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Design and Development: Social Empowerment and Two Community Art Programs in Brazil

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Design and Development:
Social Empowerment and Two Community Art Programs in Brazil

by

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Dedication

I dedicate this to my parents.

Eu te amo porque te amo,
Não precisas ser amante,
e nem sempre sabes sê-lo.
Eu te amo porque te amo.
Amor é estado de graça
e com amor não se paga.

Amor é dado de graça,
é semeado no vento,
na cachoeira, no eclipse.
Amor foge a dicionários
e a regulamentos vários.

Eu te amo porque não amo
bastante ou demais a mim.
Porque amor não se troca,
não se conjuga nem se ama.
Porque amor é amor a nada,
feliz e forte em si mesmo.

Carlos Drummond de Andrade

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Abstract

Design and Development:
Social Empowerment and Two Community Art Programs in Brazil

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This study examines how two community art programs in Brazil have empowered participants through art practice. The programs are contextualized historically and theoretically to address how program participants from varying social, cultural, and economic backgrounds, are prepared to be responsible world citizens.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction to the Study

Our world is in a constant state of flux, politically, economically, and socially. We need not look further back in our history than yesterday to understand that our economy is suffering, people are being treated inhumanely, and war is being waged. There has been a huge struggle for African American civil rights as well as equal treatment for women, and the United States has been involved in some of the most controversial wars in our nation's history.

Brazil, in recent decades, has faced many similar issues. The Afro-Brazilian population continues to struggle for equal treatment and representation, poverty is rampant, and the vast majority of the country's economy benefits only a small percentage of the population. Amidst all this suffering and conflict, the Brazilian people appear to be one of the happiest in the world. Their culture is saturated with art, music, and celebration. This study addressed the relationship between the complex social and culture environment of Brazil and how arts programs in two communities responded to these events.

As teachers intimately involved with art, we know that this endeavor has the ability to shape our ideology. Most of us receive exposure to various styles of art, numerous theories from a diverse group of scholars, and opportunities to study with people from around the world. We are perhaps more aware of the need for a

global perspective than many other individuals whose areas of study do not normally engage with world history and culture. As we become an increasingly global society, we encounter cultures, beliefs, and principles often radically different from our own. As art educators, we must orient students to an interdependent structure of society, and prepare them to become responsible world citizens.

It is imperative that art educators incorporate methods in their curriculum that encourage interest in global exploration and a desire for new knowledge. Cuno (2008) states in his book *Who Owns Atiquity?*:

> The Enlightenment's ambition for universality – for discovering the underlying principles of all things and all knowledge – and its emphasis on unprejudiced and open inquiry about the world and its people should inspire us still. It is an argument against prejudice and specialization and for ideals that we can or should attempt to grasp and appreciate the whole of human knowledge in all of its untidy and glorious strangeness. (p. 140)

Exploration of cultures and peoples other than our own should be presented and approached from a positive perspective. It is through this type of art practice that "multicultural art education increases tolerance of difference, recognizes each culture, and respects the contribution of each racial group in the creation of an American identity" (Desai, 1996, p. 36).

The term globalism has different meanings for different people. Some individuals see it is an economic and trade issue mainly addressed to Wall Street and the business world, while others see it as a way to help us address the growing entanglement of the world's numerous cultures. Douglas Kellner (2002), a

sociologist and educator, presents two opposing views of globalization in his article "Theorizing Globalization":

> For some, it is a cover concept for global capitalism and imperialism and is accordingly condemned as another form of the imposition of the logic of capital and the market on ever more regions of the world and spheres of life. For others, it is the continuation of modernization and a force of progress, increased wealth, freedom, democracy, and happiness. Its defenders present globalization as beneficial, generating fresh economic opportunities, political democratization, cultural diversity, and the opening to an exciting new world. (p. 286)

Globalization is a complex issue that has grown to encompass the exchange of technology, ideas, and cultures, as well as the governmental and business aspects of the world.

Globalism involves crossing borders and forming new complex social interactions. While many individuals in the U.S. and other countries, fearing a loss of national identity and culture, do not greet these relations favorably, most agree that this is an unavoidable part of our future as capitalism and mass media continue to expand. Cuno (2008) argues that we are becoming increasingly meshed as humans. He states:

> We live in an age of globalization characterized by the potential of almost all of us to participate in and contribute to it. Whether we like it or not, we are part of a system of production and exchange which is tying us more closely together than ever before and implicating us all in the fate of the world's politics, economics, and culture. (p. 160)

Our current education system in the United States does little to teach students how to deal with current social issues, nor does it do much to prepare them for interaction in a complex system of cultures and values spanning the globe. Our

field has a significant opportunity to fill some of these gaps where current education practices falter.

Central Research Question

Central research question for this study: What role have community art programs played in bringing about social change in twenty-first century Brazil? Sub-questions: How do these programs prepare its participants to be responsible global citizens? How was the community involved in the creation and maintenance of the program? Who were some of the key individuals involved in the growth of these programs?

Problem Statement

The field of art education has much history that is left to be explored and documented, especially when discussing programs outside the United States. There are numerous stories of programs and individuals whose stories have not been heard; stories that can add great strength to the argument for art education programming. This study aims to further establish the need for community art education programs in our society by bringing new light and context to specific examples of programs involved in social activism.

Brazil is currently the home of the largest African originating population outside of Nigeria, and a review of the country's demographics and economic

history reveals that there is significant racial and economic inequality (Telles & Lim, 1998, p. 465). This study argues that art programs have benefited Brazilian communities by fostering a discussion of social issues pertinent to the community, providing a creative outlet for voices that would otherwise go unheard, and by encouraging community strength, unity, and organization. It also discusses how community art programs served as a site for social reformation and empowerment, and specifically the role art education played in bringing about change in specific communities within the country of Brazil. This research aims to strengthen the argument that during these times of social instability and growing cultural complexity, it is necessary for individuals to have access to arts programming.

Motivations for Research

I have been interested in social justice issues, especially those related to race, for many years. Growing up, I was often exploring people and cultures different from my own. My parents lived all over the world, and though we moved back to the United States shortly after I was born, customs and practices from a diverse sampling of countries were incorporated into our lives. Most importantly, they instilled in me a deep respect for the cultures and customs of all people. I have made it a point to be an advocate for those who are victims of discrimination and feel strongly about working to establish a respectful and understanding society. It is

my belief that educating people about social justice issues through art is one of the most powerful tools that can be used to accomplish this.

Another motivating factor stems from my time as an undergraduate student. I had a professor who had a profound influence on the way I view and think about art. Previously, art had been mainly a formalistic aesthetic experience. Through his classes, I realized that artists make significant statements about numerous social and political issues, and their work often stimulated a discussion of these issues. It was during these classes that I realized I wanted to help people see art the way I was beginning to see it. This art made me think. It made me analyze my role and identity, and my influence on my community. I am interested in studying how art programs have fostered change in communities.

Professionally, I am interested in this research for some of the reasons stated previously. I am passionate about the idea that education through and about art may change people in a way few other fields can. At some point, I hope to teach others how to educate through art to address social justice issues. I also understand that the establishment of art education programs in communities will contribute positively for generations to come.

I also feel that it is a professional duty to contribute in some way to the field in which one participates. There are many areas of the history of art education that have not been explored. Historical studies add strength to the pro-arts programming argument by providing examples and experiences of successes of art

education programs, and teach us many things about what can be done in art education today. This particular study explores an area of our field that has received little research attention and aims to shed light on undiscovered programs and individuals from our not so distant past.

Research Methods

Research for this paper involved both personal observation and historical research. Chapter Three discusses a general history of Brazil, emphasizing the development of favela communities. Some context is given to the climate of the Brazil during this period, and major socio-political events are identified. Several community arts organizations (involving not only art but also music, dance, theater, etc.) have been founded over the last two decades in Brazil. However, not all of them have a significant art emphasis. Research about the programs was gathered from websites (if available), directly from the organizations, period publications, individuals with direct involvement, or other literature as discovered. Research was conducted to determine the specific motivations for their founding and growth.

During the summer of 2010, I spent approximately five weeks in Brazil with a program dedicated to studying arts programming in communities of low economic standing. The purpose of this trip was to visit these programs and gain an understanding of the role the arts programs play in providing opportunities for growth and empowerment to their residents. I visited approximately ten programs

located in four major cities of Brazil: Salvador, Belo Horizonte, Rio de Janeiro, and Sao Paulo. Among the programs I visited, two stood out as having significant visual art components.

The first program visited was the Pierre Verger Foundation. This program was founded by a prominent Brazilian photographer who dedicated the vast majority of his life to photographically documenting the exchange of cultures between African countries and Brazil. The second organization discussed is a well-established program called Corpo Cidadão, located in an interior region of the country. This program is the result of a familial endeavor to provide impoverished communities around the city with access to arts programs. These two programs are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.

Contemporary scholarly writings were used in Chapter Four, and elsewhere as appropriate, to establish a foundation of specific links between communities, social issues, and art education. Writings were also used to provide context to the various issues that are identified as having affected the art organizations. In the final chapter, these writings are used in discussing the results of the research, as well as its present-day application.

Definition of Terms

<u>Arts Programming</u>: Organized activities that incorporate the use of art, music, dance, theater, and other forms of expression to create growth in individuals.

Community: A sense of fellowship with others as a result of shared beliefs or experiences; also a group of individuals united in one location.

Community Art Program: An organization, either public or private, whose interest is focused on establishing art in the community in which it resides.

Favela: Shantytown or slum-like community found in cities of Brazil.

Social Empowerment: Gaining of ability to increase one's social, cultural, or political influence and abilities.

Social Justice: The idea that justice is achieved not just in legislation, but in all parts of a society.

