections; a sense of empowerment as students exercise their own unique creative voice building self-esteem and confidence; and opportunities for alternative forms of assessment to accommodate the variety of learning styles (Lawton, 2005, p. 13).

Albers' article "Art Education toward the Possibility of Social Change" (1999) describes two different and important roles that art education plays in schooling: (a) to recognize that at the same time students become more literate in art, they also make visible their ideologies in their visual texts, and (b) to acknowledge how art can initiate difficult, yet crucial, critical discussions to help students rethink and, perhaps, transform their present beliefs (pp. 10). Albers asserts the importance of including the literature, history, science, and art of females, nonwhites, and gays into school curricula to encourage student connections. Additionally, Albers urges Art Educators to "engage students in lively, controversial, and

important conversations about their role in the larger society” (Albers, 1999, pp. 12).

Authentic Art Instruction

Tom Anderson and Melody K. Milbrandt promote the value of Authentic Instruction in their textbook Art for Life. Their model expresses means for art educators to create meaningful instruction using Comprehensive Art Education to provide abundant opportunities for authentic instruction. The practice of art criticism and aesthetics encourages student engagement in high order thinking as they discriminate, problem solve, and engage in reflection toward an expanded understanding of the world. (Anderson and Milbrandt, 2005).

There are five primary characteristics helpful in judging the quality of authentic instruction. These traits involve:

- a) the use of higher-level thinking,
- b) the substantial conversation about the topic,
- c) peer support for achievement,
- d) acquiring of a depth of knowledge, and
- e) value and meaning beyond the classroom

(Newman & Wehlage, 1993).

Art for Life provides suggested instructional models and clearly outlines the values of using culture, personal values and social issues as significant venues to provide relevancy in art instruction. Consequently, “authentic instruction” provides students opportunity to construct meaning

and reflect upon their unique voice in today's world (Anderson and Milbrandt, 2005).

Assisting students toward meaning in art

As art educators our task is to engage students in meaningful experiences in art rather than merely teaching them the nature of art. Engaging students is no simple task and involves structuring experiences to assist making connections to their world and foster creativity. Simpson, Carroll, Delaney (1998) suggest, "teaching for creative development necessitates designing lessons that allow learners to perceive, select and explore, through their own lenses" (p. 331). Contexts for meaning "are derived from understanding the interrelatedness of actions, ideas, beliefs, perceptions, information, symbols, and a variety of stimuli". Fowler goes on to say that the purpose of the arts is "not to convey data, but to supply insight and wisdom – in a word meaning" (Fowler, qtd. in Simpson, Carroll, Delaney, 1998, p. 333). Furthermore, Little (1991) states, organizing lessons to allow students to build on their abilities and understanding by comparing similar objects from diverse cultures, studying the effects of ethnicity and cultural ties on community, exploring differences in the range of art of other cultures and within the student's own community, as well as investigating the diversity of art within a social structure assists students in deriving their own meaning (Little, 1991).

According to Cole & Griffin (1987) educators can assist the student in facing real world issues driving society by stressing historical contexts and present experiences of society's strongest cultural forces: religion, politics,

education, sex, race, and economics. We learn from our experiences in life. In learning we bring our whole experiences with us – our heritage – fears – personality – prejudices – environment – these are all woven into the experience of learning these influences woven with current established knowledge create the experience of learning (Cole and Griffin, 1987).

In conclusion, the current dialogue between political and social agendas surrounding the topic of religion may cause Art Educators to be reticent in exploring the religious underpinnings existent in works of art; consequently, fear of backlash from administrators and parents may deprive students of the important contextual scaffolding to assist critical thinking. On the other hand, in order to encourage critical thinking it is imperative that we weave into this tapestry, strong threads of the past – religion – politics – education – sex – race and economics. In this way we can assist the students in promoting critical inquiry in the direction of culturally diverse art and artifacts. This is not for the weak hearted and requires an open mind and awareness of one's own cultural bias. Willing art educators have the opportunity to step into the role of socially transformative educator by developing thoughtful and provocative lesson planning, and incorporating innovative technology such as web quests and research methodologies to support student critical inquiry (Noel, 2003).

Exposure to religious art and artifacts may prompt a myriad of responses from students from fascination to repulsion based upon their individual ideology. And yet, this type of inquiry has the potential to afford students an opportunity for questioning and discovery of diverse perspectives

from ancient and modern, as well as, discovery of truths from within as they traverse internal landscapes of their personal ideology and response to diverse perspectives. This type of fearless inquiry into the underpinnings of society promote questioning and inquiry necessary to reflect and encourage new constructs to support the ever changing and diverse landscape of modern society.

CHAPTER THREE: REPORTING OF DATA

Introduction

The study took place in a high school setting within the suburbs of a major metropolitan city. The suburban community is predominantly college-educated, high-income professionals and business leaders. The student composition is quickly expanding into a cross section of diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds: White, not of Hispanic origin 66%; Black, not of Hispanic origin 14%; Hispanic 11%; Asian, Pacific Islander 6%; Multiracial 3%; American Indian/Alaskan Native 1%. Portables crowd the exterior of the high school building on two sides to accommodate the growing demand for classroom space.

The physical location of the study took place in a small art room separated from the schools' designated Fine Arts Department located on a parallel hallway. The art room shows visible signs of wear and tear; a stark contrast to the freshly painted halls and walls of the neighboring classrooms. Most of the available wall space within the room is occupied with a combination of furniture, materials, tools and a lone American flag in pursuit of the study of art. "Works in progress" occupy gunmetal gray shelves hugging half the perimeter of the room's wall space. The remaining floor space is cluttered with a teacher's desk, a laser jet printer and a large round table covered with bags of clay, various clay tools, drawing paper and two photocopy box lids organized with instructional material. Adjacent stand well-worn tables and chairs forming a u-shaped pattern within the remaining limits of space.

Pre and Post Tests

Each of the students participating in the study was asked to complete pre and post tests consisting of questions to measure the strength of a respondent's feeling or attitude about factors that shape personal identity using a likert-like scale of five degrees. The top 8 questions shown (table 4) had increases from pre test to post test by at least .5 of a point, on average (according to the mean scores). The greatest increase in a factor shaping personal identity was “The ways in which other people react to what I say and do”. Additionally, there was an increase in the degree of sports/athletic ability as being important.

Figure 6. Pre and Post Tests:

Descriptive Statistics

Pre-Test				Post-Test			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The things I own, my possessions	6	2.5000	1.22474	The things I own, my possessions	7	3.0000	1.00000
My personal values and moral standards	7	5.0000	.00000	My personal values and moral standards	7	4.8571	.37796
My popularity with other people	7	1.7143	.75593	My popularity with other people	7	2.7143	1.49603
Being a part of the many generations of my family	7	3.5714	1.81265	Being a part of the many generations of my family	7	3.5714	1.51186
My dreams and imagination	7	4.2857	1.25357	My dreams and imagination	7	4.1429	1.21499
The ways in which other people react to what I say and do	7	2.4286	.53452	The ways in which other people react to what I say and do	7	3.5714	.97590

My race or ethnic background	7	3.8571	1.46385	My race or ethnic background	7	3.5714	1.39728
My personal goals and hopes for the future	7	4.0000	1.00000	My personal goals and hopes for the future	7	4.2857	1.49603
My physical appearance: my height, my weight, and the shape of my body	7	3.2857	1.25357	My physical appearance: my height, my weight, and the shape of my body	7	3.2857	1.25357
My religion or spiritual beliefs	7	3.5714	1.39728	My religion or spiritual beliefs	7	3.4286	1.27242
My ability to express my emotions and feelings	7	3.7143	1.49603	My ability to express my emotions and feelings	7	3.7143	1.38013
My reputation, what others think of me	7	2.0000	1.00000	My reputation, what others think of me	7	2.0000	1.00000
Places where I live or where I grew up	7	3.1429	1.21499	Places where I live or where I grew up	7	3.1429	1.46385
My thoughts and ideas	7	3.7143	1.70434	My thoughts and ideas	7	4.4286	.78680
My attractiveness to other people	7	2.2857	1.11270	My attractiveness to other people	7	3.2857	.95119
My age, belonging to my age group or being part of my generation	7	2.7143	1.60357	My age, belonging to my age group or being part of my generation	7	2.5714	1.51186
My feelings and emotions	7	4.7143	.48795	My feelings and emotions	7	4.1429	.89974
My sex, being a male or female	7	3.5714	1.39728	My sex, being a male or female	7	3.7143	1.60357
My feeling of being a unique person, being distinct from others	7	4.2857	1.11270	My feeling of being a unique person, being distinct from others	7	4.1429	1.46385
My social class, the economic group I belong to, whether lower, middle, or upper class	7	2.2857	.75593	My social class, the economic group I belong to, whether lower, middle, or upper class	7	3.2857	1.49603
Knowing that I contribute to making the world a better place	7	3.7143	.95119	Knowing that I contribute to making the world a better place	7	3.2857	1.25357
My gestures							

My gestures and mannerisms, the impression I make upon others	7	3.1429	1.06904	My gestures and mannerisms, the impression I make upon others	7	3.4286	.97590
My feeling of belonging to a community	7	3.1429	1.06904	My feeling of belonging to a community	7	3.5714	1.27242
My creative self-expression, or my ability to express myself authentically through creative expression	7	4.4286	.53452	My creative self-expression, or my ability to express myself authentically through creative expression	7	3.5714	1.51186
My social behavior, such as the way I act when meeting people and personal acceptance of others	7	3.7143	.75593	My social behavior, such as the way I act when meeting people and personal acceptance of others	7	3.8571	1.46385
My feeling of pride in my country, being proud to be a US citizen	7	2.7143	1.60357	My feeling of pride in my country, being proud to be a US citizen	6	2.5000	1.04881
My physical abilities, being coordinated and good at athletic activities	7	2.5714	1.51186	My physical abilities, being coordinated and good at athletic activities	7	3.5714	1.81265
My personal self-evaluation, the private opinion I have of myself	7	3.8571	1.46385	My personal self-evaluation, the private opinion I have of myself	7	4.1429	.89974
Being a sports fan, identifying with a sports team	6	1.6667	.81650	Being a sports fan, identifying with a sports team	6	2.5000	1.51658
My occupational goals or plans for college	7	3.4286	.78680	My occupational goals or plans for college	7	3.7143	.75593
My commitments on political issues or my political activities	7	2.7143	1.25357	My commitments on political issues or my political activities	7	2.1429	.89974

My academic ability and performance, such as the grades I earn and comments I get from teachers	7	3.8571	.89974	My academic ability and performance, such as the grades I earn and comments I get from teachers	7	4.0000	.81650
My language, such as my regional accent or dialect	7	3.1429	1.34519	My language, such as my regional accent or dialect	7	2.8571	1.21499
My role of being a teenager in high school	6	2.5000	1.04881	My role of being a teenager in high school	6	2.8333	1.47196
My sexual orientation, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual	7	3.2857	1.49603	My sexual orientation, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual	7	2.8571	1.77281
				Valid N (listwise)	4		

Figure 6.

Student Written Surveys: Identity and Meaning

Each of the students participating in this study was asked to answer in writing several questions addressing their perceptions of how they and other artists perceived their source of identity and meaning. The written data was not extensive in most cases and lent itself to a modified content/phenomenological approach to analysis. Content analysis involves identifying and developing codes from the data and using those codes for the creation of frequencies. A phenomenological approach to qualitative data analysis involves allowing the analysis to emerge from the data and words used by the participants and the analysis seek to see the world through the participant's eye. Each of the open- ended questions is presented separately in the order they were asked. It is not known whether the order of the questions might or

might not have effected how participants responded to each question. There were four students completing the identity and meaning open-ended questions.

The first question inquired: What gives meaning and value to your life? All of the participants agreed that friends and friendships provided meaning to their lives. Along with friends, the students also mentioned family and people close to them. One students thought the "people I have an effect on" was meaningful as well as "helping others," "not being alone," and hanging out." Everyday life was mentioned along with spirituality, companionship, and sex.

Second, students were asked: How do you create meaning in your life? The responses to this question were varied and ranged from "treating others with respect and kindness" to "doing well, making loads of friends and make them feel good." Students noted they did not set out to create meaning in their lives but it sort of just happened if they view things in a positive way. They also thought they needed to take advantages of opportunities presented to them.

The third question asked: How can you transfer this meaning into your creative process? The students responded they just do it by applying what they have learned about life and nature and bring this into their lives. On student thought using peaceful pleasant colors was a good way to transfer meaning to the creative process.

The students were next asked from the class unit: Which of the artist or artists do you relate to the most or "identify" with and why? The four

students chose four different artists as their example and for different reasons however, there was a theme running through the remarks addressing uniqueness, emotion, culture, and life perspective. The artists selected by the students included H. R. Giger, Roy, Pablo Picasso, and Andy Warhol. Students related to the uniqueness of each of these artists whether this came from a cultural perspective, life, style or the fantastic.

