

STUDENTS' VALUING OF ART IN A HUMANITIES
ART APPRECIATION COURSE AT A MIDWESTERN
JUNIOR COLLEGE

By

LORI ANNE PALMER

Bachelor of Arts in Art Education
Northeastern State University
Tahlequah, Oklahoma
2000

Master of Arts in Liberal Studies
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma
2010

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
May, 2022

STUDENTS' VALUING OF ART IN A HUMANITIES
ART APPRECIATION COURSE AT A MIDWESTERN
JUNIOR COLLEGE

Dissertation Approved:

Dr. Jennifer Yong Sanders

Dissertation Co-Adviser

Dr. Donita Massengill Shaw

Dissertation Co-Adviser

Dr. Jennifer Schneider

Dr. Edward L. Harris

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have many people to acknowledge and thank who have supported and guided me on this doctoral journey. First and foremost, I would like to thank my family who have not only encouraged and supported me but have willingly sacrificed much precious family time so I could pursue this goal. Many thanks to Dr. Harris who early on steered me to instrumental art education theorists and the methodology that framed my study. I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr. Schneider for her gentle support and wise words that I would get through to end “one sentence at a time.” I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Virginia Worley for starting me on this path, and Dr. Lucy Bailey who would periodically check in on me to see how I was doing. Much gratitude is offered to the Art Appreciation students who participated in this study. Finally, and most especially, I would to thank Dr. Jenn Sanders and Dr. Donita Shaw, my wonderful co-advisers, who have offered an abundance of needed guidance and gentle nudging encouraging me to dive deeper and see what I couldn’t readily see before. Without them, I do not know if I would have come this far.

Name: LORI ANNE PALMER

Date of Degree: MAY, 2022

Title of Study: STUDENTS' VALUING OF ART IN A HUMANITIES ART
APPRECIATION COURSE AT A MIDWESTERN JUNIOR COLLEGE

Major Field: EDUCATION

Abstract:

Art Appreciation is often a course that undergraduate students take to meet their general education requirements. However, many students have little interest or value of art due to a lack of previous art experiences and often choose the course because they feel it will be relatively easy. This qualitative, naturalistic inquiry focused on students' meaning making and valuing of art as well as their perceived changes in how they value art, art's practical use, and art's benefits to individuals and society from their experiences in taking an Art Appreciation course. Altering the traditional art history, aesthetics, and art criticism approach to teaching Art Appreciation, the researcher added art production as part of the curriculum in order to facilitate a broader range of art experiences, increased artistic understanding, and valuing of art. Art is valued for intrinsic and extrinsic reasons. The review of literature concerned artistic and aesthetic valuing; art experiences in relation to one's learning, living, and psychological influences; as well as examining curriculum and teaching methods in undergraduate Art Appreciation courses. Naturalistic inquirers lean toward humans' value making and ground the theory from the data collected in a natural setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Data were gathered from course assignments that included students' responses from class discussions, art history questions, art criticism activities as well as art productions. From these data, an art appreciation education theory emerged based on students' experiences that included six components: 1) a comfortable and safe learning environment; 2) foundational knowledge and application of the formal qualities of art; 3) foundational knowledge of art history and art criticism; 4) collaborative class participation opportunities through group discussions and projects; 5) hands-on, low-stakes art creation experiences; and 6) valuing reflections. The findings revealed that students expressed viewing artworks, determining how art was valued in the past and today, learning art techniques, creating art, engaging with the class, working collaboratively on art projects, and learning and critiquing artwork from history provided many benefits that could transfer to others and society and contributed to students' developing their own unique standard in which to make meaning and value art.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Coming to Research Students’ Valuing Art.....	1
Problem Statement	5
Purpose.....	6
Research Questions	6
Significance.....	6
Subjectivity Statement	7
Definition of Terms.....	7
Overview of Dissertation	9
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	11
Defining Value.....	11
Valuing Art	12
Intrinsic and Extrinsic Value	14
Aesthetic verses Artistic Value	15
Aesthetic, Creative, and Holistic Experiences: Past and Present.....	17
Past Experiences	18
Current Experiences.....	20
Art’s Value to and Influence upon Learning and Living.....	23
Interdisciplinary Learning.....	25
Multimodal Learning	27
Influences on Everyday Life	30
Influences on Citizenship.....	31
Influences on Moral Responsibility	32
Art’s Psychological Influence on Emotional Health and Well-Being	34
Psychological Identity.....	35
Psychological Resilience	36
Psychological Support through Relationship Building.....	38
Psychological Support: Fostering Agency Self-Efficacy and Cooperation.....	39
Psychological Health and Aesthetic Experience.....	40
Teacher to Student Psychological Dissonance	41
Undergraduate, College Students’ Experiences in Art Appreciation Courses	43
Filling the Gaps.....	48
Summary of Chapter II	48

Chapter	Page
III. QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY.....	50
Rationale for Qualitative Study	50
Theoretical Perspective	51
Methodology	53
Naturalistic Characteristics	54
Participant Sampling	57
Participant Information	57
A Midwestern State Junior College Context	60
Impact of the Pandemic	62
Research Bias and Subjectivity.....	64
Data Collection Methods	70
Demographic and Art Appreciation Survey	71
Field Observations and Field Notes	71
Documents and Artifacts.....	72
Focus Group Interviews	73
Data Analysis Methods	74
Trustworthiness.....	77
Summary of Chapter III	79
IV. FINDINGS.....	80
Thematic Findings	81
Theme 1: Feelings of Inadequacy and Frustration.....	81
Students' Lack of Art Knowledge and Experiences	81
Theme 2: What Students Are Drawn to in Art	88
Student Connections Based on Beauty	88
Student Connections Based on Their Personal Lives	97
Student Appreciation and Admiration for Artists.....	101
Student Connection to Meaning in Art	102
Theme 3: Benefits from Doing, Analyzing, or Viewing Art	109
Learning and Understanding Benefits	109
Learning and Understanding from Creating Art.....	109
Learning and Understanding from Art History.....	115
Socio-Emotional Benefits	117
Student Interest and Engagement.....	117
Student Enjoyment.....	120
Psychological Health	124
Increased Confidence.....	129
Communication/Connecting Benefits	131
Expressing Oneself	132
Connecting Through Collaboration	134

Societal Benefits	137
Theme 4: Judging and Valuing	139
Peer Judgment	140
Personal Judgment	144
Societal Value	151
Personal Value	154
Changes to Valuing	157
Summary of Chapter IV	162
V. CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS	163
Conclusions of Findings to Answer Research Questions	163
Summary of Findings Connected to Sub Question One	164
Summary of Findings Connected to Sub Questions Two and Three.....	167
Summary of Findings for the Overarching Research Question	170
Discussion	172
Theorizing Art Appreciation Education.....	173
Research Limitations	175
Implications	177
Researcher’s Comments.....	183
REFERENCES	185
APPENDICES	194
Appendix A	194
Appendix B	198
Appendix C	200
Appendix D	206
Appendix E	210

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Art and Music Classes in Relation to OK Public School Enrollment.....	84
2. Trustworthiness Table.....	198
3. Demographic Survey	206
4. Data Collection Chart	210

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. MWF Puzzle Piece Creations	63
2. TR Puzzle Piece Creations.....	63
3. Student 22 Photograph.....	94
4. Student 19 Photograph.....	94
5. Student 13 Photograph.....	94
6. Student 14 Final Art Production	96
7. Student 21 Final Art Production	96
8. Student 26 Final Art Production	107
9. Student 18 Final Art Production	107
10. Student 22 Final Art Production	107
11. Photograph by Erich Lessing of Minoan Toreador Fresco.....	110
12. MWF Art Proportion Project-Reproduction of Minoan Toreador Fresco	110
13. Photograph by Paul Williams 2012 of Minoan Blue Monkey Fresco	110–111
14. TR Art Proportion Project-Reproduction Minoan Blue Monkey Fresco..	110–111
15. Student 6 Dada Chance Collage	122
16. Student 23 Dada Chance Collage	122
17. Student 28 Dada Chance Collage	122
18. Student 1 Final Art Production	123
19. Student 15 Final Art Production	123
20. Student 29 Final Art Production	123
21. Student 23 Photograph.....	127
22. Student 13 Dada Chance Collage	127
23. Student 5 Final Art Production	147
24. Student 7 Final Art Production	147
25. Student 17 Final Art Production	147
26. Student 24 Final Art Production	147
27. Student 11 Final Art Production	149
28. Student 16 Final Art Production	149
29. Student 19 Final Art Production	149–150
30. Student 8 Final Art Production	149–150

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Students' Valuing of Art in a Humanities Art Appreciation Course at a Midwestern Junior College

The “valuing of art” has been part of human culture since pre-historic times. Different cultures value art differently at different times. Museums and art galleries display certain artworks created in the past that “experts” over time have identified as “great,” of cultural and monetary value. Furthermore, art museums are mainly attended by the highly educated upper and middle class members of society and not considered useful to many people’s daily live (Hanquinet, 2013). John Dewey (1934), often considered the father of U.S. philosophy of education, makes a point that art in museums is separated, or “set apart” from our daily lives and “serve as insignia of taste and certificates of special culture” (p. 8). How individuals value art depends largely on their past experiences with art (Dewey, 1916). Patton (2002) contends it is human nature to reflect upon experiences and from those reflections deduce meaning. I posit both artists and viewers use art to make meaning of human experiences.

Coming to Research Students' Valuing Art

As a humanities instructor for an Oklahoma junior college, I know many students feel negatively about fulfilling their Humanities' General Education requirement, especially with an Art Appreciation class. Therefore, in my first assignment, I direct students to post a paragraph introducing themselves and stating their reasons for taking the class. Most students indicate they are taking the class to fulfill their Humanities' General Education requirement, Art Appreciation was available, and/or the course worked with their schedules. At the end of the course, I take an anonymous class survey requesting students' views about the class. In contrast to the neutral comments at the class's commencement such as "I need the class, and this one works," students usually respond positively in the post-teaching survey. Typical comments include, "I had no idea there was so much to know about art"; "I'm so happy I took this course"; and "I look at art much differently now! They're not just pretty pictures." I have noticed over my years teaching Art Appreciation the positive changes in students' attitudes from the class's beginning to its end. These positive changes have led me to my dissertation topic. I hypothesize that, at the beginning of their Art Appreciation semester, students' "blah" view is due to a belief that Art Appreciation is a blow off class and wastes their time and money because learning about art does not contribute to their lives or future jobs; therefore, taking Art Appreciation has no real value.

I came from a discipline-based art education (DBAE) background learned in my undergraduate art education training and applied in my teaching of elementary and secondary art in the public school system before teaching in higher education. I have witnessed how learning about art's cultural history, learning and applying art criticism techniques, and making aesthetic judgments along with creating art provides a multitude

of student benefits. Discipline-based art education (DBAE) follows a comprehensive instructional strategy that includes art production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics. I believe this combination supports learning how to value and specifically to valuing art intrinsically.

Although art production is included in DBAE curricula, it is not traditionally part of the Art Appreciation course curriculum in higher education. It is my belief that to fully appreciate art, one must participate in creating art. Based on the positive undergraduate student responses I received from incorporating a one time, low-stakes final art production assignment in an Art Appreciation course before the spring 2020 semester of this study, I incorporated an art production component into the curriculum for this study. These low-stakes art productions facilitate increased art experiences for students and contribute to students' artistic understanding and valuing of art. Because students with little art knowledge or art experiences are often apprehensive in creating art because they do not feel adequately competent, the artwork produced should account for a minimal part of the students' overall grade and not be graded on technical ability, which will help to decrease anxiety and encourage students to try. Peter Elbow (2000) emphasizes that low stakes assignments increase students' willingness to take risks that they wouldn't take when the stakes are high. Elbow (2000) states, "In short, we can't pressure students to risk themselves, we can only set up conditions that increase their willingness to do so" (p. 42). To increase students' understanding and confidence in creating art, the first art production assignments included exploring and practicing simple drawing, shading and linear perspective exercises to gain an understanding of how to create the illusion of

depth as well as mixing colors using colored pencil to create a color wheel and an intensity chart in order to gain an understanding of color theory.

In *Art a Waste of Time*, White (2013) describes himself as “a [low-level] government bureaucrat” who took a college design class to help him better design the slide presentations for his job (p. 93). Despite criticism from colleagues, White took the class because he thought it would be fun. As a result of his experiences, White argues children need more rather than less art in school because through art children both develop important skills and enhance their lives. Tutt (2014) contends that state legislators and public school district and site administrators have increasingly excluded the arts from the curriculum, deeming arts content, concepts, and skills nonessential for secondary public school students. The arts are often omitted from schools to save money and time for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). As a result, I am not surprised when most of my Art Appreciation students indicate this college-level class is their first art class; they therefore do not have any memorable, high-school art experiences. I assert individuals in all disciplines benefit from the self-knowledge, creativity, cultural learning, critical thinking, and learning enjoyment the arts foster, learning experiences state legislators, district and site administrators, and STEM-everything proponents often ignore to society’s peril.

Interestingly, although the Obama administration increased STEM-program resources to improve the United States’ competitive edge globally in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, less than half University undergraduate students pursuing a STEM degree actually graduate with one (Ghanbari, 2015). With the focus on STEM education in today’s educational discourse and practice, educational policy

legislators, district and school administrators, teachers, and society at large often marginalize the arts, failing to recognize their value as both a mode of knowledge and as a means to enhancing learning in other disciplines (Tutt, 2014). Pushing back, educators have been advocating for including the arts in public school curricula to increase STEM learning—transforming STEM into STEAM (Spear, 2011), Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math—arguing “the arts have the ability to open up new ways of seeing, thinking, and learning” (Ghanbari, 2015, p. 1). Fairly new and predominately promoted through the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Endowment of the Arts’ (NEA) joining forces, STEAM exists to foster creativity in STEM students by adding the arts to their curricula (Guyotte et al., 2015).