Limitations of the Study

Organizations researched for this study were limited to four major cities of Brazil: Salvador, Rio de Janeiro, Belo Horizonte, Sao Paulo. I believe that conducting research on this current decade engages the exploration of multiple social issues such as race, poverty, empowerment, etc. The programs for this study were located in Brazil, and independent community organizations with no direct organizational or financial association to schools or museums. It was important that I personally visited the programs discussed in this research, so I was limited to the programs visited with the Fulbright-Hayes program I traveled with during summer 2010.

Benefits to the Field of Art Education

As educators, we can only teach what we have learned or experienced. Expanding our scope of information intake beyond national borders is not necessarily common within our field. For this reason, I set out to investigate programs in another part of the world.

Many segments in the activity of Art Education have not been explored, especially in countries outside the United States. This research provides a greater understanding of art programs founded during a particularly chaotic period of Brazil's history. It provides experiences and knowledge of what it was like to be involved with community art programs during such tumultuous times, and help us understand what role art programs and art education has played in these communities. This study further establishes the importance of art programs as a means of social change and community activism. It also confirms the need for these programs in today's communities, as a means of addressing issues of discrimination, violence, poverty, war, and other prevalent problematic aspects of contemporary society.

CHAPTER 2: Review of Pertinent Literature

Introduction

This chapter serves to orient the reader to some of the sources used in this research. As a review of foundational literature utilized in this study, some of the main themes and concepts presented in this research are addressed here, as are major authors whose works were influential to conducting this investigation.

Art Organizations and the Community

Several resources are used in this section to outline the role of art organizations in the community. The idea of empowerment is a central theme when addressing the relationship of art programs to Brazilian society. A semi-adaptation of feminist theory is used to address power relations between marginalized groups and the greater society. It is important to establish the socio-political relationships that occurred between participants, their communities, and the art centers investigated here. As Hicks (1990) states, “Empowerment cannot be understood separately from theories of power, freedom, and community because it is only with respect to a vision of political community that we can clearly define what it means to be empowered” (p. 36). It is argued here that these organizations provided this empowerment to these social movements, and discuss specific examples.

The principle of organization is also addressed as a system of empowerment and community formation. In the article “Community Organizing as Tocquevillean

Politics: The Art, Practices, and Ethos of Association," Sabl (2002) outlines Tocquevillean notions of association and political activism as a means of combating marginalization, and uses Tocqueville's theories of democracy as an example of a system that provides for community action separate from the government.

Environment is discussed as it relates to community. Writings of June King McFee, including *Art, Culture, and Environment: A Catalyst for Teaching* (1977), as well as a handful of her articles were used in this study. Other writings addressing environment and art as a facilitator of social change were used, including "Sociological Foundations of Education in an Urban Society" by Sikula (1975), and "Human Rights/Human Wrongs: Art and Social Change," by Hobbs and Woodard (1986).

Multiculturalism

"Asia, Hansonism and the Discourse of White Decline" is an article written by Ghassan Hage (2000), a Lebanese-Australian academic who teaches Anthropology and Social Theory of the University of Melbourne. Many of Hage's writings deal with issues of multiculturalism, the most well known being his books *White Nation* (1998) and *Against Paranoid Nationalism* (2003).

The main discussion presented in Hage's article surrounds the discourse of white decline. This term refers to the disappearance of the perceived privileges, opportunities, and promises once associated with being white. Throughout the article, Hage presents a handful of ideologies and uses them to construct a history of

this decline over the last three decades in his homeland of Australia. These ideas are then paralleled to Brazil and its current conditions surrounding race relations.

Globalism

The writings of June King McFee (1969, 1977) and Dipti Desai (2000, 2007) have been utilized to establish the importance of preparing students for a global society, as well as to present possible ways in which our teaching methods can be modified to better address these needs. McFee also discusses the need to incorporate not only Western art in our curriculum, but also art from the communities to which our students belong. This places both local and traditionally “high” art on the same level, and reinforces the validity and importance of the students’ own communities and culture.

I also utilized the writings of Desai (2000, 2001) who discusses the importance of providing accurate contextual backgrounds when discussing works of art. Without correct context, works of art can be misinterpreted, or regarded as worthless or common objects. Examples are used from her articles that articulate how this may occur.

Favelas and Economic Conditions in Brazil

Brazilian authors were helpful in discussing Favelas and economic conditions in Brazil. Marcelo Paixão was an excellent source for current statistics on Brazil’s

economy and distribution of wealth, as well as its racial demographics. His article "Waiting for the Sun: An Account of the (Precarious) Social Situation of the African Descendent Population in Contemporary Brazil" (2004) uses national Brazilian research institutes such as the Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicilios (National Household Sample Survey) and the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (National Institute of Geography and Statistics).

For a discussion of Favela communities, I turned to João Vargas, an assistant professor in the Center for African and African American Studies and the Department of Anthropology at the University of Texas, Austin. His article "When a Favela Dares to Become a Gated Condominium: The Politics of Race and Urban Space in Rio de Janeiro" (2006), provided an example of the hypocrisy present in Brazilian society. He discusses the favela neighborhood of Jacarezinho in Rio de Janeiro and the public's reaction to their desire to "secure" their community borders much as the upperclass neighborhoods do.

These, among other sources, were used throughout the research document to support the argument for the importance of art programming within the Brazilian communities I visited and investigated in this research study. In the next chapter, the settlement and cultural development of Brazil is discussed, providing context for the current socio-economic conditions addressed in following chapters.

CHAPTER 3: A Concise History of Brazil: Settlement, Slavery, and the Development of Favela Communities

Intodoction

Brazil has a complex social, political, and cultural history. Immigration of the Portuguese, the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, and the practices adopted from Brazil's indigenous populations have contributed to the creation of an extremely culturally and economically diverse society. This chapter discusses issues related to multiculturalism in Brazil by giving a brief history of Brazil's development, discussing the emergence of "favela" communities, and touching on the formation of the nation's educational system.

The Portuguese Influx

The late 1400s through early 1500s was a period of international exploration and expansion. Every major country in Europe of the period had some sort of involvement in international trade and exploration. Of special significance were Spain, France, England, and Portugal's ventures to the newly discovered continents of North and South America.

At the beginning of the 1500s, Portugal was the leader in international exploration. Portuguese explorers conquered lands in North and South America as well as on the continent of Africa. On April 22, 1500 Pedro Alvares Cabral landed in the Northeastern coast of Brazil in what is today BrazPorto Seguro, near the city of

Salvador. The actual settlement of the territory did not begin until a few decades later, but the Portuguese began collecting natural resources, such as Brazilwood, to take back to Europe. This city would later turn into Brazil's largest site for slave importation from Africa.

Almost immediately, the Portuguese were met with resistance from the native peoples. The Portuguese would later unsuccessfully try to enslave many of them on sugar plantations and in mines.

Native Populations

Before the arrival of Portuguese explorers at the beginning of the sixteenth century, there were approximately two thousand different bands or tribes of natives living in the Amazonian region. Their total population at that time is estimated from one to ten million individuals, and spoke approximately 1,300 different languages (www.funia.gov.br). These tribes were mainly nomadic, and relied heavily on the riches of the rainforest.

During the 1600s colonists tried unsuccessfully to exploit indigenous labor. European countries such as Spain in other south American territories were quite successful at enslaving its native populations. However, the indigenous peoples in Brazil (or *povos indígenas* in Portuguese) were extremely hard to capture, and were unable to resist infermities brought by the settlers. Tens of thousands of natives died from diseases such as tiberculosis, at times wiping out entire native

communities (www.funai.gov.br). Due to these factors, the enslavement of natives diminished rapidly, and was formally outlawed in the late eighteenth century. During this period the Portuguese began to rely more heavliy on the African slave trade for their labor force.

Today, according to the Fundação Nacional do Índio (FUNAI or translated, the National Foundation of the Indian), there exist at least sixty-seven different uncontacted tribes living in Brazil, concentrated mostly in the Northwestern territories of the country. Natives may not make up a significant percentage of Brazil's current population, but they have had a considerable cultural influence, especially on the (Brazilian dialect) Portuguese language.

Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade

Slavery played an extensive and essential role in the colonization of Brazil. By 1520 African slaves were reaching the northern city of Bahia on the coast of Brazil (Graden, 2006, pp. 1-3). Many people are surprised by the vast numbers of slaves that lived in the United States during the seventeenth through the nineteenth century. However, by 1675, before the transport of Africans to British North America had been securely established, more slaves had already arrived in Brazil than would ever reach North America.

Brazil relied heavily on the importation of slaves from Africa. From the sixteenth to the beginning of the nineteenth century, Brazil imported over four

million African slaves, which amounts to approximately thirty-eight percent of the total slave trade. By comparison, the United States, whose slave population grew largely from natural reproduction, went from approximately 900,000 to about 3,000,000 by mid nineteenth century, with relatively little importation of Africans. Slaves and freed Africans made up about two thirds of the total population of Brazil until the nineteenth century (Merrick & Graham, 1979, pp. 51-53).

The slave trade in Brazil was easily justified by the European settlers. They depended on slaves to develop their crops and products that were exported and sold. Many Christians saw the capture (and subsequent conversion) of African natives as an opportunity to save pagan souls. An early nineteenth century writer said God had "created just opposite Brazil in the interior of Africa men who were deliberately constructed to serve on this continent." This same ideology was also used to justify the capture and enslavement native peoples during this period.

Slaves were captured and brought across the Atlantic to be sold to farmers, miners, and those expanding the frontiers of cities and territories. The conditions in the undeveloped jungle terrain were harsh. Insects spread disease, and harsh heat and humidity constantly exhausted workers. Yet slave masters constantly pushed their slaves to work, leading to shorter life spans and a constant need for importation.

