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**Evaluating Social Justice in Art Education in the Washoe County School District:
A Case Study**

Presented to the Faculty of
The Graduate Program of the Department of Art and Design
at the University of Nebraska, Kearney

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
Degree of Master of Arts in Education
Major: Art Education
Art 895: Art Education Research Paper
Under the Supervision of Dr. Ross Schlemmer

By
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Abstract

This research is inspired by my own desire to improve my teaching by implementing social justice lesson planning into my curriculum and to make it easier for other educators to do so. I believe that social justice is one of the most important topics we can teach that our students are facing today. By integrating social justice into art education, students can think critically about oppression, injustice, and inequality, that is happening to them and around them. Social justice in art education is a critical tool that students can utilize to examine oppression within our institutions and in our communities, they can be proactive in bringing awareness to injustice and promoting change. Social justice contains components that could further the development of students through inquiry, collaboration, and possibly community-based art that promote a real-world experience for students to make a difference and create change. Through social justice in art education, students can develop *critical consciousness*, Freire's (1970) theory of one becoming aware of societal inequities and begin the practice of creating change by understanding and participating in democracy.

Keywords: Social justice, socially engaged art, community-based art, oppression, injustice, critical consciousness.

Chapter One

Introduction

During a recent visit to the Nevada Museum of Art I was reminded of the importance of social justice in art education (SJAE). One of the exhibitions, *The Art of Jean LaMarr (2022)* addressed issues of cultural stereotypes, representations of women and Native American people, and ancestral traditions (Nevada Museum of Art, 2022). LaMarr primarily works in the medium of printmaking, many images contain ancestral figures juxtaposed against modern technology, making comparisons of the past and present situation of indigenous people and how colonialism has affected their lives. *Some Kind of Buckaroo (1990)*, a LaMarr screen-print depicts a proud American Indian dressed in modern rodeo attire, a designer western shirt, wholly chaps, and a cowboy hat. With hands on hips and chin raised, the figure stands proudly upon a rounded planetary shape decorated with a repeating floral pattern, could be the Earth. The sky is spattered with stars and on the left of the figure are two modern F-16 fighter jets flying diagonally into the darkened sky. Three strands of barbed wire stretch horizontally across the image and cross the figure at thigh level. The print says survival and adaptation, shows the resilience of the indigenous people as they endure imperialism. Another of LaMarr's artworks, *Sweat for Healing* (n.d.) comments on the indignities of what happened to American Indian children who were taken from reservations and families and sent to white boarding schools. The artwork is a 3-d mini sweat lodge with black and white photographs decorating the outer surface of children that endured the atrocities. In these schools, tribal children were forcefully assimilated into white culture and deprived of their own (Nevada Museum of Art, 2022.). Their hair was cut, they were not allowed to speak their own languages, nor practice their own spiritual beliefs. The artwork

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creates awareness and promotes healing of the events that took place. These events are only now being talked about due to artists and activists like Jean LaMarr that are bringing them to light.

Seeing LaMarr's (2022) exhibition reminded me of a news story that was broadcast on the local radio station. According to Palma (2023), in the town of Minden, Nevada there was a sundown siren going off every day for one hundred years. It is considered a town tradition and residents insist that was to honor the local fire department and first responders, but the truth is the siren is connected to Minden's history of being a sundown town. According to Palma, a town ordinance was created in 1917 that mandated all non-white people to be out of town limits by 6:30 p.m. or face consequences. The ordinance was still in place as recently as 1974. According to Palma, Washoe tribal elders shared stories of how their people were punished if they didn't obey the law. The siren, still being used today is a painful reminder of tribal history as many acts of violence took place, men were beaten and had their braids cut off, women were beaten and raped (Palma, 2023). It is only now that legislation is being sought to shut down the sirens in the state of Nevada because of activism. These are just two examples why social justice in art education is important. These injustices that happened within our communities, and people of those communities are still healing from those atrocities.

I am embarrassed to admit that I did not know what social justice in art education (SJAE) was prior to embarking in the masters program at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Fortunately, I had unknowingly worked on social justice topics during my undergraduate career at Chico-State while working on an emphasis in printmaking. During my undergraduate career I was very interested in history and chose history as a topic to explore in art. I had taken some history and art history courses related to the American Indians and really learned the truth about what happened to them. I became very well read about the topic and I enjoyed investigating

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history and seeking the truth. I set out to portray the atrocities that took place against the American Indians in my art, I wanted to bring attention to the injustice that occurred.

Unfortunately, my art only reached a small audience, my fellow students and family. I had gained an awareness and understanding of oppression but was unable to create change.

According to Freire (1970) one must reach *critical consciousness*, achieving awareness of one's situation with an in-depth understanding of the world. Critical consciousness also includes acting against the oppressive elements in one's life that are clarified by that awareness. As a teacher, I have been trying to get my students to think critically about the world, and to create art that has meaning. I have not specifically taught social justice and am trying to design a lesson that is meaningful, and figuring out what strategies and steps that should include. I suggest it is not enough to know about oppression and make art about it, it is important for students to investigate and to act against oppression to reach critical consciousness, students can collaborate through socially engaged art and can create change through community-based art for best practices of SJAE and effective learning.

It is crucial for students to be aware of oppression and injustice as it is directly affecting their lives as well as the lives of others. SJAE is a platform that students can utilize to bring attention to and to create change against legislation that diminishes the rights of individuals or groups of people. There are political organizations petitioning to change school board policies and enact legislation that diminishes the rights of our students and society. LGBTQ students are now a popular target for conservative groups to attack through policy and legislation. According to Peele (2023) there has been a record 70 anti-LGBTQ laws enacted so far this year. These laws consist of banning gender affirming care for transgender youth, require or allow misgendering of transgender youth, target drag performances, create a license to discriminate, and censor school

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curriculum. The ongoing attack against people of color is shown in another example as the Florida state board of education approved new African American history standards for grades K-12 including descriptions of slavery that suggests African Americans benefited from skills they learned while enslaved (Nagarro, 2023). Beyond legislation and policies that diminish individual rights and the rights of communities there are also attempts at censorship of what students can read and how they can express themselves, art will not be exempt from policies of censorship. According to NAEA (2019) political groups and leaders in various positions are trying to remove specific artworks from public view and trying to censor exhibitions, they are trying to label artworks as controversial and trying to identify artists as objectional. These attempts develop from a perspective that censorship is necessary to prevent the corruption of morality and political subversion. According to NAEA social justice topics are considered controversial by different groups. Students should be free to express their ideas in art with minimal restrictions that allows them to bring awareness to topics that directly affect them and to create change for themselves and for the better of society. According to Art Sprouts (2023) art is a universal language that can surpass barriers of language, culture, and geography. Art can provoke a range of emotions from audiences and can encourage change through the translation of powerful messages. Art has the power to provoke thought, challenge perceptions, and inspire human beings to have a deeper level of connection. Art can be a canvas where marginalized voices can be heard, to promote social justice, and initiate social change. Art is a powerful tool of communication that can influence the passions and intellects of people on an international scale, despite differences in peoples' backgrounds, beliefs, or experiences (Art Sprouts, 2023).

A problem with SJAE may be that art educators are not effectively teaching social justice or not teaching it at all. The Washoe County School District (WCSD) does not have a required

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curriculum for any grade levels for teaching art. It is up to art teachers to develop and create curriculum for students, the only requirement is that art curriculum meets the national standards for the visual art at grade level, therefore there is no specific requirement to teach SJAE in this district. Teachers may be more focused on teaching traditional methods and skills in art than socially relevant topics. Other problems are teachers may not be utilizing differentiated instructional strategies to help guide the learning of students. Teachers may be teaching the banking method, only delivering information to students through lecture, students may not be forming their own conclusions through inquiry. Students may not be translating concepts or ideas of social justice clearly or be given opportunities to display their work to impact change.