Problem Statement

Many Oklahoma, undergraduate college students have had few such experiences as learning art history, producing art, or analyzing and judging art’s aesthetic value in their public school or personal-life experiences since only one unit of art or set of competencies is required for high school graduation in Oklahoma public schools. This requirement can be obtained from any of the arts disciplines, including music, drama/theater, dance, and visual art (*2021 Core Curriculum Graduation Checklist, 2021*); therefore, they may have little or no experience from which to reason and believe art has value, no experience from which to know how to assign art, artist experience, and aesthetic experience value,ⁱ and no experiences with art from which to know art can positively influence their lives. Although undergraduate students are certainly exposed to art in our current visual society. I wondered if they have developed an understanding of

art's influencing and communication potential or developed a sense of how to value art. This problem led to the purpose for this study.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine college students' perceptions of their experiences with and their valuing of art before, during, and after taking their entry-level, college, Art Appreciation course designed to meet the 3-credit, humanities' general education requirement most students have for their undergraduate degrees.

Research Question

Based on the problem that many undergraduate students in Oklahoma have had little experiences to engage with or ascribe value to art, my research question was the following: How do undergraduate students make meaning and ascribe value to art, based on their experiences in a general education Art Appreciation humanities' course? To support the overarching research question, I examined three sub-questions: 1) What changes do undergraduate students perceive in how they value art after taking an Art Appreciation course? 2) What changes do undergraduate students perceive in how they value art's practical use or function after taking an Art Appreciation course? 3) What changes do undergraduate students perceive in how they value art's benefits to individuals and society after taking an Art Appreciation course?

Significance

I assert the arts have value as a mode of knowledge, educative value across disciplines, and value as a means for enhancing students' seeing from different perspectives and gaining insights that will serve them well in their future endeavors,

whatever they may be. I project my research will reveal art's importance to students' learning how to value and learning what they value in life and across disciplines; students' coming to enjoy learning; students' using their imaginations; students' creative thinking and problem solving; students' better understanding themselves; and students' giving themselves permission to make mistakes and create their own worlds.

Subjectivity Statement

As a current, college-level, Art Appreciation educator and former K–12, public-school art teacher, I am personally vested in and highly value art education because I believe engaging with and doing art contributes to one's knowledge, pleasure, and agency by offering an additional form of self-expression. I have witnessed individuals grow and increase their understanding of others and the world when collaboratively making art. I have observed students' thinking critically and imaginatively while creating art, thereby developing self-confidence, purpose, and satisfaction. I know from my own experiences studying, creating, and appreciating art, its potential power, meaning, and value in one's everyday life. I also know from experience that many students seem neither to value art nor understand why one might value making, viewing, critiquing, or learning about art and art history. As a result, I want better to understand the concept of value, the act of valuing, and what contributes to one's coming to value artistic and aesthetic experiences, processes such as creating art, communicating through art, appreciating art, responding to art, analyzing or "reading" art, learning art's history, and/or learning art's meaning and value in culture and society.

Definition of Terms

Definitions for the following terms are to provide clarification of significant terms used for the purpose of this study.

Aesthetic Value is derived from something that one is profoundly moved by, whether that be art or anything else, and the degree of value is proportional to the impact of one's experiences (Iser, 1978; Vygotsky, 1971; Barthes 1980; Dewey, 1916, 1934; Eisner 1997; Jackson, 1998).

Aesthetic Experience is an extension of an experience that is particularly satisfying or emotional. Any experience can be aesthetic (Dewey, 1934).

Appreciation as a noun is “an increase in the value of something” or is “the act of recognizing or understanding that something is valuable, important, or as described” (Cambridge University Press, 2019, *Appreciation*). The verb form, “to appreciate,” is “to increase in value”; “to be aware of something, or to understand that something is valuable”; or to be grateful for something (Cambridge University Press, 2019, *Appreciate*).

Art Appreciation is “an awareness of art and its processes from the past and present and an ability to think about and respond to art and art theories in order to find value and meaning in art” (Busbea, 2006, p. 9; emphasis in original).

Artistic Value is multi-faceted and includes the process of judging works of art by one or more of its aesthetics (beauty), its historical/cultural value, or its financial value (Stecker, 2012).

Extrinsic value is to value “for the sake of something else to which it is related in some way” (Zimmerman & Bradley, 2019, no. 6, para. 1).

Holistic Experience is derived from an aesthetic experience that contributes to one's whole being, the mental, physical, and emotional (Dewey, 1934).

Intrinsic value is “the value that something has ‘in itself,’ ‘for its own sake,’ ‘as such,’ or ‘in its own right’” (Zimmerman & Bradley, 2019, no. 6, para. 1).

Knowledge is “awareness, understanding, or information that has been obtained by experience or study, and that is either in a person's mind or possessed by people generally” (Cambridge University Press, 2019, *Knowledge*).

Learning is “the activity of gaining knowledge” (Cambridge University Press, 2019, *Learning*).

Value as a noun means “importance, worth, or benefit” and, in its verb form, “to assign importance, worth, or benefit” (Cambridge University Press, 2019, *Value*) – Judging-Prizing (Dewey, 1916).

Visual Literacy is “a set of abilities that enables an individual to effectively find, interpret, evaluate, use, and create images and visual media” (American Library Association, 2011).

Overview of Dissertation

In Chapter I, I introduced the “valuing of art” and how experience is significant to that valuing. I explained that this research is based on my teaching experience of undergraduate students in an Art Appreciation class in which I've witnessed changes in their views about art and art's contributions to their lives. Due to lack of experience with art in the areas of history, production, analysis and judgement, many undergraduate college students have no foundation upon which to value art or realize how art could contribute positively to their lives. The purpose of this study was to examine college

students' perceptions of their experiences with and their valuing of art over the course of an Art Appreciation class that I teach. I feel the arts have value in education and can make a profound positive impact to students' lives. The forthcoming chapters contain following: In Chapter II, I review pertinent scholarly literature relevant to valuing art, experiencing art, the benefits of art and undergraduate student experiences in Art Appreciation. In Chapter III, I present my rationale for doing a qualitative study, expound the theoretical perspective, and detail the methodology of the study. In Chapter IV, I present the findings of the study; and finally in Chapter V, I present the conclusions, summary, and implications of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Recognizing axiology's enormity, I begin defining and explaining "value" by selecting the aspects of value most useful to my research on artistic and aesthetic value. Next, to identify gaps in research concerning whether students' perceptions of their valuing art change once they have created, engaged with, analyzed, and learned about art and its history, I review theory and contemporary research concerning 1) aesthetic, creative, and holistic experiences; 2) art's value and influences to learning and living, 3) art's psychological influence on emotional health and well-being; and 3) undergraduate, college student's experiences in Art Appreciation courses.

Defining Value

Although curriculum and art education scholar Eliot Eisner (1997) contends "what are considered needs of the child, of the community, and of the society are, in large measure, affected by the values...one holds" (p. 4), does one know what "value" means or what it means to value? Individuals use the term "value" to mean different things, but, most commonly, when one uses "value" as a noun, one means "importance, worth or benefit" and, in its verb form, "to assign importance, worth, or benefit" (Cambridge University Press, 2019, Value). In the following, I review how art is valued, differences

between intrinsic and extrinsic valuing, as well as aesthetic versus artistic valuing.

Valuing Art

While art is the vehicle through which artists express their own and society's values, the viewer values art for financial, historical, sentimental, cultural, social, moral, aesthetic, or educative reasons, to name a few. Throughout time, art has been created to project people's place in the world and the situations around them (Eisner, 1997). As Eisner explains:

The work of art frequently presents to our senses a set of values, either positive or negative; the work praises or condemns, but it comments on the world and makes us feel toward the object it depicts—provided we have learned to “read” its message. (pp. 15–16)

Some individuals separate fine, visual art from applied arts or other art objects. Dewey (1934) disagrees with such divisions, contending instead that there is artistic value in both and separating the two diminishes the value of one's experiences with everyday life. Referring to how intrinsically valuing art relates to one's experience, Dewey emphasizes “even a crude experience, if authentically an experience, is more fit to give a clue to the intrinsic nature of aesthetic experience than is an object already set apart from any other mode of experience” (Dewey, 1934, p. 9). In other words, valuing something useful such as a beautiful quilt or ceramic pot that brings comfort and joy can be as valuable to one's life, or perhaps even more so, than viewing what is considered priceless art in a museum.

Because art's social, cultural, historical, and moral meanings may shift over time, the way individuals and society value art also shifts. Museum curators, for example, exercise substantial power assigning social, cultural, historical, and moral value to art objects by assigning works to tell stories which often preference particular artists' dispositions (Preece et al., 2016). We have been culturally conditioned to value art based on how others value it, often preferring art and artists that have shown a certain amount of notoriety and not art or objects that is part of our everyday lives nor do we value our own creative abilities. Sociologist Edith Cobb (1977) speaks to this limited valuing system stating, "we must learn to treat creativity in terms of value systems that differ from intellectual achievement yet reinforce positive aesthetic attitudes toward nature and man and our culturally created world imagery" (Kindle ed., Location 1485). Echoing this sentiment, Eisner (1997) asserts art's purpose or value is to serve "man not only by making the ineffable and visionary available... [but to activate] our sensibilities; art provides the subject matter through which our human potentialities can be exercised" (p. 12). How one values art should extend beyond what others such as museum curators determine valuable. John Dewey (1916) goes beyond assigning value by emphasizing valuing as an active thinking process, for when one values, one judges one thing's worth compared to another's. This valuing-judging process results in prizing—a high appreciation. Jackson (1998) emphasizes that Dewey moves value beyond prizing to an almost transcendental level, declaring that to value "requires... [one] acknowledge something beyond the immediately given—something, that is beyond the here and now" (p. 28). That is, value progresses imaginatively acquiring meaning and significance,

functioning beyond the present situation, thereby reflecting value as intrinsic and extrinsic.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Value

Philosophers debate the meaning of intrinsic and extrinsic value. In general, and for the purpose of this study, intrinsic value refers to “the value that something has ‘in itself,’ ‘for its own sake,’ ‘as such,’ or ‘in its own right’”; extrinsic value refers to value “for the sake of something else to which it is related in some way” (Zimmerman & Bradley, 2019, no. 6, para. 1). An example of intrinsically valuing art is buying, collecting, or admiring art for the art itself: its beauty, the way it communicates to the admirer, and the way it inspires or moves the viewer. Dewey (1916) posits when something has intrinsic value there is no judgment because it is “invaluable” (p. 349). Contemporary Italian philosopher Mario Perniola (1995) specifies intrinsic value “resides in the combination of connections (discourses, actions, grids, situations, and sense effects) established around or starting from an object, which is only an occasion, a pretext or a point of transition” (p. 47). Dewey (1934) asserts that art’s real value is how it can transform human experience and one associates “great art” with having intrinsic value.

Philosophers also debate whether extrinsic value exists (Zimmerman & Bradley, 2019, Intro., para. 1). An example of extrinsically valuing art is purchasing art as a financial investment. When one values art objects for what they can do, that value is instrumental or extrinsic; therefore, the purchaser does not appreciate the objects he/she purchases so much as art as for their financial function, for their use as money or property (Jackson, 1998). Those marketing art value artworks extrinsically for their financial

worth. The reasons experts consider some art works more valuable than others involve “important issues of scarcity and originality and a wide variety of professional stakeholders exercising different valuation roles including artists, distributors, collectors, and the general public” (Preece et al., 2016, p. 1378). For example, an artist’s notoriety contributes greatly to an artwork’s financial value, for “the personality of the artist is transformed in a brand name that guarantees the value of artistic merchandise” (Perniola, 1995, p. 47). Therefore, although one “great” artwork may have both the intrinsic value to transform human experience and extrinsic or financial value, extrinsically valued art may not powerfully transform human experience, may not be “great art.” Dewey (1934) asserts such extrinsic valuing as “adventitious matters, like the pleasure of collecting, of exhibit, of ownership and display, [merely] simulate esthetic values” (p. 8). This leads to exploring the differences between aesthetic and artistic value.

Aesthetic versus Artistic Value

What does aesthetic value mean, and is aesthetic value different from artistic value? There has been much debate about the differences between aesthetic and artistic value. Robert Stecker (2012) distinguishes between the two, asserting artistic value “derives from a set of values relevant to evaluating artworks as art,” while aesthetics comprise a subset to artistic values (p. 1). In contrast, Dewey (1934) maintains “‘artistic’ refers primarily to the act of production and ‘esthetic’ to that of perception and enjoyment” (p. 48). Since experience involves both production and perception, then artistic and aesthetic cannot be completely separated; therefore, “to be artistic, a work must also be esthetic—that is, framed for enjoyed receptive perception” (Dewey, 1934, p. 49).

German aesthetic-response scholar and literary anthropologist Wolfgang Iser (1978) contends “aesthetic value...is like the wind—we know of its existence only through its effects” (p. 70). Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1971) asserts a similar stance that one’s aesthetic response to art “is the emotional reaction it generates” (p. 206). This aesthetic response relates to how art affects the viewer, an effect that represents how the viewer has judged and subsequently valued that art (Iser, 1978). Plato and Meskin (2013) agree with Iser that one knows art’s value by its effects but contend one must first establish the precursor to aesthetic value’s effects before identifying them as positive or negative. To distinguish if an object or environment holds aesthetic value depends upon one’s experience when engaged with the object; that experience becomes the precursor for aesthetic valuing. If an object’s beauty, grace, proportion, harmony, etc. evoke a pleasurable experience, the object has a “positive aesthetic value,” but if an object induces an experience of ugliness, displeasure, deformation, revulsion, etc., then that object has a “negative aesthetic value” (Plato & Meskin, 2013, p. 1).

French philosopher Roland Barthes (1980) distinguishes between kinds of value based upon the feeling that viewing a photograph evokes: *studium* or *punctum*. *Studium* is a general interest or valuing; it “is of the order of linking not loving” (p. 27). In contrast, *punctum* sets apart from the ordinary—it is a type of valuing that moves one in a poignant way—it is an “element which rises from the scene, shoots out of it like an arrow” (Barthes, 1980, p. 26). When writing about verbal texts, Barthes (1975) distinguishes between pleasure (the visual’s *studium*) and bliss (the visual’s *punctum*). One feels pleasure when reading a text with which one feels comfortable, often a text that follows a familiar structure with a clear beginning, middle, and end. Bliss results from

reading a text that shatters traditional expectations of logic, structure, and character, for example, a text that may discomfit or trouble.