Advising sugar plantation owners on the treatment of their slaves, an Italian Jesuit priest wrote:

> It is customary to say in Brazil that three "p's" are required for slaves, that is: pão, pao, and pano {bread, a stick, and a piece of cloth}. Even when they start out with the stick, which means, of course, punishment, they should also offer proof to God that their food and clothing are as abundant as their punishment often is. Slaves are often falsely accused, and punishment is often inflicted without much proof of guilt. And even when crimes are proved, the instruments they use to punish them with are too harsh, for they would not employ such devices against brute animals. Masters, in fact, sometimes give more care and attention to a single horse than they do to half a dozen slaves. (Conrad, 1983, p. 58)

This harsh treatment, in addition to a lack of care and attention, shortened lives of slaves in Brazil. In comparison, slaves in the United States existed in relatively better conditions. Their level of care and nutrition is reflected in the high reproductive rates and overall better health than slaves in other countries (Singleton, 1995, pp. 123-125). Slaves in Brazil tended to be underfed and overworked, and often provided with unsanitary living conditions, which caused sickness to spread easily. Knowing that many slave's lives were too short to make a profit, plantation owners felt little motivation to properly care for them. Their African slaves were disposable. Conditions were so poor that the Portuguese king ordered better treatment for the captives. In a letter written in 1701 in response to learning of these deplorable conditions, he declared:

> Because the slaves being obliged as they are to serve their masters, the masters are also obliged to give them the necessary sustenance so that they will not die. I have therefore decided to order you to force the mill owners either to give their slaves the required sustenance, or a free day in the [work] week, so that they can themselves cultivate the ground, in the event that mill owners should choose this alternative. (Conrad, 1983, p. 61)

This was the King's long distance attempt to improve the living conditions of slaves in his territory. However, by the beginning of the nineteenth century that decree was no longer enforced. The abandonment of this law is seen in a letter written by an observer in Salvador, Bahia:

> It is only just and charitable that I say something about the barbaric, cruel, and bizarre way that the majority of masters treat their unfortunate working slaves. There are some who provide them with no food at all, merely allowing them to work on Sundays or on a holy day. . . from this work they are supposed to supply themselves with food during the entire week, their masters contributing only a drop of molasses of the worst kind during milling time. (Conrad, 1983, p. 61)

It is obvious that the neglect and brutal treatment slaves in Brazil had continued.

When the slave trade (not to be confused with the *practice* of slavery, which was legal until 1888) was finally abolished in 1850, Brazil turned to European immigrants to supply their labor force. Between 1884 and 1913, over 2.7 million Europeans migrated to Brazil, most subsidized by the Brazilian government. This was a move designed to cut off the labor market to former slaves and their families, and thus stunt their social and economic progress (Paixão, 2004, p. 746). By the mid twentieth century, non-whites went from 66% of the population in 1890, to 34% in 1940 (see table 1 in appendix).

An extremely uneven distribution of social and capital wealth can already be seen. Per capita income of the plantation populations during this period well exceeded that of most European countries (Merrick & Graham, 1979, p. 11). The wealth of the nation was concentrated in the top tier of the white male owners. In

1890, the national penal code criminalized the practice of cultural expressions such as drumming, spiritism, faith healing, and the Afro-Brazilian martial art form Capoeira (Paixão, 2004, p. 746).

Brazil's population growth continued during the twentieth century. The country's largest growth period took place during the 1950s-1970s. This growth was not seen as an impediment to the country's economic development. According to Merrick and Grahamn (1979) this is based more in "the strong nationalist sentiment of Brazilian political and military philosophy, as well as a sophistication in economic thinking, which recognizes that population factors have had little to do with the ups and downs in the recent performance of the Brazilian economy" (p.1).

In recent decades, Brazil's economic indicators continue to demonstrate significant inequality amongst races. Data from the 1998 National Household Sample Survey (PNAD) indicate that 12% of black men and 23% of black women in Brazil worked for no income, and 26% of black men and 35% of black women earned income that did not surpass minimum wage rates. By comparison, white income during the same year indicated that 7% of men and 17% of women worked for no income, and 11% of men and 18% of women earned less than minimum wage. In summary, during 1998, citizens of African descent made up approximately 45% of the total population, yet comprised over 66% of individuals who earned less than half of minimum wage (Paixão, 2004, p. 749).

Development of Favelas

Unequal economic distribution among other factors have forced many people to move to surrounding areas of the cities to communities called Favelas. The typical translation of favela tends to be a "shantytown," "slum," or "ghetto." They are typified by social inequality, poverty, and crime. However, once one takes a deeper look at their formation, the social and political implications become much more complex. Two important sources provide information on this subject: The Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE or translated, The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics) and the Instituto Municipal de Urbanismo Pereira Passos (IPP or The Pereira Passos Municipal Institute of Urbanism).

The IBGE defines a favela as a "development built of a minimum of fifty-one habitational units (shacks, houses…), occupied or until recently occupied, someone else's available property (public or private), generally, in an unorganized and dense way; also lacking essential public services" (translated, www.ibge.gov.br). The IPP states that a favela is an "area predominantly inhabitable, characterized by land occupied by people of low income, precarious infrastructure of public services, narrow roads and irregular alignment, lots of irregular form and size, and unlicensed buildings, that do not meet legal standards" (translated, www.rio.rj.gov.br/web/ipp).

A major issue for these communities stems from the fact that inhabitants are living on lands illegally. The Brazilian government does not recognize these

communities because they do not pay land taxes, and therefore do not receive the benefits usually provided to tax-paying citizens, such as public schools and medical care. In most favela communities drug lords have stepped in to build schools, community centers, and medical facilities, services the government provides for recognized communities.

Favelas are found in almost every city in Brazil. They are seen by many as a refuge for criminals, a place of danger and violence, and an aesthetic horror of the cityscape. They are places where criminals go to buy and sell stolen merchandise and drugs.

The sizes of some of these communities (some reaching tens of thousands of inhabitants) make it difficult for law enforcement to maintain control of its doings. This has led to many erratic actions by police over the last few decades. In one instance in August 1993, four police men were killed by drug traffickers. In response, a mob of policemen retaliated against the killing of their coworkers by entering the Vigário Geral favela and killing twenty-one innocent people, including a fifteen year old girl. Fortunately, these types of acts have become less common over the last decade. However, the memories of this period still linger in the minds of most Brazilians.

Since crime, violence, and drugs are typically associated with favelas, these stereotypes have strong implications for non-whites inside and outside the community's borders. Unlike the United States, racial profiling is rarely discussed in

Brazilian society. There exists in Brazil what is called the “racial democracy myth” (Vargas 2006). Brazilians pride themselves on having a “Racial Democracy” where “color does not matter.” Unfortunately, the idea that racism has no place in Brazilian society is a misconception. In his article, “When a Favela Dared to Become a Gated Condominium,” Vargas (2006) discusses how television news reports present racial stereotypes to the public:

> When poor neighborhoods, crime, drugs, and violence were mentioned, a tacit connection was made with black people. This pregnant silence, also prominent in the subsequent public debate, only reinforced the stereotypes and justified discrimination in that it prevented conceptions about Afro-Brazilians from surfacing. Silence about race thus constitutes an atmosphere in which racism persists. Silence, furthermore, protects its producer from being seen as overtly prejudiced, and since few persons seem prejudiced the Brazilian myth of racial democracy continues. (p. 51)

The implications of racial stereotyping remain unspoken, but find their way into society through the media, popular culture, and geographic class division. The issue becomes more complex because a vast percentage of Brazilians have some portion of non-white heritage, and there is no definite line of where “white” begins and ends.

Vargas discusses in his article the public reaction to a favela Jacarezinho that decided to install security gates and cameras. Typically in Brazilian cities, every apartment building and upper class neighborhood has security gates, cameras, and guard houses (controlled by both private security and also public law enforcement) at every entrance to deter unwanted visitors. Even though, by law, police officers cannot deny passage to people traveling on public roads, they continuously patrol the walls surrounding neighborhoods, and set up road blocks at their entrances.

This is a normal practice, and is accepted by the community at large. However, when this particular favela community decided to set up the same system for their neighborhood, public reaction was explosive. Vargas (2006) states:

> The outrage derived in large measure from the fact that the installation of gates and cameras in Jacarezinho challenged tacit, often repressed but well-understood connections between blackness and the favela. In other words, the security devices disrupted hegemonic understandings of racialized urban spaces defined by illicit activities and persons devoid of legitimate political agency. Thus conceptualized, the people of the favelas were ultimately dangerous, less than human, and incapable of organized and rational political action. Favelas were thought of as areas necessarily permeable and subjected to law enforcement at all times, where preemptive state- and society-sanctioned violent measures were to contain its evils before they spilled over into the wider polity. (p. 51)

The hypocrisy here is obvious: what is acceptable for the "good" upper class, is not appropriate for the perceived "criminal" lower class.

Vargas (2006) brings up several important questions. "1. How are notions about Brazilian urban space influenced by hegemonic conceptions of race? 2. How do hegemonic conceptions of race inflect understandings of urban space? 3. What are the political consequences of the cognitive feedback loop between urban space and race in the Brazilian context?" (p. 51). In response, Vargas (2006) discusses the relationship between race and class and how this outcome influences the perceptions people have of favela communities. There are four "propositions," as he calls them; the first being there is a direct connection between poverty and race. Compared to other races, blacks earn less and have fewer assets than do whites with the same experience and level of education. The second proposition defines the

relationship between poverty and urban space. Vargas argues that it is the urban spaces that house the poor and lack public transportation, sewage, running water, and household appliances, such as stoves and refrigerators. If these items are present in the area, their presence is significantly less than that in middle and upper class neighborhoods. Third, areas with higher population density are disproportionately black. And finally, there is a common assumption that those from urban areas are expected to be of color (Vargas, 2006, p. 66). These inequalities are easily seen in the perilous living situations of the African-descendant population, who are recipients of the country's worst education, jobs, and living environments (Paixão, 2004, p. 763).