Students were then asked: What events or sources of inspiration influenced the artists' work you most "connected to" or "identified" with? One student connected with the sexuality and felt "about 90% of creativity" was based in sexuality. Another student connected with the culture represented by the artist and the ability of the artist to break with tradition or take a unique view of life. One student felt the composition and abstractness of the art was what connected him/her to the artist. Again, uniqueness was a theme through out the words of the students on how they connected to the work of a particular artist.

Students were then asked: What shaped the personal identity of the artist you "connected to" or "identify" with? It was interesting to note one student described growing up with the work of an artist through movies and despite the 'extreme hatred of women" and "use of bondage" a very strong connection was formed with the work of this artist. Several of the students mentioned the artists' style or again, uniqueness. Several of the students noted they had encountered the work of their chosen artist when they were younger and this seems to have influenced their present thinking. The influence of the artist continued over time.

In the identity and meaning questions, the last one asked: What shapes your personal identity? Several of the students mentioned 'everything' or different things as shaping their personal identity. While others found identity in their individuality, or "things that affect me personally also created who I am." Sexuality was also mentioned by several of the students along with machismo. Only one student mentioned family as shaping their identity and one mentioned culture as shaping identity. Another student thought "my eye and unique feelings for friends" shaped identity. Throughout the questions on identity and meaning, the students appeared to be noting the unique, the different, and the unusual as sources of identity. It was this uniqueness or breaking a mold, or rebelling that most appealed to students in art and artists and what they felt was driving their art and appreciation of art.

Student Written Surveys: Influences

Students were also asked to respond to questions about what they thought influenced the artist and what influences their own art. The first question asked: What influences the subject and content of an artist's work? The responses of the students could be loosely grouped into internal and external forces of influence for artists. The students thought family and friends were important as well as their "upbringing," "background," "style." Several of the students thought "everything," "experiences" and "past surroundings" were important influences. The students also thought "tragedy," "personal beliefs," and emotions or feeling at the time of creating art were important. Only one student mentioned the artist's view of society, the environment, and even world events would influence artists.

Students were then asked: Do political issues or historical events influence artists' work? Most of the participating students agreed politics and history but artists' interpretations would also be tempered by how they were feeling at the time. But students did feel the artists' feelings about an issue would temper their work. They also mentioned art honors or fits into historical context through exhibits in specific area such as the Warsaw ghetto. Another student felt artists might be responding to "what's hot at the moment" or where they can express their opinions about current situations and this is a way for the artist to make their opinions known.

The third question asked: Do social issues or historical events influence artists' work? All of the students agreed with this question, social and historical do influence artists' work. They explained this by saying "history and social situations alter how one feels which will then alter how they feel" about what is important to the artist. One student did note, what is important to one artist may not be important to another. Another student noted there are any number of art works addressing social issues such as Black rights, women's suffrage, abortion, and other issues.

Next the students were asked: Do religion/spirituality influence artists' work? Again, nearly all of the students agreed religion did influence artists. One student noted most early work was done in churches and monasteries and "the stained glass in churches and synagogues is about biblical events or experiences of that particular religion." They noted religion would be an important influence and "if the artist is very religious this can be

seen in the work.” They also felt religion could influence what the subject of the art was going to be.

Students were also asked: What other factors influence artist's work? The students' responses to this question were varied. Influences included family, friends, where they are from, how they grew up, environment, surroundings, and even weather was thought to influence artists. One student thought influences could be society at large as well as what was going on in their personal lives. Feelings and emotions were also thought to be factors influencing artists.

Students were then asked to reflect on: What experiences or issues influence your artwork? There were few duplicate responses across the five sets of student responses. Only friends and family were mentioned more than once but there were a number of references to personal life or personal issues including life events. One student mentioned good times, tragedies, weird occurrences, or thinking the "impossible becomes possible." There was also evidence of thinking about issues they were not used to, how they felt any particular day, or how the day was going were also factors influencing their artwork. Who the art was for and how they felt about that person might be an influence. One student noted it was "important to inspire and motivate yourself." Outside influences included other cultures, trips, experiments in art, dreams, mystical animals, something from long ago could also influence themselves as artists.

Student Written Surveys: Social Change

The student artists participating in this study were asked to respond to the question: How do artists impact social change? Seven of the students wrote responses to this question and all of them indicated art could influence or perhaps even instigate social change. It was interesting four of the seven students wrote about fashion, advertising, and architecture as setting the tone for what is considered modern culture. There was also mention of how ipods, electronic games, and other electronic tools influenced art and social change. Several students mentioned posters as bringing our attention to areas of concern while another student thought the plight and suffering of others could be impacted and brought to attention by photography. Artist could also impact social change through using a different perspective or impact society through portrayals of society. One interesting idea was the influence on social change through animation, gaming products, and technology especially when children were young and memories were created. The evidence of technology and the influence of technology on lives and social change is apparent to these students as well as how the design and attractiveness of these products might influence change. These students felt by virtue of what artists create could exert an influence on society. They brought attention to aspects of society the artist felt needed changing or attention and artists were able to advocate for a cause through art, design, posters, and many other ways of communication in our current society.

Auto-Ethnographic Data

Identity and Meaning Lesson: Mixed media collage symbolic

self-portraits

10.27.06: As a warm-up activity and introduction into the lesson on creating a symbolic representation of self the students were given an assignment to create a typographical self-portrait. This was a means to have students begin relating to themselves as a source of inspiration for their artwork and moving into the idea of symbolic representation. The students used letterforms and words to communicate aspects of themselves as well as literally their likeness. They were told they could write a poem, choose a poem or choose words to represent aspects of self.

Once the typographical self-portraits were complete students were introduced to the website “Explore Art” in the section entitled “identity” as a major resource students explore portraiture as a means of expressing identity. We visited the online gallery and viewed the presentation on Himalayan Portraiture. Some students watched with heads down on the table turned toward the screen. Others talked among themselves ignoring my attempts to present the introduction to the unit. I took a few minutes to attempt to get them on track with being attentive. We discussed the use of portraiture in the Himalayan culture to depict the subject’s role and characteristics that are valued as part of the culture’s cultural heritage. One student – Belinda -- whom I taught in Intro to Art the previous year expressed, “It sort of reminds me of the Mandala project we did last year. We choose symbols to represent something important to us and I remember talking about Buddhism and

ancient Tibet.” “Wow, Belinda I’m impressed. That’s right and what a wonderful connection you’ve made with the artwork.” I continued by explaining portraiture has the potential to portray the values and characteristics of a culture as a means of visual record and communication in a symbolic fashion as well. A portrait does not necessarily have to be a visual likeness – it may also represent the values and beliefs through the visual images and symbols the artist embeds in the work. It was explained to students they would be creating a work of art that expresses the most important things they want others to know about them. What does the image of the Buddha tell us about the culture of the Himalayans? Ryan responded, “It tells us they like wearing pajamas.” “What else”, I asked. Somebody tell us – look at the objects surrounding the Buddha – notice the placement in the work in relationship with the other subject matter. I looked around the room searching for a response from the expressionless faces staring back. “It could be something about being central or important”, Gita said compassionately. “Yes, Excellent!” I exclaimed. I continued with the questioning, “What else do you observe?” This slow and painstaking process continued for several minutes until we worked through the portrait of the Buddha. The students wouldn’t participate in the activity I’d hoped would prepare them for this project – it seemed to go nowhere.

Identity and Meaning Lesson - 10.30.06: This day we took a look at some very different styles and time periods. We looked at Frida Kahlo, Chuck Close and the self-portraits of Rembrandt. Students were asked to compare and contrast the various representations and symbolism of the

artists. Students found the portraits of Frida Kahlo the most interesting and were more communicative. The class had the most to say about the artist's unibrow. What does this communicate about her? "That she's a man?" said Rod. "Well" I said, "I'm pretty sure she was a woman. Perhaps this tells us something about the artist being comfortable with herself the way she was. What do you think?" "I don't know" said Ilana, "it's hideous." "I think with all the cosmetic tools available she could choose to do something about it if it bothered her." "Yeah, I see what you mean" replied Ilana.

Identity and Meaning Lesson - 10.31.06: Students are shown works using mixed media and we discuss incorporating bits of fabric or objects they can use to build a relief with their image. In the introductory discussion on creating a self-portrait I provided students a "research tool" to assist in constructing a sense of our cultural heritage and identifying some of the influences shaping their identity. Natalie was rather disturbed because she didn't know anything about her family or the heritage. "It's just me and my mother and I never knew my father - we don't have anything to do with any of our family" she expressed frantically. I paused, searching for the best response, as I sensed the delicate nature of what presented itself for Natalie. I responded searchingly, "In that case you can research your name and interview your Mother to see if she has anything new to share with you about your background and possible cultural influences. Also, you can concentrate on developing visual symbols that represent your values and what you choose to communicate about those in your self-portrait."

Next, Ryan motioned me over in a hush tone and turned off to the side for me to follow, “Ms. Q, I was adopted and I’m not really white.” I confided back, “I thought you might be adopted when I met your parents during the parent teacher conference. “Did you think I was Mexican?” “No” I said, “I thought you might be Latino, but I didn’t really know.” “I was born into an orphanage in Columbia. I never knew my Mother” he shared as he lowered his head. “I’m sorry about that,” I shared. Your parents really seem to care a great deal about you and I really enjoyed meeting them. Did your parents ever share anything with you about your culture or background?” “No” he said. “Well, what do you know about your (adoptive) parent’s background that has influenced you and cultivated a huge part of who you are?” “Oh, okay” he responded (Figure 7). “Not to worry, just draw from what’s available and concentrate on the influences from your parents as well as other areas of interest to express your personal values and beliefs symbolically. I was concerned about the areas of vulnerability this opened for some of the students. Trying to reassure students the lack of information about their background wasn’t an issue. Additionally, trying to come up with adaptive solutions on the spot caught me a little by surprise but teaching is full of such situations day to day and trying to be supportive of the student’s emotional well being in the process.

Figure 7. Auto-Ethnography:

Identity and Meaning



Figure 7. Student Example

Identity and Meaning Lesson - 11.01.06: Some of the students are working to develop their symbols and clarify their values and beliefs to present in their work. Meagan, Ilana, Rick and Dahlia are goofing off in the corner as they are prone to do. I ask them how it's going. Jimmy assures me he's on it and has his ideas but the sheet with all the information is at home.

Ilana shares how much she didn't enjoy the last project and really doesn't want to do another self-portrait. I share my experiences of self-portraiture with Paige, remembering how painful it can be. I reminded students of the different approach – using mixed media and a very different range of media to create their portrait. Some students utilized the research tool and found interesting pieces of information in the process they had not known about their family. Students are still whining about doing another self-portrait today. I hated doing the last portrait – it was soooo hard” said Emma. “Yeah”, chimed in several of the students. I circulated the classroom as I mulled over student responses. Students continued working and cultivating ideas and influences to represent in their mixed media self -portrait.

Identity and Meaning Lesson - 11.02.06: How about this I said to the class, “You can construct your self portrait as a visual metaphor to communicate your values and beliefs incorporating influences that have shaped you symbolically. What is metaphor?” I asked. Josh responded, “It’s when you compare one thing to another without the use of like or as.” “Yes, that’s correct in literature, writers use metaphor to make a comparison. And similarly an artist will use metaphor as a symbol to represent a larger idea.” “Can anyone tell me what an image of nature in an artwork might represent as a visual metaphor?” There was a long pause with no response. I continue, “Remember the image of nature in the work of Frida Kahlo? What do you think the symbolism might be in using that metaphor?” “Something wild and untamed?”, asked Dara. “Yes, that’s a great interpretation, especially knowing something about the artist. That’s excellent.” Although we

discussed the possible symbolism of the artist's use of nature previously I'm delighted she made the connection from our previous discussion with some prodding. We looked at yet another power point of a collection of various artists that used visual metaphors to communicate. Students were responsive to the idea and seemed to find a new motivation in their project.

Identity and Meaning Lesson - 11.03.06: Today students seem to be inspired. Dara wants to use a water slide and DNA to represent her message. Brittany has an initial sketch. Students have to provide a sketch before beginning. Once they have their initial sketch I give them a canvas board to begin their work. Some students were ready to start working on the actual creation of their piece. In addition to their sketch they were to provide initial awareness of the materials they would be using to construct and create their metaphorical self-portrait. I assisted with explanations and demonstrations of technical application.

Identity and Meaning Lesson - 11.07.06: Students continue working with the various media to bring their ideas to life. We spent a great deal of time looking at examples of mixed media work and discussing the nature of mixed media artwork before beginning the hands-on approach to the project. However, some of the students are unwilling to experiment and explore the various media techniques we reviewed. I walk them through the process and asked them to bring in items to incorporate into their work. On the reverse side, some students experiment with the mixed media techniques to the point of becoming overdone. It's a bit like learning to cook and adding too many

spices causing one to miss the underlying flavor, or in this case, the message of the work.