Philosophers continue to debate the meaning of aesthetic value and whether it is distinct from artistic value. One often equates aesthetic value to beauty, but what about objects or environments that are not beautiful? Can “ugly” have aesthetic value? For this study, I contend that artistic valuing is multi-faceted and the process of judging works of art by one or more of its aesthetics (beauty), its historical/cultural value or its financial value. For aesthetic value, I comply with Iser (1978), Vygotsky (1971), Barthes (1980), Dewey (1916; 1934), Eisner (1997), and Jackson (1998) that aesthetic value is derived from something that one is profoundly moved by whether that be art or anything else and the degree value is proportional to the impact of one’s experiences. Eisner (2002) stresses that experiencing “is a process that is shaped by culture, influenced by language, impacted by beliefs, affected by values, and moderated by the distinctive features of that part of ourselves we sometimes describe as our individuality” (p. 1). Experience has different qualities and is valued differently depending on one’s circumstances which leads me to review literature concerning the effects of experience.

Aesthetic, Creative, and Holistic Experiences: Past and Current

To live is more than merely to survive; to live is to experience. John Dewey (1934) defines different kinds of experiences, noting the most basic can be an action mindlessly performed, an automated event. Dewey (1916) claims such actions repeatedly performed with no specific end in mind become “evil” because they are mindlessly routine (p. 247). To experience is to interact with one’s environment, resulting in varying degrees of significance or value to the self. (Dewey, 1934) contends, an ordinary,

everyday activity is experience, but to be *an* experience, to have special meaning, experience must rise above the everyday, mindlessly performed act by continuing to completion. An extension of *an* experience that is particularly satisfying or emotional is *an* aesthetic experience. Any experience can be aesthetic in any field if “moments of fulfillment punctuate experience with rhythmically enjoyed intervals” (Dewey, 1934, p. 16). Realization of rhythmic connected experiences with self and the world “even in its rudimentary forms...contains the promise of that delightful perception which is esthetic experience” (Dewey, 1934, p. 19). Various past experiences form one’s perceptions, and “creative vision” transforms perceptions: “the very character of the creative mind...[reaches] out and seize[s] any material that stirs it so...the value of that material may be pressed out and become the matter of a new experience” (Dewey, 1934, p. 197). An aesthetic experience indeed contributes to one’s whole being, mentally, physically, and emotionally, thereby also providing a holistic experience.

With Dewey’s aesthetics and Eisner’s curriculum theory as grounding, I turn to researchers on experience. I will review the following researchers who focus on experience in their research. Anderson (2016) and Detlefsen (2012) focus on past experiences while Anrelchik and O’Neill Schmitt (2014) spotlight perception, each providing insight into how art contributes to students’ experiences.

Past Experiences

Focusing on past experiences as a means through which students may come to recognize some experiences as aesthetic and upon which they may reflect and then judge and assign value, Anderson (2016) encourages pre-service drama teachers to reflect upon

their past experiences with the arts before creating lessons that facilitate their future, common-school students' aesthetic, creative, and holistic experiences. From their reflections, the pre-service teachers explore ways to engage their future “students in learning through the senses, imagination and thinking” (p. 3). Using Deweyan aesthetics as a theoretical lens, Anderson explains her conceptual process as fully engaging with a memory fragment to provoke pre-service teachers' awareness and imagination. Linking aesthetics with intelligence, Anderson (2016) posits individuals develop aesthetic intelligence through artistic practice and engagement. This engagement pertains both to students' and their teacher's involvement; ideally, the teacher facilitates engagement—“animation, connection and heightened awareness”—to enhance aesthetic learning creating a holistic experience (Anderson, 2016, p. 10). Dewey (1934) connects holistic experience to a universal whole: explaining that art incites expansion and “accentuates this quality of being a whole and of belonging to the larger, all-inclusive, whole which is the universe in which we live”; art opens one to a “deeper reality” of everyday life (p. 202). This study's focus on teachers facilitating engagement has led me to facilitate engagement through a combination of both individual and shared experiences, including viewing art from history, creating art, and analyzing and critiquing art from both history and each other, in order to promote a holistic experience for students.

Rather than having students reflect upon past experiences with the arts to help them recognize aesthetic experiences, Detlefsen (2012) emphasizes students' reflecting upon experiences they are presently living in tandem with the past. Identifying this study as living inquiry, Detlefsen works with art educator-participants to explore past experiences and themselves as artists, researchers, and teachers. She investigates different

self-identities evolving from her art educator-participants' experiences in these different roles. The educators explored connections among their different experiences to identify qualities they value in art education and the qualitative whole of art education, qualities that might ultimately benefit their students. By bringing their "contoured memories of art in their lives, as a/r/tographers [—(a) for artist, (r) for researcher and (t) for teacher—] they [transform] their perceptions into experience and experience into perceptions, bringing new understanding to the complexity of artistic inquiry" (Detlefsen, 2012, p. 1).ⁱⁱ Detlefsen's a/r/tographers reflected upon their perceptions of why they became artists and teachers and collaborated together, creating a new experience for what they felt and identified as art's role in education.

Although Detlefsen begins her study focusing on her educator-participants' "in the moment" experiences, she discovers their conversations led to their reflecting upon past experiences. These past experiences influenced their decision-making when creating activities designed to facilitate their art students making new artistic and aesthetic experiences. The a/r/tographers' past experiences helped them collectively devise new ways to spark student engagement, learning, and development. Detlefsen's study focused both on past and current experiences; now I look to researchers Anrelchik and O'Neill Schmitt's (2014) whose study focuses on perception and current experiences.

Current Experiences

To perceive is different from merely seeing; to perceive something fully requires feeling, caring, and appreciation (Jackson, 1998). "What is perceived are meanings, rather than just events or existences" (Dewey, 1934, p. 248); "what is perceived is

charged with value” (p. 261). Sociologist Edith Cobb (1977) specifically relates art and perception by stressing art’s power to raise one’s perceptual awareness. Forty years after Cobb’s writings, Anrelchik and O’Neill Schmitt (2014) build upon her idea that art augments perceptual awareness. In their study, they question high-school, ceramics students’ perceptions of art education’s role in and influence upon—value to—their future successes. The students define success as conquering challenges, achieving goals, and feeling accomplishment after achieving goals (Anrelchik & O’Neill Schmitt, 2014). These researchers learn that although students were forming their own definitions of success, their parents’ and other adults’ definitions for success remained ever on their minds.

For their study, Anrelchik and O’Neill Schmitt (2014) asked student-interviewees to bring one art piece they had created and thought successful to their interviews. These art objects were to prompt meaningful, open-ended responses. Some students commented their art was not perfect and felt frustrated because they did not have the necessary talent or skills to do a good job. However, they also mentioned the pleasure they felt making art, claiming the course less stressful than other courses because they could relax and unwind while making art. Students expressed appreciation for “opportunities to develop creativity and self-expression” in their ceramics classroom, and “they appreciated learning through hands-on art-making, which differed from the learning outcomes of their other classes” (Anrelchik & O’Neill Schmitt, 2014, p. 2).

Although student-participants expressed the pleasure they experienced from creating art in their art education classes, they did not perceive art education as important to their successes. Mirroring their understanding of their communities’ perceptions that

art education would not contribute to their future successes, the students came to value art for giving them pleasure but not for contributing to their future successes. Similarly, their perceptions reflect Dewey's (1916) claim: when one strives for a goal, one concentrates on objects' or situations' instrumental value, their "use" for realizing one's desires rather than on fully perceiving these objects or situations to appreciate their worth. One might then ask these students to deduce why they desire pleasure but perceive no value to that pleasure, specifically, to their pleasurable art experiences, and why they conclude that pleasure doesn't contribute any value to their successes, present or future. One might further ask these student-participants what would change their perceptions of artistic experiences' meaning and value to their successes, to their lives.

Not surprisingly, despite studies evidencing positive art experiences increasing students' self-efficacy and perceptions of their own competence and despite students' striving to define success for themselves, researchers found, during face-to-face interviews, students judged—valued—art class as less important than other classes. Indeed, students perceived and defined success in ways reflecting contemporary societal values including, it seems, their school district administrators devaluing the arts by halving the arts program budget. Education administrators habitually preference other disciplines over the arts (Hunter-Doniger & Sydow, 2016; Summers, 2018), which contributes to shaping students' perceptions, judgment, and valuing of the arts. Dewey (1934) asserts perceptions, however, can change. To perceive something fully takes practice, for "tradition is itself an organized habit of vision and of methods of ordering and conveying material" (Dewey, 1943, p. 276). "In seeking to understand how perception operates, what makes repetitious encounters interesting is the fact that earlier

opinions and beliefs concerning the object may be modified or become unsettled by later ones” (Jackson, 1998, p. 58).

Although in reporting their research, Anderson (2016), Detlefsen (2012), and Andrelichik and O'Neill Schmitt (2014) do not write about educators' or students' valuing art, artistic experience, or art education, their findings concerning perceptions of past and present experiences speak to valuing art and evidence Dewey's (1934) contentions that one must reflect and judge to arrive at value. In the studies I cite, researchers ask educators to reflect upon past artistic experiences or students to reflect upon their present-day artistic experiences to determine these experiences' influence upon—that is, value to—their future successes. These studies alert me to researchers' data on “value,” specifically valuing art and valuing artistic creation, without seeming to recognize their findings on participants' processes of learning how to value. Examining these researchers' data alongside Dewey's (1910) work on how one thinks, specifically on reflection and judging as part of the thinking and valuing processes, I recognize that without reflection, students would not be able to judge and value; they will understand neither their perceptions' meaning nor value. These studies inform the design of my study to investigate participants' past artistic and aesthetic experiences in order to better understand how those experiences, or lack of experiences, contribute to their valuing of art and help design activities to facilitate growth in their valuing processes.

Art's Value to and Influence upon Learning and Living

In addition to influences of past and current experiences, art has value and influence on interdisciplinary and multimodal learning as well as influence on everyday

life, citizenship, and moral responsibility. Learning and knowledge are common terms associated with education, but what does that entail when involving the arts? Using the dictionary definitions for “learning” and “knowledge”ⁱⁱⁱ as starting points, “learning” is “the activity of gaining knowledge” (Cambridge University Press, 2019, *Learning*). and “knowledge” is “awareness, understanding, or information that has been obtained by experience or study, and that is either in a person’s mind or possessed by people generally” (Cambridge University Press, 2019, *Knowledge*). Embracing these dictionary definitions, many in education value learning and knowledge, aim for students to learn the knowledge educators are passing down, and, as high-stakes, standardized-testing indicates, intend for students to be able to recall that knowledge.^{iv} Proposing learning is fruitless unless the student values what he/she is learning as meaningful and connected to his/her life, Dewey (1916) illustrates his point using an example of a student learning Latin:

Latin has a value per se in the abstract, just as a study, as a sufficient justification for teaching it. But it is equally absurd to argue that unless teacher or pupil can point out some definite assignable future use to which it is to be put, it lacks justifying value. When pupils are genuinely concerned in learning Latin that is of itself proof that it possesses value.

(p. 353)

Knowledge has value, according to Dewey, for “its use in thinking” (p. 223), but teachers place too much emphasis “in recitation and examination” (p. 232). Sociologist, Edith Cobb (1977) claims “all knowledge...begins in sensory experience” (kindle ed., location 1086).

Dewey (1934) notes that “philosophic theorists...treat art as a mode of knowledge” (p. 300). In contrast, in contemporary public schools, administrators have often removed art from schools as a mode of knowledge. Instead, when incorporated into the curriculum, art supports and enhances learning and knowledge in the core disciplines without itself counting as something worthy of learning, something worthy enough to count as knowledge. Researchers Ghanbari (2015) and Guyotte, Sochacka, Costantino, and Walther (2015) study educators’ collaborative, interdisciplinary approaches to foster students’ learning and knowledge construction while Pavlou and Athansiou (2014) study an interdisciplinary approach to facilitate students grasping visual meaning and communication. I begin with reviewing literature concerning art as part of interdisciplinary learning.

Interdisciplinary Learning

The lack of support for art education in favor of scientific education frustrates art educators (Detlefsen, 2012). Commenting that education in modern society has lost balance between science and the arts, Dewey (1934) contends teachers “are repelled by any suggestion of teaching and learning in connection with art,” a repulsion hindering the imagination and wholeness that promote being and humanity (p. 357). Cobb (1977) stresses school administrators separating the arts as a special subject from the sciences are treating the arts as unessential. Indeed, Dewey and Cobb could be writing today, for many contemporary public-school administrators focus students on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), sometimes incorporating the arts as STEAM—in principle to enhance the STEM disciplines (Detlefsen, 2012). Ghanbari (2015) asserts that arts educators promote understanding and the questioning of concepts, skills that are

beneficial for any discipline. Some scholars worry, however, that STEAM educators only use the arts to enhance learning in other disciplines rather than as a mode of knowledge to be intrinsically valued in its own right.

Although there has been much discourse about STEAM, especially in the political sphere, little research exists concerning its implementation or its effectiveness for students' learning. Adding to the research, Ghanbari (2015) conducts a qualitative, collective case study to understand students' learning when teachers integrate the arts into two university STEM programs. Ghanbari (2015) wanted to understand students' learning experiences and students' perceptions of learning in an ArtTechnology and an ArtScience program. One project in the ArtScience program required students' collaboration to create a permanent sculpture after they learned about various types of bees. In open-ended interviews, most students reacted positively, noting they enjoyed their collaborations; that collaboration resulted in their better understanding the science and retaining the science content than they did when taught using traditional methods. Students told researchers that doing the class projects introduced them to new challenges and helped them see the world in new ways. Although students in all majors could take the arts-integrated classes, most participants were STEM majors. Because of the positive benefits, Ghanbari recommends universities offer at least one STEAM course to freshman of all majors. Ghanbari suggests "it would be interesting deliberately to sample students with an arts background to see if there are similar sentiments about STEAM programs as a vehicle for exposure to STEM fields" (Ghanbari, 2015, p. 17). The following researchers did, in fact, conduct a study looking at the effects STEM has on art students through multimodal learning.