There may be additional barriers to teaching social justice in the traditional public-school setting, I believe that collaboration is an important factor in the effectiveness of teaching social justice, as the more people that are involved, the more the topic is discussed and brought to light, it is through collaboration that activism takes place. Classroom management and behavioral issues could impede the process of learning through collaboration and community-based art. There could be many factors from the teachers perspective that dissuade the teacher from engaging in effective to highly effective practices in SJAE.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to examine how high school art teachers in WCSD are implementing and teaching SJAE curriculum, then using information to build a criterion for improvement. This study will create a discussion for best practices to utilize in implementing and teaching that can serve as a model for art teachers integrating SJAE. This study gathers data on three important features of social justice in art education. The first, the study examines social justice curriculum for practices in delivering content for social justice in the classroom, what is

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the lesson comprised of, how is the teacher engaging with and exchanging information with students, how do students learn about social justice and how do they show understanding.

Second, the study examines if and how teachers are using socially engaged art practices for promoting social justice, is there collaboration with each other and the community. Third, the study examines how and if teachers are being successful in community-based art practices for promoting social justice. Are teachers reaching out to those in the community who have suffered injustice, are teachers creating experiences for their students to collaborate with people in the community or inviting people of the community to the classroom and working together to solve problems and create change. This study is important to the field of art education because it will improve the implementation and effectiveness of teaching SJAE in schools and help students achieve critical consciousness so that they may participate in a democracy.

Research Questions:

The guiding research questions for this study are:

1. How are WCSD art teachers implementing and teaching social justice curriculum in the classroom?
2. How successful is WCSD at integrating and teaching SJAE?
3. What should a successful criterion for teaching SJAE include?

Chapter 2

Methods

This case study will analyze data consisting of lesson plans, student examples, surveys, and interviews collected from WCSD art teachers to examine how SJAE is being implemented and taught in WCSD. Secondary art teachers of WCSD are asked to provide lesson plans and student examples and are surveyed for how they are teaching social justice in art education. Teachers are surveyed if they teach social justice and how they are delivering lessons, how do they engage and interact with students, what differentiated instruction do they utilize to help the understanding and learning of students, what types of collaboration take place, what investigative and questioning techniques do they utilize. Teachers are surveyed if they teach social justice with a socially engaged aspect and if they are using community-based art for a real-world experience and affecting change. Lastly, the survey examines reasons why teachers are not teaching SJAE. Teachers who have implemented and are teaching social justice will be interviewed to further shape a criterion for best practices. The data collected from surveys and interviews will lead to improving implementing and teaching SJAE.

A *case study* method is defined by Merriam-Webster (n.d.) as “a method of research used especially in sociology by which accumulated case histories are analyzed with a view toward formulating general principles”. Case studies are used in education frequently to find solutions to specific problems. The American Psychology Association (APA) (2020) defines a case study more specifically as illustrating a problem in depth and points out a process to solving a problem or bringing awareness on needed research. In case studies, researchers collaborate closely with individuals or groups, they obtain data through observations and report on the analysis to solve the problem or create awareness of that problem so it can be further investigated. The APA

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definition highlights reasons why case studies are widely used for the improvement of education, because educators are collaborating with individuals, groups, communities, when dealing with classrooms, courses, and schools, with a problem to be analyzed. According to Davenport and Bergmark-O'Connor (2014) a *case study* allows researchers to gain insights into phenomena or issues or to identify new areas of inquiry by examining an individual, a group, a variable, an episode, or a series of episodes. According to Hancock and Algozzine (2017) a researcher should do a case study when the research topic addresses question or questions that focus on describing, documenting, or discovering characteristics of a phenomena. The phenomenon in this case study is SJAE and how it is implemented and taught. I use case study because I anticipate that there may be unknown insights and reflections that may become known during the study.

This study uses a case study methodology to examine how teachers in WCSD are teaching SJAE and to extend the boundaries of existing knowledge of how to teach social justice in the field of art education, to open the door for developing a criterion to improve practices. The case study method is appropriate as it will help formulate general principles to be included in a SJAE lesson plan, to improve implementation and teaching SJAE in the WCSD, to lead to the creation of a standard lesson plan that can be implemented and shared by WCSD high school art teachers.

Boundaries of the Case

This study is bound by the number of secondary art teachers of WCSD that share artifacts and respond to surveys and participate in interviews within the allotted time frame the study takes place. The study takes place from August 29, 2023, to December 3, 2023. The study examines artifacts, lesson plans provided by art teachers, and a lesson plan from an online source. It evaluates information given by teachers, an online source, and discusses information provided in surveys and outcomes of interviews.

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Data Collection Tools

- 1) **Artifact analysis**- I examine lesson plans and student works collected from teachers of WCSD and an online resource, The Art of Education University.
- 2) **Survey**- I examine a survey taken by WCSD high school art teachers of their experience in implementing, teaching social justice in the classroom, and expanding social justice into the community, or reasons why they have not taught SJAE.
- 3) **Interview**- I interview colleagues, secondary art teachers in WCSD for ideas to improve.

Data Analysis

The study will rely heavily on artifacts and surveys to examine teaching SJAE in the WCSD. Secondary art teachers of the WCSD will be asked to share lesson plans and examples of student work regarding SJAE. The lesson plans will be compared to a rubric, **see figure 1**. The rubric examines teacher interaction with students, opportunities for viewing and discussing artwork related to social justice, differentiated instruction strategies, methods of inquiry, types of collaboration, and opportunities for displaying artwork, and meeting the national standards of visual art. The rubric will rate teachers lesson plans in comparison to three categories, minimally effective, effective, and highly effective.

After collecting lesson plans and student examples a survey, **see figure 2**, will be sent to teachers that will ask questions about how they are teaching SJAE, how are they implementing instruction and exchanging information with students, are they using differentiated instructional practices to guide the learning of students, are they utilizing investigative and questioning practices when having their students research social justice topics, are students collaborating

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with each other, are teachers and students connecting the project to the community for a real-world experience.

Interviews will be conducted with WCS D art teachers that participated in sharing artifacts and submitting surveys for suggestions and insights for successful strategies when teaching social justice to further develop a criterion for evaluation. According to Davenport and Bergmark-O'Connor (2014) interviews add an important viewpoint by describing the case from the perspective of others, to give the researcher insights that the researcher may not know about or does not see. This case study will use document analysis and interview for different viewpoints. According to Davenport and Bergmark-O'Connor (2014), *triangulation* is seeking multiple perspectives to study the phenomena to ensure a more trustworthy study. Through document analysis, surveys, and interviews, I will be seeking multiple perspectives on how to improve teaching SJAE. Interviews will follow up the survey to flesh out highly effective strategies. I will describe the artifacts, surveys, and interviews using thick description that helps readers to come to their own conclusions about the effectiveness of the content. According to Davenport and Bergmark-O'Connor (2014) case study researchers can use *thick description* to provide an indirect experience for readers who bring their own experiences and add their own ideas. The data collected is relevant to the topic of teaching SJAE in the WCS D because it will let educators know the status of the topic of social justice and how it is being taught through art in our school district and can lead to improvement.