Identity and Meaning Lesson - 11.08.06 – 11.14.06: I continue working with students making suggestions and answering technical and design questions while they complete the process of creating their mixed media self-portrait.

Figure 8. Auto-Ethnography:

Identity and Meaning



Figure 8. Student Example

Figure 9. Auto-Ethnography

Identity and Meaning



Figure 9. Student Example

Identity and Meaning Lesson - 11.15.06: Critique arrives and I approach it having students first express the message conveyed in the work before having each student represent the intended message to the class. Dara, Adrian and Gita were the only students who really participated. Meagan complained that it was unnecessary and cruel to make the students go

through the process (Figure 9). Dahlia told her to suck it up that they were high school students and should be able to handle it. I reminded students to be constructive and positive in their approach to criticism. Everybody more or less expresses “I like it” and I remind them these are the dreaded words. I use guiding questions to assist the students in the process of critique. I asked how effectively the visual symbols and cues used communicates the artist’s message. How effectively has the student used the elements and principles? Have they explored the use of mixed media or have they relied heavily on one medium?

Identity and Meaning Lesson - 11.16.06: Today I tried two different approaches to critique. I asked students to select four works to critique and I gave them worksheets to conduct a formal art criticism in lieu of the class discussion. Several students share they like this approach much better. Several students shared they like the class discussion better. Ultimately I feel this works as it gives everybody a chance to express themselves versus the few students participating in class discussion. Overall I was pleased with the student work. Several students, in spite of their inability to articulate any real connection with metaphor and symbolism, achieve mixed media self-portraits with visual impact.

Art as social witness lesson: Printmaking with Linoleum cut print

11.17.06: Students broke into groups and began thinking about the concept of using art as a voice to communicate persuasively or in protest of issues. The individual groups were told to discuss and identify visual

evidence of protest or persuasion in their everyday lives. During the class discussion students identified examples of various forms of protest and persuasion from the world around us. Nathan called out “t-shirts”. He, like so many of the students in class, was wearing one of the most visible forms of protest and persuasion in this environment, a t-shirt advertising a product. Nathan’s was black and showed evidence of excessive wear.

Gita led the discussion expressing art works as social witness in the clothes people wear, the use of advertising and media to communicate these messages. Ryan, the graffiti artist in the group, offered up graffiti as a form of protest. Meagan consistently dressed in black with black painted finger nails expressed, “the clothes we wear and the type of hairstyle we wear”.

After completing the class discussion students were asked to write a reflection on their own views pertaining to Art as Social Witness. I interjected to the class the perspective that various artistic periods have offered a form of social protest working often as a reflection of the changes occurring to propel society forward.

Art as social witness lesson - 11.17.06: Students were generally off task today. It’s not possible to crack the whip and force them to create. I realize from personal experience as an artist in the professional world it doesn’t even work that way, even though your livelihood depends upon it, not to mention one’s sense of creative fulfillment. When you have to turn it on day after day in the work place there’s a level of discipline one cultivates that as an adult one finds a challenge. The high school art class is a place for many of these students to decompress from their day, as expressed to me

time and time again by not only the students but also their parents. This particular day two students came to my class wearing unhappy expressions and their demeanor far from their usual pleasant nature. I asked the students if there was something bothering Paige. Alyssa, a white female senior, with an expressed and evident interest in art responded in a dejected tone, “I’m tired of all these stupid art projects. I’m just ready to get out of high school and have people stop telling me what to do.” “Oh, I see”, I expressed, “and I here I am expecting you to complete yet another project for my class.” I went on to empathize expressing, “I remember that feeling of being so ready to move on from a situation and yet not quite to the point of completion. It can be hard to find the patience and perseverance to continue.” Looking downward at her project her shoulders somewhat slumped her head shook in agreement.

Art as social witness lesson - 11.21.06: Students continued to choose their topic and develop visual designs to communicate their topic. Rod wanted to create his image incorporating the “rebel” flag with type communicating “the south will rise again” – I spoke with Rod about the positive aspect of having pride in his southern heritage and how the message “the south will rise again” may might be interpreted. His response was they need to get over it – this was our flag first and it’s not right. We talked about the issue at length with some of his classmates. There was a growing tension in the air and a strained look on Meagan’s face as we continued. I brought up that Rod was definitely entitled to his point of view and perspective but that it is valuable to have sensitivity to the past and why historically the

experience of Black Americans might have a negative association with this symbolic representation of that time. We discussed why a new flag might represent a “new” South inclusive of all vs. the values and beliefs associated with that “old South” symbolized in the flag. Throughout the discussion Nathan continued with quips and sarcasm as to why it mattered. He thought we should just let Rod do what he wants without all the discussion. Meagan, Belinda and a few of the students appeared impatient with Rod’s relentless defense of this topic. Meagan interjected to Rod, “Don’t you think you’re overreacting?” Rod became more and more agitated as well as increasingly loud and argumentative. Finally, I asked him to step into the hallway to take a time out.

Rod’s circle of friends in the class expressed their annoyance with me for asking him to step out of the room. Once students were actively working on their own I stepped into the hallway to speak with Rod. After our discussion he stepped into the room and took his seat. After a moment of silence Rod exclaimed, “Ms. Q I have a new idea. I want to do mine on Legalizing Drugs!” At this point I told him I didn’t know that the administration would see this topic as school appropriate and told him I’d have to discuss it with the Administration.

Art as social witness lesson - 11.22.06: I did speak with the department head and she told me to tell him to back off and write him up if he pursued in this vein or created any drug related images. I expressed to Rod I spoke with the administration and that it was not appropriate in this setting.” He then shared, “We did a linoleum cut in Ms. Z’s class and used a

pot leaf for my image.” “You really did? I asked.” “Yes, he said and nobody said a thing.” “Well Rod,” I said, “Why don’t you try to come up with something that expresses your pride in your southern heritage that is less controversial?” The student was determined to push the edge of controversy and I’d had previous encounters when he’d become reactive and argumentative during the semester. I explained to him that I didn’t want him to feel censored or stifled creatively, but to consider that we’re in a public school and that the freedom of speech and communication he might like to experience is limited. I reminded him of the incident earlier in the semester regarding senior shirts and issues with inappropriate messages and the consequences the administration set in regard to students not respecting those guidelines. He said he’d give it some thought.

Art as social witness lesson - 11.27.06: On this day students continued cutting their linoleum to create their intended images and I spent time working one on one with Paige to assist her in approaching other visual possibilities to represent her topic concerning the destruction of the rainforests. She was holding fast to the image of a non-indigenous flower of the rainforest so I encouraged her to search the computer for images associated with the rainforest or to develop symbolism that might convey the story as well. However, she remained with the image of a single flower resembling a daisy and a fallen petal. I provided both black construction paper and newsprint for the students to imprint their plate upon. Paige was one of the few to experiment with white ink on black paper. The result was a stunning visual image and well-balanced design yet, conveying no direct

visual connection visually to the topic she selected.

Art as social witness lesson - 11.28.06: I began class today by revisiting the point of the lesson to the class. I reminded the students art has the potential to be a powerful tool to communicate and provide an alternative perspective to the viewer. Ultimately art has the potential to impact others by making them aware of topics that might otherwise be hidden from their awareness. Students are reminded of artists such as Mark Vallen, Nari Ward and Jean-Michel Basquiat who find a voice for their values and beliefs by providing a visual narrative of the world through their artwork.

Several students -- Rod, Nathan and Paige in the back corner of the room and Ryan, Nick and Natalie in the front corner of the room -- carried on in conversation as if the instruction time directed toward the entire class was background music. I expressed to the students carrying on their individual conversations to please stop talking over me as it was disruptive and very distracting to other students trying to pay attention. After several attempts of "silence please" other class members asked to students to "shut up". I took the opportunity to interject, "To those students who are talking - if you have no interest in what I'm communicating please have the courtesy to refrain from talking to allow students who are interested to hear. I continued, "Whether you realize this or not your behavior is disrespectful and disruptive." One of the great challenges I encounter when delivering instruction to Paige as a relatively new teacher is remaining focused with the points I am covering and not becoming distracted by uncooperative student behavior. I dismissed the class to work on their own, and reminded the

students the linoleum cutting tools are sharp and to cut away from themselves to prevent accidents.

Hanging back after class Belinda took her time cleaning up and putting her project away as she expressed her appreciation of the class, “This class is different from other art classes we have an opportunity to create and express ourselves in a deeper and more meaningful way . . . looking at art from a different perspective.” I thanked Belinda for sharing her point of view as she prepared to leave.

Art as social witness lesson - 11.29.06: Ilana arrived in class today having undergone a drastic change in her appearance. She transformed from long dreadlocks wrapped in fabric to shoulder length soft flowing curls. Very petite in stature and having delicate features, her hairstyle enhances these features. Noga declined consistently to work during the designated class time or allow for feedback about her process. She arrived to class with an image in hand, this being the day the project was due. Her message is the value of support groups. However her image, like Paige’s, was very strong technically, yet it showed no connection to the intended message.

Art as social witness lesson - 11.30.06: Students work to complete their linoleum cuts. They made black and white prints and worked to complete a consistent series of three prints. They seemed to enjoy the process and the surprise of seeing their work come to life from their plate. I offered students the option to also try the black paper. Students experiment with the black paper using white ink as well. Students comment on how different the image looks based upon the change in the background color.

Art as social witness lesson - 12.01.06: Critique day arrives and I ask students to go into the hallway and carefully tape a copy of their black and white prints to the wall and order the work with ascending numbers. Students were given an index card and told to number the card from 1 to 20 to represent each of the works. Next, students were to respond to each work by describing or interpreting the message they saw being communicated in each print. The purpose of the linoleum print was to visually communicate a message about the social issue they chose through images rather than relying upon words.

Students responded at their own pace and agenda to the critique. Paige, Nathan, Noga, Rod, Natalie and Ryan choose to go back into the classroom and socialize rather than participate in the critique in the hallway. I encouraged the missing students to come into the hallway to participate by expressing this was part of their grade as well, however, they chose to ignore my efforts. Nathan made a comment that the students were holding their own critique in the classroom. Finally, Paige and Nathan rejoined the group.

The majority of the class gathered in the hallway as we made our way down the wall of images one by one. Students with no previous awareness of the student's intended message were asked to respond first by expressing the message they interpreted and their response to the piece. The student responsible for the work then conveyed their intended message with students providing feedback on the effectiveness of the print in conveying the intended message, as well as any possible suggestions on how to make the work communicate more clearly the intended message. Students were also

asked to comment on the originality of the image, as well as the student's use of the elements and principles to create an aesthetically pleasing composition.

Two of the AP art students struggled with the conceptual and symbolic representation of images to convey a message. Both produced aesthetically pleasing images without visual clues for the viewer to the related message. During the class critique none of the students were able to make the connection to the students' intended message. The closest interpretation to the student's intended meaning came from Dara who suggested the cycle of life and death as symbolic in the image of a single flower and the fallen petal. Meagan's image (Figure 10) represents drinking during pregnancy and the resulting fetal alcohol syndrome. Dara and several students without any previous knowledge were able to very quickly read her message during critique. Gita's image (Figure 11) addresses world hunger in a very dramatic way. Students definitely got the message, however, found the image disturbing and somewhat creepy. I found the image very impactful and shared my thoughts that sometimes artists approach their subject matter in a manner that's least comfortable to the viewer in order to convey their message in a way that will make an impact or stay with the viewer.

Figure 10. Auto-Ethnography:
Art as Social Witness



Figure 10. Student Example

Figure 11. Auto-Ethnography
Art as Social Witness

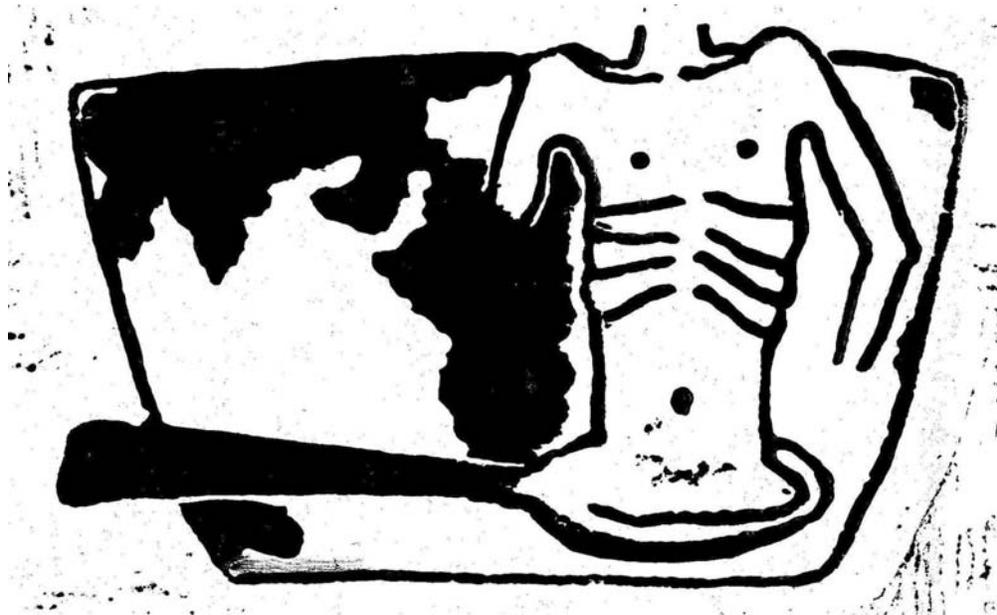


Figure 11. Student Example

Belinda's image (Figure 12) was created to address religious freedom related to the issue of the fallen soldiers' denial of the pentagram on their gravestones. Her topic was rather controversial during the initial discussion when students selected their topics. Belinda is an openly practicing witch and has been throughout the two and one-half years that I have known her. She took jabs and questions from students in regard to her topic with stride. She seems very comfortable with her belief there was no defensiveness in regard to her topic. She listened and accepted the process of the discussion with calm and a bit of humor. Students asked if she casts spells, rode a broom . . .