Multimodal Learning

In contrast to how the arts are valued for STEM students by offering opportunities for creative problem solving, Guyotte, Sochacka, Costantino, and Walther (2015) flip the focus to understand how or if STEM involvement benefits art students. Two of the co-authors who normally teach design studio^v at one, southeastern university jumped at the chance to teach “collaborative creativity” in a STEAM-inspired, transdisciplinary design studio where they observed students’ collaborative, creative approaches rather than the typical, individual, creative approaches teachers often implemented in art design studios. Grouping students in collaborative, interdisciplinary teams, teachers charged students with finding and solving a two-design-challenge problem. One group’s problem was reducing waste. The College of Art’s gallery curator later displayed these students’ artwork revealing their explorations on reducing waste.

Collaboration offers immense possibilities in positive, social interactions and self-reflection (Guyotte et al., 2015). The findings suggest that both STEM students and arts students benefited from group creative interactions when incorporating different disciplines in their collaborative learning and product creation. The study evidenced art-education students benefited from collaborating with students from other disciplines in part because they collectively reflected upon their creative processes or shared their individual reflections with their groups. This study shows how students collaboratively constructed meaning with students with whom they traditionally would not interact. The interdisciplinary group members solved problems by bringing together their different experiences and knowledge for collaborative consideration. They thereby experienced something new together and from that experience created new knowledge.

Both Ghanbari's (2015) and Guyotte et al.'s (2015) interdisciplinary examples reveal students increase their learning and knowledge construction when collaborating with others with different interests and increase their retention, learning enjoyment, understanding, and exposure to the arts. Their findings have led to my incorporating collaborative-group projects into my research methods to observe students' creative interactions of concrete, collaborative-group experiences and group-generated products. These experiences then became touchstones for students conversing with me during focus group interviews about their perceptions of these experiences' influencing their valuing art. I also incorporated group discussions that involved reading the meaning of a work of art.

In an increasingly visual world, reading and interpreting images is necessary, of practical use, and therefore of value, at least of instrumental, extrinsic value. Pavlou and Athansiou (2014) investigate an interdisciplinary approach combining the pictorial with music to enhance pre-service elementary teachers' visual-art understanding. Visual artworks are modes of communication, and due to increasing changes in the world, educators are responding to communication changes and challenges using multimodality and multiliteracy networks and platforms. Although art education is particularly useful in helping students navigate visual images, public school and university faculty have traditionally privileged art production over aesthetics, art history, and visual culture due, in large part, to teachers' limited visual-arts knowledge. In their interdisciplinary study, researchers Pavlou and Athansiou (2014) targeted pre-service, elementary teachers because many elementary teachers teach art without having been specifically trained.^{vi} These researchers investigate whether or not multimodal activities enhance students' art

appreciation skills; that is, would multimodal activities help students learn *how to value* art by increasing their art understanding? If multimodal activities help students learn how to value art, that insight would be useful when teaching future elementary teachers to develop multimodal lessons for students.

Visual art and music connect in multiple ways: one can view art and listen to music at the same time, both can provoke aesthetic responses to one's experiences, and specialized knowledge is enhanced (Pavlou & Athanasiou, 2014). Framing their study with Parson's (1987) aesthetic-response theory that concentrates on viewers' responses to artworks' features and the viewers' judgments [valuings] of artworks, Pavlou and Athansiou (2014) had an experimental group view art while listening to music and a control group view art without listening to music. The researchers then gathered written responses to the art and conducted group interviews. Although participants indicated they had little to no experience with, knowledge about, or preferences for viewing art, most listened to music daily. The data indicated the experimental group (those who listened to music while viewing art) seemed to glean more meaning from the artworks and focused longer on viewing than did the control group. The students who listened to music indeed expressed an increased interest in artworks and wrote more about the artwork's communicative aspects and about their feelings than did the control group. From these findings, the researchers concluded a music stimulus increases art appreciation skills and art-viewing focus. Pavlou and Athansiou's study reveals that students value making their own meanings when viewing art, and their work supports the need for investigating the concept of value, the act of valuing, and what contributes to one's coming to value

artistic and aesthetic experiences. I now review research concerning art's influence on everyday life.

Influences on Everyday Life

Culture influences art; art influences and reflects culture. Art is also part of culture. Understanding this complex and interesting relation between art and culture contributes to understanding past and present social issues, which then informs and guides contemporary society. Indeed, substance derives from the currents of culture and an idea is born from building upon the social, political, artistic, and philosophical cultural environment (Dewey, 1934). Additionally, past culture is viewed through the lens of current cultural atmospheres (Cobb, 1977). Historically, political leaders have controlled or censored art to enhance their own power or to squelch free thinking.

Today, educators focus art education curriculum primarily on technique, limiting attention to art's historical and cultural relation to society. Agreeing with such art educators and researchers as Ciganko (2000), I maintain art education must go beyond teaching techniques to adopting "an alternative humanistic framework" and exploring life issues through students' art production (Ciganko, 2000, p. 36). Students need to move beyond completing prescribed tasks for self-discovery to investigating life issues that concern them in their presents and futures. Ciganko explains: "inquiry that is dialogic helps students question assumptions they have about art and life" (Ciganko, 2000, p. 37). Wanting students to investigate life issues in conjunction with their creating and learning about art, art education researchers Chung (2009) and Heaton and Crumpler (2017) experiment by coupling historical, cultural art narratives with contemporary life issues to facilitate students' exploring their places in the world and becoming agents for positive

societal change through their art. This work leads me to consider art's influence on citizenship.

Influences on Citizenship

Using constructivist learning theory, Chung (2009) targets art educators' understanding of students' written autobiographies and visual self-portraits to gain insights for designing relevant, critical, visual-culture curriculum. Noted scholars such as Dewey, (1938), Bruner (1973), Piaget, (1973), Vygotsky (1978), and Wertsch, (1988) lay the foundation for constructivist learning in which students make connections when reflecting on their past experiences and knowledge to construct meaning (Chung, 2009). Related to the research of Anderson (2016) and Detlefsen (2012) who focused on past experiences with art, Chung's (2009) research is geared toward "gathering preliminary insights into students' personal interests, knowledge, and experiences with art and artistic development with respect to future implementation of teaching critical visual culture" (p. 2).

Teaching visual, critical culture involves students' viewing and participating by creating art that focuses on such cultural issues as class, gender, and race and their then making connections among what they view, create, and have experienced (Chung, 2009). Vygotsky (1971) echos the need for a critical visual culture, saying "the feelings and emotions aroused by a work of art are socially conditioned" (p. 21). Visual-culture education focuses on political connections to historical precedents, theory, and students' lived experiences in order "to empower human agency for social reconstruction" (Chung, 2009, p. 3). Wanting to foster critical citizenship (Chung, 2009)—citizens actively promoting equality for all (WynSculley, 2012)—Chung had four, female, junior-high

students visit a museum. Charged with focusing on identity and as a means for understanding their pasts, students were to reflect upon their museum experience alongside their prior knowledge and experiences and then construct new knowledge by writing their autobiographies and creating a visual self-portrait (Chung, 2009).^{vii}

The project provided insight into the students' interests and values, simultaneously indicating students' need to be taught to identify political and social aspects in art and other visual practices and "art [teachers'] need to recognize the persistence of and challenges created by conventional art practices as well as the long-held beliefs by their students and themselves in the art room when teaching visual culture" (Chung, 2009, p. 16). Their study of students creating a self-portrait focusing on identity after the experiences of the course has led me to incorporate an individual art project focusing on value, particularly to communicate how they value art. I now review literature concerning art's influences on moral responsibilities.

Influences on Moral Responsibility

Adding to the research on art's contributions to cultural understanding and social justice, Heaton and Crumpler (2017) used a changemaker philosophy to introduce future art teachers at Northampton University to "how moral consciousness and responsibility can be developed" and to illuminate for their future students the possibilities of expanding cognitive growth and intercultural knowledge (p. 1). "Changemakers identify problems and frequently act as inspiring role models, instigating others to create positive changes when problems are encountered" (Heaton & Crumpler, 2017, p. 2).

Changemaker philosophers identify self-reflection through art experiences and art practice as valuable for both teachers and students:

Such practices can positively influence progression in our intercultural art world because learners will be equipped with the skills to understand, question and forge, new and unfamiliar, routes through learning scenarios in art education that embody and progress the practices and problems of different cultures. (p. 3)

Heaton and Crumpler identify culture as different peoples' interdisciplinary, multidimensional, and changeable practices and behaviors. Ideally, art educators offer students opportunities to question societal events, problems, and mores as well as new ways to communicate possible social changes leading to a better world (Heaton & Crumpler, 2017) "A culture populated by a people whose imagination is impoverished has a static future. In such a culture there will be little change because there will be little sense of possibility" (Eisner, 2002, p. 5).

For their study, Heaton and Crumpler (2017) wanted to test changemaker concepts in an art-teacher, training course. To test changemaker principles, they selected fifteen, future art-teacher participants to collaborate with a local art gallery to create educational resources to enrich children's (ages 5–11) connections to the exhibits. The teachers problematized current issues through their artwork and revealed in their stories and questionnaire responses that changemaker practices enhanced their social and critical conscious. A co-writer/participant contends these changes in consciousness would enhance their future teaching practices.

The changemaker philosophy Northampton University's teacher educators incorporated into the curriculum increased future art teachers' awareness of their moral

conscious, spurring them to take action and to become art-educator change agents who would teach changemaker-inspired lessons to foster their own students' becoming changemakers (Heaton & Crumpler, 2017): The researchers conclude, "When calculating the impact of active art experiences in relation to social justice or changemaker philosophy, this research has revealed that reflective critical analysis of both the experience and art created is needed" (Heaton & Crumpler, 2017, p. 15–16). Now working from this changemaker philosophy, Northampton University's teacher educators continue to encourage artist-teachers in training to learn from and teach by taking risks through art related to real-life problems.

Ciganko (2000), Chung (2009), and Heaton and Crumpler's (2017) research contextualize art's value as cultural and social experience and knowledge that incite students to think deeply about current events, social problems, and social mores; to see the world more broadly and openly; to find their artistic and social justice voices; to create art through which they establish a stance; and to have the courage to promote change where they see the need. Using these studies as a reference point, I designed my study to incorporate activities that allow students to have agency in their learning and activities as well as encouraging them to express their opinions without fear of being judged.

Art's Psychological Influence on Emotional Health and Well-Being

In addition to speaking to cultural and social issues of society, art experiences also contribute to one's psychological identity, resilience, relationship building, agency, self-efficacy and cooperation as well as facilitating aesthetic experiences which contribute to emotional health. Emotional health is a social issue and certainly for college students in

which I feel art can positively contribute to which leads to my next focus for my literature review of literature concerning art's psychological influences. Sociologist, Edith Cobb (1977) asserts that health "demands that the personality be able to express itself creatively" (kindle ed., location 74) because "health of personality depends on personal creativity" (kindle ed., location 1442). For over a century, therapists have used art as therapy to help those suffering from mental illness heal, recover, and "find" or make meaning ("Art Therapy," n.d., Foundations Recovery Network). I turn next to researchers' investigations into the value art adds to an individual's health and emotional well-being. Stickley and Eades (2013) and Lipe, Ward, Watson, Manley, Keen, Kelly and Clemmer (2012) showcase the positive possibilities art offers for self-identity which ultimately benefits mental health. Stride and Cutcher (2015), Brown and Jeanneret (2015) and Grube (2015) concentrate on art-making to improve life for at-risk youth. Finally, Haberman (2017) and Yilmaz (2015) target how art benefits "gifted" students. This leads me to review research on art's connection to psychological identity.

Psychological Identity

Art programs become what 20th-Century psychologist and pediatrician D.W. Winnicott (1986) calls a "good enough environment"—one that adjusts to the needs of the individuals in order for them to be independent and to live the life they want by having a "sense of self" (p. 28). Adopting this concept of a "good enough environment," researchers Lipe et al. (2019) investigate how art intervention affects and serves the mentally ill in a Canadian, arts-intervention program geared to improve one's social and emotional well-being. These researchers discovered their participants' feelings, social skills, and sense of well-being improved. Lipe et al.'s art-intervention program

effectively led to other health facility administrators' offering art intervention to "benefit patients and their families and contribute to a healing environment within the facility" (Lipe et al., 2012, p. 25).

In another example, this time of a UK, community-based, arts program, creators Stickley and Eades (2013) designed programs to improve mentally ill individuals' emotional health: "Arts on Prescription." Benefiting from arts intervention used to foster positive, social and mental health, ten, two-year participants reported "increased self-confidence, improved social and communication skills, and increased motivation and aspirations" (Stickley & Eades, 2013, p. 727). While participants further indicated "Arts on Prescription had played a lasting role in changing their social perceptions and reactions to others," researchers noticed many program participants changed how they self-identified, for now artist, musician, or writer displaced the self-identifier 'mentally ill': "the artist identity implies that the person thus identified is making a contribution to society, whereas the 'mentally ill' person may be regarded in a more negative light, both socially and economically" (Stickley & Eades, 2013, p. 727). Indeed, when living experiences give one feelings of power to create one's world, one comes to feel, too, that life is worth living. Separate from talent, creative living "is a universal need, and a universal experience" (Winnicott, 1986, p. 44). I next review research connected to art's connection to psychological resilience.