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Limitations and Biases

Limitations to this study are related to the timeframe given to complete the case study. The timeframe provided is fifteen weeks, which includes writing the proposal, conducting the study, and writing the paper. Delimitations to the study may include the amount or lack of knowledge that I possess or gain during the timeframe of the case study on SJAE, this may inhibit questions asked on surveys and interviews, it may inhibit the assessment criteria. My personal bias may influence the rendering of what should be included in lesson planning for social justice. My personal opinions are based upon my own ideas and knowledge learned from scholars that have written about SJAE and may reflect on what scholars I have selected in the literature review, and what ideas I believe are important in the discussion and conclusion of the case study. Other limitations to this case study include a small sampling pool, limited to the WCSD. Although WCSD is a very large school district and there are about 30 secondary art teachers, the study is limited to those that reply and participate in data collection requests. This study also relies on whether teachers have implemented and are teaching SJAE in the district. Some teachers may have limited responses if they are not teaching social justice or only teaching aspects of social justice. There may be no teachers or few teachers in the district that are teaching SJAE which also may limit ideas for furthering improvement.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

There are four parts to this literature review. The first will examine what social justice in art education is and why it should be taught. Part two will examine best practices and strategies for teaching social justice in art education. Part three will examine how to move social justice beyond the classroom and into a real-world experience. Part four will identify problems with implementing social justice in art education.

What is social justice and why is it important?

According to Duignan (2023) *social justice* is the just and equitable treatment of all individuals and social groups within society. *Social justice* also refers to policies that seek fairness in social, political, economic, and legislative platforms. Duignan states, the term also pertains to social movements that advocate for fairness, equity, inclusion, and self-determination, for exploited, oppressed, or marginalized people. Social justice is directly linked to Freire's (1970) theory of critical consciousness; understanding critical consciousness and its components helps teachers guide the process and expand understanding of the concept of social justice with students. According to Watts, Diemer, and Voight (2011), there are three components of critical consciousness development: critical reflection, political efficacy, and critical action. According to Watts et al. *critical reflection* refers to an understanding and rejection of societal inequities, these include social, economic, racial/ethnic, and gender inequities that restrict the welfare of individuals or groups. Critical reflection also pertains to understanding that societal inequities are built into our institutions and laws. According to Watts et al. *political efficacy* is the awareness to effect social and political change by individuals or groups through activism. According to Watts

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et al., if people are aware that change is possible, they are more inclined to engage in critical action. *Critical action* refers to individual or collective actions taken to alter the nature of society which are perceived to be unjust, such as institutional policies and practices. According to Watts et al., voting, community organizing, and peaceful protests are types of critical action.

According to Garber (2004) social justice education addresses the goals and perspectives of feminist, multicultural, disability rights, environmental, community-based critical pedagogy, social reconstruction, and visual culture art education. Garber gives us four themes developed from practice; identity; understanding beyond ourselves, racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination; and becoming political subjects, are themes used for instructing beginning teachers.

SJAE is also about creating curriculum that is meaningful to students, art educators are responsible to help students learn that social justice in art is a learning process where students see that creating art is not just about building skill and making aesthetically pleasing imagery. SJAE also about critical thinking and reflecting on social and political issues as part of educational growth and participating in democracy. Desai and Chalmers (2007) suggest students need to learn that artists not only make art as a career, but they also make art to challenge the status quo. Desai and Chalmers argue that art educators have traditionally rewarded individual skill but should be more geared towards recognizing social and aesthetic studies that affect social and cultural change. Desai and Chalmers highlight the importance that art be more critical than decorative. It is through SJAE that students can achieve critical consciousness and learn how to participate in a democracy.

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Best practices and strategies for teaching social justice

Art educators play a key role in developing curriculum and implementing SJAE into that curriculum; they create opportunities to connect students with different platforms to highlight social justice issues. Teaching social justice begins with the teacher believing in the importance of social justice followed by how the teacher interacts, engages with, and leads students to learning, this requires a teacher to reflect upon how they teach with a critical lens. According to Garber (2004) teachers need to envision themselves as agents of change, they need to be engaged as cultural workers, as intellectuals capable of reflecting on their situations and their roles in society, teachers need to engage in open and critical dialogue, and engage as critical citizens working for a democratically just society. Garber suggests it is important for teachers to be able to conceptualize, design and implement ideas, and experiences in educating students, rather than implementing pre-packaged content and instructional procedures. Teachers need to make sure that students are learning knowledge and culture themselves, not just receiving information.

A classroom should serve as a microcosm of a democratic society. Good curriculum should be constructed of empathy, democracy, and critical practice (Ballengee-Morris, C., & Daniel, V. A. H., & Stuhr, P., 2010). Ballengee-Morris et al. suggest these ideals are derived from *multicultural education*, a reform in education enacted during the civil rights movement dedicated to providing more equitable opportunities for the disenfranchised. Ballengee-Morris et al. define democratic values that should be provided in multicultural curriculum, it should be grounded in the lives of students, should provide a critical lens to view all social and cultural systems, establish a safe environment in which to do critical inquiry, incite an investigation of bias, present justice for all as a goal, provide for participatory and experiential involvement. Lastly, should be hopeful, joyful, kind, visionary, affirming, activist, academically rigorous, integrated, culturally sensitive,

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and utilize community resources. It is through research in *critical multi-culturalism*, the lens in which educators analyze how they teach multiculturalism in the classroom (Acuff, 2018). Kraehe and Crabbe (2020) suggest practical strategies to help develop pedagogy in the face of injustice through the lens of critical multiculturalism. One, art educators must see ourselves as guides rather than just teaching skills and measuring outcomes, we must create a personalized experience for students. Two, we must get to know our students, build relationships, and connect with them. Third, invite students to take part in multicultural projects. Four, approach teaching art with humility, be interested in our student's ideas and viewpoints. Teachers can learn from students as well, teachers and students should be learning and pushing ideas together. Fifth, Crabbe states "check your savior hat at the door. Pitying or fixing people is a top-down approach that is not particularly helpful or wanted" (p. 6). Instead, we should work collectively at building relationships. Sixth, be flexible and willing to adapt, we must respond to the needs and interests of our students. Lastly, Crabbe reminds us that language differences should not be a barrier of communication. Crabbe suggests that we can communicate through creating art, with mark making, laughter, and through gesture. Kraehe and Crabbe suggest that the ideal teaching and learning atmosphere is free of authoritarian rule.

Kraehe and Crabbe's suggestions are in line with Freire's (1970) critical pedagogy and teaching model where Freire pointed out the social nature of learning, that teachers and students are both learners and can learn together through collaboration. Helguera (2011) provides a framework for contemplating the complex issues of socially engaged practices and is instrumental in identifying ways to promote socially engaged art through collaboration. Helguera does not provide a concrete definition for socially engaged art, instead, he describes it as all art with various levels of participation. Helguera describes levels of participatory structures. The

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first is *nominal participation*, a viewer thinks about or reacts to an artwork in a passive manner. The second is *directed participation*, a visitor adds to an artwork by completing a task directed by the artist. The third is *creative participation*, the visitor adds a creative idea to the artwork within the structure supplied by the artist. The fourth is collaborative participation, a visitor helps the artist develop the structure and content of the artwork. It is through collaboration that can lead SJAE into the real-world experience of community-based art.