Figure 12. Auto-Ethnography

Art as Social Witness



Figure 12. Student Example

many of the topics and even general conversations. Consequently, once critique day arrived students were well informed of her intended message, yet students expressed that the image had impact and clear in its meaning. On a day to day basis I happened upon students' conversations loaded with ethnic and gender stereotypes. Misconceptions and racial stereotypes are so imbedded in the interaction of students; I hear it interjected into student conversations frequently in the course of teaching. One day recently two

female students were discussing a male student outside their class whom I happen to know. The black female student and white student were discussing the nature of Jim's "blackness". The white female student said, "Ms. Q I'm not racist, but he's the whitest black person I've ever known." "The black female student chide in, "Yes, he is!" "Why?" I asked. "Well the way he talks and the way he dresses," exclaimed the white female. I commented to the students, "What does this express about your ideas of what it means to be black?" "Huh?" they chimed together looking at each other puzzled, "and besides he's just weird" added the white female. Both girls quickly turned their heads away returning to the feverish pitch of their former conversation.

World Cultures and Meaning in Art: Shadow puppets

12.05.06: Leading into the last lesson from the unit students sat around two large tables arranged back to back and I sat on a stool slightly towering above the students. I asked, "What is a Human?" Students provided a myriad of responses. Ilana expressed, "as humans we have the ability to reason." Emma said, "Humans walk up right on two legs." Belinda peering through her freshly cut bangs and new hairstyle added, "Humans have emotions and can feel." The students continued the round table discussion offering their responses. Next, I asked them "what is a Right"? I clarified, "R-I-G-H-T". "Well humans can write" expressed Ilana. "Ah that's true, but not the type of 'Right' I'm referring to." Dara interjected, "it's something you're entitled to that can't be denied." I asked, "You mean like inalienable rights – those that are fundamental, not awarded by any human power being

subject to politics or government? “Yes like that”, she replied. I continued, “That is a perfect transition into the discussion of human rights. These are basic rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled, providing equality under the law.” The discussion continued to prepare students to think about human rights and what this means. We discussed the nature of human rights globally and students were given the guidelines for the project.

Students worked on their own to choose a country and begin research to obtain facts pertaining to the demographics and culture associated with their country. Students were instructed to pick one current human rights issue associated with their country of choice and research its history. Students were encouraged to investigate beyond their preconceived ideas and stereotypes of what they think they know about the country and topic.

After class Meagan hung back. She hadn’t looked too pleased during the presentation of the project. She said, “This feels like some history or social studies class. This is the type thing we’d do in history class.” I expressed how she might make the connection to social studies as this is an issue of “social” study. Remember the discussions we’ve had this semester about art and how it’s interwoven into the fabric of society for most cultures? “Yeah”, she responded, “but it still feels too much like social studies or history; I don’t want to have to do that much work or think about it that much.” My attempts to discuss the role of the artists and the nature of the artist in society seem in vain. I have noticed students often take art so they won’t have to think, but rather just so they can “do” - meaning create without having to think – to provide a reprieve from the rigorous academic day. At

this point in the study it is my perception based on attitudes and lack of effort in completing the surveys and lessons students are growing apathetic and tired of the requirements of the study.

World Cultures and Meaning in Art - 12.06.06: Students were given the opportunity to go to the media center and research their topic or use the computers in class yesterday and today. As I circulated I overheard a conversation between students discussing the statistics on genocide in Cambodia initiated from Meagan in the back corner of the room. Students have been collecting facts to assist them in writing the script for their puppet show.

Issues students choose to represent as a human rights topic were: Cambodian genocide, Diaspora, gay rights, poverty, and Pakistan immigration issues in England, Freedom of religion, and women's issues in India. The topics are impressive and many of the students are drawing from a personal connection with the topic. Unfortunately, the motivation to complete the projects is not where I'd hoped. Maybe that's more a statement that students have initially good intentions for their projects, but not the follow through. Perhaps this is characteristic of high school students, shortened attention spans and the distraction of peers in what they associate as a more relaxed environment. I set Wednesday as the deadline for students to complete their script. I express their script for the play must be based upon fact, yet they are free to be creative and imaginative in their script and consequently their play.

World Cultures and Meaning in Art - 12.07.06: Yet, another day passes and students continue to socialize rather than work on their projects. I hear laughter coming from Gita, Belinda, Emma and the other students sitting at their table. "That's mean Emma", Gita exclaimed smiling. "I'm part Chinese," Gita said to Emma. "But I thought you were from India." Emma responded with a confused expression. "My father was born in India, but my grandparents lived in Beijing before moving to India." I gave Gita a knowing smile, as I knew she was presenting this scenario to Emma to make a point. Gita shared with me in a previous conversation a semester earlier her parents were both from India and had an arranged marriage. Playful banter continued among the group for several minutes.

I broke into students independent work time to encourage and prod them reminding the class they could use the computers in the classroom or go to the media center to research their topic. Ilana shouts across the room to me, "I'm going to work on this at home where I can concentrate." "Alright, if indeed you will. Why not use your class time more effectively to get this completed?" "Yeah, yeah" she responds as she turns to pick up her conversation with Meagan and Jimmy in the corner of the room. I asked students to please set out the list of facts they have been compiling to assist them with the creation of their script. I begin with Emma and she reaches to open her sketchbook. "Three pencil written entries float among an empty page in her sketchbook. The entries read as: China . . . Communism . . . with no religious freedom and they are imprisoned if they practice Christianity. Is this all you have?" I ask. "Well they have an emperor who rules the country

and they exist on rice.” “An emperor?” I asked, “Emma do you realize your script needs to be based upon fact? “Oh”, she says, “You mean this isn’t correct”? “Not, entirely” I said, “it is true they are governed by the communist party and exist without true religious freedom. But, the political structure changed quite some time ago and they no longer have an emperor, they have a president. You need to continue you’re research. Remember the point of this is to help your class mates expand beyond their preconceived ideas and stereotypes of what we think we know about the country and the human rights topic you’ve chosen.”

World Cultures and Meaning in Art - 12.08.06: Two days later in speaking with students about the missed deadline Emma defended herself by offering Paige an explanation. She said, “Ms. Q I have soccer practice until 7:00 and then when I get home I have to take a shower and eat dinner. Then I start working on my homework around 8:30 and I don’t have time to work on the project.” Several students are either on the tennis team or soccer team as well. From the conversations I hear students do have quite a bit going on and are often physically exhausted from trying to maintain the pace of it all. Consequently, when priorities are selected the needs for the art class are the first to go as they have been expressed by many a parent and student as less important than academic concerns and therefore expendable.

World Cultures and Meaning in Art - 12.12.06: Students are dragging on the project and have not met the deadlines I’ve set. I’m becoming discouraged and frustrated with their lack of focus and commitment to the project, much less the study overall. When I step outside my role as educator

and remind them the completion of this project is essential to the completion of my thesis research the motivation increases out of what appears a desire to help me personally achieve my goal. Ilana exclaimed, “But Ms. Q I don’t know where to start. This is too hard will you help me?” Meagan, and Dahlia were laughing and making absurd quips at each other. I told Ilana to step into the small section of space available to claim apart from the noisy class. She handed me a list of facts she’d printed from the computer at home. I thought a moment and suggested, “Why don’t you start with a conversation among a family of Pakistanis in their homeland having a discussion and anticipating their migration to Great Britain. What are the reasons driving their desire to make the move?” Ilana responded with a relaxed smile, “Ms. Q you’re so smart.” She thought a moment and added before walking away satisfied, “Yeah, I get it now. I can do this.”

Even though students are working independently I circulate much of the time rather than sit at my desk and work. I try to be aware not to stand over student’s shoulders but I like to be present to discuss and encourage development and execution of their ideas. Overall, students have had a very low degree of self-motivation and drive in the completion of art projects. There are exceptions in the occasional student that loves art and seems to exist to create. I asked one of those students why they thought students had such a nonchalant attitude about art? She explained, “Ms. Q most students take art because they think they won’t have to work and that it will be easy grade. They’re not like me; I love art. But in Math I barely passed and didn’t do much of anything because I hate math.”

World Cultures and Meaning in Art - 12.13.06: Ilana arrived to class exclaiming, “Look Ms. Q I have my script and an interesting drawing!” She walked my way to hand me the fruits of her labor. “Wow, this is great”, I exclaimed, “See you could do it!” Ilana beamed with satisfaction. “Now you need to work on the design of your puppet or puppets if you think it’s necessary to have more than one to communicate the story. “Do you like my drawing?” Ilana asked. She added, “This is a drawing of the guy who doesn’t exist, but that I’d like to meet.” “Well,” I added and smiled, “maybe you’ll manifest that.” The drawing was in charcoal of a curly headed young man with a crooked smile. I pondered perhaps the image was inspired by her research on the Pakistanis migrating to Great Britain.

World Cultures and Meaning in Art - 12.14.06: Students are out of time on the project and all the students have not completed their puppets. Final exams are coming up and the semester is over. All the students have their scripts, but not all the characters they intended for their shadow play. Ilana expressed she hated the project because she had too much to do and wasn’t going to be able to finish. The students who finished present their plays. Students enjoyed seeing the final production and were more excited about the “cool” and “creepy” effect of the shadow puppets projected on screen. Students questioned Gita about her heritage and were intrigued to learn the practice of arranged marriages is still in practice. Meagan’s topic and puppet worked well, however, she was uncomfortable presenting her play to the class and walked away. Surprisingly, students were more

motivated to finish their production after viewing the live performances from Gita, Maddie, Dara and Meagan.

Figure 13. Auto-Ethnography:

World Cultures and Meaning in Art



Figure 13. Student Example

Figure 14. Auto-Ethnography

World Cultures and Meaning in Art



Figure 14. Student Example

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

1) Does students' investigation of personal/social values in adult artists' work and reflection of their own personal/social values and context assist them in acquiring respect for people with a diversity of beliefs and worldviews?

Pre & Post Tests

Based on the pre and post test data students thought that the most important factor in shaping their personal identity was “The ways in which other people react to what I say and do” implying perhaps that student identity might be strongly shaped by the group acceptance of their peers. This variation may account for the difficulty in getting students to participate in class activities such as critique and class discussions where they may be self conscious and concerned of how they are viewed in the eyes of their peers.

Additionally, there was an increase in the degree of sports/athletic ability as being important. Again, the inference I make to this increase may relate to a sense of identity being derived from the high school community. In attempting to isolate variables that may have impacted students during the course of the study several students involved in the study became active in school sports, as well as, our JV basketball team was in the running for the state championship. Social class and possessions seem to be related to each other and also show a considerable increase. As an affluent school, students may sometimes feel the need to fit in based upon the social class and possessions of their peers.

Conversely, there was a decrease in their reporting of the importance of: feelings and emotions; political issues; and creative self – expression /authentic expression. This is surprising as these are factors speculated as relevant to shaping identity and creating meaning in the study and production of art.

Student Written Responses

Judging by the responses of the students, they were aware of the differences of the artists they selected and they were aware of different sources of inspiration for the artists and for themselves. They had a lot of ideas about where “their ideas” came from or their inspiration but it’s not evident they arrived at a genuine sense of this respect for diversity of beliefs and a tolerant worldview. Drawing from the negative results in the pre and post regarding their sense of making the world a better place there are inconsistencies from the survey of “what shapes identity” and the open-ended written responses related to the study. One factor that accounts for the difference may be the developmental ability of teenagers to truly consider others outside of themselves when isolating what shapes their individual identity, versus looking at this within the contextual clues of the open-ended surveys directing them outside their sphere of perception. But, like most people of this age group, the average age being sixteen, and with the frontal lobe still developing that they are not always able to take on such lofty ideas. In actuality they are still at a very self-centered age - and may have only arrived developmentally to Piaget's formal level of thinking or a higher level

of moral thinking - where they can see the greater picture. The students were certainly aware of social issues as they pertain to them, yet I wonder if something did not touch them fairly directly if it would truly affect their awareness of the issue. They are just becoming aware there is a world beyond themselves. Hopefully they will arrive at a more mature perspective in the next few years. It was interesting how aware many of the respondents were of other cultures and the influence of these cultures on art, however, that awareness was not evident in all of the replies.