Psychological Resilience

Rather than focusing on the mentally ill, Stride and Cutcher (2015) examine visual-arts, teacher-student relationships focusing on student resilience. Resilience is the capacity successfully and positively to adapt to adversity; this capacity "can be

strengthened through protective factors...which act to prevent or protect an individual from developing a problem” (Stride & Cutcher, 2015, p. 3). Although research concerning resilience is subjective since one cannot measure resiliency, teacher-student interactions offer one main resilience factor—a caring relationship (Stride & Cutcher, 2015, p. 5). Thus, with arts education, teachers’ developing unique, caring relationships with their students, co-construct a “dynamic education” by requesting individual responses to broad tasks through which teachers gain particular knowledge of their students (Stride & Cutcher, 2015, p. 5). Through five, secondary, visual-art, teacher-participants’ journaling, researchers discovered personal, student-teacher relationships developing as teachers acknowledged students’ individuality and strove to make students feel comfortable. Teachers at once helped students feel comfortable and fostered their creativity by supporting students’ making authentic, original art, encouraging students to express their differing values, and promoting their individuality through student storytelling. Researchers concluded “the relationship between teachers and their students in visual-art classrooms appears to be intrinsic to the artmaking process, not merely a product of it” (Stride & Cutcher, 2015, p. 7); students valued the student-teacher relationship and the connections between artmaking and that relationship. To foster resilience teachers empathized with their students, relied on intuition when determining students’ individual needs, encouraged risk-taking, and allowed them to fail without retribution. The “findings suggest...resilience and creativity may be linked implying Visual Arts classrooms provide an opportunity for every student to enhance their resilience in an ongoing fashion” (Stride & Cutcher, 2015, p. 13). Interestingly, Stride and Cutcher’s research connects to the Guyotte, et al. (2015) study of interdisciplinary

collaboration in the transdisciplinary design studio where students collaboratively created art after reflecting individually; in Stride and Cutcher's (2015) study students create individual art from their reflections of their relationships with the teacher rather than from their collaborative relationships with each other. Since I incorporate group art projects in the Art Appreciation class for my study I review literature concerning art's connection to relationship building.

Psychological Support through Relationship Building

Like Stride and Cutcher (2015), Grube (2015) focuses on relationship building but specifically researches the relation between art and relationship building in the art studio, "Room 13" (p. 1). Although the concept, "Room 13," began in 1980s' Scotland for children 7–11 years old, the concept has since spread worldwide becoming "an international phenomenon in which children make significant decisions like the hiring of adult artists who challenge theories, pose philosophical questions, comment on student work, act as co-negotiators when ethical issues arise, and serve as a steady presence in the room" (Grube, 2015, p. 2). Aware that at-risk children from low, socio-economic backgrounds have neither the same opportunities more affluent, at-risk children enjoy nor their often stable support systems through which to learn coping strategies, Grube studies Room 13's student-led, before, after, lunchtime, and sometimes class-time operations. After researchers' interview and observe participants—students, teachers, adult artists, and arts advocates—in the Program, they report students' mutual respect for each other and each other's artwork and, especially significant, their using art materials as vehicles through which they engage in and form relationships. Grube (2015) recounts:

I saw children looking for ways to join with others in all the many layers and levels of being human. (p. 5)

I did not expect to find the imagination, sympathy and self-discipline that was common when children set aside self-interest for the good of something else. (p. 7)

Art then is not seen as a material like, oil painting, printmaking, sculpture, but as a means to make sense of the world. (p. 14)

This leads me to review research concerning art's contribution to agency, self-efficacy and cooperation.

Psychological Support: Fostering Agency, Self-Efficacy, and Cooperation

Australia-based researchers, Brown and Jeanneret (2015) also study arts' value to at-risk young people, ages 15–21, in this case, children struggling with social or mental obstacles attending “Evolution,” a Melbourne community’s eight-week, arts’ program.^{viii} Participants in Evolution’s two-day-per-week program may not be employed or in another arts program in which they would engage such media as “visual art, design, film, video, animation and photography guided by a practicing artist” (Brown & Jeanneret, 2015, p. 5). Investigating what motivates these at-risk youth to participate in such a program and the effect their participation “has on their re-engagement in further education, and training,” researchers learned twenty-five of the thirty-one participants (80.6%) continued to pursue further employment or education three months after completing the eight-week, arts program (Brown & Jeanneret, 2015, p. 5).^{ix} Researchers attributed the high attendance rate and later work and educational pursuits to the artists’

and youth workers' engagement strategies. Rather than trying to "remedy perceived deficits" (Brown & Jeanneret, 2015, p. 14), the program's artists and youth workers supported participants' agency encouraging self-efficacy, self-pacing, social cooperation, and goal-setting and facilitated students' connecting with each other as they strove to realize their potentials ultimately achieving relevant, concrete outcomes. I now review literature concerning art's connection to psychological health and aesthetic experience.

Psychological Health and Aesthetic Experience

In contrast to exploring the arts' influences on at-risk youth, Haberlin (2017) replaces traditional interviewing techniques with pictorial and written storytelling and self-portraiture when studying five, second-grade, elementary-school, gifted students' "peak experiences" (p. 1): "peak experiences" occur when students feel their best—when students "experience a high point during the instructional day in regards to positive intense emotionality" (Haberlin, 2017, p. 3). Recognizing the term, "gifted," is subjective, researchers for this study used the Columbus Group's^x (1991) definition: "Giftedness is asynchronous development in which advanced cognitive abilities and heightened intensity combine to create inner experiences and awareness that are qualitatively different from the norm" (Haberlin, 2017, p. 2). Using Arts Based Educational Research (ABER) as a methodology that goes beyond words, Haberlin (2017) notes its common principles:

- (a) the research is guided by a moral commitment—the work is expected to "take a stand;"
- (b) it is not initially clear in what ways knowledge will be generated;
- (c) a strong focus on reflexivity;
- (d) a sense of authenticity—the research and artwork

must be intertwined, consistency and rigor in the relationship between the two. (p. 5)

Using art as a way for students to explore their inner-selves, each week during the study, students drew their “peak experiences” in a self-portrait with captions or “thought bubbles” before explaining their drawings (Haberlin, 2017, p. 7). The self-portraits and students’ explanations revealed the gifted students valued art as a creative outlet in which to communicate their feelings and “express their knowledge and insights” (Haberlin, 2017, p. 15). I equate students’ peak experiences with aesthetic experience because peak experiences stand out from their regular, everyday experiences—a peak experience is an experience that provides pleasure. Additionally, students indicated their peak experiences involved another pleasure, teacher praise, illuminating teachers’ power to influence students’ experiences (Haberlin, 2017). Next, I review literature concerning teachers’ connection to their students in a creative setting.

Teacher to Student Psychological Dissonance

Unlike Haberlin’s (2017) focus on second-grade, gifted students, Turkey-based researcher, Yilmaz (2015), researches secondary students’ attending the Science and Arts Center. Researchers wanted teacher-and student-participants to understand their development should include more than academics. Observing teachers’ inflated emphasis on students’ IQs while ignoring their other talents, researchers encouraged teacher-participants to open opportunities for students to develop talents often ignored within the school context and to promote creativity thereby fostering original thinking and ideas (Yilmaz, 2015, p. 1116). Although students indicated they value creative experiences and

creative means to express themselves, the teachers preferred focusing on students' IQs rather than their creativity. The research data revealed that despite these gifted students' high self-awareness, they lacked the teacher support needed "to develop their creativity potential" (Yilmaz, 2015, p. 1115).

The researchers studying how art contributes to health and well-being (Kelly & Clemmer, 2012; Stride & Cutcher, 2015; Brown & Jeanneret, 2015; Grube, 2015; Haberin, 2017; Yilmaz, 2015) support the need for my study because they not only reveal art's value to students' psychological health but art's value as a vehicle to social connections; value to students' learning and constructing other kinds of knowledge; value to students' claiming agency, self-efficacy, and resilience; and value as inspiration or inducement to continue their educations and employment. These values speak to how educators may help college students meet their own needs and cope with the pressures they face. Although the students participating in my study are diverse in background and ability and not pre-identified as mentally ill, at-risk, or gifted, the research I have reviewed illuminates the arts' power to facilitate and enhance *all* students' creativity, academic performance, and health. Moreover, as with the other art education research I have reviewed, these studies on art's psychological influence on emotional health and well-being consistently include the underlying theme of art's value, a theme researchers seem either to ignore or fail to recognize. Regardless, although art's value and art education's value recur across studies, I have not seen researchers, educators, or administrators explore how students perceive their own valuing art, valuing art's practical use, and valuing art's benefits to individuals and society change during one semester's

experience in a General Education, Art Appreciation class. I therefore turn next to examine research in undergraduate Art Appreciation courses.

Undergraduate, College Students' Experiences in Art Appreciation Courses

Because my research will be to understand how college students taking an Art Appreciation course perceive valuing art, valuing art production and learning how to value, I review Bottoef's (1947), Busbea's (2006) and Benton's (2002) research within undergraduate Art Appreciation courses. One generally recognizes the noun "appreciation" means "an increase in the value of something" or is "the act of recognizing or understanding that something is valuable, important, or as described" (Cambridge University Press, 2019, *Appreciation*). The verb form, "to appreciate," is "to increase in value"; "to be aware of something, or to understand that something is valuable"; or to be grateful for something (Cambridge University Press, 2019, *Appreciate*). Philosopher of education, John Dewey (1916) goes beyond defining appreciation to identifying it as vital within all disciplines. Helpful to understanding views of the purpose of Art Appreciation courses, Bottoef (1947) summarizes the history of Art Appreciation courses, Busbea (2006) and Benton (2002) focus on teaching strategies that best support increasing students' learning and appreciation of art in Art Appreciation courses.

Beginning with Bottoef's (1947) fifty-nine-year-old study, Bottoef traces the underlying purposes for Art Appreciation courses beginning with courses offered in 1874, noting instructors focused on art's moral dimension before the 17th century. In the 18th century, Art Appreciation instructors still concentrated on the moral but shifted from the art's moral dimensions to using the art to promote students' character improvement.

After many universities adopted general education requirements in the 1930s, students were to take art survey courses as part of earning a well-rounded education.

Challenging C.A. Benet's 1927 position in, *Art Training for Life and Industry*, that truly to appreciate art comes from experience, Bottoef questions what makes up an experience itself—does not knowledge about artists, their lives, and characteristics of their art become part of one's experience? Bottoef posits "knowledge of good art forms is one of the most important knowledges needed since the individual is constantly surrounded by objects and is meeting and selecting new ones" (Bottoef, 1947, p. 18). Lamenting public-school, art-teachers' primary focus on artistic creativity and production rather than critical judgment, Bottoef wanted to discover whether teaching Art Appreciation using the execution and creative production method or the art history method would most help college Art Appreciation students increase their aesthetic appreciation: "although the execution method was not found to be statistically more productive of aesthetic appreciation than the 'history of art' method, the tendency in that direction appeared so persistent as to strengthen any evidence toward such a conclusion" (p. 18). The study revealed both methods to increase students' aesthetic appreciation. Although, Bottoef's study dates back to the mid-20th century, it speaks to my study because I encompass knowledge about art from history, art criticism and art production in my Art Appreciation class.

In contrast to Bottoef (1947) and fifty-nine years later, Busbea (2006) teaches Art Appreciation using a constructivist approach to determine the approach's influences and effects on learning. Rather than lecturing, art teachers using a constructivist approach foster students' creativity and personal expression by having students actively engage

with each other as part of their learning experiences. For her study, Busbea (2006) lays out the following definitions:

I will define art appreciation as *an awareness of art and its processes from the past and present and an ability to think about and respond to art and art theories in order to find value and meaning in art*. Understanding in this study will be given a more constructivist definition as *the ability to use knowledge, make connections among art topics, and justify those decisions and opinions*. Finally, learning will be seen as *an active process of constructing knowledge*. (p. 9; emphasis in original)

Interesting, but not surprising, most of the six, undergraduate, Mississippi College, Art Appreciation students in the study indicated they had no prior art experiences (Busbea, 2006, p. 19). Busbea (2006) had students assume various roles including art curator, artist, and webpage designer. The students in the study:

demonstrated nine patterns of learning. The subjects could: *1) explain their processes, 2) apply their knowledge, 3) connect meanings, 4) interpret works of art, 5) judge quality, 6) empathize with artists, 7) view in a new way, 8) assess their learning, and 9) continue on their own*. (p. 164; emphasis in original)

Busbea concluded Art Appreciation instructors need to understand how using constructivist (inquiry-based), art appreciation, teaching strategies facilitates students' higher-level thinking, meaning-making, and appreciating —valuing— art.

Similar to Busbea's (2006) study, Jerri G. Benton's (2002) study focused on students' perceptions of learning and understanding of art by incorporating studio art work assignments into the curriculum of an Art Appreciation course at a rural Florida community college. Benton's goal for this constructivist approach was to increase students' knowledge and understanding of art concepts. Similar to my experience, the researcher points to her early previous discipline based art education (DBAE) training which includes art production, art history, art criticism and aesthetics. Arguing "the inclusion of all four disciplines in the studio art classroom has become a valid rationale for improving the quality of the studio art curriculum," the researcher questions why art production is left out of Art Appreciation courses in college when it has the potential to increase students' appreciation and understanding of art (Benton, 2002, p. 35).

Benton explains, after reviewing contrasting art teaching philosophies between liberal and manual viewpoints, studio production is not traditionally included in college Art Appreciation courses because the liberal art philosophy is considered to be academic. Benton also reviews learning theory literature involving, active participation such as learning through doing hands on projects, learning from past experiences, instruction where students have an active process in their own learning as well as Gardner's (1983) multiple intelligence theory. Surmising from the review that active engagement is superior to passive learning with the primary focus on lecture for student learning, Benton modified the Art Appreciation course she taught to include studio production for the study.

The research questions involved investigating students' past art experiences, learning and intelligence styles, attitudes toward doing studio art productions, learning of

art concepts from studio experience, and perceptions of art appreciation from studio experiences. Using a naturalistic inquiry methodology, the researcher became part of the study. Participatory action research was the theoretical perspective because the focus was to make changes to including studio production in tradition Art Appreciation courses. Besides document, artifacts, observations and field notes, the findings primarily came from three interview sessions from three students that were purposely selected from their differing viewpoints (positive, neutral and negative) for participating in studio sessions. Although there were initial negative responses and anxiety from doing studio productions, especially by the student with negative viewpoints of doing art, the findings verified the Benton's belief that including studio production in an Art Appreciation course did increase students' learning and appreciation for art.

Busbea's and Benton's research speaks specifically to my study because I incorporate constructivist teaching methods to foster and support students' value making as I investigate students' perceptions of their valuing art, valuing art's practical use, and valuing art's benefits to individuals and society change during their humanities, general education, Art Appreciation class. Keeping in mind Dewey's (1916) wisdom that no subject has weight for students unless they have "appreciated it to be deeply significant in concrete situations" (342), for my study, I plan to blend art history, aesthetics, and creative art production by establishing conditions that spark students' imaginations and by orchestrating activities supporting students' having concrete, artistic and aesthetic experiences. I hypothesize this combination will support their learning how to value and specifically their learning to value art intrinsically, value art's practical use, and value art's benefits to individuals and society.