If the antiracist movement in Brazil hopes to succeed in generating broad-based support, then what Stuart Hall (1996) refers to as a "sort of racist common sense" must be challenged and transformed. Hall emphasizes the importance of this common sense philosophy when discussing how to intervene into racist ideologies. He states

> Why, then is common sense so important? Because it is the terrain of conceptions and categories on which the practical consciousness of the masses of people is actually formed. It is the already formed and "taken for granted" terrain, on which more coherent ideologies and philosophies must contend for mastery; the ground which new conceptions of the world must take into account, contest and transform, if they are to shape the conceptions of the world of the masses and in that way become historically effective. (1996, p. 431)

Brazil's complex cultural history has led to an even more complex present. Race, poverty, and violence are common aspects of most cities and regions, yet the

blame is typically placed on non-whites and the poor. In actuality, most inhabitants of favelas are not involved in drug trafficking or other crimes, they simply do not earn enough to live inside he city limits. They are good people, interested in earning a living, raising their families, and living peacefully.

This chapter provided historical information about the settlement and cultural development of Brazil. In the following chapter multicultural art education and the role it can play in empowering individuals is discussed.

CHAPTER 4: Multicultural Art Education and Empowerment

Introduction

This chapter discusses the importance of multicultural art education in art programs, and provides support for the argument that this type of art curriculum is necessary in helping to build stronger communities.

Why Multicultural Art Education?

The past several decades have brought about great changes in the field of art education. Many of these changes are related to the development of new technologies that enable faster and more detailed transfer of information and images. These technological advances have also made it particularly easy to communicate with individuals throughout the world. There are few fields, if any, that have not been affected by these technological shifts. As communication becomes easier and more accessible, the need for individuals of differing backgrounds and cultures to be able to work together effectively and respectfully becomes more necessary.

Art education scholars such as Desai (2000) argue for the importance of a more globally minded approach to art education. Since its inception, the field of

multicultural art education has argued that students should become aware and respectful of cultural pluralism both locally and globally. As Desai (1996) states:

> The official recognition of multicultural education can be traced to the 1973 statement by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, entitled 'No One Model American.' This no-one model defines and explains the nature of multicultural education as education that values cultural pluralism and strives for its preservation and enhancement. (p. 35)

Helping students become aware of other ways of life will enable them to function more effectively in an increasingly global economy and society.

Community Building through Multicultural Art Education

Communities are dynamic entities. Because our interests, desires, and lifestyles as individuals constantly change, so does our society. As Hicks (1994) offers, this "state of redefinition and reconstitution is a state of social reconstruction" (p. 149). Many factors influence the way members of society change and develop. These may include relationships, advertising, work, health, natural disaster, relocation, etc. However, one of the most powerful influences is education. Hicks (1994) discusses the importance of education, and especially education through art:

> As one of the forces through which societies reconstruct themselves, education is, by its very nature, an agent in the development and maintenance of social beliefs, behaviors, and values. For this reason, the question for art educators is not *whether* art education is or should be involved in social reconstruction, but rather *how* it will be involved. Art educators must constantly pose the following question: what role will art education play in the evolution of social structures, patterns of behavior, and identities? (p. 149)

What role will art educators play in constructing new multicultural communities? What roles *can* they play? Art educators and the programs they work with are able to reach students in ways that the studies of regular subject areas usually do not. Art is a personal and expressive discipline. It is malleable to our own interests, desires, and experiences in an extremely personal manner.

Art practice enables students to create and reflect in a way the study of math and science does not. It incorporates a process of creation and reflection allowing the viewer to contemplate what has been created. For example, when an experiment in chemistry class is conducted that causes an explosion, the experimenter may in fact "reflect" on what has occurred. However, what is being assessed is a chemically reactive process, relying on no introspective evaluation. The creation of an art project starts from within, using the students' own abilities and reflections.

The Multicultural Threat

It seems appropriate to discuss at brief some theories about whiteness, racism, and power. Hage (2000) defines and discusses what he titles the discourse of white decline. This refers to the disappearance of the once perceived privileges, opportunities, and assurances associated with being white. Though he addresses the discourse of white decline from the Australian perspective, he points out that there are three main characteristics that cross national boundaries. First, the white

national has an idea of themselves as being the average, mainstream, or ordinary citizen, which justifies their criticisms. Second, whites see minorities and immigrants as a threat to their well-being. Third, is the idea that one's race (white) accompanied by hard work is how one earns their belonging in the country. The latter idea tends to lead to a mentality that welfare recipients (often non-white) are undeserving, fraudulent individuals. This is also referred to as the "work to deserve social security" policy (p. 86). While the systems of welfare and social security apply more to the United States, the idea that anyone can work their way out of poverty is common among the upper class of Brazil.

Hage (2000) references the Australian politician Pauline Hanson's ideas, which suggest that the generations of bias towards minorities has led to "reverse discrimination" against whites. She states:

> We now have a situation where a type of reverse racism is applied to mainstream Australians by those who promote political correctness and those who control the various taxpayer funded 'industries' that flourish in our society servicing Aboriginals, multiculturalists, and a host of other minority groups. (p. 87)

By "mainstream Australians" Hanson is, of course, referring to the white population. What is dangerous about Hanson's perspective is the subtleness of its racism. This ideology is not always marked by a blatant desire to expel or exclude certain groups, thus reaching beyond the more common biological forms of "racism." Its racist ideologies are often masked by a desire for the preservation of nationalist values, or perhaps what some may refer to as "patriotism."

Michelet has made many observations about nationalist behavior. He argues that people generally identify as nationalists because national identity gives them acknowledgment, self-respect, and a form of social importance. The national feels in control of his national space, creating a sense of hope (Hage, 2000, p. 87). This nationalistic mentality is problematic, as we have seen, because when other races or immigrants enter and are seen to "take over," the white nationalist's sense of identity and self-security is compromised; their view of hope dwindles.

When one loses hope, and "worry" enters the picture, the desire to be a "special manager" emerges. Hage defines a special manager as someone who has, or ought to have, a privileged relationship with a particular space, so as to have the right to control who and how people live there. An example of this was the discussion of the Jacarezinho neighborhood discussed previously in Chapter Three.

The postcolonial capitalist culture is less racialized. Whiteness as cultural capital is losing value while other identities are becoming equally empowered, and the more well-to-do within nations are increasingly culturally and racially diverse. This is especially true in the United States, however less so in Brazil. Capital domination is no longer completely controlled by whites. Basically it seems, in a postcolonial world, capitalism cares less about what color you are and more about your productivity and efficiency. Certainly, many upper class Brazilians see this occurring in other parts of the world, and ponder its implications on their own economic standing.

Empowerment

Benefits from participating in art programs go beyond creativity and expression. A major benefit is the fraternization that students experience when participating in art programs. It is especially beneficial when the programs are set in a particular community and draw in participants from the surrounding area, as do the programs discussed in Chapter Five. Hicks (1994) outlines the importance of the community aspect in multicultural art education:

> One of the central concepts that links social reconstruction in feminist and multicultural art education is the concept of community. While feminist discussions often link women into a community based on gender, multicultural education highlights the existence of cultural, racial, ethnic, and religious communities with diverse traditions, ideals, and power. (p. 150)

It is imperative that art educators emphasize ideas of community not based on sameness, but on diversity. A community based on sameness is automatically exclusionary. The boundaries of a group are established by identifying what those around them are not. Students need to be able to recognize that other participants may be of different race, religion, or gender, but that they can still work collectively.

Studies show that participation in many types of collective group activities empowers individuals through self-confidence and motivation. Perlman (2006) states in her article "The Metamorphosis of Marginality: Four Generations in the Favelas of Rio de Janeiro," which discusses social mobility in poverty stricken areas of Brazil:

> The other significant predictor of economic mobility was social capital, particularly membership in community groups, a finding that confirms prior theoretical work underscoring the importance of social networks, organizational membership, and density of social relations in achieving economic prosperity and political stability… Thus, almost 60 percent of those respondents who participated in one or more community associations, versus 17 percent of nonparticipants, experienced relative upward mobility during the period under consideration. This mobility might be explained by the fact that participants were better off to begin with (and therefore had the time and resources to participate as well as to achieve mobility) or that participants had greater levels of motivation, hope, and energy. (p. 164)

The programs discussed in this research are located in some of the poorest economic areas of Brazil. The participants of these programs often witness drug use, crime, poverty, and premature death. By default, many of the relationships children and youth develop are with individuals who participate in these types of activities, if they have any relationships at all. Community art programs in general provide for the creation of friendships that are based on common interest, rather than circumstance. As Perlman (2006) continues in her article, she states that these children become more economically stable due to healthy relationships formed in community programs:

> Data . . . indicate a relationship between upward economic mobility and two other measures of social capital: the possession of friendship and kinship ties and having relations of trust with neighbors. Among those who report many friends and relatives in the community with whom they interact frequently, 42 percent scored high in upward mobility, as opposed to only 23 percent among those who were more socially isolated. In terms of trust, 47 percent of those who felt they 'could trust more or all of their neighbors' experienced upward mobility compared with just 25 percent of those who said 'few or non' could be trusted, demonstrating the importance of what Sampson (2004) called 'collective efficacy'. (p. 164)

It is this “collective efficacy” that helps provide a strong social foundation for children in these communities. Art programs in these communities motivate participants to be successful in other aspects of their lives. Educators and participants encourage each other to exceed the low expectations often applied to this demographic.

Brazil is a largely hegemonic society. The dominant ruling class is primarily white, upper class, educated, and resides in or near city centers. The separation of power in Brazilian society is both physical and mental. However, identifying and accepting one’s own culture can be a source of strength and confidence, leading toward upward social mobility. Power is not outside the realm of culture and history, but rather is associated with their construction. John and Jean Camaroff (1992) discuss the intermingling of power, hegemony, and ideology:

> We take hegemony to refer to that order of signs and material practices, drawn from a specific cultural field, that come to be taken for granted as the natural, universal, and true shape of social being – although its infusion into local worlds, always liable to challenge by the logic of prevailing cultural forms, is never automatic. It consists of things that go without saying: things that, being axiomatic, are not normally the subject of explication or argument (Bourdieu 1997). This is why its power seems to be independent of human agency, to lie in what it silences, what it puts beyond the limits of the thinkable. It follows that it is seldom contested openly. Indeed, the moment that any set of values, meanings, and material forms comes to be explicitly negotiable, its hegemony is threatened; at that moment it becomes the subject of ideology or counterideology. (pp. 28-29)

Power can be gained through the recognition, action, discussion, of one’s culture. Multicultural art education seeks to promote an understanding of customs and practices regardless of their traditional standing in the world of western art

history: “The central tenet in multicultural art education is acknowledging the global diversity of the cultural contexts and environments in which art is produced, displayed and viewed” (Desai, 2000, p.122). It is through this type of practice that students will be empowered with the ability to read and relate to peoples from around the globe.