Also, interesting to note, the participating students who were more culturally aware are from a diverse cultural background. Students developed an awareness of the artists presented in the course of study, yet maintain their own tastes and ideas of the artists that inspire them. In the lesson “Identity and Meaning ” students created a symbolic representation of self created from mixed media. Students were exposed to works of art utilizing metaphor and symbolism to communicate something about the influences and culture of the subject. The class discussion was lively, but not necessarily insightful. It seems the students were less open to the cultural differences expressed in the works of the Himalayans and Frida Kahlo than Chuck Close or even Rembrandt. My perspective on this is that although Rembrandt appears of another time and is somewhat foreign to student’s visual sensibilities this was not as foreign to students as the type of dress and environments represented in the work of the Himalayans or Frida Kahlo. It’s an infinite mystery as to which artist(s) will inspire an individual, however, the range of artwork and

frequency to which we expose students to a variety of artists presents greater opportunity for students to make a genuine connection.

- 2) Does students' investigation of personal/social values in adult artists' work and reflection of their own personal/social values positively impact student construction of meaning through their artwork and aid them in becoming critical thinkers?

Pre & Post Tests

The students' pre and post tests are inconclusive in providing a correlation between the influences and factors shaping identity and students' construction of meaning toward becoming critical thinkers. Student written responses and teacher observations provide greater direct information and insight into the process of students' construction of meaning and their development of critical thinking skills.

Student Written Responses

Based on students' written responses I think the participants are on the way to becoming critical reflective thinkers. However, this may have been a new experience for them. The students in the study did seem to come to a better understanding through thinking critically about a variety of artists' artwork. Additionally, they seem to be able to come to a degree of in-depth thinking about their artwork and the work of others. Conversely, they also seemed fairly accepting of what they are told rather than having deeper

personal insights. Sadly, critical thinking is not what our educational system asks students to do much of the time. Often teachers ask students to respond by rote without thinking and we have a bad habit of telling students what to think. Comparably, when interpreting literature we have a tendency to tell students the meaning to construct rather than letting them figure out meaning for themselves.

The use of the research tool lesson with guiding questions “Identity and Meaning” was used to assist students in acquiring information about their cultural heritage and various influences shaping their identity presented an element of emotional vulnerability for a small percentage of students. One young biracial male shared the poignant experience of his parents marrying and the resulting split between grandparents. He grew up with divorced grandparents, but did not know until his research this had been the cause of the divide. He also shared that this helped him to understand more clearly his family dynamics.

During the critique process for “Identity and Meaning”, the students made connections to a variety of student artwork, reflecting upon the use of symbolism and metaphor to arrive at the student’s intended message. Consequently, the process requires students to analyze the qualities of the work symbolically to interpret the message and to evaluate the student artists’ use of the elements and principles to create an aesthetically pleasing composition. Additionally, during the critique process students were outwardly very supportive of one another and the level of diversity among their classmates. There was an audible and visual effort among students to

create an accepting community among students in regard to the artwork of their peers. I observed the verbal responses from student to be positive and non-critical in this context in contrast to the discussions related to adult artists of diverse beliefs and worldviews. In contrast, student's written critique responses were more openly critical in their assessment of their classmates' technical skill and presentation.

- 3) From the teacher's point of view in what ways does varying teaching strategies positively impact student 1) construction of meaning in their artwork and 2) critical thinking ability?

Belinda is a 16-year old female junior. She comes from a single parent household independent of any relationship with her father. She has a definite ability in art and has been working to develop her artistic perspective outside her passion for Anime. I had Belinda as a freshman in Intro to Art and have had the good fortune to watch her develop through her association with art club and ceramics into quite a conceptually and technically talented young artist. Over the course of the project I witnessed her developing a passion and commitment to the creation and pursuit of art. This level of passion and commitment is usually indicative of one destined to become a professional artist. Belinda appeared to find greater inspiration and motivation in the completion of her art projects given the freedom to select from larger global issues through the "Art as Social Witness" and "World Civilizations" project. Witnessing such devotion to the pursuit of one's art

from a high school student has been a rare occurrence in my two and one half years experience in the high school environment. During the study I witnessed Belinda's process toward making a deeper connection to meaningful content as she expressed deeper aspects of her personal identity and cultural influences.

Emma, a 17-year old white female junior, comes from a closely-knit two-parent household of upper middle class working professionals. I would describe Emma as conscientious and gifted in the visual arts, however this was not my original assessment. Emma has expressed her long-term educational and career goals as being associated with the arts. Initially, I was unaware of her talent due to the fact that her approach to her art projects was basic and superficial in nature. Emma consistently puts forth the least amount of effort toward idea generation and ultimately, the execution of her projects. She had a tendency to approach and quickly complete her projects with little or no effort. While there was a level of visual appeal, the work was lacking in follow-through.

As we began the Unit on "Identity and Meaning" Emma struggled with attempts to dig deeper to make connections to conceptually express her personal identity and explore the issues related to the unit of study. In working with her one-on-one through the lessons in combination with class discussions and group discussions among her peers she appeared to make progress from the purely aesthetic aspect of her artwork to connecting and ultimately projecting more of her personal values into her artwork. Additionally, Emma's level of commitment to the execution of her work

changed significantly as she struggled with mix media techniques to arrive at a solution that she was visibly connected to and explored the potential of the media.

Gita, a 17-year old junior moved to the United States from India with her mother three years ago. Gita's father recently moved to the United States to join Gita and her mother permanently. Gita's mother is an educator and her father an international businessman. Gita displays a level of maturity and personal responsibility toward her academic achievement beyond her peers in the study. My initial introduction to Gita was through art club in her freshman year. She was not enrolled in an art class, she desired to be connected to the arts in her high school experience. When presented with each of the three lessons Gita exhibited a natural tendency to strive for a personal connection with the project. She seems to naturally connect to her place within the global community. Gita has connections to family and friends around the world, as well as her country of origin. It would appear she has a sense of the world from personal experience versus the ideology of the high school social studies class or media representations.

Initially, Gita seemed to be somewhat removed from socializing and connecting to her peers within classroom environment. Most of her interaction and communication was directed toward me. During the course of the study I observed changes in the direction of her becoming more connected with the community of her classroom experience. She began to form friendships and interact with classmates more and more through exposure to class and group discussions, as well as increasing her daily

personal interaction with classmates over all. In terms of Gita's approach to her projects she consistently made a personal connection to each of the lessons allowing her to express her personal identity and evidence of social awareness. Her level of commitment toward her work continued to grow and was evident in the execution of her projects. Gita's technical execution continued to improve bringing her to a new level of artistic achievement in the quality of her work. In working with her mixed media self portrait she encountered technical issues twice before arriving at her third and exceptional resolution of the project.

Initially, Gita was inclined to settle for the inconsistencies of craftsmanship and technical issues inherent in her projects; she had to recreate her mixed media self-portrait three times. I shared with her personally, as well as the class, encountering challenges and resolving those challenges is the true process of artistic creation and impacts the clarity of its intended message. This process is why art becomes such a metaphor for the experiences and process of navigating life. Through her personal experience and the process of art production Gita became a model and source of inspiration for her classmates. As students witnessed her unwavering commitment to her project they also witnessed her ultimately arriving at a very successful solution eliciting awe among her classmates.

Ryan the sole male in the study is a senior 17 years old and was born in Colombia, South America. Ryan was adopted as a toddler from South American orphanage into the home of white American parents. Graffiti art is Ryan's preferred form of artistic expression. His affect was initially smooth

and sexualized toward women often choosing visual solutions that tended to objectify women. His language was often inappropriate for the classroom environment and we discussed this issue early in our association. As Ryan began the unit he responded by socializing with one of the girls in the class who made the choice to remain unproductive by focusing on socializing with Ryan and another male friend during the semester. They preferred instead to discuss sexual exploits with one another.

Ryan began sharing some of his personal artwork with me before the bell; I observed potential apart from the initial superficial stereotypes he expressed in his class assignments. I encouraged him to develop his talent and explore subject matter beyond his fixation with the female anatomy. Ryan slowly made progress in minimizing his rude comments and inappropriate behaviors during class. Additionally, his process expanded to facing a significant personal issue in his mixed media self-portrait. He began using his research instrument to explore the dilemma of a young teenage pregnancy ultimately leading to his placement in an orphanage. He did not fully explore the possibilities of mixed media, however, the resulting artwork was a compassionate and poignant portrayal of a Madonna like female emitting colorful rays to express an aspect of his personal identity. He was thrilled with his project and took great pride in his achievement. Ryan's attendance and participation during the unit was very sporadic, as "senioritis" seemed prevalent among the seniors in the group. Ryan's greatest level of participation and visible self expression occurred through the "Identity and Meaning" lesson.

Ilana is a 17-year old junior and Israeli immigrant living in the States since age six. She's spent her spring semester in Israel the previous year. Ilana and Meagan met and connected during the class and began spending most of their class time off task and expressing indignation when presented with requests by me to get on task with the class projects. Ultimately, she participated by completing the majority of her projects with much prodding. Her initial response to the mixed media project was creative and displayed connection to areas of value in her personal life. Yet, her execution lacked development and craftsmanship. I shared my appreciation of her creativity and encouraged her to allow me share some techniques and suggestions to bring more depth and detail to her subject.

Ilana foresees going to an art school to pursue a career in art; I impressed upon her the importance of having a level of work suitable for her admissions portfolio. Ultimately, she came by before school in order to spend more time on the execution of her "Identity and Meaning" mixed media self portrait. The final work displayed a connection with the materials and techniques and an imaginative display of influences shaping her identity. During the final lessons she began expressing her disdain for the projects. Her attempts at completing the remaining two lessons were a sporadic mixture of good intentions and apathy toward loftier ideas.

Dara is a 17-year old senior born of Jewish parents in the United States. Over the course of the lessons I observed tremendous growth in Dara's technical and conceptual abilities. Dara also spent last year's spring semester in Israel. Admittedly the experience was significantly impacting and

she returned with a new level of self-acceptance and a sense of connection to her roots. During the scope of the study she was very receptive to constructive suggestions and direction toward developing her ideas and work. Dara desires an art related career and has been accepted into an art program at a local university next year. Dara possesses a level of depth in her character possibly acquired through her personal experiences and circumstances.

Dara consistently contributed her personal insights toward the topics of class discussions and student critiques for each of the lessons. Initially she was content to arrive at a less developed concept or production lacking in craftsmanship to express her ideas. As I continued to encourage Dara toward the value of her ideas and images she persisted toward a higher level of development and standard in the creation of her artwork. Dara was able to quickly arrive at sources of inspiration for each of her projects. Dara connected to the topics of acceptance of sexual identity in the “art as social witness” and the Diaspora for her human rights issue in the “world civilizations” lesson; she expressed great enthusiasm and pride in the resulting artwork.

Meagan is a 19-year old senior originally from Columbia South America and identifies her ethnicity as biracial: a combination of Paraguay Indian and Colombian. Meagan has been living in the United States with her father, brother and sister since the age of 8. During the course of the study Meagan was at times sullen and non-communicative, refusing to respond to attempts to encourage her participation in the unit. The exception in the study

is Meagan. Meagan is representative of the older high school student ready to move onto to the autonomy of life beyond the high school environment, yet unable to due to academic circumstances. At times she displayed connection to social awareness by her choice of topics: Fetal alcohol syndrome in the “art as social witness” lesson and Cambodian genocide in the “world civilizations” lesson. She is capable of sensitivity to the topics during class discussions when choosing to participate. Although Meagan had a tendency to fight and resist the structure of the high school art class she ultimately expressed her unique connection and perspective. She seems to have an awareness of issues outside the bubble of the high school environment bringing her a great source of inspiration to draw upon in the production of her own artwork. Meagan resisted and grumbled through the lessons expressing personal difficulty with the level of personal challenge they presented. The greatest area of progress I observed with Meagan was the opportunity to connect to topics of personal meaning and ultimately meeting the challenge of moving outside her comfort zone.

My personal overview of the process of teaching the unit is the students’ commitment to the unit was minimal. The time frame I originally set aside for the project tripled in the process. Some of the variables at play were: many of the students are seniors and are ready to move on from high school. There are always a few students that are under motivated. However, during this study I’ve had to stand over students and constantly try to get them to work on the projects. I can’t identify a motivational difference between the projects I initiated in the study and projects outside the study for

the majority of students. Belinda and Dara appeared to be the two students who consistently responded to the attempts to build meaning into their study of art. Otherwise, the students appeared more concerned with socializing as their priority vs. learning about or the production of art. Overall there's a low level of participation, and student grades are low overall.