Finally, Dewhurst (2010) provides us with a framework and outlines defining features of SJAE through connecting, questioning, and translating. Dewhurst defines *connecting* as artists engaging in critical reflection of how injustice plays out in the world. Dewhurst identifies *questioning* as the investigation and understanding of the issue. Dewhurst names *translating* as to how the artist communicates the problem to the world. Dewhurst (2011) describes three critical lenses in which to analyze social justice in art education through intention, process, and context. Dewhurst distinguishes *intention* as how an artist intends to impact society. Dewhurst places the defining features of connecting, questioning, and translating, under the previously mentioned lens of process. Dewhurst labels *context* as social location, where the artwork is created and by whom. Dewhurst (2014) examines how to empower students with social justice projects and identifies strategies for what is called activist art pedagogy. Dewhurst's activist art class sought to immerse students in making art with small studio activities, in depth conversations, questioning and research, and a student driven final project followed up by a culminating show. Dewhurst's curriculum focused on fostering conversations about the role of art in social change and investigating topics. Dewhurst empowers students by encouraging them to guide their own learning while emphasizing inquiry and social engagement. Dewhurst and Desai (2016) inform us of the importance of interviewing when engaging in social justice art projects. Through

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research-based art projects, students learned how to prepare investigative questions. Students learned how to question individuals in powerful positions. They learned how to examine responses, and how to interpret the information they learned into a creative platform for larger audiences. Dewhurst and Desai's strategies for teaching social justice are reflective of Freire's suggestions of encouraging active inquiry that is led by curiosity. Freire (1970) believed without active inquiry; students miss opportunities to develop into independent people who can critically reflect on their world.

Social Justice beyond the classroom

According to Ballengee-Morris, et al. (2010) curriculum should engage students and teachers with a sense of an educational purpose, it requires a connection of visual culture with surrounding communities. Delacruz (2010) suggested SJAE curriculum encourages art teachers to reach out and make connections with their local communities to enact community arts-based practices by exemplifying a civic partnership. According to Delacruz, these practices include a cross cultural friendship with local organizations, creative individuals who are connected to culture, and individuals who are civic minded. Carpenter II, Taylor, and Cho (2010) attach service-learning as a key element of SJAE as students increase knowledge, develop skills, and clarify values, through reflecting on the direct experience of service learning. Hochtritt, Ahschwede, Halsey-Dutton, Fiesel, Chevalier, Miller, and Farrar (2018) look at a variety of international examples to highlight the generality of public pedagogical opportunities in visual culture that include a festival, an individual, a citywide symposium, an online community, a cultural group, and a museum exhibition. Hochtritt et al. show us alternative platforms that can be engaged for social justice opportunities. Hochtritt et al. suggest that public pedagogy and social justice are rooted within people's experiences and are in contrary to institutional settings

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like schools, museums, and government that re-reinforce the status quo. There are different venues for teaching social justice in the community. Hochtritt et al. describes the Fiesta del Senor de Choquekillka in Peru as an example of a festival that celebrates a cultural experience, which contains themes including dances that mock powerful figures and systems of oppression.

Sanders-Bustle (2010) suggests service learning or community-based art is a give-and-take effort where learning happens with all participants, students, teachers, community participants are all learners. Schlemmer (2016) suggests the advantages of implementing socially engaged practices fosters greater critical awareness of the artist's role that is based upon collaboration rather than a solitary focus. Schlemmer presents the opportunity to develop socially relevant programs for teaching art, that includes community, social justice, democracy, collective responsibility, activism, and equity to confront established perceptions of both art and education. According to Schlemmer, it is important to focus on creating alternative educational possibilities that include the community as part of the environment for learning.

Service learning helps build social connections and gives students a heightened sense of awareness by challenging students to make a difference through engaging in the community through active participation (Schlemmer, 2016). Schlemmer, Carpenter II, and Hitchcock (2017), show us social justice can be collaborative with education students, faculty, artists, and members of a community, they made hand built ceramic water filters to raise awareness of a crisis with a creative response. Schlemmer et al. show us that art is not just creating aesthetically pleasing art objects but to build a more equitable world using creative processes of art and pedagogical practices. Schlemmer et al. challenge the status quo of traditional education and show us that the real education experience is working with others on real issues to solve problems.

Problems with teaching social justice in art education

Garber (2004) examines problems encountered by students and teachers implementing the theory in ideological and economic contexts. According to Garber, engaging in practices of social justice in some school districts can be high risk behavior, teachers can be retaliated against or fired from their jobs by encouraging critique or change of the status quo. Problems with teaching social justice in art education can be related to the lack of understanding of social justice by the teacher themselves, new teachers may have limited exposure to understanding of social justice and how to implement into art curriculum. According to Li (2020) teachers may still be emphasizing teaching skills and techniques over critical thought. Although the national standards were recently re-written for art education to be more collaborative, expressive, and culturally relevant in nature, art teachers may be slow to change curriculum, slow to add socially relevant topics to their already built curriculum. Current art teachers may be entrenched in teaching traditional artmaking and may have little room to explore socially relevant concepts with students. According to Desai (2010) art education programs focus on methods, aesthetics, child and adolescent development and art history, the curriculum does not have room to involve socially relevant content.

According to Delacruz (2010) not every art teacher has the mobility or access to resources or to people in the community that share the belief of the importance of social issues. Not every teacher has time in their curriculum to engage students in conversations and activities that embrace aspects of social lives that really matter to our students, families, and communities. These reasons raised by scholars lead us to ask questions regarding the structure of our schools, art curriculum, and the education of art teachers. Where and how do new art teachers learn about

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SJAE? Is it taught in undergraduate art education and credential programs? Is there professional development for SJAE or is it only learned in a masters program?

Chapter 4

Discussion

Lesson plans from online source

Several years ago, WCSD adopted framework by the Art of Education University as a resource for improvement of pedagogy for art teachers. There is no specific lesson plan for SJAE, there is an article that suggests what to include in a lesson plan. Ten Hoeve (2016) suggests steps to tackle a lesson plan for social justice. Ten Hoeve suggests starting with finding a compelling example, choosing an artist and a cause that is appropriate for your students. Ten Hoeve is a middle school teacher and suggests that she might use Keith Haring or Ai Weiwei, but teachers should choose an artist that they are passionate about. Ten Hoeve explains that if she was using Haring, she might talk about how he addressed issues like AIDS, racial and income inequality, nuclear proliferation, and pair with imagery that is relatable and visually compelling, then challenge students to take up a cause. Ten-Hoeve suggests using these steps to guide students through the process of creating powerful works of art: One, ask students to think about what is important to them. Help draw out what students are passionate about by asking questions: What are causes that are near and dear to them? Two, have students research causes using social media, help students explore, point out places to start. Three, challenge students to create art they will share on social media to honor their chosen cause. Have students think about how they can visually represent and support their cause. Ten-Hoeve suggests engaging in a discussion about symbolism and metaphor. Lastly, Ten Hoeve says watch as students are reminded of their power as they upload their work to social media and see it shared, liked, and retweeted, they will be amazed. Students can use social media as their platform to affect and create change. Ten-Hoeve

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suggests a platform like Edmodo would help if a teacher were worried about monitoring content.

Lesson plans provided by WCSD art teachers

G. Krutz

G. Krutz is a second year teacher with a Masters in Education degree shares a lesson that she teaches to an *Art I*, a beginning high school art class that encompasses 9-12 graders. Krutz shares a power point regarding a social justice lesson plan that she presents to students. The lesson plan is introduced with the artwork of Keith Haring. The lesson opens with “read about the artist page,” it features two colorful images by Haring, and a link to a YouTube video. The video is a short summary of Haring utilizing the subway system and drawing his messages on blank wall spaces, it is considered illegal, but Haring does this even after he becomes a known artist (CBS Sunday Morning, 2014). The video briefly describes the content of Haring’s work and his success from an unknown graffiti artist to becoming famous. The next slide encompasses historical definitions of art movements and images related to Pop art, Andy Warhol, and Roy Lichtenstein, then back to Haring images again with a quote “Ignorance equals fear”. The next slide contains directions of making art using the aesthetics of Keith Haring. How to draw and exaggerate simplified figures, patterns, and movement lines. There is a 1–6-page artmaking packet that accompanies the slide presentation that guides students through idea development. A worksheet on social issues follows the drawing packet. In the lesson, it appears students have a choice as to what social issues they research and utilize to create a message through art. In the slide show a quote reads, “When the artists recognize a particular social issue using art and creativity, artists use creative skills to work within their community to affect change.” The quote is next to examples of student works, some are similar, and some are different than the style of

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Keith Haring, it appears that students have more choice on how they translate topics. There is a list of social issues; pollution, climate change, racism, homelessness, bullying, depression, suicide, and discrimination. The slide instruction says “choose something that is important to you and that you want to change”. Another instruction pushes for investigating the social issue by suggesting talking to friends and family. The slide asks the question, “Is there anything that they have been affected by? How? Why? How did it affect them?” The latter part of the slide show shows a schedule for students to follow for distinct parts of the artwork and when to turn it in. Overall, the lesson encompasses several aspects of social justice, it guides students with choices and suggests investigative practices through questioning, it provides a list of different social issues related to social justice and provides examples of images related to social justice for further understanding. Students are instructed to translate a message of social justice through art. This is a very thorough description of a lesson, but you need to evaluate if it’s a good social justice lesson.