Filling the Gaps

Reviewing the literature provided insight into the power of: (a) concrete, sensory experiences; (b) reflecting upon past and present experiences; (c) students' collaborating during artistic experiences adding social experience to the artistic and aesthetic; (d) students' familiarity with the political, social, and cultural as students relate these to the arts and artistic creation; (e) these relations' inciting students to use art toward transforming society; and (f) students' improved psychological health and well-being when they consistently engage with the arts. I also noticed most arts-based researchers in some way addressed "value" and "valuing" though rarely using axiological language. The researchers did not address students' "coming to value" or "learning how to value," nor did they examine such different kinds of arts-related experiences as "judging" or "valuing" what "counts" as art and what "counts" as artistic or aesthetic experience; valuing art (aesthetic); valuing creating art (artistic); and valuing art education. I propose to begin filling these gaps by studying students' perceptions of art, art's value, and to whom art is of value; students' perceptions of their learning *how to* value, specifically how to value art and individual and collective artistic and aesthetic experiences; and, by the end of the semester's study, students' perceptions of how they judge value, what they value as art, and their valuing of their own artistic creations and aesthetic responses. As part of their perceptions of how to value, value, and artistic value, in particular, I am concerned with students' coming to discern the differences between extrinsic and intrinsic value and noting changes in what and how they value as a result of their artistic and aesthetic experiences in their beginning Art Appreciation course.

Summary of Chapter II

In this chapter, I reviewed literature that was relevant to my study concerning valuing and art. I defined various aspects of valuing including intrinsic, extrinsic, artistic and aesthetic. I defined aesthetic experience and reviewed literature concerning experiencing art including creative, aesthetic and holistic. I reviewed literature on art's connection to learning and living through interdisciplinary and multimodal avenues as well as literature concerning art influences on everyday life, citizenship and morality. I reviewed literature concerning the psychological influence art can contribute to one's feelings of well-being through identity, resilience, relationship building, self-efficacy and cooperation as well as the role teachers have to students' experiences. I reviewed literature that focused on undergraduate students in an Art Appreciation course. Finally, I revealed gaps in the literature that I will attempt to narrow with my research.

CHAPTER III

QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

Rationale for Qualitative Study

In qualitative inquiry, one studies the ways humans construct meaning. My aim was to understand how students make meaning and attach value to art from their experiences in an Art Appreciation course; therefore, qualitative inquiry was the most appropriate type of research for my study to richly answer the research questions. As indicated in Chapter I, the overarching research question for this qualitative study was as follows: How do undergraduate students make meaning and ascribe value to art, based on their experiences in a general education Art Appreciation humanities' course? There were three sub-questions: 1) What changes do undergraduate students perceive in how they value art after taking an Art Appreciation course? 2) What changes do undergraduate students perceive in how they value art's practical use or function after taking an Art Appreciation course? 3) What changes do undergraduate students perceive in how they value art's benefits to individuals and society after taking an Art Appreciation course? These questions called for qualitative investigation to understand students' first-hand experiences and perceptions.

Qualitative researchers emphasize how people interact and make meaning of situations in their environment through interpretation in order to better illuminate our understanding of the world (Brinkmann, 2018). One element of qualitative research involves the researcher interacting with a select group of people, deciphering the essence of how they connect and relate to a particular set of experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Qualitative research assists humans' understanding of the world through inquiry and the researcher's interpretation of humans' unique ways of meaning making. Objects that people interact with and attach meaning to or find value in are what anthropologists refer to as "material culture" (Patton, 2002, p. 5), which would include art.

According to Gillian Rose (2016), "our use of images, our appreciation of certain kinds of imagery performs a social function as well as an aesthetic one. It says something about who we are and how we want to be seen" (p. 40). Being the Art Appreciation instructor and qualitative researcher positioned me to facilitate both the social and aesthetic functions to which Rose (2016) refers: I observed students creating art, engaging with art, and interacting with each other and me concerning the art they created. I analyzed students' responses to viewing, analyzing, and creating art to gain insight into their perceptions of art and their valuing of art, artistic creation, art education, and social engagement through art. I also analyzed students' final reflection questionnaires and the transcripts from the final focus group interviews with students (included in Appendix A). The findings indicated that engaging in art experiences changed students' perceptions of art, their valuing of art, their valuing of art's practical use, and their valuing of art's benefits to individuals and society.

Theoretical Perspective

A theoretical perspective is the philosophical viewpoint that underlies one's methodology to provide "a context for the process" and to ground "its logic and criteria" (Crotty, 2003, p.7). Another term for theoretical perspective is paradigm—a mindset from which to understand the intricacies of our world (Patton, 2002). Brinkmann (2018) points out that qualitative researchers aim to make sense of or interpret how people assign meanings in their natural environments. Interpretivists look at how culture within time and place inform social perceptions of worldviews (Crotty, 2003). Interpretivists assume reality is socially constructed, and there are multiple realities. This theoretical perspective fits under the epistemology (how we know what we know) that knowledge is constructed and there can be multiple realities depending on the experiences of humans in their environment (Crotty, 2003).

An interpretivist theoretical perspective is most appropriate for my research because not only is art culturally derived and historically situated, but students in the study are within the school and classroom culture and social environment: In the social environment, our curiosity tends to focus on features that are "unique, individual, and qualitative" (Crotty, 2003, p. 68). Interpretivists recognize various subjective meanings exist in the social world and try to reconstruct and understand those subjective meanings (Goldkuhl, 2012). I wanted to illuminate how students construct meaning when coming to value artistic and aesthetic experiences during their general education, Art Appreciation class.

I incorporated three interpretivist tenets into my study: 1) understanding occurs when research includes human interests; 2) meanings are relative and value bound within space, time, experience, and context; and 3) there is an interactive and enmeshed

relationship between the researcher and the participants (Dudovskiy, 2019). Aligning with the first tenet, my goal was to understand the various components for how students value art in order to develop a holistic understanding of their experiences and perceptions of art (Goldkuhl, 2012). Unlike positivism that focusses on generalities and laws “exhibiting quantifiable, empirical regularities” (Crotty, 2003, p. 68), my study aligns with interpretivism’s second tenet because collected data comes from college students taking an Art Appreciation class in one, Midwestern State Junior College. My study aligns with the third tenet because I investigated college students’ perceived changes to their valuing of art, their valuing of art’s practical use, and their valuing of art’s benefits to individuals and society after engaging in art experiences in their entry-level, Art Appreciation class. I was both the course instructor and researcher; students elected to participate or not participate in the study, and the artistic and aesthetic activities designed had all students participating collaboratively, and therefore interactively, with each other and with me.

Methodology

In my research study, I used naturalistic inquiry as my methodology, which was developed by Guba and Lincoln (1985) who geared this naturalistic method to education research. Erlandson et al. (1993) explain that because the reality people construct depends upon individuals’ cultural situations and experiences, context is important, and the researcher assumes “all the subjects of such an inquiry are bound together by a complex web of unique interrelationships that results in...[their] mutual, simultaneous shaping” (p. 16). Because these realities and all realities’ parts interrelate, one can understand the whole by investigating any portion of it holistically or by understanding the

interrelationships within the whole. Although Lincoln and Guba (1985) emphasize naturalistic inquiry lacks a single definition, Erlandson et al. (1993) point out the relationship and interaction between the researcher and the participants is paramount in illuminating the relevancy in a natural setting, allowing for "...a deep understanding and explication of social phenomena as they are observed in their own contexts" (p. 16). In my naturalistic inquiry, I, the researcher, investigated students in a naturalistic setting, an Art Appreciation course they were enrolled in and where I was also the instructor. Therefore, we were connected together in a reciprocal natural setting.

Naturalistic Characteristics

I incorporated underlying tenets, or what Lincoln and Guba (1985) call characteristics, of naturalistic inquiry to align my study. One characteristic is that research is conducted in a natural setting. I conducted my research in Art Appreciation classes where I observed and interacted with students, thereby facilitating my understanding of their perceptions of their coming-to-value processes. Especially significant to my study is naturalistic inquiry's value-bound concentration. Naturalistic inquirers lean toward the human and especially toward humans' value making; therefore, it aligns well with this investigation of how students perceive changes in their coming to value, particularly, their coming to value art, their valuing art's practical use, and their valuing art's benefits to individuals and society during one semester's experience in an Art Appreciation class.

I applied the naturalist inquiry's characteristic that data is mainly from the researcher and other participants, and adaptations and changes to the study's purpose

were not only allowed but anticipated. As the researcher, I collected data from students via observation, focus group interviews, artistic creations, and individual and collective reflections. Interacting with students one-on-one, in small groups, and in the whole-class setting provided me with the information necessary to quickly “adjust to the variety of realities” that were encountered (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 39). I made adjustments as the need arose, especially when the class went completely virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I utilized tacit knowledge, another naturalistic inquiry characteristic, to understand what I observed as students created and viewed art individually and collaboratively. Students also worked from a tacit knowledge base due to the new experiences they were adapting to. This tacit knowledge allowed me to adjust the study as I felt necessary, based on my engagement with students in class and their artistic and written responses. Qualitative methods and purposeful sampling are naturalistic inquiry characteristics that I employed because qualitative methods are adaptable to “value patterns that may be encountered” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 40). My aim was to understand students’ perceptions of how they came to value art from using data from the two Art Appreciation classes offered during the 2020, spring semester at one Midwestern, State, Junior College in order to reveal the range of experiences and understandings.

Following the naturalistic inquiry characteristic of permitting the materialization of the research design, I (as the naturalistic researcher) determined an initial data collection process but reassessed after initial data analyses and modified when deemed necessary. Adhering to another naturalistic characteristic, I utilized grounded theory by allowing the leading substantive theory to emerge from my data analysis rather than

analyzing the data through a theoretical lens; to do so would have forced my data into a theory that may or may not be best for illuminating the meaning and value that became evident in my data. In contrast to priori theory, Lincoln and Guba (1985) emphasize, "...grounded theory is more likely to be responsive to contextual values" (p. 41). As a step of the final analysis, the theory that developed from the findings will be explained in Chapter V. By using inductive analysis, I analyzed the salient findings emerging from the data to learn how students perceived their coming to value art rather than selecting only the data that directly answered my research questions.

As the teacher-researcher, I co-created with students using hermeneutic, dialectic interactions that guided additional actions. Together we negotiated meanings, interpretations and assigned value to our individual and collaborative artistic, aesthetic, and social experience. This follows the naturalistic inquiry practice in which a researcher "prefers to negotiate meanings and interpretations with the human sources from which the data have chiefly been drawn" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 41).

I chose to deeply describe my study's particular social setting and keep my findings centered within that context, rather than attempt to make generalizations from the data to other contexts. Data from naturalistic inquiry does, nevertheless, provide a means for judging (toward valuing) among similar social settings, giving possible direction for future inquiries (Erlandson et al., 1993). Holding onto another naturalistic characteristic, I interpreted the data to identify differences in individual perceptions of meaning construction and value-making, including my own, and investigated possible reasons for the differences (Erlandson et al., 1993). I realize also that my data is unique to

this particular setting and time and, therefore, not generalizable, and my findings may or may not be applicable in other settings.

I allowed the data to speak so multiple realities could emerge, which set the inquiry's boundaries. I applied techniques that followed the criteria for trustworthiness (trustworthiness table is in Appendix B, Harris, 2018) of naturalistic inquiry including but not limited to "prolonged engagement and persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, thick description...and auditing to establish dependability and confirmability" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 219).

Participant Sampling

The criteria I used for choosing participants for this study was a combination of both purposeful and convenience sampling. The participants were students enrolled in one of the Art Appreciation courses offered during the spring 2020 semester at the Midwestern, State, Junior College where I teach and for which I was the instructor. Participant data was used for only those who consented to be part of the study (IRB approval and consent form are included in Appendix C). Two face-to face Art Appreciation classes were offered during the spring 2020 semester on two different campuses. I purposefully used students enrolled in courses I taught to offer insight into my students' experiences and their valuing of art and to inform my instruction for future courses.

The participant sampling was convenient for the fact that I am the only instructor who teaches Art Appreciation at my institution. I omitted any participants who did not participate in final focus group interviews and who did not consent to be part of the

study. Out of 42 students enrolled at the beginning of the semester, there were 30 participants who met the criteria. According to Erlandson et al. (1993), there are no set rules determining sample size in qualitative research; the primary objective is to gather quality information rather than quantity. In order to keep the data analysis manageable, my original criterion for sample narrowing was to only include participants from one class, if the sample size was too large. However, due to some students being administratively withdrawn for non-attendance and some who didn't participate in a final focus group interview, I didn't feel the need to narrow the sample any further.

Oklahoma State University's Institutional Review Board approved data collection throughout the semester and a flexible, formative course design that aligned with the goals of naturalistic inquiry (see Appendix C). However, to decrease the likelihood of influencing students to participate throughout the semester, I waited until the end of the semester, after students knew their final grade, to present my study to students and ask for their consent. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and all face-to-face classes switching to virtual classes in March, I presented my study to the students during a final Zoom class session. It wasn't until after I presented my study to students that I asked students who agreed to participate to take the anonymous demographic survey on Blackboard and then provide me with their contact information (personal email address and telephone number) for member check purposes (see demographic survey chart in Appendix D). As discussed further below, data for any students who did not consent was omitted from the study.

Participant Information

The participants for this study were undergraduate students who enrolled in one of my two Art Appreciation courses in the Spring 2020 semester. There were 30 students who consented and participated in the final focus group interview; 20 from the Monday-Wednesday-Friday (MWF) course and 10 from the Tuesday-Thursday course (TR). The MWF course met on the main campus, located in a rural area, and the students were primarily traditional, college aged who lived in the dorm. These students may have participated in such programs as rodeo, agriculture, baseball, softball, basketball, livestock judging, et cetera. The TR course met on the suburban campus that caters primarily to commuter students because there is no dormitory. Many attending the commuter campus work and have family responsibilities. Although there were 30 participants, there were 31 students who completed and submitted the final anonymous demographic survey (Appendix D). Since the demographic survey was submitted in Blackboard online anonymously, I have no way of knowing the identity of the student who consented and completed the demographic survey but did not participate in the final focus group interview or if someone submitted the demographic survey twice.