Trying to start class or introduce a lesson students are engaged in personal conversations and many continuing talking over me as I'm speaking to the class during instruction time. It seems that a study of this nature requires sequential exposure from the earliest part of the students' experience in art to make correlations between the meaningful versus emphasis upon aesthetic concerns in art production. We barely scratched the surface of discussion. During the initiation and discussion of the more serious topics students chose the tensions began to surface and areas of sensitivity became evident. Perhaps that's why as a society or within our relationships it is often more comfortable to keep things below the surface. Many of the social issues, such as Georgia's state flag, freedom of religion and equal rights based upon ethnicity or sexual orientation, bring a mixed response. Student interactions ranged from insensitive and glib to sensitivity in relation to the topic of discussion. Perhaps students less sensitive to the experience of others have formulated ideas in a sheltered environment, while the personal or family experiences of other students makes them more sensitive to the topic. This study seems to merely scratch the surface of potential available through the introduction of art projects designed to build meaning based upon individual student identity.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, the unit of lessons that I developed to raise the social consciousness of high school students was much more challenging to implement than I expected. I was disheartened that students did not always respond to my lessons as I had anticipated, but I also learned a great deal about the interests and attitudes of my high school students. Rather than arriving at a new path for teaching I have even more questions about how to engage students in the study of art. As I reflect on the art and artists I deemed relevant to the study of art and what is indeed relevant to teaching art to high school students might in fact be more relevant to teaching 20- 25 year-old college students rather than 14-19 year old high school students. As an educator and adult I'm hard pressed to understand the issues and concerns at the heart of a teenager in the 21st century. I've been working to support students in constructing identity and meaning from external sources, when perhaps it is valuable to look more to the students themselves as the locus of constructing meaning. Although exploring cultural influences and social issues in the study of art may prove beneficial it appears from the analysis of student data my instruction may be more effective if I weave a balance between external influences and the influences of the teen community. My new insights will guide me in making the study of art more significant to high school students based upon issues related to their worldview and within the classroom community. However, I believe it is still important to introduce students to diversity in art that may expand their awareness of issues outside themselves and plant a seed of social consciousness. With time

and exposure to real world issues the seed may grow into new perceptions as students move into the larger world and their ability to use reflective cognitive reasoning.

The experience of conducting the study was valuable as it gave me the opportunity to re-evaluate my own student population. I was able to learn more about the students I teach, their varied life experiences and unique perspectives. Yet, in the world of a teenager, where adults are alienated to varying degrees from the experience of the teen, what truly shapes their sense of identity and reflects their sense of “culture” can be ambiguous. The answer to the question may be very different from microcosm to microcosm of individual high school. After involving this particular group of students in the study with this set of art lessons I have concerns about their developmental capabilities. These concerns cannot necessarily be generalized to all other high school students and all other lessons about developing values or social consciousness.

Art Education theory provides a myriad of concise models for teaching art to students. Yet, current art education theories and models are harder to implement than the literature would imply; there’s a need for the literature to further address instructional methods that can motivate and engage students’ developmental understanding and attitudes in relation to art. In the course of my curriculum study student attitudes impeded them from embracing new and unfamiliar experiences toward the construction of meaning in art.

Society’s general attitudes about art also influences student attitudes

regarding serious study of art in the classroom. Student value systems and expectations about art are shaped in the elementary experiences of the child and are carried through the nine-week exploratory in middle school and ultimately into their high school art education. Many public education experiences in art provided a limited scope of the discipline due to prevailing perceptions of art, funding and time limitations. Consequently, everything about the system is structured to create a less comprehensive approach to the study of art. The prevailing culture among many of the students taking art classes in our school is that the art room is a place of “fun”; consequently, all activities related to the study of art should be “fun”. Any activity involving reading, writing and reflection seems either alien or too closely resembles their regular course of study in their academic environment. Art is viewed by many students as an escape and respite from the rigors of their academic day and therefore may cause students to rebel against assignments and tasks beyond their selection.

The experience of field-testing the set of lessons and the associated outcomes encourage me to continue integrating aspects of the lessons in my teaching. However, the pressure of trying to implement a comprehensive study of this scope was probably not the ideal learning environment. Consequently, I plan to introduce the various lessons with less intensity into my art instruction to allow students to adjust and grow into this method of art instruction.

The most difficult part of implementing the new curriculum was maintaining consistent student involvement and motivating students to

complete the assignments. Another difficulty in completing the study was a prevailing apathy among the majority of students. The findings described in this thesis were conducted using a small sample size of students, but these students were very representative of the class population as a whole. Many of the students involved in the study did not demonstrate a serious attitude toward the study of art or topics outside their sphere of social concerns as a teenager. The remaining problem in regard to the study is overcoming the student apathy toward the study of art.

My recommendations for further study are structured around inquiry about how to construct a study of art that is highly significant to secondary students. I recommend:

- The use of socio-anthropological research to investigate the factors that shape identity and meaning within the high school environment.
- An understanding of the norms of high school students as a distinct “cultural group” would be beneficial to constructing more meaningful and relevant art education.
- Further studies are needed to assist art educators with methods for motivating secondary students to more fully participate and appreciate the study of art.
- Further studies exploring student attitudes toward social issues and conscience to determine whether their attitudes are the result of a developmental disposition or cultural influences that reflect the values and attitudes of the larger popular culture.

In addition, I recommend further study based upon a similar set of lessons addressing values and social conscience:

- With a different group of students yet, similar to the student population participating in the study.
- With a different population of students.

As an art teacher, my hope is to develop art lessons that nurture a social consciousness to intervene in the self-absorption typical of many high school students. My goal as an art educator is to build student awareness of issues beyond themselves and encourage students' future participation and positive contributions to the global community.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

What shapes personal Identity?

INSTRUCTIONS: These items describe different aspects of personal identity. Please read each item carefully and consider how it applies to you or influences who you are. Fill in the blank next to each item by choosing a number from the scale below.

- 1 = Not important to my sense of who I am.
- 2 = Slightly important to my sense of who I am.
- 3 = Somewhat important to my sense of who I am
- 4 = Very important to my sense of who I am
- 5 = Extremely important to my sense of who I am

1. The things I own, my possessions.

2. My personal values and moral standards

3. My popularity with other people

4. Being a part of the many generations of my family

5. My dreams and imagination

6. The ways in which other people react to what I say and do

7. My race or ethnic background

8. My personal goals and hopes for the future

9. My physical appearance: my height, my weight, and the shape of my body

10. My religion or spiritual beliefs

11. My ability to express my emotions and feelings

12. My reputation, what others think of me

13. Places where I live or where I grew up

14. My thoughts and ideas

15. My attractiveness to other people

16. My age, belonging to my age group or being part of my generation

17. My feelings and emotions.

18. My sex, being a male or female

19. My feeling of being a unique person, being distinct from others.

20. My social class, the economic group I belong to, whether lower, middle, or upper class.

21. Knowing that I contribute to making the world a better place

22. My gestures and mannerisms, the impression I make upon others

23. My feeling of belonging to a community

24. My creative self expression, or my ability to express myself authentically through creative expression

25. My social behavior, such as the way I act when meeting people and personal acceptance of others

26. My feeling of pride in my country, being proud to be a U.S. citizen

27. My physical abilities, being coordinated and good at athletic activities

28. My personal self-evaluation, the private opinion I have of myself

29. Being a sports fan, identifying with a sports team

30. My occupational goals or plans for college

31. My commitments on political issues or my political activities

32. My academic ability and performance, such as the grades I earn and comments I get from teachers

33. My language, such as my regional accent or dialect

34. My role of being a teenager in high school

35. My sexual orientation, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual

Age: _____

Gender: _____ Male or _____ Female

Race or Ethnic Background: _____

Appendix B**Survey of Identity and Meaning**

What gives meaning and value to your life?

How do you pursue or create meaning in your life?

How can you transfer this meaning into your creative process?

In the unit on “Identity” and “Meaning” we studied various artists and the way in which they express their identity and build meaning into their artwork. Which of artist or artists do you relate to the most or “identify” with and why? (Please be specific)

What events or sources of inspiration influenced the artists’ work you most “connected to” or “identified” with?

What shaped the personal identity of the artist you “connected to” or “identify” with?

What shapes your personal identity?

Appendix C**Influences Survey**

What influences the subject and content of an artist's work?

Do political issues or historical events influence artists' work? If so, please explain.

Do social issues or historical events influence artists' work? If so, please explain.

Do religion / spirituality influence artists' work? If so, please explain.

What other factors influences artist's work?

What experiences or issues influence your artwork?

Appendix D

Exploring personal identity through Art

High School
9-12

Charlotte Turner

QCC or Content Standards:

Content Standard 1: Students will understand, select and apply media, techniques and processes.

Content Standard 3: Develops ideas, plans, and produces artworks that serve specific functions: (e.g., expressive, social, and utilitarian).

Performance Standard: Conceive and create original works of art that demonstrate a connection between personal expression and the intentional use of art materials, techniques and processes.

Content Standard 5: Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others.

Lesson Theme: The “Big Idea” for this unit is how artists use works of art to create self-portraits that expresses who they are, their feelings, culture, or identity. In the lesson students will explore the use of portraits as a source to portray feelings, culture, and identity. Students define and reflect on their own identity to create a work of art that expresses the most important things they want others to know about them.

Objectives: INTASC 7

Students will:

- 1) gain an understanding of a variety of means of expression of identity.
- 2) choose symbols to represent some of the things that are most
- 3) important to them. develop metaphors to express aspects of their culture and identity.
- 4) conceive and create original works of art that demonstrate a
- 5) connection between personal expression and the intentional use of art materials, techniques and processes.
- 6) think critically and discuss symbolic representation in their classmates' art in the form of group critique.

Sample: (INTASC 1) A sample of a self-portrait is provided.

Resources: INTASC 10

The Ruben Museum of Art website: <http://www.exploreart.org/index.html>
Wikipedia website: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk:Selfportrait/Artroots.com>

PowerPoint presentation featuring the self portraits of: Rembrandt, Durer, Vermeer, Van Gogh, Dix, Chagall, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, Judith Leyster, Frida Kahlo, Cindy Sherman, Ana Laura de la Garza, Chuck Close .

Introduction/Motivation: INTASC 1 , INTASC 5

We are all members of many cultures. Entering a culture's art world is a pathway to understanding its culture and its art. We are influenced by our culture, people, and we influence others – the power of one.

Visual art remains a primary means of communicating and capturing the human experience.

Students will view <http://www.exploreart.org/index.html> exploring portraiture as a means to express identity and culture. After viewing the presentation students will be asked the following questions: *Do we all have to like or understand the artwork we viewed in the presentation? What do these works communicate about the subject?*

In this project you will research your own cultural identity, share it with their classmates, and symbolize your identity by creating a self-portrait.

Content Paper: INTASC 1

The information will be communicated in a PowerPoint presentation.

Instructor's Procedures: INTASC 5

Students will view a PowerPoint presentation to show examples of metaphor and symbolism to express larger ideas in a work of art. I will demonstrate the development of symbolism to express larger ideas. Instruction will be given on a variety of mixed media techniques. Students will create preliminary sketches to develop ideas that communicate and express their personal identity.

Research using "research tool provided", interview family members, collect drawn artifacts, and interpret their cultural identity, symbolize their identity, identity of one person who has influenced them in their life, and the identity of an individual they have influenced (assimilation). Share their cultural identity with the class; Research other artists, their cultural identity and different cultures to see if they created portraits, how they created portraits, why, why not. Present given information about different cultures and the use of portrait to express larger ideas connected to cultural heritage.

Compare and contrast self-portraits of Frida Khalo and Chuck Close, identify cultural influences, and historic influences. Refer to other portraits through internet; Select finishing media and color scheme that best expresses personal identity; Reflect upon how research has influenced choice, symbols used, what disciplines are integrated with art, how media expresses personal identity, self-evaluate how student has fulfilled assignment criteria, what changes student might have made, what student has learned. Present self-portrait to class, describe the choice of symbolism used to communicate their message.

Materials and Materials Management:

Students' individual journals
 12 x 18 canvas board for mixed media
 Variety of drawing pencils, sharpener, rulers, erasers
 chalk, "Q" tips, pastel, color pencils, conte-crayons, felt tip markers (fine and broad)
 watercolor, tempera, acrylic paints, yarn, gel mediums
 paint brushes, water buckets, water, and paper towels
 (students are encouraged to bring objects they may wish to incorporate into their work)

CLEAN-UP:

Students will be responsible to clean their own area including washing of brushes, tables and desks.

Student Procedures:

Students will maintain their personal journal to contain their sketches and reflections, responses to instructor posed questions and visual explorations for their self-portrait.