P. Biller

P. Biller states that she does not specifically teach social justice but integrates social issues when teaching figurative drawing. Biller has students explore social issues and create commentary work around that. Biller claims that students sometimes go the route of social justice, but she does not specifically have that conversation with them. The steps include investigation, exploration of visual metaphor, and a composition design for meaning. Billar shares a presentation and examples of artwork that was originally used during our hybrid due to covid. The project is called the *Social Commentary Project*, the artwork that students create is figurative with a unique surface of mixed media. The presentation begins with a slide titled, Figures in modern art, and displays several artworks that portray different figures from different

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artists from genres like cubism, impressionism, post impressionism, and showing some diversity with an image of African art. The subtitle says, Artists continue to explore the human form through hyperrealism, abstraction, exaggeration, and many other styles. The following slides contain images and descriptions of several contemporary artists that feature the figure as their subject matter. Billar shows a variety of contemporary artists and examples along with descriptions of their artist profiles and processes of how they work. The presentation continues with suggestions of a variety of surfaces that students can choose to work upon ranging from marbled watercolor to corrugated cardboard and collaged newspaper surfaces. The next slide and one important to social justice is titled Social commentary through figurative work, is followed by Picasso's 1937 painting of Guernica. The next slide goes on to explain the meaning behind the painting, a shocking example of the atrocity that took place during the Spanish Revolution by Hitler as requested by Franco just prior to World War II. The painting is a difficult metaphor to understand unless one knows about the atrocity that took place in the town of Guernica, this could spark an investigation by students into its meaning. Examples of several other artists and artworks are embedded in the presentation prior to arriving at a slide that reads, choose a topic,. The next slide defines a social problem as an issue with a society that makes it difficult for people to achieve their full potential, followed by a list of social issues, racism, sexism, unequal opportunity, agism, malnutrition, global warming, immigration, domestic violence, substance abuse, healthcare, civil rights, foster care, environment, gun rights, poverty, unemployment, homelessness, air pollution, bullying, LBGQ+ rights, and education. The list is comprised of suggestions of choices of social issues for students to investigate in their artworks. The next slide has a diagram of what this investigation can look like within a sketchbook, it contains a mind map of idea development, the outline contains headings labeled social issues with six bullet

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points for students to choose topics to explore. The next heading is labeled topic followed by source one and main points, followed by source two and main points. This outline provides a template for students to begin an investigation into social issues. The next slide creates a personal response for students to share their experience with social issues as it reads, list five social issues that you are concerned about and have experience with. The next slide instructs students to choose one of the social issues from their list, then asks them to look up current information on the internet about the social issue, it says that students need three quality sources in bold, the slide suggests using a search phrase like social issue or social cause and social issue healthcare. The slide suggests sources like news articles, editorials, and professional organization websites, are quality sources. Students are required to use three sources, write down the website and the main ideas from the articles. The instructions go on to explain the expectations that are required in the presentation of the artwork regarding artmaking and design. The instructions are quite elaborate, and the slide show goes on to help students to incorporate meaning using metaphor and analogy. There are following slides that require students to create thumbnail sketches of analogies regarding their social issue topics. Then we get to a slide titled, plan your composition, this slide is followed by the expectations that state, create a work of art that contains a visual message about a social issue, then, every choice that you make about media and design should impact your work, the slide show continues to guide students through definitions of the elements and principles of design.

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WCSD art teacher surveys

K. Cordero

K. Cordero, a 9-12 grade ceramics teacher responded to the survey. Cordero responded that sometimes she teaches social justice but that it depended upon the skill that is being taught and does not have a specific lesson for social justice. Cordero introduces concepts in social justice by showing artists that create work around social justice and helps students understand meaning by showing visual examples and having conversations. Cordero claims to use vocabulary lists, visual guides, and sentence framing guides as strategies to help guide learning for social justice. Cordero utilizes collaboration with turn and talk, group projects, and conversations. Cordero does not have students engage in investigative or questioning practices for social justice. Cordero's goal is to do one community outreach project each year that is an extension of a social justice project done in class. Cordero says transportation, volunteers, and time, are roadblocks from extending learning of social justice beyond the classroom. Cordero reports that there are not many opportunities to highlight student work at her school. There is an art show at the end of the year for all student work but not specifically for social justice. When asked if Cordero thought she was teaching social justice effectively, she reported that she was not at all, and could be doing so much more.

G. Krutz

Krutz reported that she is teaching social justice because it is important for students to learn about the world around them. Krutz said that her students learn about Keith Haring and have a brief examination of art that makes some kind of political or social statement. Students are asked to think about things in the world they feel passionately about, and eventually make an

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artwork representing that. Krutz helps students understand the meaning of social justice by using a lot of visual examples. Krutz has her students look at several pieces of artwork that make a statement, students are encouraged to discuss with her and with each other, and to express something important to the world. Krutz used differentiated instruction through the way she structures her classes and by using short demos and lectures followed by work periods. During the work period, Krutz spent more time discussing with the students who need help or need something more. In Krutz' classes collaboration transpires in the way the class is structured, students spend all year forming a community in the classroom with those around them, she encourages students to discuss with each other, but she has not employed any kind of group projects so far. Krutz reports that her students do not engage in any kind of interviewing, although she reports that it would be interesting to start doing. Krutz makes lessons make student centered so they answer prompts about their opinions and must qualify their opinions. Krutz reports that she has not attempted to do any community-based art yet, but that she would like to. Krutz says that funding, time, resources, and that she is not really sure where to start if she wanted to, are roadblocks to working off-site with the community. Krutz shares there are art competitions that she uses to showcase student work, the *Holland Project* is a local art gallery that caters to students through the Youngblood Art Exhibition and through Scholastic Art Awards, the national art contest that is prestigious to students. Krutz reports that her students could be engaging with social justice and social issues a whole lot more, especially the intermediate and advanced students. Without using specific criteria, this section does a little better job of convincing me that she effectively integrated SJ into her lessons.

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R. Rosenberg

Rosenberg states that she is not specifically teaching social justice, the reason is that she just never got around to developing lesson plans for it.

H. Yeom

Yeom is in her 16 year of teaching and has two masters degrees, she teaches Art 1-2, Drawing 1-2, 3-4, and A.P. Art. Yeom reports that she is not teaching social justice because she has too much work to do already. Yeom does not know if she has introduced the topic as lesson content, A.P. students sometimes use it as their theme. She reports that maybe she could connect it with equity in different areas of social life- maybe political, economic, and cultural. Yeom has not reached out to the community; she questions if the community is even interested in it.