Multicultural art education programs have the unique ability to address the concerns of an increasingly amalgamated society. To address and explore this idea, in the following chapter two community art programs in Brazil are examined.

CHAPTER 5: Community Art Programs in Brazil: Two Examples

Introduction

This chapter discusses two community art programs visited during a trip to Brazil in summer 2010. The first community art program is the Fundação Pierre Verger (translated as the Pierre Verger Foundation), which is a program that uses photography to enable participants to identify racial history and current issues of a community located within the city of Salvador, Bahia. The second is Corpo Cidadão (translated as Body of Citizenship), which is an organization dedicated to providing poor communities in the city of Belo Horizonte with access to the arts. A brief history of each organization is provided, and a close look given to the types of activities participants are involved in.

Program 1: Fundação Pierre Verger

Artist's Personal History and Work

Pierre Edouard Leopold Verger was born in Paris, France on November 4, 1902. Verger led a normal life from his childhood until he entered his thirties, when he began learning photography from a friend, Pierre Boucher. Through photography, Verger discovered his love of travel, and eventually invested in his

first camera. However, it was not until after the death of his mother that he began to travel and explore the world, and his photography developed in sophisticated ways.

From 1932 until 1946, Verger travelled throughout the world supporting himself with funds earned from his photography, which he sold to newspapers, photo agencies, and research institutions. Verger's work was published in some of the world's most noted magazines, yet throughout his life he constantly searched for new opportunities to travel and explore. Verger said, "The sensation that there was a wide world out there didn't leave me, and the longing to see it took me towards new horizons" (Pierre Verger website).

Verger's interests began to change in 1946, when he travelled to the northeast coast of Brazil, to the state of Bahia. Europe during that time was filled with post-war turmoil. Salvador, Bahia, on the other hand, seemed rather unaffected by these tumultuous events and continued to be a tranquil refuge. Verger was immediately attracted to the friendliness of the Bahian people and the cultural wealth of the city, and he decided to settle there. As Verger did elsewhere in the world, he preferred to build relationships with locals and enjoyed spending time in the simpler places around town. Africans and Afro-Brazilians comprised a significant portion of Bahia's population. These people not only became protagonists in his photos, but they became his close friends. Verger sought to understand their lives and history in detail. He discovered that the Candomblé religion and its Orishas (or gods), had made a significant contribution to the

development of Bahia's culture and vitality. In 1948 he received a research grant to travel to Africa and study origins of African religions.

Africa had a great influence on Verger and his work. It is here that Verger was, in a sense, reborn and received the name "Fatumbi," meaning "one who was reborn for Ifá." His intimacy with Candomblé put him in contact with priests and local authorities. Verger ultimately became a Babalaô, or diviner of Ifá prophecies, and was able to access the heart of the religion's oral traditions. During that time Verger amassed approximately 2,000 photographic negatives. However, the French Institute of Black Africa (Institut Français d'Afrique Noire or IFAN), from whom he received the travel grant, requested a detailed account of his observations. The report became his book *Notes sur le culte des orixás et voduns*, which was published in 1957. Through this publication Verger became infatuated with scientific research, and continued to make significant contributions to it for the rest of his career.

The focus of Verger's work ultimately became the history, customs, and religions of Yoruba peoples in West Africa and their descendants in Bahia. He travelled continuously between the two continents, bringing with him information, messages, and ritual objects. During these travels, he also served as a collaborator and guest researcher for various universities, and presented numerous lectures on his research. In 1960, Verger bought a small house in Salvador, in the Vila América neighborhood, which later became the center for his Foundation.

During the last years of his life, in the 1980s, Verger's photography declined. He instead turned toward other interests. Many of his books were published, and he worked to insure that his research and archives would be available to a wide public audience after his death. These years of work lead to the creation of the Pierre Verger Foundation in 1988. He served as president of the foundation until his death on the 11th of February 1996, leaving the Foundation with the task of carrying on with his work.

Verger's Community Involvement

Throughout his life, Verger maintained a personal and friendly relationship with the communities wherein he lived. He would talk constantly with his neighbors about his research and religion. However, after his death his name and significance in the community became less known. Because of the continuous increase of the population, children in the area did not know who he was because they did not have personal contact with him. Angela Lühning, current director of the foundation, stated:

> Verger was keen on sharing what he had with the locals. There was always somebody knocking at the door and if Verger was avoidably disposed, he would receive whosoever it was with open arms. Indeed there was an exchange with the local community. Verger was open to the friendship of people no matter their social status. (Pierre Verger website)

In the first newsletter of the FPV, Verger wrote:

> The creation of the Pierre Verger Foundation was a consequence of two of my loves: what I feel for Bahia, and that which I have for the African region

> situated on the Gulf of Benin. It presents itself through its objectives and activities, to highlight this common inheritance, offering what Bahia knows about Benin and Nigeria, and inform these countries about their cultural influences in Bahia. (Pierre Verger website)

As founder, mentor, and president, he gave the foundation his entire personal archive, including decades of travel records and research. There are dozens of articles, books, 62 thousand photograph negatives, sound recordings, films and videos, besides a precious collection of documents, records, correspondence, manuscripts, and objects (translated, taken from www.pierreverger.org).

The Foundation

The Pierre Verger Foundation has had an extensive influence on the local community. Even after Verger's death, the organization has continued to expand its involvement and resources to the surrounding people. This is partly due to an impressive list of objectives Verger himself helped establish. According to the foundation's website, the principle objectives of the foundation are to:

1. Preserve, divulge, and research the work of founder Pierre Edouard Leopold Verger.
2. Study and prepare publications related with the reciprocal influences between Brazil and Africa in general, and principally between Bahia and the Gulf of Benin.
3. Create cooperative interdisciplinary opportunities in areas like the arts, anthropology, botany, music, and history.
4. Serve as a center of information and research.
5. Fulfil social function in a practical way, integrating the local community and audiences through the creation of a cultural community space, offering free cultural workshops, looking at the construction of citizenship and validation of the aspects of African and Aftro-Brazilian cultures, and also share the Verger's own history.

6. Establish and maintain relations with international cultural organizations interested in African culture and the diasporatic problems of Africans in the new world. (translated, taken from www.pierreverger.org)

Verger's desire to inform the community about aspects of their African heritage is apparent in the foundation's objectives. There are many ways community members can participate in the organization and utilize its resources.

The Foundation has an extensive library for public use. It contains over 3,500 volumes, most of which are dedicated to the culture and history of the Afro-Brazilian and African religions. Community members cannot check out or copy the books, but there is a large area in the library with desks and computers where those who are interested can read and write. The library also has an archive that contains some rare or damaged materials that are not available to the public.

Another section of the foundation is the photographic archive. This archive has over 62,000 original negatives and 8,000 developed photos of Verger's work. Many of the photos were developed by Verger between 1934 and 1950. The foundation is currently in the process of copying all the photos and negatives into digital format to continue to preserve Verger's work.

Part of the foundation's archive is Verger's personal belongings. These include letters, books, and communication with researchers, friends, editors, museums, and research institutions from around the world. This archive also houses a small collection of objects that Verger kept from his travels on the African continent. Many of these objects are not on view to the public. However, the

foundation does provide guided tours of Verger's living quarters, preserved exactly as Verger maintained it while living there.

The Cultural Center

The Pierre Verger Cultural Centre was officially created in 2005 to provide artistic opportunities to the children of the Vila America community where the foundation is located. The area has a strong history, but over time had deteriorated into a low income and underdeveloped part of the city. The goal of the center is to "increase the possibility of cultural discoveries and knowledge for youngsters, adults as well as elderly people" (translated, www.pierreverger.org). The center also gives a high priority to the neighborhood's social progress.

During an interview with a local university professor in 2006, Angela Lühning, current director of the foundation and center, stated the following:

> In 2002, during the celebration of the 100-year anniversary, I gathered a group of kids from the neighbourhood and we had the first workshop in one of the rooms of the Foundation. We brought together art, education, theatre, music… a little bit of everything during one or two months. I also took the group with a bus provided by the city council of Salvador to the 100-year anniversary exhibition held at the Museum of Modern Art (MAM). The idea behind this visit was that people from all walks of life came to the exhibition but the actual neighbours of Pierre Verger did not even know that there was an exhibition taking place, besides they were not accustomed to attending exhibitions and if they would have wanted to, they would not have had the means to do so.

This is how the center has continued Verger's legacy. It provides opportunities for individuals to expand their knowledge and experiences in ways they could not otherwise do.

The center is located in a building built next door to Verger's home. Part of the center's mission states:

> The Centre gives a new magnitude to the relation the photograph was already fostering with the neighborhood community. It allows youngsters and others to be critical, to develop their creativity; it encourages them to be aware of their citizenship and to participate to the district's activities. (www.pierreverger.org)

The Cultural Center seeks mainly the participation of children from the local community, but allows the engagement of children from surrounding neighborhoods, as well. The only qualification is a desire to develop artistic practice and learn about Verger's work.

The artistic center highlights the Afro-Brazilian culture through the education of different artistic means that the community can freely make use of. Workshops at the center include plastic arts, capoeira, sewing, Afro dance, musical discovery, self-expression through movement, analogical photography, craft photography (Pinhole), Afro hairstyle, music theory, theatre, guitar, and chess.