Closure/Review: INTASC 4

Time will be allowed for students to display and discuss the ways in which they portrayed a sense of who they are and what they value in their work. Question: *Do we all have to like or understand the artwork we see among your classmates? We each bring our own special vision to what we think about art, so let's really listen to each other. What do these works communicate about the subject?*

Assessment: INTASC 8

Upon completion students will reflect upon cultural and symbolic interpretations, choices, and evaluate their artistic endeavor and understanding as a reflection in their journal.

Questions to ask class to assess learning outcomes:

How do you create artwork that expresses your feelings, culture, and identity to express who you are? *What do you Value? Where have you come from? What influences shape who you are? What do you know about self-portraits?*

Class critique: students will participate in a class critique to identify meaning and symbolism, as well as evaluate the students' use of the elements and principles to create a pleasing composition.

Assessment Instrument

Students will evaluate their own project using a rubric created by the teacher.

Teacher resources for lesson plan:

<http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/lessons/whoami/index.html>

<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/>

Appendix E

Art as Social Witness

High School
9-12

Charlotte Turner

QCC or Content Standards:

Content Standard 1: Students will understand, select and apply media, techniques and processes.

Content Standard #2: Using knowledge of structures and functions.

Content Standard #3: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas.

Content Standard #4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and culture.

Lesson Theme:

Students look for visual signs of social witness in the world around them as through visual art, song lyrics and poetry. They then develop inquiry questions to guide their investigation of artworks that attempt to communicate a point of view to inform (i.e. social injustice, gender, political). After reporting their discoveries to their classmates, students begin to identify ideas for their own art making focused on expressing social perspective. Students will plan and execute a relief print that attempts to protest or persuade focusing on effective definition of shape, use of symbols, and impact upon their intended viewers.

Objectives:

Students will:

- 1) Students learn that artist may use art as a method of working to improve situations such as injustice, inequities, or the quality of life.
- 2) Students learn how to identify visual evidence of protest and persuasion in the world around them.
- 3) Students learn that some artists have used art to protest injustice, to promote and glorify revolution, to persuade others to their views, and to define their own reality.
- 4) Students learn how to use symbols to communicate ideas to the viewer.
- 5) Students learn how to execute the steps in a relief printmaking technique (linoleum block, cardboard relief, or woodcut).

Sample: (INTASC 1) A well-executed sample will be provided.

Resources:

Visual Artists: Nari Ward, Masood A Khan, Mark Vallen, Jean-Michel Basquiat

Websites: <http://www.designforsocialimpact.org/index.html>

<http://www.arts.arizona.edu/change/arts.html>

PBS Frontline website:

<http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/srilanka/slideshow.html>

Daumier website

<http://www.time.com/time/europe/magazine/1999/1129/daumier.html>

<http://www.daumier.org/>

Vallen website: <http://art-for-a-change.com/>

Musical Artists: India Arie, Floyd Westerman (Wounded Knee), Jack Tannehill (Stop right now, Hard Rain), Bob Dylan (Man of constant sorrow), Ashoka (Cold in the Sun), Stephen Berg (Nation of Victims)

Introduction/Motivation:

We all choose which traditions to follow and which to challenge.

When people are not satisfied with things the way they are, they sometimes protest or try to persuade others to change their ideas. They work to change things by criticizing or protesting the old ways and replacing them with new ways. Some protests lead to revolutions. There are various kinds of revolutions. In political revolutions the old powers are overthrown and new people take over the government. In social revolutions the relationships between social classes change, or the population experiences the rise of new social classes or the expansion of existing classes. In economic revolutions wealth changes hands. There are also scientific, industrial, agricultural, artistic, and religious revolutions when old ideas are replaced by new ideas.

In many cultures, artists use their artworks to protest or to bring attention to their ideas. Sometimes a painting, sculpture, or building can persuade just as well or better, than words can.

Art can protest, propose, and provoke ideas – essentially bring to light what is sometimes hidden or out of the conscious reach of the general population.

Students will view Frontline presentation on fighting terror with paint

Content Paper:

This information will be communicated in a PowerPoint presentation.

Instructor's Procedures:

Explain that some artworks serve more than one function. Use artworks from Daumier or Mark Vallen and other artworks as examples that serve many different functions.

Examples to appear in PowerPoint presentation of how works of art have multiple purposes: Communicating ideas, making comparisons, documenting an event.

Begin students thinking about the concept of using art as a voice to communicate persuasively or in protest of issues – have them break into groups and discuss and identify visual evidence of protest or persuasion in their everyday lives. Examples might include T-shirts; advertisements, CD-

album covers; vandalism in the form of graffiti; unconventional clothing, jewelry, and hair styles; or the more permanent visual evidence of tattoos.

- a) Explain the revolutionary or persuasive meaning of the artwork. Explain why the artist made it and for whom.
- b) Point to subject matter in the work that supports a protest or persuasion interpretation of the work.
- c) Share other information you have discovered that supports a protest or persuasion interpretation of the work.
- d) Conclude the lesson by asking students to list concerns that are relevant to them in some way. Group together similar concerns and note differences or conflicts among concerns. Ask students to indicate which concerns they think are most important and why.

- e) Next, ask each student to spend some time reading local newspapers to find out about important events or places in their neighborhood, such as a community town hall meeting, a soup kitchen, city hall, a political rally, or an activist organization meeting. They should look for a story or issue that interests and speaks to them in some way—whether emotional, intellectual, political or otherwise.

- f) Finally, identify two or three situations or events that he or she might choose to protest or persuade others about. Students might be interested in such causes as Students Against Drunk Driving, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, D.A.R.E., labor strikes, anti-pollution or environmental issues, or ribbons (such as red ribbons for AIDS) that show an individual's concern for some cause.

Art Activity: Explain that students will be producing a linoleum block print related to an issue or situation that concerns them. Their prints should use shapes symbolically. Students should pay attention to negative as well as positive shapes as they plan their prints. An alternative process is cardboard relief printing or, for advanced students, woodcuts.

Review the theme of Protest or Persuasion. Ask students to use the issue or concern they've identified and symbolic shapes they've developed in previous lessons, as starting points in designing their icons. You may want to show students examples of political, corporate, government, and other simple logos, as examples of how shapes can be defined and how positive and negative shapes can complement each other. Remind students to consider how the viewers they hope will see their printed icon may understand it.

Show sample print and demonstrate the steps of the process for your students. You may want to ask your students to experiment with different image combinations and submit an "edition" of perhaps five prints that they believe are most successful.

Remind students that a most effective protest or persuasion print communicates its ideas to others who view it.

When finished students will participate in a class critique to discuss their images and interpret symbols and their intended meaning in student work.

Materials and Materials Management:

linoleum blocks
 linoleum cutters
 palettes
 water based printer's ink in a variety of colors
 brayers
 drawing or construction paper
 press or wooden spoons to apply pressure for printing
 newspaper

CLEAN-UP:

Students will be responsible for cleaning their own area including washing of brayers, tables and desks.

Student Procedures:

- 1) Break into groups and begin thinking about the concept of using art as a voice to communicate persuasively or in protest of issues – have them break into groups and discuss and identify visual evidence of protest or persuasion in their everyday lives. Examples might include T-shirts; advertisements, CD-album covers; vandalism in the form of graffiti; unconventional clothing, jewelry, and hair- styles; or the more permanent visual evidence of tattoos.
- 2) Share other information you have discovered that supports a protest or persuasion interpretation of the work.
- 3) List concerns that are relevant to you in some way. Group together similar concerns and note differences or conflicts among concerns. Once you've noted the differences and conflicts indicate which concerns you think are most important and why.
- 4) Next, spend some time reading local newspapers to find out about important events or places in their neighborhood, such as a community town hall meeting, a soup kitchen, city hall, a political rally, or an activist organization meeting. They should look for a story or issue that interests and speaks to them in some way—whether emotional, intellectual, political or otherwise.
- 5) Finally, identify two or three situations or events that you might choose to protest or persuade others about. You might be interested in such causes as Students Against Drunk Driving, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, D.A.R.E., labor strikes, anti-pollution or environmental issues, or ribbons (such as red ribbons for AIDS) that show an individual's concern for some cause.

Art Activity:

After selecting the issue you plan to focus upon for persuasion and protest begin creating sketches to represent your ideas. You will be creating linoleum cut prints as a means to protest or persuade others about your views on a particular issue. Before preparing your linoleum print you will sketch your ideas and complete a final design before beginning to cut your linoleum sheets. It is required that you plan the image in advance, remembering to focus on shape and symbols to represent your point of view remembering that letters and words will print in reverse.

- 1) The linoleum format is small so plan to incorporate several linoleum cuts in order to create your larger scale work of art. Also, remember the power of color to communicate. You may use the colored inks provided in combination with black ink to bring focus and emphasis to parts of your artwork.
- 2) Experiment with monoprints vs. adding color to evaluate the visual and emotional impact of black and white vs. color.
- 3) You can transfer a preliminary sketch onto a linoleum block by tracing the shapes of the sketch onto tracing paper, turning the tracing paper over, placing a sheet of carbon paper between the block and the tracing paper, and finally tracing over the outlines.
- 4) Prepare the block by removing areas not to be printed (or with cardboard, by gluing raised areas to a flat base. Coat the entire cardboard "block " with watered down white glue to seal the surface.). Place a small amount of ink on a palette and spread ink evenly over the brayer (roller) by rolling it on the palette.
- 5) Next ink the block by rolling the inked brayer over its surface. Place a sheet of paper over the inked block. Apply pressure (with a press, using a wooden spoon, or by applying weight, such as a stack of books) to transfer ink to the paper.
- 6) Carefully pull off the print. Expect some texture in printed areas.

Closure/Review:

The lesson concludes by asking students to consider how cultivating a social conscience might be relevant to their own lives. To what degree can we practice this philosophy of social change at a personal level? We can participate toward social change by using our creative voice to express a socially conscience message through our artwork.

Assessment:

Assessment Questions:

- 1) How do artists use symbols to communicate ideas to the viewer?
- 2) How can art be used as a method of working to improve situations such as injustice, inequities, or the quality of life?
- 3) What are the steps in the process of creating a Linoleum print?
- 4) Identify visual evidence of protest and persuasion in the world around you.

Assessment Instrument:

See attached rubric

Appendix F

World Cultures and Meaning in Art

High School
9-12

Charlotte Turner

QCC or Content Standards:

1 Topic: Artistic Skills and Knowledge: Creating, Performing, Producing
Standard: Applies higher order thinking skills (e.g., tolerance of ambiguity, nuanced judgment, complex thinking, and finding structure in apparent disorder) in the creation of multiple solutions to visual problems.

3 Topic: Artistic Skills and Knowledge: Creating, Performing, Producing
Standard: Develops ideas, plans, and produces artworks that serve specific functions: (e.g., expressive, social, and utilitarian).

16 Topic: Critical Analysis and Aesthetic Understanding
Standard: Evaluates, based on predetermined criteria, own performance and progress on skills and written and visual products.

21 Topic: Historical and Cultural Context
Standard: Evaluates through expository or creative writing the role of arts and artifacts as
a) a visual record of humankind's cultural, political, scientific, and religious history
b) a vehicle for gaining knowledge and understanding another culture.

Lesson Theme: In this lesson, students will learn about different systems of belief and values impacting a country and culture of the student's choice. The student will then select a human rights issue impacting that culture within the historical context affecting the issue today. They will discuss what they believe it means to be "human" and the issue of "rights" discussing their views on human rights issues affecting human rights globally. Students will write a creative script representing their knowledge of their country/culture of choice and the human rights issue affecting that country. Students will create a shadow puppet to act out their script, select music and add props to accompany their presentation.

Objectives:

Students will:

- 1) select a country and culture to explore and investigate in order to choose a human rights issue affecting the chosen country.
- 2) explore and investigate the diverse views and belief systems of the country and culture to express the complexities and historical factors affecting student's chosen human rights issue.

- 3) demonstrate understanding of a human rights issue by writing a script to communicate and represent the complexities affecting current policies.
- 4) Design and create a shadow puppet to symbolically represent and act out a human rights issue in the form of a shadow play.
- 5) control a variety of materials, tools techniques and processes while creating works of art.
- 6) reflect on similarities and differences between systems of belief and how these beliefs affect a country's policy of a human rights issue around the world.

Sample: A well-executed example of a shadow puppet will be provided and a visual demonstration of the art form of the shadow play.

Resources:

what are human rights?

http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/getactive/educators_lessonplan1.html

playing with shadows

[http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/3879/shadow light productions](http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/3879/shadow%20light%20productions)

[http://www.shadowlight.org/slp/the burning bush shadow puppets](http://www.shadowlight.org/slp/the%20burning%20bush%20shadow%20puppets)

<http://www.theburningbush.co.uk/shadow.htm>

<http://thirteen.org/shadowplay/>

Introduction/Motivation:

Introduce students to the concept of human rights:

What does it mean to be human?