L. Ruby

Ruby reports that she is excited to help kids express social ideas through visual language in her class projects. Ruby declares she usually introduces social justice by showing the students examples of art that includes those ideas, students understand the meaning of those topics through discussions about art examples. Ruby states to use discussion and written responses as differentiated instructional strategies. Ruby articulates that she has not had students engage in investigative and questioning techniques yet. Ruby expresses that her students made art shows in community spaces, but that social justice was not a goal, unless you count giving under privileged people the opportunity to exhibit their work in places of privilege an act of social justice. Ruby says the building trust and the time it takes are roadblocks to community-based art. Ruby says that the Holland Project and several other community spaces including the City of Reno and lots of local business owners are super supportive of students and young people's art. I

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believe in social justice, however, it's not my main goal as an art teacher. Ruby says her goal is to get students to think critically and freely so they have mental space available for things like social justice.

C. Schnaare

C. Schnaare did not take the survey but responded to through email reporting truthfully that she does not attempt to teach social issues in her classroom anymore as it is too divisive of a topic. Schnaare states that she is too close to retirement to deal with the backlash of parents. Specifically mentioning those groups of parents that are raising havoc at school board meetings and accusing teachers as the scapegoats of everything wrong with the world.

B. Stanford

I would like to conclude this discussion by sharing my own experience with teaching SJAE, I have taken my own survey to further reflect on my experience and understand my own shortcomings when teaching SJAE. I am a high school art teacher in WCSD, and I am in my twelfth year of teaching. I teach Art 1-2, Foundations in Art, Painting 1-2, Painting 3-4, and Painting 5-6. I do not currently teach a lesson specifically for social justice. Prior to this research, I did not feel that I had enough understanding of social justice and what a lesson plan should include to be effective. I have had little education in social justice, it wasn't until I began the masters program that I have learned and understand more about SJAE. I generally utilize lesson plans that are already out in the art education world but have yet to come across a pre-made lesson plan that is in line with what I believe are the expectations of SJAE as proposed by scholars. I feel that not having a standard curriculum and little time to lesson plan contribute to this deficiency in my own pedagogy. I am also guilty of teaching curriculum that is more heavily

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based upon learning techniques and building skills in art than critical thinking. One reason why my curriculum leans more toward teaching skills and techniques is partly due to the lack of art education in elementary school in this district, but this is another case study that needs to be researched in my district. My Art 1-2 and Foundations in Art classes are full of ninth graders that have never taken art prior to my classes, many can barely draw stick figures, and I am supposed to teach them critical thought as well, it seems overwhelming. The fact that our district has very little art in elementary school makes teaching higher concepts in art education a monumental task when students are so far behind in meeting the national standards for visual arts at grade level. I compare this problem to a high school student taking algebra that has never had math in elementary school. How are they supposed to understand algebraic equations when they do not know addition and subtraction? Although the new national standards stray away from skills and techniques in art and are more geared toward collaboration and critical thought, it takes time to implement and change curriculum. The curriculum that I currently work with took me twelve years to build and implement. Although I continually implement, modify, and improve curriculum to be more engaging for my students, I have yet to introduce the concept of social justice to my students. Like other teachers, I teach social issues in art projects, and I work with my students to help them research topics that are important to them and to create meaning through art regarding their topics, sometimes they include social issues. I introduce art projects to my students by looking at and discussing artwork, I try to use artworks that reflect the cultural diversity of my classes and make it a point to introduce my students to other cultures. I use differentiated instruction with all projects to guide the learning of my students, like discussion, choice, and project-based activities. I am really in support of orbital learning, I give my students a packet designed to lead my students through a research and investigation process to develop

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ideas, then to sketch those ideas, make modifications, and to develop them into a final composition. I see myself as a guide helping my students through this process, I give feedback and suggestions on how they might improve. My students have choices on what they are going to investigate, on how they are going to translate the information, and what materials they are going to use. I teach skills and techniques in art through demonstrations then students apply their skills to a meaningful culminating project. My students collaborate with each other as they work in groups that they can discuss and share ideas and critique each other, the room is set up for collaboration as my students sit four or more at a table. I have not had my students use investigative practices as far as interviewing and questioning people related to social issues, but I am intrigued by the premise of students questioning those who have suffered oppression and injustice and questioning those in power, questioning and investigating the systems of power to help students gain understanding and perspectives of social justice, and to build on empathy, and ultimately to achieve critical consciousness. I have only attempted to take learning beyond the classroom one time in the past, it was for a mural painting at the park. It was logistically difficult and a failure. I have over 200 students, 37 in each class, 7 classes, and we are on a block schedule, classes rotate every other day, arranging transportation and substitutes for school excursions is time consuming and costly. The sheer number of students I have in each class makes teaching critical thinking a challenge, I have 37 students in an art class. It is difficult teaching critical thinking when many students don't know how to behave yet. It is because of logistics that I take one field trip per year to the museum with my advanced painting class. The mural project ended with volunteers after school hours, and me touching it up by myself. In my opinion, it would be more logistically realistic to have community guests visit the classroom, but like many other teachers, I just don't know where to start or who to reach out to. Again, there is

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no curriculum or blueprint for reaching out and working with the community. There are opportunities to show student work at my school, there is a culminating annual student art show, but not specifically set up for social justice. There is a lot of space, so there is potential. I know that I am not teaching social justice in art education effectively, that is the main reason I am doing this study.

Insights from interview: Fleshing out the criterion

I interviewed another teacher from my fine art department, K. Cordero, to try to flesh out a criterion based upon the literature review and on what we thought should be included in a lesson plan. We had an open discussion regarding ten questions that I asked Cordero based upon best practices discussed by scholars (K. Cordero, personal communication, November 17, 2023).

Q: What should a lesson plan structure for SJAE include?

Me: I thought a lesson plan should include an introduction, discussion, investigation/exploring topics/inquiry, idea development, translating idea, displaying artwork, and a reflection.

Cordero: I like the flow of your plan. I might combine the intro with the discussion in one day.

Q: What is the best way to introduce social justice to your students?

Me: I think that showing artwork related to social justice so that students could critique it and dig into what it means. I think there should be a variety of artworks by a diverse group of artists to match the diversity of our students that feature social justice topics. Students would have to study each image, students would be asked to think critically

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about the content of artworks and answer questions about what the artworks are about, then compare and contrast with other artworks to see similarities and differences.

Students could collaborate in groups to try to figure these out, this will help students gain an understanding of what social justice is.

Cordero: I think showing imagery without explanation possibly through printing up images and displaying them like a gallery walk and having discussion would be a great way to start.

Q: How do you help students understand the meaning of Social Justice?

Me: I think students could gain some personal insight and talk about their own experiences regarding oppression and injustice if they are given a pre-assessment on the meaning of social justice. They could respond to questions like: What is social justice? Have you ever been treated unjustly or unfairly? Have you ever known anyone in your family or friends that was treated unjustly or unfairly? Do you know of any groups of people who have been treated unfairly or oppressed in the past? Can you share an example of injustice taking place in the world now? We need to ask questions that students can personally relate to gain an understanding of the meaning of social justice. I think that if we ask students questions that they can answer and investigate to form their own perspectives.

Cordero: You could provide sentence frames for EL or low achieving students. This is also a way to introduce art vocabulary, critical thinking, and discussion techniques.

Letting students arrive at conclusions and ideas on their own to build independence and

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will allow the subject of social justice to be introduced organically. If not, the teacher could provide some guiding questions or thought prompts.

Q: What types of differentiated instruction could you suggest using during a social justice project?

Me: Visuals, discussions, investigating/questioning, orbital learning, and student choice.