The demographic survey revealed that typically these participants are between the ages 18-24 and mostly female. The majority (16 participants) self-identified as White/European American, followed closely (12 participants) who self-identified as Native American. One participant self-identified as African American, one as both Native American and Mexican, and one as Hispanic/Latino. The majority of the student participants were taking 12 to 15 credit hours, with only three taking less and one taking more. The majority of the students indicated they worked over 20 hours per week with only seven indicating they worked over 40 hours per week. Two participants responded

they didn't have a job, and one said that before the pandemic they were in a work study program and were sure they could work full time but decided not to.

Typically, these students' college expenses were paid by financial aid. After Spring Break, the class went totally virtual, and the students who lived on campus returned home. The extreme changes to students' lives prompted the addition of asking students about changes to their socioeconomic situation due to the pandemic, and the majority of the students indicated their socioeconomic situation dropped dramatically. Also, 13 participants were the first in their family to attend college, followed closely with 12 student participants being a second-generation college student. The majority of the students indicated that they wanted to take Art Appreciation as part of their general education requirement, and the minority took it only because it fit as a requirement for their major.

A Midwestern State Junior College Context

The Midwestern Junior College has two campuses, both within one county that had a population of 70,990 reported in the 2010 census (United States Census Bureau, 2019). The main campus, located in a rural town with a population of 1641 (United States Census Bureau, 2019), primarily serves traditional, college-aged students who come from surrounding rural towns: 96.2% of the students are Oklahoma residents and 3.8% are non-Oklahoma residents (This Midwestern Junior College's website, 2019). Many traditional students have agriculture, equine, rodeo, basketball, or baseball scholarships. The second campus, located in the neighboring and largest city in the county, with a population of 39,223, reported in the 2010 census (United States Census Bureau, 2019)

lacks both dormitory and cafeteria infrastructure and serves the area's commuting students, most of whom are employed full-time.

Between the two campuses there are 2119 students: 436 are concurrent high school students; 69% are female; 31% male; 30% are fulltime students; and 70% are part-time students (This Midwestern Junior College's website, 2019). The college demographics for enrolled students are 64.5% Caucasian, 38.6% American Indian, 10.8% Black, and 1.0% Asian (This Midwestern Junior College's website, 2019). The county demographics show the population to include 55.8% Caucasian, 19.6% American Indian and Alaskan Native, 11.0% Black or African American, 6.3% Latinx, 8.7% two or more races, 0.7% Asian, and 0.1% Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander (United States Census Bureau, 2019). The state demographics show the state's population to include 60.4% Caucasian, 9.3% American Indian and Alaskan native, 7.8% Black or African American, 10.9% Latinx, 6.2% two or more races, 2.3% Asian, and 0.2% Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander (United States Census Bureau, 2019).

This Midwestern Junior-College student enrollment by program reveals 45.0% of students enrolled in general education, 12.7% in pre-nursing, 9.8% in business administration, 8.5% in nursing, and 6.9% in agriculture. An average of 447 students from 2013–2018 earned associate degrees or certificates at this Midwestern State Junior College (This Midwestern Junior College's website, 2019). The county statistics from 2013–2017 show 18.9% of persons over age 25 earned a bachelor's degree or higher, 5.9% lower than the state's percentage; 85.2% of persons over age 25 earned a high school degree or higher, 2.5% lower than the state's percentage (United States Census Bureau, 2019).

Out of the 31 associate degrees offered at the junior college, 27 require six Humanities' credit hours. Art Appreciation meets three-credit hours of Humanities. For the past three years, I have been this college's only Art Appreciation instructor. I have taught this course in both face-to-face and online and hybrid formats. The student cap for each class is 30 students, and for the last three years, no less than twenty-five students have registered for each course offering every semester.

Impact of the Pandemic

Since I was the instructor for the class, I was not able to take notes during face-to-face classes while lecturing or responding to students unless students were engaged in an assigned activity, so most of my field observation notes were written down from memory in a notebook at the end of each class period while events were still fresh in my memory. However, after the class went virtual due to the pandemic, I was able to record the Zoom class sessions and then take notes from the recordings. The pandemic forced adjustments to how data was collected. Art production assignments, especially any group productions, had to be altered since students could no longer work in a group physically. Although this was an inconvenience, as stated earlier, making adjustments to data collection is not only accepted in naturalistic inquiry methodology but expected (Erlandson et al., 1993). After spring break when the class went virtual, art history lectures were recorded, and students viewed them on their own time before the class met to discuss as a group. The class met once a week via Zoom for class discussion and information concerning upcoming assignments. Students who were unable to attend the class session via Zoom had access to the Zoom class recording on Blackboard.

The art production puzzle piece creation assignment was one group assignment where significant adjustments had to be made. Before spring break, students were given a blank puzzle piece and assigned to create a design of their choosing that emphasized one element and one principle of art. The original plan was for students to fit their completed puzzle piece designs together to complete the puzzle. Since class went virtual after spring break, students were not able to do that; also, there were a few students who were absent on the last day of class before break and didn't receive a blank puzzle piece to complete. Adjustments made due to the class going virtual included asking students who didn't receive a blank puzzle piece to create a made-up puzzle shape on a piece of paper to complete their art element/production design. All students held up their completed puzzle piece or made-up puzzle piece for all the class to see during the Zoom class sessions and discussed their process. In order to get some idea of what the puzzle could have looked like all together, I took a picture of each puzzle piece as each student held theirs up during the class meeting and then "sniped and pasted" them all together (Figure 1 and Figure 2).



Figure 1: MWF Class Puzzle Piece Creation



Figure 2: TR Class Puzzle Piece Creation

Although the puzzle pieces didn't fit together exactly like a puzzle, it did give students an idea of what the puzzle might have looked like if the art project had gone as originally planned. Making a case for naturalistic inquiry adjustments, Erlandson et al., (1993) write, "The seasoned researcher will recognize these high and low emotional periods for what they are—the necessary adjustments of the wonderfully sensitive human instrument" (p. 107). The puzzle piece assignment is but one example of alterations made so the study could continue in the midst of an emotional and life altering pandemic.

Researcher Bias and Subjectivity

Before identifying my researcher biases and subjectivities, I recount my own "coming to art" and summarize my teaching the arts in public, common schools and at one Midwestern State Junior College because my researcher biases and subjectivities, of course, emerge from these experiences. I have substantial experience with art both as a student and teacher and value art in multiple ways. The first time I had an opportunity to take an art class was in junior high school in a medium-sized rural school district: I fell in love. My love for art remained unchanged as I entered high school, where I do not recall art being an elective offering. I, nevertheless, took every opportunity to do art on my own in any way I could.

Before taking Art Appreciation and Art History in college, I, like many, considered art to be good by how realistic it looked; after taking Art History, I learned to love and value modern art. I graduated with a bachelor's degree in Art Education, and the next fall I was hired as an art teacher in a small, rural school where I would teach third

through twelfth grade Art, Art History, and Humanities. Because I also earned Oklahoma Teacher Certification in vocal and instrumental music, I began teaching choir, guitar, and drumline along with the art courses. In my thirteen years there, I witnessed how the arts gave students an additional way to express themselves while learning about the world. After earning a master's degree in Liberal Studies, I began my current position teaching Art Appreciation, Music Appreciation, and General Humanities at a Midwestern State Junior College, a two-year institution with campuses in two neighboring cities. I have taught these Humanities courses for eight years while serving as Humanities Department Chair and Museum Director for the last five years. Due to low enrollment, the college's administrators cut the Fine Arts degrees and fine arts courses before my arrival. Art and Music Appreciation courses are offered under Humanities rather than Fine Arts; typically, students have a six-credit Humanities, General- Education requirement.

I maintain arts education is important for developing the whole self. Although growing up I did not have many visual-art-education opportunities, the few experiences I had enabled me to grow in self-expression and helped me find my voice. As a public school art teacher, I have witnessed art's power to increase students' confidence, self-expression, and self-awareness. I have observed that students in contemporary public schools have even fewer opportunities to engage with the arts than I did. I believe that contemporary society and public schooling has been constructed not only without giving place or time to the arts in ways such disciplines as science, math, and technology have place and time, but that as a result, school and society project a devaluing of the arts. I have repeatedly witnessed how the arts help students release their frustrations by giving them a creative outlet. I advocate that we, as U.S. citizens, demolish, re-vision, and

reconstruct public education to incorporate the arts so students grow into whole, well adults who creatively contribute to society. Although I believe in and support public education, I also believe the current system has failed and will continue to fail many students.

Connected to the subjectivity involved with values, naturalistic inquiry's being value-bound also influences the researcher's role. Unlike positivism in which the researcher works to eliminate biases, the naturalistic researcher is, as the main research instrument, necessary for reliable data while still revealing his/her involvement in order to control biases (Erlandson et al., 1993). With the relation between "the knower and known" being an "interactive" and "inseparable" one (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 37), the researcher's values inevitably and, according to Erlandson et al. (1993), necessarily bind with the study, partially because the researcher both designs the study and is the main research instrument.

As researcher, I brought my knowledge, experiences, and attitudes about valuing, valuing art and artistic creation, and valuing art education to bear when I made meaning from the data. My knowledge, experiences, and attitudes in turn "undergird the credibility" of my findings (Patton, 2002, p. 3) ultimately to provide in-depth, personal understanding of undergraduate students' perceived values of art.

I have identified seven potential biases and subjectivities to which I was steadfastly attentive to throughout my study.

1. **White, Middle-Class, Heterosexual, Married, Female.** I have many privileges that many lack or will never have because I am a white, middle-class,

heterosexual, married female with grown, successful children and a working husband. I work in two locations, one rural, the other suburban, in a conservative, Midwestern state where less than 20% of the population has a bachelor's degree. Working in higher education, I am in a highly regarded profession with multiple benefits that many in the area do not have. Because of my privilege, including my experiences and opportunities to engage in artistic endeavors, I realize those without my financial and educational privileges often struggle to meet day-to-day expenses and may therefore never have considered art, had opportunities to engage with art, or perhaps simply have never viewed art as important to their lives or something that should be included in their schooling and educations. As a researcher, I recognized that I see through privileged eyes and from a perspective of experiences to which my participants may have never had access. I committed consistently to remember my privileged status and its potential influence on my data collection, analysis, and findings. I committed to working to see clearly outside this privilege, always being open to my participants and the kinds of experiences they bring with them into the classroom.

2. **Mother, Grandmother.** I am a mother of grown children whom I encouraged to take art courses while they were growing up. I am also a grandmother and want my grandchildren to have arts opportunities in school as part of their educational experiences. I recognized my experience as a mother and grandmother (supporting and observing my children and grandchildren in their arts' engagement and their resulting joy and growth from creating and responding to art) influences how I might interpret students' interactions during my

observations, interpret my readings of their responses and reflections, and interpret their comments during my interviews with them. As a result, I was especially attentive to this potential bias and continually questioned my data analysis, interpretation, and findings.

3. Educational Background. My limited but positive art experiences in middle and high school contribute to my belief that all students will have positive experiences with art. Although I seldom had artistic experiences during my early, mainly rural education, I have pursued art in higher education. My formal education in Arts and Humanities education influences my judgment and sentiments that art should be part of all students' educational experiences. Because I began my study as a pro-artistic experience and pro-art education advocate, I was especially diligent not to read more into what I observed, read, and heard than students actually expressed as they created art and wrote or talked about their responses to art viewings, their artistic experiences, and their valuing artistic and aesthetic experiences.

4. Artist, Art Educator, Art Advocate. I am an artist, an art educator, and a passionate advocate for art education because I deem artistic and aesthetic experiences to benefit one's emotional well-being, to enhance one's thinking skills, to facilitate one's empathizing with others, to stimulate one's imagination and creativity, and to foster joyful living—living creatively—among other things. Again, because I began my study as a pro-artistic experience and pro-art education advocate, I was especially diligent not to allow my pro-art and pro-art

education perspectives to influence my objectivity during data analysis. I worked attentively to conduct my research with an open mind.

- 5. Limited Experience.** Although I have taught art in some form for over nineteen years, I have only taught Art Appreciation at one higher education institution, a Midwestern State Junior College in the U.S. and have only taught art and music education in one, rural, K–12, public-school district in the same Midwestern state. I realize my having taught in only one state in the U.S., in only one college-level institution, and in only one, rural, K–12, public-school district restricts my view of students’ accessibility to and perceptions of artistic and aesthetic experiences and art education (including Art Appreciation) in the U.S. I, therefore, consistently strove to put aside the conclusions I had already drawn based on my experiences in order to be opened to what I observed, read, and heard during my data collection and then truly to let the data speak in my data analysis.
- 6. Teacher, Division Chair, and Researcher.** Because I am at once teacher, Division Chair, and researcher for this study, asking my Art Appreciation students to participate was risky for students who may have felt obliged to participate because I would be assigning their grades and am also, as Division Chair, the person they would go to with a problem. To address this ethical problem, I alleviated pressure on students to participate by not asking students to consent to join the study until the semester’s end, after the students knew their final grades and emphasized that participation was completely voluntary and if they chose not to participate, I would remove documents (their responses and reflections) discussions, focus group comments and observation field notes specific to them.

7. STEM Education at Art Education's Expense. I am biased against the push for STEM education *at the expense* of arts education because I think this push is more about politics and big business than about education and public education's fulfilling U.S. children's physical, developmental, emotional, creative, and intellectual needs for learning to live well. I contend students should engage in meaningful ways with all the disciplines, including STEM, and should not narrow their studies to specialize in high school before seeing how the disciplines connect and inform each other. I strongly assert society is responsible for providing public education toward educating the whole child, something to which many give lip service even as they remove the arts from public schools. I was ever aware that my anti-STEM education at art education's expense position merited my attention throughout the study so not to influence my data collection, analysis, or findings.