Educators are encouraged to incorporate items from the archives into their workshops. Most of the items discussed above are available for use by members of the community, and add depth to their learning. Some of the educators knew Verger personally and are able to share personal experiences of the artist.

Educators also have access to the center's other facilities, which include the library, multimedia room, photo lab, and music studio. Most of the rooms are named after Verger's friends, such as the Jorge Amado library, the Roger Bastide IT room, or the Maître Bimba open space. The center also has two guest rooms set up for visiting researchers.

Visual Arts Workshop

Of particular interest to this study is the Visual Arts Workshop. This workshop focuses mainly on developing the participants' coordination, creativity, and group relations. Painting, clay sculpture, and composition with found objects are the three main mediums used in these workshops. Each of these mediums are then used to help students express and explore their world. During the painting workshop, students learn about colors, how they mix, and how to apply them in various manners. They learn to mold clay into different objects that the teachers present in classes, and also make their own types of creations from found objects. All throughout the classes students learn the importance of taking care of their environment and being responsible citizens. Jacson Ornelas, a twelve year old participant in the center, comments on his experiences:

> Since I was a child, I have always had interest in arts of all kinds, but mainly in visual arts. The foundation, I mean, the art course that I participate in, has developed and perfected the talent that I already had, and I admire the foundation for this reason. I find it important also to remember that it gives us a new choice in life, work and pleasure. (Pierre Verger website)

Julia, an 8 year old in the center, offers:

> I like the art class a lot because we learn how to do many great toys that we didn't know. And we make a lot of friends. (Pierre Verger website)

Pinhole Photography Workshop

The workshop on pinhole photography centers around "cameras" students make out of recycled milk cartons. The "lens" of the camera is created by placing a small hole in the side of the carton. Photographic paper is placed on the opposite side of the hole on the interior wall of the carton. When the hole is uncovered, and exposes the photographic paper to the light, it captures an image of whatever is sitting in front of it.

This is a remarkable and extremely resourceful process. The only cost to the center is the photographic paper and developing liquids. Students usually provide their own milk cartons and scenery of their choice. They learn the basic processes of taking and developing photos. Their photographs often cause reflection and awareness in their own lives, as well as greater understanding of their classmate's thoughts and actions. Robenilson, an eighteen year old student of the class, states:

> The workshop of pinhole photography triggered a great curiosity in me, because I would never have imagined that I could take pictures with a can of milk. Sometimes, I asked myself: how can this be? Can it work? This is the reason why I enrolled. Today I am learning everything and a little bit more until I will become a professional. If I am accorded the opportunity to advertise the photographic workshop my jingle will be: enroll and get to know the magic of hand-made photography. You will like it (Pierre Verger website).

These workshops, as well as classes in musical experimentation, African hairstyles, dance, and percussion, offer children of the surrounding neighborhoods opportunities for fraternization, professional development, as well as opportunities to expand the boundaries of their minds to incorporate information and ideas beyond their own.

Program 2: Corpo Cidadão

History

In 1998, a contemporary dance group in the interior city of Belo Horizonte, called Grupo Corpo, chose to expand its borders and extend their practice to other territories. The founders of the company, a team of five brothers and sisters, determined that their accomplishments as a dance ensemble were not sufficient. They decided they needed to help others realize that the arts can be an instrument in the transformation of life.

From this conviction they created the Sambalele organization. The purpose of this organization was to bring art education to children and teenagers that live in communities where the living conditions were poor. The organization grew, and the members challenged themselves to create a structure that would enable them to focus on social needs of the children in these communities.

The group Corpo Cidadão grew from this previous organization. Corpo Cidadão works with children and young men and women ages six to twenty-five. Students share experiences with art educators and each other. These exchanges are mediated through art, which creates unity amongst difference. The organization believes art engagements are the "cornerstone of exercising citizenship." As stated on their website, the mission of the organization is to "contribute to the human potential of children and young men and women through experiences with art, culture, and dialogue, valuing the exchange of knowledge, duties, and dreams" (www.corpocidadao.org.br).

Children are chosen to participate in Corpo Cidadão based on a demonstrated ability in one of the areas of instruction such as dance, painting, or music. However, this is not the main qualifier for participation in the organization. Engagement with Corpo Cidadão centers on an individual's desire to participate in activities and develop as a person.

Today, Corpo Cidadão serves over 600 students at four main sites or "units" around the city: Unidade Centro Cultural Vila Fatima, Unidade Vila Fazendinha (Escola Integrada), Unidade Nossa Casa, and Unidade Casarão. Sites have been established in areas where its members are socially at risk of crime and poverty. To ensure that the participants have access to the classes, Corpo Cidadão provides transportation and meals for all participants.

Programming

Corpo Cidadão has as its objective to accomplish the following:

> Promote educational opportunities and human development through art education, respecting the different cultural codes, expanding students' world of knowledge, stimulating their independence, and rescuing values such as ethics, affection, solidarity, self-confidence, and sensibility. All work with art education is directed principally at the physical, emotional, and intellectual growth, and to transform the student's potential in their personal, social, cognitive, and productive competencies. Through the making of art, we hope to enable the students to create and search for better alternatives in their lives. Besides this, we intend to form students that will share this educational process in the communities where they live. (www.corpocidadao.org.br – translated)

The organization puts into practice a "pedagogy that goes beyond the walls of school, having art and education as instruments of transformation" (www.corpocidadao.org.br – translated).

> The practice is a continuous process, built through the interworkings between art and art educators, children and their families, schools, and partner institutions. This process has created a comprehensive educative methodology with proven results. Individuals that have participated in the program now have the capacity to be social educators, which is the most recent product of Corpo Cidadão in the area of social responsibility. (www.corpocidadao.org.br – translated).

Programs offered by Corpo Cidadão are not limited to the visual arts, but also include street dance, contemporary dance, music, percussion, and the African based martial arts form capoeira Angola.

While visiting one of the units at Corpo Cidadão, I was able to participate in some of the visual art classes. The students in this particular unit were divided into three groups, each having around twenty participants. The class lasted a little over

an hour, after which, the students rotated to another class. The project being taught that week focused on the creation of an individual facemask. Participants had previously looked through books brought by the instructor, which contained numerous images of African tribal masks. The instructor discussed the history of masks in several African countries, and led a discussion based on various visual components of the masks, including fur, teeth, and stones. The teacher copied selected images from the book and hung them on the walls of the class at the children's eye level as a point of reflection.

After these discussions, the students were encouraged to create a mask that would reflect something about themselves. The masks were created in a traditional papier-mâché molding over inflated balloons. The participants were then free to decorate the masks by applying found objects, coloring with paint or markers, or modifying them with scissors. The instructor was actively involved in discussing individually with students as they worked, why they made certain modifications to the masks, what it symbolized to them, and what relationship their masks had to the African masks discussed earlier in the class.

This project had multiple purposes. First, it helped students learn world geography, and taught them that there were other parts of the world to explore outside their own city or country. Second, it provided students some history of countries where many of their ancestors came from, and the history of masses of people that were brought to Brazil with other customs and traditions. This project

also opened an avenue for the students to explore their personal identity as it is now, and to ask whether or not the students had any direct African heritage or not (though most did). African traditions are profound in all regions of Brazil. This activity and conversation added context to objects students see around them, and gave them a chance to explore these items and how they relate to them in new ways.

Establishing a Sense of Community

A mandatory part of each gathering is the formation of a giant circle created by all the participants, including students, leaders, and teachers. The group states that "for man, making a circle has always signified incorporation, or, to make many bodies into one. It is by uniting in a circle that all the activities at Corpo Cidadão begin and end" (www.corpocidadao.org.br). It is here in the circle that art educators, children and youth talk about what is happening in their lives.

In the circle, they learn that their opinions and dreams matter. It is also here where educators learn, along with the children, how they can strengthen themselves as citizens through art: "In the circle, all practice the art of listening to each other. In the circle, all become human" (www.corpocidadao.org.br – translated).

Once a year, all the students and educators unite to produce their annual "Espectáculo" (translated as "Spectacular"). Each year students and art educators choose a theme for the program. Past themes have included "communication," "consumption," "body functions," "identity," "the Portuguese language," and

“nourishment that isn’t just food.” These themes tend to be repeated throughout daily life, however they are not terms that are necessarily clearly defined for the students. These topics are investigated through art practice and become a large show that is put on for friends and family and the public, by the over six hundred students who participate in this program. The shows include music, writings, paintings, sculpture, drawings, and dances. They are presented in local theaters, exhibitions in public spaces, and parts of the shows even travel around the state of Minas Gerais and Brazil. The shows help students develop cultural, communal, and personal identity.

Chapter Summary

The Fundacao Pierre Verger and the Corpo Cidadão are programs in Brazil that exemplify the importance of the arts in the development of individual and community identity. These programs help participants to visualize their place in the surrounding community, how others fit in to it, and how each other’s culture and lifestyles can work together in a potentially positive way. In the final chapter, ways in which these types of activities can be applied to community arts programs in the United States are discussed, as well as what effects these programs can have on preparing students to be responsible global citizens.

CHAPTER 6: Conclusions

Introduction

In this chapter, conclusions from the study are presented. It includes a discussion of how this research applies to today's community art programs, and their importance in today's communities both in Brazil and here in the Untied States.

The programs discussed in this study are excellent examples of how art can be used in the development of both cultural and personal identity. It is not complicated models that make these programs successful, but rather, they are successful through the skill of the art educators in helping students explore their lives through art practice. Both these programs were able to facilitate a multifaceted exploration of the participants' identity on an individual, local, and global level, and as art educators Ballengee-Morris and Stuhr (2001) state, it is "the personal, national, and global aspects of culture make up a fluid, dynamic mesh of an individual's cultural identity" (p. 8).

The Pierre Verger Foundation began from one man's desire to photographically depict the transfer of culture from Africa to Brazil. His focus was one of unity, from one section of the globe to another. His photography and writings illustrated commonalities between cultures that are geographically distant. Verger's Foundation continued to focus on commonalities between peoples, both locally and

globally. He established in his community a center where people could come and explore their heritage and look at the world from a new perspective.