Cordero: I mentioned before you could use sentence frames to help guide students on how to talk about art or visual thinking strategies. This could be prefaced in earlier lessons so that it ensures students all already know how to talk about and analyze art. The New York Times shows an image of the day, and this is a great way to learn with students about different issues and talk about what they see in the photos.

Q: How do we help students understand empathy? How will you help your students relate to oppression and injustice? How could you help your students show empathy for others who have felt oppression or injustice?

Me: I think that if we have guest speakers visit the classroom, disenfranchised people who have been oppressed or treated unjustly, could speak with our students, students could ask questions, then they may start feeling empathy as the real person is right in front of them and telling their story.

Cordero: I think the best way to help students relate is to tell factual stories or show works of art that reflect social injustice. Also bringing in speakers or artists that have been through the oppression or face it today, to talk to students.

Q: Do you have suggestions for whom students could interview and question to investigate topics for social justice?

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Me: I think students could begin with interviewing their family members, parents, grandparents, friends, and teachers. Teachers could connect with different organizations to bring people in to talk to students. Different organizations that have felt oppression and have been disenfranchised like local indigenous people, the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, African American organizations, ACLU, Latino organizations, LGBTQ+ organizations, people with disabilities, shelters, etc....

Cordero: The BIPOC community, LGBTQ+ community, women, criminals, the workplace.

Me: Not sure about the criminals. Is that safe? I guess if they are approved by the district.

Q: What forms of collaboration could you use during a social justice project? Teacher to student? Student to student? Student with community? What could students collaborate on together?

Me: I think that students could collaborate in groups on investigating artworks and understanding the meaning of social justice. They could also collaborate on artworks together if they desire, I know many of my students would like to do that on their own, but they should be talking to each other and expressing ideas and opinions, and helping each other with suggestions on how to improve their art. Teachers should collaborate with students through informal discussions, making suggestions, helping students through the process of understanding the topic and translating their idea in art. Students can collaborate with the community by investigating and questioning people related to social justice as mentioned before, they could collaborate on preparing questions to ask. If

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possible, we could collaborate on an art project within the community, like a mural or a major art project that takes a collaborative effort somewhere in the community, this is the level of collaboration that is difficult to achieve because of logistics.

Cordero: You could collaborate with community groups that were mentioned before. Collaboration between schools or teachers at the same school. It would be great to do a community project that students were passionate about.

Q: Social justice art doesn't affect change if it isn't shown and talked about. What are suggestions for in school and on-line venues for students to display artwork? What are suggestions for venues out of school for students to display artwork?

Me: I have ideas for a student run art gallery as we have much wall space in the halls of our school that could be utilized as a “Pop-up art gallery”, a gallery that can be put up and taken down during school hours and monitored during lunch, a gallery open to all students and faculty to visit during classes and at lunch. Students could run it, they could curate it, other classes could come down and visit and critique the artwork and also gain some knowledge of social justice, it will be cross-curricular collaboration. There are many opportunities online to showcase student work and several venues and businesses in town that I know work with art teachers, there are restaurants, coffee shops, the library, that are open to displaying student work. There are galleries like the Holland Project that would help us create and display work, again it is a matter of getting students there. I think that art contests, Scholastic Art Competition, and the Congressional Art Contest, and other spaces students could use to post online, like Instagram. These are great venues for showcasing student work and for venues for bringing attention to social justice that can be done in class.

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Cordero: In school could be a special art showcase. Out of school could be the NVMA, Holland Project, Grateful Gardens, maybe a casino.

Q: Can you think of any organizations in the community that would be open to working with students? Can you think of locations for students to do artwork in the community? What are venues and activities?

Me: This is where I am struggling, the Holland Project is the only organization that I know of that has reached out to us.

Cordero: NVMA, Holland Project, The Generator, Sierra Arts Foundation, Arts for all is a place to start.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Lesson plans

Ten-Hoeve gives us helpful suggestions to find a compelling example to discuss with students, gives students choice of topics for exploring social justice, and suggests to make the topic student centered. Ten-Hoeve's suggestions are helpful but does not give us details on how to discuss the artworks or how to research those topics with our students. Ten-Hoeve eludes to inquiry and challenges students to ask questions and to use social media for researching topics, but does not give specifics instructions for teachers to follow. Ten Hoeve has suggestions to use social media to display artwork, this is effective, it gives students the opportunity to display their artwork and impact a larger community.

Unfortunately, only one teacher, Krutz, submitted a lesson specifically for teaching social justice. I find Krutz's project to be effective in most areas. Krutz project opens with the artist Keith Haring, there are images, a historical background, and a link to a video about Keith Haring. The Haring video (CBS Sunday Morning, 2014) is a segway into a discussion about content of the artwork where students can examine and identify social issues in artworks. Krutz responded in the survey that she has students discuss images related to Keith Haring. In this area, Krutz's lesson is effective as it offers students opportunities to discuss and identify social justice issues in artwork. Krutz also reported through survey that she uses differentiated instruction with the way she structures the classroom. I assess that Krutz is effective in this area as she uses short demos and lectures, that are followed by project-based activities. Krutz has expressed through survey that during the work period, she spends more time helping students through discussion,

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this suggests that Krutz is using strategies and steps that align with the teacher learning along with students as a guide through the process of discussion, helping students who need something more. I rate Krutz as effective in using differentiated instruction. Students are given a choice of topics and medium to use with their artworks and Krutz encourages students to investigate and ask others about their experiences and asks students to create choose a topic they care deeply about so that it is meaningful to them. I rate Krutz effective in collaboration, as she has formed communities of learning in the classroom with students sitting together at tables, she encourages collaboration with student-to-student discussion. Krutz is effective regarding inquiry, students are asked to choose topics to investigate and expand on that with discussion. I rated Krutz as highly effective in opportunities to showcase artwork. Krutz mentioned that she has students enter Scholastic Art competition as a showcase for art, although this may not have a direct change on the community, everyone will have the opportunity to view it through the scholastic art showcase that reaches a national level. I rate Krutz as minimally effective in community interaction as engagement is limited to the classroom structure. I could not rate Krutz's lesson if it is meeting the National Standards for visual arts because it was not specifically stated in the presentation.

Only one other teacher submitted a lesson, Biller also submitted her lesson in the form of a presentation. Although Biller's lesson is not specifically and only about social justice, it is imbedded with social issues and open for students to comment on social issues in their artworks. I think it fits as a lesson in social justice because it offers students the chance to work with and comment upon social issues in our society. The presentation begins with slides showing diverse works of art and different artists related to the figure, followed by different techniques to create textured surfaces, and followed by discussions about social issues. I find Biller effective in

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learning alongside her students as a guide, as Biller presents slides she encourages open discussion of content of each slide. Guernica is presented during the presentation, Biller is effective in providing students the opportunity to discuss the content and meaning of the painting and offers students the opportunity to collaborate during those discussions. I rate Biller as highly effective in utilizing differentiated instruction with offering choice in medium and choice of social issues to investigate. Biller also encourages students to research social issues important to them and to reflect upon how a social issue has affected them on a personal level. I think that Biller is effective in directing students through an investigative inquiry as she has designed an in-depth template of investigation for students to follow within their sketchbooks. Biller has students do research into topics and idea development and Biller suggests reputable sources for finding information. Biller's instructions for creating a meaningful piece of art are elaborate in steps and are reflective of students understanding of topics, researching ideas, and then creating works that successfully translate ideas. Biller really pushes high quality artwork out of her students that aligns to highly effective translation of artwork.

Neither Krutz nor Biller stipulated how their lesson plans meet the national standards, so I will not assess for effectiveness here. Biller did not describe community collaboration nor if or how the artwork would be displayed, so I will not speculate.