What are human rights?

Are all people entitled to human rights?

Do you hold views or a connection to a particular human rights issue(s)?

Content Paper:

Presentation and discussion of shadow plays and the art form of puppet making utilizing the website:

Students will view Shadow Master a documentary featuring the Balinese art form of shadow play.

Instructor's Procedures:

Segue class discussion into individual research and selection of a human rights issue.

Students will view and participate in discussion utilizing the artsedge

website:

<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/shadowpuppets/artsedge.html>

Guide students through the research process and review outlines for performance and final script. Upon completion of scripts students will begin planning and sketching ideas for the characters and puppets to fit the roles in their play. Students may add props and music to accompany their play.

Materials and Materials Management:

X-acto knives, extra blades	Glue and masking tape
Scissors	White roll paper
Paint & brushes	Pencils, markers
Dowel rods, various diameters	Yarn, fabric
single hole punch	Brass fasteners
Poster board	Popsicle sticks
Spot light	

Clean-Up:

Students will be responsible to clean their own area including washing of brushes, tables and desks.

Student Procedures:

Discussion and group activity:

Students will use guiding questions to research the country and culture of their choice. Students will research and explore the chosen human rights issue in the context of the belief systems affecting the human rights issue.

Guiding questions for research:

What factors such as, gender issues, racial inequalities, politics, economics, affect the human rights issue in the country of your choice?

What historical events, belief systems and cultural influences affect the currently situation regarding your human rights issue?

Does the country have a policy, plan of action, or statement to improve and promote your particular human rights issue?

Puppet making:

- 1) Upon completion of their scripts students plan and sketch what character roles their play needs.
- 2) Each student decides what kind of puppet he or she should make to portray a particular character role.
- 3) Have the students watch the step-by-step guide to shadow puppets available on the artsedge website.
- 4) Next, have students cut the silhouette for their puppet design out of poster board using an x-acto knife. Remind students they will present their puppet in two forms 1) as a decorative art form to hang on the wall for display 2) as a silhouette projected upon the screen. Discuss

- 5) use of negative and positive areas to allow light to penetrate to provide visual detail to the shadow silhouette.
- 6) Have students add moving parts using a single hole punch and brass fasteners.
- 7) Supervise and assist students with construction of their puppets.
- 8) Add dowel rods using masking tape to provide functionality and control for the shadow master.
- 9) Students can use paint or markers to decorate their puppets to fit its role as a decorative art form apart from the shadow play.
- 10) Students will make props using the available materials as needed to enhance their puppet show. Students are to work as a team to help each during the performance phase of the shadow play. Students need to think about props that would enhance their performance.
- 11) Students will create a screen using white roll paper and pole supports provided by the teacher to use for their image projection (materials—large roll of white paper).

Closure/Review: After all plays/puppet shows are performed, discuss the assignment with the class. Analyze what aspects of the assignment were the most challenging, and ask the students what new ideas or thoughts about the human rights issue were raised from their research and production of their play.

Emphasize the commonalities and differences between worldviews. Continue the class discussion of human rights addressing differences that occur in a culture's worldview based upon a country's system of beliefs. Ask students "what other factors impact a country's views on human rights?"

Assessment: To assess individual student understanding, students will reflect upon the human rights and the various topics presented by their classmates. In the reflection students will address the following questions: Which particular human rights issue presented during the class project did you connect to most? What are the defining features of this human rights issue? What are some of the advantages and disadvantages enjoyed by people of the country affected by the human rights issue? What are some of the similarities and differences between the human rights issue from the country where the issue originates and U.S. policy regarding a similar human rights issue?

Assessment Instrument: See attached rubric

Appendix G

RUBRIC: Mixed Media Self Portrait

Name: _____

Date: _____

Circle the description that best describes how well List media used to create your self portrait:
you met the objectives for the project

Performance scale & Project objectives	Advanced	Proficient	Emerging	Needs Improvement	Score
Planning: Use of research tool & sketches to develop ideas	Student completed the research tool & at least three preliminary sketches to develop ideas Points: 10	Student completed the research tool & a minimum of preliminary sketches to develop ideas Points: 8	Student partially completed the research tool & no preliminary sketches to develop ideas Points: 5	Student did not complete the research tool or preliminary sketches to develop ideas Points: 2	_____
Use of elements and principles: emphasis, balance, harmony, etc. to create a pleasing composition	Student displays a clear understanding of the elements & principles of design. Arrangement of images is effectively organized to create unity. Points: 20	Student displays a moderate understanding of the elements & principles of design. Arrangement of images is effectively organized to create unity. Points: 18	Student displays a minimal understanding of the elements & principles of design. Arrangement of images is effectively organized to create unity. Points: 15	Student demonstrates no clear understanding of the elements & principles. Composition lacks unity and overall organization. Points: 12	_____
Execution and application of med: Explored a combination of materials to create a mixed media self portrait	Student demonstrates excellent exploration of mixed media techniques to create a self-portrait. Points: 20	Student demonstrates moderate exploration of mixed media techniques to create a self-portrait. Points: 18	Student demonstrates minimal exploration of mixed media techniques to create a self-portrait. Points: 15	Student relies upon one media technique to create a self-portrait. Points: 12	_____
Use of symbolism and metaphor: to communicate a message of self & influences shaping your sense of identity	Student demonstrates effective use of symbolism to represent larger ideas that visually communicate a personal message. Points: 20	Student demonstrates moderate use of symbolism to represent larger ideas that visually communicate a personal message. Points: 18	Student demonstrates minimal use of symbolism to represent larger ideas that visually communicate a personal message. Points: 15	Student lacks displays use of symbolism to represent larger ideas that visually communicate a personal message. Points: 12	_____
Creativity: Are your images fresh & unique	Student has taken the time to create a unique, very original, innovative design solution. Points: 20	Student's design reflects similar concepts and design solutions expressed in the designs of his/her classmates. Points: 18	Student's design solution is predictable reflecting similar concepts and design solutions expressed in other student's work. Points: 15	No original ideas. Student designs displays little or no effort to pursue an original or innovative solution. Points: 12	_____
Craftsmanship: Neat, clean & complete? Skillful use of the art tools & media?	Exceptional skill with media and display of personal best Points: 10	Good skill with media and display of personal best. Points: 8	Moderate skill with media and display of personal best. Points: 5	Poor skill with media and lacking personal best Points: 2	_____
Total Score: _____					

What does your artwork communicate about you?

What did you learn about yourself from the project or the process of creating your self-portrait?

What if anything, would you change about your approach or solution to this project?

Appendix H

RUBRIC: Art as Social Witness

Name _____

Date _____

Circle the description that best describes how well you met the objectives for the project

Performance Scale & Project Objectives	Advanced	Proficient	Emerging	Low Performance	Score
Planning & Concept Development: Student researched and selected a social issue to represent in the form of a linoleum print. Student completed a minimum of three sketches to develop the image.	Student researched and selected a social issue to represent in the form of a linoleum print. Student completed the required number of 3 or more sketches for their linoleum cut design. Points: 10	Student selected a social issue to represent in the form of a linoleum print with no research. Student completed the required number of 3 or more sketches for their linoleum cut design. Points: 8	Student selected a social issue to represent in the form of a linoleum print with no research. Student completed below the required number of 3 or more sketches for their linoleum cut design. Points: 5	Student selected a social issue to represent in the form of a linoleum print with no research. Student did not develop concept prior to executing their linoleum cut design. Points: 2	_____
Design Qualities: Student displays effective use of design. Design fills the 5"x7" picture plane & works well for the media. The print uses of positive and negative space, line, value, etc. to create a pleasing composition.	Student demonstrates a clear understanding of the elements and principles of design. Design works well for this media. Arrangement of images is effectively organized to create unity. Points: 20	Student demonstrates a moderate understanding of the elements & principles. Arrangement of images is moderately organized to create unity. Points: 18	Student demonstrates minimal understanding of the elements & principles resulting in a minimally organized composition. Points: 15	Student demonstrates no clear understanding of the elements & principles. Composition lacks unity and overall organization. Points: 12	_____
Effective Communication: Student's image communicates a clear connection and message relating to their chosen issue.	Student's design effectively communicates a connection and message related to their social issue. Points: 20	Student's design moderately communicates a connection and message related to their social issue. Points: 18	Student's design minimally communicates a connection and message related to their social issue. Points: 15	Student's design lacks a connection to their social issue and to communicate their intended message. Points: 12	_____
Carving & Printing: Student has created an edition of at least three identical prints. The application of ink is even and consistent between each print in the edition.	Student has created an edition of at least three closely matching prints. The application of ink is even and consistent between each print in the edition. Points: 20	Student has created an edition of three prints. The application of ink is moderately consistent between each print in the edition. Points: 18	Student has created an edition of less than three identical prints. The application of ink is inconsistent between each print in the edition. Points: 15	Student's prints lack consistency of duplication between quality of prints and application of ink. Points: 12	_____
Creativity: Student's visual concepts are fresh displaying an innovative solution.	Student has taken the time to create a unique, very original, innovative design solution. Points: 20	Student's design reflects similar concepts and design solutions expressed in the designs of his/her classmates. Points: 18	Student's design solution is predictable reflecting similar concepts and design solutions expressed in other student's work. Points: 15	No original ideas. Student designs displays little or no effort to pursue an original or innovative solution. Image copied from another artist's work. Points: 12	_____
Craftsmanship	Exceptional skill with media and display of personal best Points: 10	Good skill with media and display of personal best. Points: 8	Moderate skill with media and display of personal best. Points: 5	Poor skill with media and lacking personal best Points: 2	_____
Total Score: _____					

How do artists utilize their artwork as a personal voice to inform others and protest an important issue?

Teacher comments:

Appendix I

RUBRIC: World Civilizations & Human Rights

Name _____

Date _____

Circle the description that best describes how well you met the objectives for the project

Performance Scale & Project Objectives	Advanced	Proficient	Emerging	Low Performance	Score
Planning & Research: Student selected a country and human rights issue to research. Research focuses on historical events, belief systems and cultural influences affecting the currently situation.	Research is thorough focusing on historical events, belief systems and cultural influences affecting the currently situation. Points: 10	Research highlights historical events, belief systems and cultural influences affecting the currently situation. Points: 8	Research provides limited information on the historical events, belief systems and cultural influences affecting the currently situation. Points: 5	Student relies upon common knowledge of their human rights issue lacking evidence of attempting to research topic. Points: 2	_____
Script for shadow play: Student demonstrates understanding of a human rights issue in the form of a shadow play. Script features historical events, belief systems and cultural influences affecting the human rights issue.	Student's script communicates a clear understanding of the historical events, belief systems and cultural influences affecting the human rights issue. Points: 20	Student's script communicates a moderate understanding of the historical events, belief systems and cultural influences affecting the human rights issue. Points: 18	Student's communicates minimal understanding of the historical events, belief systems and cultural influences affecting the human rights issue. Points: 15	Student's script omits any reference to the historical events, belief systems and cultural influences affecting the human rights issue. Points: 12	_____
Design of shadow puppet: Student demonstrates connection to selected human rights issue in the creation of a shadow puppet.	Student's design effectively communicates a connection and message related to their social issue. Points: 20	Student's design moderately communicates a connection and message related to their social issue. Points: 18	Student's design minimally communicates a connection and message related to their social issue. Points: 15	Student's design lacks a connection to their social issue and to communicate their intended message. Points: 12	_____
Production & Performance: Student created an effective shadow play to communicate the range of cultural issues affecting a human rights issue.	Student created an excellent shadow play to communicate an excellent range of cultural issues affecting a human rights issue. Performance was well executed with attention to details. Points: 20	Student created a shadow play to communicate a moderate range of the cultural issues affecting a human rights issue. Performance demonstrates moderate effort and attention to detail. Points: 18	Student's shadow play communicates a narrow range of cultural issues affecting the human rights issue. Performance demonstrates minimal effort and attention to detail. Points: 15	Student's shadow play neglects to communicate the cultural issues affecting the human rights issue. Performance lacks effort and attention to detail. Points: 12	_____
Creativity: Student's visual concepts are fresh displaying an innovative solution.	Student demonstrates creativity in designing a unique & original puppet and performance to communicate a human rights issue. Points: 20	Student demonstrates a moderately unique & original puppet and performance to communicate a human rights issue. Points: 18	Student demonstrates a minimally unique & original puppet and performance to communicate a human rights issue. Points: 15	Student's puppet and performance lack a fresh & original approach to communicate a human rights issue. Points: 12	_____
Craftsmanship	Exceptional skill with media and display of personal best Points: 10	Good skill with media and display of personal best. Points: 8	Moderate skill with media and display of personal best. Points: 5	Poor skill with media and lacking personal best. Points: 2	_____
Total Score: _____					

What are some of the similarities and differences between the human rights issue from the country you presented and U.S. policy regarding a similar human rights issue?