His legacy led to the creation of a cultural center that has a mission to provide children and young adults from the neighborhood opportunities to explore the arts. Not just limited to photography, but also painting, sculpture, dance, and music. It gave participants the ability to go out into the community into their own homes, schools, and streets - and take pictures with their "pinhole" cameras made from recycled milk cartons. In a capitalist world so often focused on wealth and profit, we learn that through something as simple as a milk carton the perspective of a young student explorer can be changed.

The second group, Corpo Cidadão, began as a family dance company and expanded into a group of centers created to provide children in impoverished areas of the city access to the arts. Here students studied music, dance, and the visual arts, and used these as tools to explore their personal and communal identity. Students are able to explore and make connections to other parts of the globe through activities at the centers, such as studying African tribal masks before creating their own personalized masks. The organization teaches the importance of being part of, and working as, a community. The daily practice of forming a discussion circle with teachers and students helps to establish a sense of respect and unity among the community.

It was through the creation of art that individuals in these programs learned about their common humanity. Through art projects and presentations they have learned to work together as a group, as a community. Efland (1990) states:

> The artist was now seen as the creator of unifying symbols in an otherwise fragmented civilization. 'Beauty alone can confer upon him a social character. Taste alone brings harmony into society, because it fosters harmony in the individual' (Shiller, 1795/1967, p. 215). (p. 51)

Moving Towards a Global Mentality

The study of art allows for an easy escape from local and national boundaries. As art educators, we understand the importance of studying other cultures, beliefs, and practices. The citizen of tomorrow's emerging economy is a global one, and we must all be prepared to work with people different from ourselves. As art educators, we must help our students begin to expand their sense of community so they will be responsible and capable world citizens by making a global perspective a more predominant part of our curriculum.

Local Issues and Anti-Globalization

As previously discussed, the term globalism has various meanings. For some it is centered on capitalism and the economy, while for others it provides a tool for the world's increasingly diverse cultures to interact and work together. Regardless of the perspective, globalism involves crossing physical, geographical, and cultural borders, and forging new relationships.

To some countries and cultures, globalization is seen as another form of post-colonialism. It is associated with the marginalization of large groups of people in various countries for the sake of hegemony or economic gain (Rajgopal, 2002). Often, the United States uses resources from other countries to promote their own ideals, which are not always welcomed by other cultures.

One example of this form of globalization can be illustrated by examining how the United States uses their education system to impose on other countries, such as Brazil. United States-based universities are admired by many people around the world for spreading quality education and encouraging global citizenship. However, they are not neutral entities that impact a country and leave no footprint. Teachers and administrators from the United States enter disadvantaged countries and restructure their universities, forcing them to conform to the system practiced in the United States. The authors of the article "Globalization & Academic Ethics" pose that this imposition is based on a global economic system, and not one centered on education. Thus, it exploits "multicultural awareness into a means of neo-colonial exploitation rather than a means of understanding and valorizing other people's histories and struggles" (Alidou, Caffentzis & Federici, 2003, p. 363). According to the National Security Education Program, the two largest promoters and funders of international expansion of United States academic institutions are the CIA and the Pentagon (Alidou et al, 2003).

Universities in the United States draw international students into their programs, and equally seek to send their students overseas. This effort has been headed mainly by administrators and funding organizations. Students are encouraged to participate in study abroad programs, international cultural exchanges, or classes focused on international studies. In fact, many prominent United States academic institutions have maintained that at least ten percent of their undergraduate students should have an educational experience abroad (Alidou et al, 2003). However, for those students coming from other countries, there tends to be an emphasis on international students conforming and experiencing the United States academic system, giving little importance to the student's personal culture.

Schooling in the United States: Are We Thinking Globally?

Most methods used in the public school system in the United States have emphasized the need to be independent and self-sufficient. Public school students are not often taught to think in relationship to other cultures, or how to function as members of either a local or global community. This push for independence developed from a time in our history when a rural lifestyle was widespread. Being independent was necessary for survival on the frontier. However, with the expansion of urbanization, and now further expansion to globalization, this lifestyle is far less common in the twenty-first century. As McFee (1969) argued, "the values

that grew out of our pioneer society are not working as we have changed from a predominantly rural to a predominantly urban-suburban society" (p. 17). Education in the United States does not prepare students to address issues of life in an urban setting, much less for life in an intermingled society stretching across the world. Art education has a significant opportunity to fill gaps where the education system has failed, as has been shown in the programs conducted in Brazil and discussed in this research.

In the 1800s the United States embraced the idea of Manifest Destiny: that the country's borders would expand from one coast to the other. This plan became a reality decades ago as people established cities and towns from the Atlantic to the Pacific in an effort to ease crowding of more eastern cities. However, only recently have we realized that we have nowhere else to expand, and this has caused our cities to grow rapidly (McFee, 1969). Yet in many ways, our educational system has maintained practices from almost a century ago. McFee (1969) references some research of Robert Pitts, a scholar of urbanization problems by stating:

> [Pitts] cites mistakes in transferring the values of an agrarian society, which grew out of the need to be independent for survival in rural areas, to an urban society, where everyone is exceedingly dependent on everyone else. Educational aims are borrowed from the agrarian institution and do not fit the complex interdependence of the city. (p. 17)

This antiquated system has caused issues for art educators who are unprepared to address circumstances students living in urbanized communities bring to the classroom. First, students are rarely taught how to handle issues of

interdependence. Students must learn to act within their personal environment in a manner that does not interfere with the environment of someone else. Citizens able to function respectfully and productively in a mutually dependent society are a cornerstone for democracy. Also, as cultures and peoples blend together and become more homogeneous, students must learn to maintain their personal identity. This is becoming more and more difficult as the qualities and traits that usually distinguish one cultural group from another begin to blur (McFee, 1969). Simply allowing students to do their "own thing" is not sufficient. We must help students understand their environment, and assist them in maintaining their individuality while respecting their local and global community and working collaboratively with others.

There was a good example of this idea present on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin. The University's Blanton Museum of Art is showing an exhibit called *America/Americas* that showcases work from both North and South American artists. Connections are made between artists who studied together, worked together, or simply lived in the same environment during the same period. However, in the midst of this large narrative, many people did not seem to understand the message of the exhibition.

Reactions to the exhibit and the question, "What it meant to be an American?" included comments such as the importance of being an American (citizen of the United States), it means we're free to do what we want, and it means

having pride in your country. An overwhelming majority of the responses to the exhibition indicated that they were primarily using the definition of "American" to mean a citizen of the United States. This may not seem like such a terrible thing, but it illustrates that there is a national patriotism in the minds of many of our students, which does not consider the process of other countries on the same continent. Most of us don't consider other members of the *American* continents, fellow *Americans.* Even though progress has been made in instituting a more nationalistic curriculum, since the time of June King McFee, we have not achieved one that incorporates global programs.

The Role of Media and Technology in Globalism

Media and technology are making it easier for societies to merge, and with the rise in international trade and global migration it becomes increasingly important for students to be visually literate on a global scale. Culture is often tied to economic factors. As Duncum (2009) argues, "Mass culture is sometimes called the dominant culture because it is closely tied to dominant forms of economic production, and it tends to convey the principle values of a society based on that economic system" (p. 233).

People encounter art and cultural symbols in massive amounts, from advertising on billboards or the Internet to restaurants and shopping malls. Students must have the familiarity and ability to understand these images, and their

social or political undertones, in various cultural contexts. Duncum (2009) also adds, “Popular culture is a rational expression of widely-shared social assumptions. In a consumer economy, the dominant message of mass culture is to consume, though many other mainstream messages about class, gender, ethnicity, and so on are also embedded all of which has the effect of reinforcing social inequalities” (p. 233). This exposure cultivates a mentality that empowers students with a socio-cultural fluidity necessary in tomorrow’s world.

Technology plays an intricate role in the rise of the globalized society, and facilitates an increased exchange of knowledge. Kellner (2002) states:

> Technologies produce a new economy interpreted affirmatively as fabricating a fresh wealth of nations. Technophiles claim that new technologies also make possible increased democratization, communication, education, culture, entertainment, and other social benefits, thus generating a utopia of social progress. (p. 288)

Today’s technology enables us to bring art and cultural treasures from all parts of the world into the classroom. We can use these objects to teach students to think from multiple points of view. Art educators can incorporate this alternative way of thinking with more ease than other subjects taught in schools like history or math. Unfortunately, the current curriculum in our schools, is largely based on formalist notions of teaching techniques or principles of art such as line, color, and shape. Guidelines also often force art educators to justify art by relating it to what students are studying in other subjects. As Desai and Chalmers (2007) argue, “school art is

more about illustrating or analyzing existing knowledge rather than a practice from which new forms of knowledge about our world are constructed" (p. 492).

This outdated art education curriculum needs to be revised to incorporate the necessities of today's urbanized children through more modern methods. Such action needs to occur not only to allow a wider range of objects into the classroom, but also to aid our students in becoming more comfortable with technology. The field of art education has much to learn from a more technology-centered field such as media education. Duncum (2009) argues that "art education, especially in the United States, is still at an early, experimental stage in developing a pedagogy for popular culture, and some reported practices appear to be at odds with what media education has found to be both defensible and effective" (p. 232). As Duncum does, so should the rest of the field: look to those familiar with media education for adoptable practices that would benefit our field.

Creating Globally-minded students in Art Education

Educators must constantly ask themselves what can be learned about this other culture. The inclusion of a global perspective in art education relies in part on the influence of multicultural education. Hart (1992) explains that the basis of multicultural art education is recognizing "the global diversity of the cultural contexts and environments in which art is produced, displayed, and viewed" (p. 5). Maintaining the importance of these cultures, a shift in our teaching methods must

occur within the classroom and the museum besides a simple recognition of cultural multiplicity. When discussing art, educators generally approach a conversation from a Western perspective. This perspective gives great importance to iconic significance, which limits our understanding and interpretation to what our own Western culture deems important.