Surveys

Unfortunately, only eight teachers from the WCSD participated in taking part in the survey, including myself. Some teachers responded that they teach the idea of social justice by including that concept by introducing social issues into projects. Several teachers have shown a good understanding of how to teach as a guide, learning along with students, and helping students investigate topics, giving students choice in social issues and how they are going to

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show that in their artwork and the materials they use. Some teachers are teaching it effectively as discussed in the lesson plan section of this paper.

Through surveys, teachers have identified many roadblocks that are inhibiting implementing SJAE, time, just never developing the lesson plan, logistics in community-based art, where to start, accusations by the public, the number of students, and behavioral issues, are the many reasons why it is not being taught. Some teachers expressed that they do not have time to spare in their daily duties, or just never got around to developing SJAE. The traditional classroom structure and school sites may not support environments for collaboration or for working outside the classroom due to the number of students, and logistical problems of organizing field trips for the changing class schedules that secondary teachers teach. Transportation access and costs may inhibit taking students and classes off site to engage with the community in doing community-based art related to social justice.

I am not passing judgement or condemning my colleagues as I, myself, am guilty of not teaching SJAE. I think the biggest factor is that there is no requirement in this district to teach SJAE and the lack of a standard art curriculum across the district, and the lack of an available lesson plan, adds to this deficiency. It is clear there is not a specific structure for teachers to follow when implementing social justice or teaching social issues, teachers are utilizing ideas and resources to supplement and implement into their own curriculum.

It is important to note that art teachers in this district are solely responsible for designing and implementing curriculum to students, the only requirement is meeting the national standards in art. Teachers just need to align lesson plans to one or more standard to be able to prove that they are teaching to the national standards in visual arts. This factor gives art teachers plenty of freedom to teach curriculum to their strengths and to their liking, but drawbacks may be that our

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students are missing important topics that they need to understand to become enlightened, for developing critical consciousness, and to be able to participate in this democracy.

Interview

Through our discussion, Cordero and I brainstormed and figured out what we think would be a good criterion for developing a lesson plan for SJAE. We are confident in creating a meaningful lesson plan regarding SJAE, we took into consideration what other educators in our district are doing and reported in their surveys and what scholars consider best practices. I believe the only weakness to our discussion is the community-based aspect, this is something that is going to take a lot of extra work on our part, but if we can reach out and get the community to the classroom, I think we will be on the way of meeting the expectations.

How are WCSD art teachers implementing and teaching social justice curriculum in the classroom?

Both Krutz and Biller are effective at implementing and teaching SJAE into their curriculum, both lessons are effective, and in some areas are highly effective. There are both strengths and weaknesses to build upon, one area of concern is the aspect of community engagement in or beyond the classroom which neither lesson described expectations for. Overall, WCSD art teachers are ineffective at implementing social justice curriculum into the classroom, most of the teachers who responded to the survey reported that they have not implemented SJAE due to various factors. Most teachers did not participate in the study, there is not enough participation and evidence to support effective teaching of SJAE in this district.

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How successful is WCSD at integrating and teaching SJAE?

Based on this study, the WCSD is ineffective in implementing SJAE curriculum, there are no efforts on the district level to integrate SJAE into art curriculum or even adopt art curriculum across the board that includes social justice. The only resource of curriculum was adopted by art teachers from the Art of Education University in the article by Ten-Hoeve. The article by Ten-Hoeve is geared toward middle school and only contains suggestions of how to teach SJAE and does not go into critical detail or concrete lesson plans. Only two teachers show evidence of implementing curriculum. Based upon the lack of participation and the identified roadblocks from surveys our district needs specific lesson plans. We need a written curriculum across the district that includes concrete lesson plans and expectations to teach SJAE for easy implementation by teachers.

What should a successful criterion for teaching SJAE include?

Based upon my interview with Cordero, a successful criterion should include eight aspects. One, it should include an introduction that allows students to look at different artworks related to social justice, to allow students to investigate and discuss content and meaning, to form their own conclusions about the similarities and differences of the artwork, to help them form understanding of the meaning of social justice. Two, students should also learn what social justice is from their own perspective, what social issues are important to them, and how it has affected them personally. Three, teachers need to use differentiated instruction to meet the learning needs of individual students, like pre-assessments, visuals, discussions, student choice, orbital learning, to help guide students through critical thinking. Four, inquiry and investigation, students need to ask questions by interviewing others experience to build empathy and understanding, invite guest speakers to give students the opportunity to interact with the

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community. Five, collaboration, teachers to students in guiding through the process, student to student for investigation and discussions, and students with community for furthering knowledge and building empathy. Six, translation of artwork, students need to complete research and implement their knowledge and ideas in an artwork and in a creative way to translate to the public. Seven, students need a forum to showcase their work to the community to affect change. Eight, students need to reflect upon their experiences of what they have learned into helping them achieve critical consciousness.

Appendix

Figure 1.

SJAE Lesson plan rubric.

Minimally Effective

Lesson strategies imply that interactions with students are based on the banking model. The teacher delivers content and students passively receive information.

Lesson plans offer students opportunities to view artworks to critique for content and meaning.

Lesson plan is lacking differentiated instruction strategies to help guide the learning of students, giving only choice in social issues and medium.

Lesson plan steps do not include student lead inquiry of investigation/questioning of social justice topics.

Lesson plan is lacking student/student and student/community collaboration.

Lesson plan does not offer a format for students to translate information to showcase artwork.

Lesson plan meets the national standards for visual arts 9-12 grades as proficient.

Effective

Lesson plan strategies imply the teacher is interacting as a guide, learning along with students to help students discuss investigate/question social justice topics.

Lesson plan offers students opportunities to view artworks, discuss, investigate, and critique for content and meaning.

Lesson plan clearly states the use of differentiated instruction strategies to further the understanding and learning of students, giving choice in social issues and medium, and explores how social justice relates to student.

Lesson plan includes student lead inquiry of investigation/questioning of social justice topics.

Lesson plan includes opportunities for student/student collaboration.

Lesson plan offers a format for students to translate information to showcase artwork to classmates/school.

Lesson plan meets the national standards for visual arts 9-12 grades as accomplished.

Highly Effective

Lesson plan strategies imply the teacher is interacting with students as a guide, learning along with students to help students discuss investigate/question social justice topics, gives suggestions and models how to investigate and lead inquiry.

Lesson plan offers students opportunities to view artworks, discuss, investigate, and critique for content and meaning, compare and contrast a diverse group of artworks related to social justice.

Lesson plan clearly states the use of differentiated instruction strategies to further the understanding and learning of students, offers choice in medium and social issues, explores how social justice is related to student, and by investigating prior and personal knowledge of social justice.

Lesson plan includes student lead inquiry of investigation/questioning of social justice topics and includes interviewing different people related to oppression and injustice.

Lesson plan includes opportunities for student/student and student with community collaboration.

Lesson plan offers a format for students to translate information to showcase artwork to classmates/school/and communities.

Lesson plan meets the national standards for the visual arts as advanced.

Figure 2.**Survey questions.**

1. Are you teaching Social Justice in Art Education? Why or why not?
2. How do you introduce the concept of social justice to your students?
3. How do you help students understand the meaning of social justice?
4. What differentiated instructional strategies do you use to guide the learning of your students?
5. What types of collaboration are being employed during your social justice lesson?
6. Do your students engage in investigating/questioning social justice topics or interviewing people? If so, how?
7. How do you take social justice learning beyond the classroom, to the community? Do community members visit the classroom? Do your classes engage the community off-site?
8. What are roadblocks with community-based art? What are the difficulties in engaging with community?
9. What opportunities are being utilized to display student artwork, to bring awareness to social justice topics?
10. Do you feel that you are implementing and teaching social justice effectively? How do you know?

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