Some researchers have begun to study what art educators can do to modify the current system. One method of establishing a more globally conscious student population for art educators is to incorporate interdependent problem solving into our teachings. McFee proposed this in the 1960s as a solution to the rural-urban transition, but it can apply to global initiatives, even today. She stated interdependent problem solving:

> Requires a high level of understanding… it requires that every citizen be as responsible for the public domain as for the private, as the effects of one set of private decisions affect the quality of life of many other people, and public decisions affect the quality of life of everyone. (1969, p. 17)

We have the ability to expand our learning environment beyond the borders of our home country, and explore countries around the globe. As the world becomes more connected art educators must ask ourselves how we can better the system to meet these new needs. Or more specifically, how can we change art education?

One method, presented by Alica Lai and Eric Ball (2002), discusses the benefits of incorporating eco-theory to expand the idea of community. They encourage art educators to use examples of space-specific art from the areas in which they teach to address the idea of local community, history, and traditions.

This same methodology can be used to discuss other cultures by incorporating works of art and objects from outside the local community. This will allow for a sympathetic discussion of another community's site-specific cultural and natural contexts.

The importance of teaching globally extends beyond the classroom. Museums, as prominent community organizations and trustees of our art and cultural objects, must also reassess the methods they are using. We should take more advantage of the multiple forms and cultural interpretations of artifacts that exist. There should be tours constructed about how a select group of objects can be interpreted by various cultural groups. These points of view should not be taught only to encourage and enable us to approach and think differently, but also to teach students to respect the diversity of cultures around them.

Desai proposes a method that can be utilized in the classroom. She emphasizes the importance of presenting an accurate cultural context and local popular culture when teaching about a work of art. This may not be as easy as it seems. Many art educators typically present information from a "high art" or Western point of view. She argues that this Western perspective cannot be used to provide context for non-Western art. Desai (2000) states:

> Many proponents of multiculturalism rightly argue that Western aesthetic standards cannot be used to understand non-Western art forms. . . the general characteristics of Western aesthetics – individuality, originality, permanence, and form that distinguished "high" art from "low" or popular art – cannot be applied to non-Western art systems. Rather, teachers and

> students have to acknowledge that different aesthetic principles exist in the world. (pp. 122-123)

We must promote the system of pluralist aesthetics discussed earlier, where there is not one single measure by which objects are judged. Students and teachers must realize that there are multiple standards by which art is assessed, and these standards must be acknowledged while teaching about works of art in the classroom.

If art educators do not take the time to present works of art in their cultural context, a significant teaching opportunity is lost. Desai (2000) states, "It is irresponsible of art educators to present artworks to students without preparing them to also understand the context from which they come and the rationale for their selection" (p. 121). Many non-Western forms of art are not present in the visual culture we encounter, or even in most museums. This provides art educators with an excellent opportunity to present new art and cultures to their students.

Desai illustrates the importance of providing accurate and pluralistic context to cultural objects when teaching about them. Generally, objects from India found in major museums are objects that possess iconic significance, and these signifiers form the basis of the discussions that occur in the museum. In this excerpt from the Instructional Resources section in *Art Education,* a possible discussion about a Hindu God is being described:

> This image of Shiva Nataraja, a Hindu god, is still being made in India today, in variety of sizes, to adorn temples and shrines in people's homes. Everyone recognizes Shiva, whether made of plastic, wood, stone, or gold; the form, the

> composition, and the symbols have remained the same for centuries. The symbols reveal Hindu values and describe the Hindu world view. Learning about Shiva will help students enjoy other Hindu sculpture. (Prabhu, 1987, p. 40)

The article continues by discussing the way in which the Hindu object should be read "appropriately and correctly." At issue here is the idea that an object such as this can be read "correctly." Such as perspective is not valid. There is not a universal understanding of the symbols of Hinduism, or objects from any other religion for that matter. Different Hindu communities interpret Shiva in significantly different ways, and Shiva herself is presented in an assortment of contexts from temples to billboards, and political posters to movies.

In countries such as India and Brazil, popular culture and high art do not exist as it does in the West. Desai (2000) uses the term "public culture" to illustrate that there is an area of contestation between "private and state interests, common and high cultural media and different classes and groups formulate, represent, and debate what culture is (and should be)" (p. 123). Objects seen as art by people in India: spoons, quilts, nutcrackers, mirrors, etc. have no iconic significance outside the culture wherein they were produced, and are, therefore, not visible in Western art education discourses. Yet, these objects play a significant role in defining what we understand culture to be. Popular culture "reinforces dominant social values and so contributes to social cohesion while simultaneously offering pleasures associated with resistance to and even subversion of the social order" (Duncum, 2009, p. 233).

Not only should we be careful in how we contextually prepare students to learn about art, but we should also seek to incorporate art from the students' society or culture, which may be different from our own. McFee (1970) stated:

> A study of the function of art in societies other than our own should give us insight into the way art forms, no matter how humble, operate in people's lives *right now*. We may have to be willing to look at these art forms with a new sensitivity to see how they function to give a sense of continuity and belonging to a community. (p.77)

Art's value is often perceived from its presentation. If art educators present mainly Western art in classrooms, an automatic separation and inferiority is established between it and local artforms. She continues:

> If their art forms are making this contribution, then our introduction of art to members of these groups should include their symbolism. If not, we are in some degree teaching their children to devalue their own background. (p. 77)

World cultures are often presented as monothematic, and make grand assumptions about massive groups of peoples. This is not due to any fault of their own, but because this is what and how they are taught in our educational system. We need to reevaluate our teaching methods, be more responsible with how we discuss objects from around the world, and ensure that we are providing students with the multiple interpretations necessary to gain an accurate understanding of art and culture.

Material Culture, World Culture

Globalization, as it has been discussed, focuses on the idea that all humans recognize their membership in the worldwide society. Whether we recognize it or not, that *is* what we are. As such, every human being has a responsibility to maintain a respectable and responsible community on a local, national, and international level. But this is not an inherent practice; it must be taught. This type of communal society requires citizens that are "educated around cultural issues of individual and collective concern as well as having the capability to consider such issues from a critical perspective" (Bolin & Blandy, 2003, p. 246). The field of art education has a unique capacity to provide this type of preparation by facilitating an exploration and appreciation of a wide variety of objects, expressions, and cultural experiences in the classroom (Bolin & Blandy, 2003, p. 246).

As discussed earlier in this chapter, technology and media have become increasingly influential. With this growth, it has become more important that we incorporate not just the visual into definitions of culture, but all types of sensory experiences. Bolin and Blandy (2003) state:

> It is critical to recognize that our current multimedia world is expanding rapidly towards multi-sensory experience. It may be that if art educators continue to privilege visual objects and/or visual experiences, which is characteristic of visual culture studies, our students and the field will be susceptible to manipulation through our other sensory modalities. In this, our field will continue to perpetuate the disciplinary and sensory boundaries that fail to encourage a holistic and systemic understanding of experience. We risk being rendered obsolete because of our restricted and limited orientation to the world around us. (p. 247)

Their argument continues by stating that the field of art education would benefit from a material culture approach because it has the ability to cross into other disciplines, focuses on the exploration of common objects as opposed to high art, and speaks more currently to students who are already heavily involved in multimedia experiences (Bolin & Blandy, 2003).

New Literacy Studies have also grown recently as a method of learning, and share some principles with the study of material culture. New Literacy, as defined by Stephens (2000), "takes a sociocultural view of literacy, emphasizing the description of literacy practices of everyday life, and challenging approaches which emphasize decontextualized basic skills" (p. 10). The idea is to create a method of understanding new ideas by accessing ways of learning students are already familiar with; this is done through embracing the study of objects from the everyday.

New Literacy Studies utilizes everyday objects from the lives of students such as mp3 players, i-pods, computers, rap, or video games, as a point of access for learning. Street (2003) provides a better understanding:

> What has come to be termed "New Literacy Studies" represents a new tradition in considering the nature of literacy, focusing not so much on acquisition of skills, as in dominant approaches, but rather on what it means to think of literacy as a social practice. This entails the recognition of multiple literacies, varying according to time and space, but also contested in relations of power. NLS, then, takes nothing for granted with respect to literacy and the social practices with which it becomes associated, problematizing what counts as literacy at any time and place and asking "whose literacies" are dominant and whose are marginalized or resistant. (p. 77)

This is perhaps yet another method educators can use to help students understand culture, community, and place.

Conclusion

As we continue our studies and embark on our various experiences as art educators, let us have in mind our duty to stimulate globally conscious individuals. We must provide students with the motivation and tools to understand and interpret the limitless cultural and artistic influences that surround them every day. We must also teach them of their role in contributing to a respectable and responsible local and global community. June King McFee (1968) stated that art education should include teaching "that responsibility in a democracy includes responsibility for one's visual contribution to one's street, one's neighborhood, one's business environment. In other words, the quality of the visual environment we create, allow to exist, or allow to deteriorate is our responsibility" (p. 2).

We must encourage students to be responsible locally to facilitate respect and progress globally. Community art education programs, whether they occur in Brazil, the United States, or anywhere else in the world, have the ability to teach about culture, society, and community on many levels. There must be a shift in schools and cultural institutions away from recreational art, to one that embraces a multiplicity of thought and global interdependence (Desai & Chalmers, 2007). Let

us generate ways in which we can utilize art to teach students to embrace difference, and teach them to become responsible citizens of our global community.

Appendix

Table 1: Distribution of Brazilian Population by Race

Population	1872	1890	1940	1950	1960	1980	1991	2000
White	38.1	44.0	63.5	61.7	61.0	54.8	51.7	53.8
Parda	42.2	41.4	19.4	26.5	29.5	38.4	42.6	39.2
Preta	19.7	14.6	14.6	11.0	8.7	5.9	5.0	6.2

Parda (brown), Preta (black).
Source: Brazilian General Census, (Paixão, 2004, 747)

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