Data Collection Methods

As the researcher, I wanted to understand students' perceptions of their experiences connected to their learning to value art in particular in their general education Art Appreciation class. In other words, I wanted to "be able to experience what the 'natives' experience and to see that experience in the way that they see it" (Erlandson et al, 1993, p 81). This experiencing and seeing involves collecting data in various ways from various sources where the researcher and participants mutually engage (Erlandson et al., 1993). Erlandson et al. (1993) assert, "In qualitative data gathering and analysis, attention should be given to constructing a comprehensive, holistic portrayal of the social and cultural dimensions of a particular context" (p. 85). In order for me, as a researcher, to form a holistic picture of the social and cultural dimensions within my Art

Appreciation classes, I used a demographic and an art appreciation survey, field observations, documents and artifacts, and focus groups as data sources. These ongoing data sources included a variety of formats (written and media).

All documents, artifacts, and focus group interviews were created as required assignments for the course that all students were asked to produce, create, or engage in as part of the regular class curriculum. To prevent students from feeling pressured to participate in the study, since I was the teacher, researcher, and Division Chair and per IRB approval (Appendix C), I waited until the end of the course after student-participants received their final grades before I asked for consent. I emphasized to the students that participation was completely voluntary, and if they chose not to participate, all documents and artifacts pertaining to them would be removed from the study. At the end of the semester, after the class was over and I received consent, I was able to access all of the archived material for our course website or from the Zoom recordings. Following, I explain each data source and how it was collected.

Demographic and Art Appreciation Survey

The purpose of this data source was twofold: 1) to gain information about students' identities, backgrounds, and socio-economic status, and 2) to glean insight into my students' perceptions of their coming to value art. The survey included 15 questions soliciting demographic information and four questions soliciting their valuing of art. The survey was made available through the course Blackboard site after the students were given their final course grade and consented to being in the study (Appendix D).

Field Observations and Field Notes

As teacher-researcher, I was as a participant-observer. Observation provides important data in naturalistic inquiry because it “maximizes the inquirer’s ability to grasp motives, beliefs, concerns, interests, unconscious behaviors, customs and the like” (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 193). Throughout the semester, I observed while students engaged with me and each other about art history, art criticism, and artistic creation. Observing and participating with students occurred during whole-class and small-group discussions and during students’ individual and collaborative artistic creations, which follows Erlandson et al.’s (1993) guidelines that observations “can range from very focused to unstructured forms” (p. 95). After the classes went virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I recorded the Zoom class sessions for students who were absent. I realize these types of recordings could influence students’ responses because they are to some degree intrusive (Erlandson et al., 1993). I took field notes in a notebook each day after class, noting specific events that transpired each session. I focused particularly on any comments students made about value such as how they or others value art.

Documents and Artifacts

“The term *document* refers to the broad range of written and symbolic records, as well as any available materials and data” (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 99). I collected such documents and artifacts as discussion summaries, written art criticism responses, individually and collaboratively generated artistic creations, and individual and collaborative reflections concerning the creative process as it reflected students’ values, valuing processes, and social-creative interactions, all of which were required assignments for the course. For naturalistic inquiry, the material artifacts “give insight

into the culture's technology, social interaction, and physical environment" (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 100).

Although students individually or collaboratively created art objects throughout the semester, an especially important artifact was the final class project. Choosing their own media, students created a 2-D or 3-D art object demonstrating their artistic and aesthetic values at the end of the course. To accompany their art objects, students submitted a written reflection questionnaire (see Appendix A) explaining how their artwork illuminated their valuing art. In a responsive critique, each student explained how he/she interpreted one peer's art object and what he/she discovered about that artist-peer's valuing of art

Focus Group Interviews

Erlandson, et al. (1993) cite Lincoln and Guba (1985) to explain that "interviews allow the researcher and respondent to move back and forth in time; to reconstruct the past, interpret the present, and predict the future" (p. 85). As the researcher, I observed and analyzed students' responses throughout the course, which provided information for reconstructing the past and interpreting the present. As part of the class, students participated in focus group interviews and all students who participated in the focus group also consented to be a participant in the study at the end of the semester. Focus group interviews were beneficial to my study's validity because social interactional experiences increase meaning and understanding of one's own viewpoint (Patton, 2002).

I followed Patton's (2002) recommendations that a focus group interview, typically lasting two hours or less, will consist of interviewing a small group of six to ten people who share certain commonalities. As the moderator rather than the interviewer, I

guided the discussion and participated in the focus group interview (Patton, 2002). I structured the focus group interviews by giving the students questions in advance. Students received a final reflection questionnaire that they responded to individually before attending the focus group interview. I prepared open-ended questions in order to get an in-depth understanding of how students perceived their valuing of art. The focus group interviews were casual and conversational because “in natural research, interviews take more of the form of dialogue or an interaction” (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 85). The questions for the focus groups are in Appendix A.

Data Analysis Methods

To examine the overarching question of how undergraduate students make meaning and ascribe value to art from their experiences in an Art Appreciation class, I analyzed data collected over the spring 2020 semester from two Art Appreciation classes. With IRB approval of this formative design, I started collecting and analyzing data on the first day of both classes. Erlandson et al., (1993) explain, “The collection and analysis of the data obtained go hand-in hand as theories and themes emerge during the study” (p. 111). One must also consider not only the way participants construct meaning but also the researcher’s experiences, knowledge, and dispositions that inform how and what the researcher distinguishes to be substantial and relevant (Patton, 2002). The analyst interprets such qualitative data as observation, interviews, and documents, looking for recurring patterns of data to organize themes (Patton, 2002).

I began analyzing my observations of the Art Appreciation classroom as I interacted with students. As each class period ended, I jotted down field notes in a notebook, making note of things of substance and later typed them out in a word

document. Following a naturalistic inquiry characteristic, I adjusted what I assigned and collected from students as my ongoing data analysis led me. For example, after receiving students' receptive and positive responses from doing a collaborative art production project early in the semester, I decided to add an additional group project—a puzzle piece creation. This project required each student to create a design on a blank puzzle piece they were given that focused on one element and one principle of art which would be put together forming a class puzzle. Similarly, my analysis of observation field notes and students' documents and artifacts determined the questions I asked during the focus group interviews.

Following naturalistic inquiry data analysis guidelines, I started analyzing data by looking for emerging themes early in the semester, as students completed and turned in assignments and from my classroom observations. The data were either retrieved from Blackboard or from physical assignments that students handed in, all of which were scanned and saved digitally, allowing me to organize the data into six domains of focus: 1) pre-instruction responses (PIR) with two data sources; 2) art production responses (APR) with eight data sources; 3) art history responses (AHR) with 11 data sources; 4) aesthetic/and critique responses (ACR) with four data sources; 5) valuing responses (VR) with two data sources and 6) post instruction responses (PostIR) with one data source, the anonymous demographic survey (see Data Collection Chart in Appendix E for description of the data domains).

I carefully examined the data by reading and re-reading documents. I transcribed the focus group interviews verbatim. Unitizing the data, I open coded for anything that seemed significant in relation to the research question. Erlandson et al. (1993) define

unitizing data in naturalistic inquiry as “disaggregating data into the smallest pieces of information that may stand alone as independent thoughts in the absence of additional information other than a broad understanding of the context” (p. 117). Line by line, across the data sources, I looked for patterns and manually open coded words and phrases from student responses that were significant to students’ experiences in the course, gave insight into their valuing of art or valuing process in general as well as any changes they indicated, and expressed benefits they perceived from either art or the course. This coding including descriptions of the ways they valued art, which might include general aesthetic judgments or responses to art, personal connections or disassociations with art, recognition of the artistic ability or skill involved in an artwork, expression or noticing of formal qualities of art, changing viewpoints, experiences from creating their own art, or learning from doing or evaluating art as well as noticing how others valued art.

Following naturalistic inquiry’s “emergent category designation,” I intuitively sorted the codes and created categories that I collated by color of similar phrases, ideas, and perceptions (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 117). For instance, one category that emerged was the “value of enjoying.” This category included words, phrases, sentences, or utterances that expressed enjoyment such as “I really enjoy looking at art,” “I enjoy photography,” “I’ve always liked to color,” or “it was fun,” to name just a few.

From the categories, I looked for relevant relationships and patterns and organized the categories into likely themes and sub-themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) stress that “Data within themes should cohere meaningfully, while there should be clear and identifiable distinctions between themes” (p. 91). After several examinations and clarification, four major themes emerged related to the following experiences: 1) feelings

of inadequacy or frustration; 2) what students are drawn to in art; 3) benefits from viewing or doing art; and 4) judging and valuing. The “benefits from viewing or doing art theme” was divided into three subthemes: learning and understanding benefits, socio emotional benefits, and communicating/connecting benefits.

Because I was looking for changes in students’ perceptions of valuing from taking the course, I combined all the data in a table organized by theme. Within each theme, the data was sub-divided by the color-coded category evidence, which was sub-divided by the data within each domain of focus. Finally, I field color-coded all the data by three time periods (early semester, mid-semester, and end of semester). This chronological organization helped me to better identify changes to students’ perceptions as the course progressed.

To recapitulate, my analysis process involved five steps. I first organized the data into six domains of focus. From each domain, I coded significant words or phrases that aligned with my research questions and sub-questions. I then color-coded the words and phrases for similarities, which established the categories. From the categories, I identified themes and sub-themes. Finally, I organized all the data into one Word document divided by theme, then sub-divided by the domain of focus, category, and time changes in students’ perceptions of valuing art.

Trustworthiness

My study was designed to include techniques to establish trustworthiness (see trustworthiness table in Appendix B Harris, 2018). Lincoln and Guba (1984) give credibility techniques to establish trustworthiness that I employed in my study. They include the following: 1) activities that increase the likelihood of creditable findings, such

as “prolonged engagement, persistent observation and triangulation” (p. 301); 2) have a disinterested party play devil’s advocate or “peer debriefing” (p. 308); 3) refine the hypotheses to account for additional information—referred to as “negative case analysis” (p. 309); 4) preserve raw data that can be checked with interpretations and findings—referred to as “referential adequacy” (p. 313); and 5) provide opportunities for stakeholders to check for accurate representation—referred to as “member checks” (p. 314) (see trustworthiness table in Appendix B, Harris, 2018).

I analyzed and compared individual students’ artworks against their explanations of their art and how it revealed their valuing of art. I also compared how they perceived how another student values art from their interpretation of the other student’s artwork. By using varying methods of collecting data, I triangulated my study—an important element Erlandson et al. (1993) advocate. “Perhaps the best way to elicit the various and divergent constructions of reality that exist within the context of a study is to collect information about different events and relationships from different points of view” (Erlandson et al., 1993, p. 31).

I audio recorded focus group interviews and transcribed them verbatim. I then did a member check by sending a copy of the transcription to participants to confirm accuracy of their intention because “given context are best verified and confirmed by the people who inhabit that context” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 41). Although interpretations and conclusions result from negotiations between the inquirer and the respondents, no participant disputed the transcription. I insured confidentiality was maintained by locking collected data in a file cabinet in a secured office. After all data was collected, I finalized the coding and refined my data analysis.

Summary of Chapter III

To summarize, my qualitative study was designed to understand how students who may or may not have had previous art experiences value art after taking an undergraduate Art Appreciation course that will count towards their required humanities credit. Qualitative research is most appropriate for my study because I am not seeking quantitative findings; rather, I want to investigate students' perceptions and how they construct meanings of their experiences through an interpretivist theoretical perspective. I used naturalistic inquiry as my methodology, which focuses on participants in natural setting. I purposefully and conveniently chose students enrolled in my face-to-face, spring 2020, Art Appreciation courses to inform how I may design future Art Appreciation courses, using data that was part of the class assignments except for a final demographic survey at the end of the course. As the instructor for the course and a participant/observer, I identified and made a concerted effort not to allow my biases alter my collection or analysis of the data. Using a thematic approach for analyzing data, I organized the data into domains of focus, coded the data, organized the codes into categories, identified the themes that emerged, and organized all data by time. Finally, I followed naturalistic inquiry guidelines to establish trustworthiness.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Since I was particularly interested in whether there were changes to how students valued art after taking an Art Appreciation course, I collected data over an entire semester. In order to better recognize changes, I divide the analyses into three time periods throughout the semester: 1) early semester (weeks 1-5); 2) mid-semester (weeks 6-11); and 3) end of semester (weeks 12-17) (see Data Collection Chart in Appendix E). After several iterations of data analysis, four major themes emerged: 1) Students' expressed inadequacy and frustration in their knowledge of art history and ability for art production; 2) Students were drawn to art because of personally relevant connections; 3) Students expressed benefits from doing, analyzing and viewing art; and 4) Students conveyed they developed skills of judging and valuing art as well as other things pertinent to their lives. The third theme dealing with benefits is divided into subthemes related to students' learning and understanding, socio-emotional experiences, communicating/connecting benefits and societal benefits. The fourth theme, judging and valuing, is divided into subthemes related to peer judgment, personal judgment, societal value, and personal value. I first define each theme then provide evidence from the varying time periods and data sets.

Thematic Findings

In the following sections, I define each of the above-mentioned themes and subthemes, give data evidence to support the theme and present the findings. I also connect the findings to educational and philosophical theory from recognized theorists.

Theme 1: Feelings of Inadequacy and Frustration

Students experienced feelings of inadequacy and frustration because they did not have adequate knowledge about art and art history. They felt that they were not artistic or creative or they became frustrated when they created art.

Students' Lack of Art knowledge and Experiences

Early in the semester, many students expressed they did not have sufficient knowledge about art or art history due to lack of background from high school classes. Although many students revealed they had some art in high school, several students indicated they had zero or few art classes or art experiences, or the only art instruction they did receive came mainly from elementary or middle school. I noted in my observation field notes that when asked on the first day of the class what artworks or artists students could name, some could name very well-known artists and artwork such as Vincent van Gogh and *The Starry Night* but several couldn't name any. One student said she knew the *Mona Lisa* but didn't know the artist. Even students who did have art in high school indicated a lack of knowledge. For example, Student 2 stated, "I took art in high school, and it was not much of an art class. I did not really learn anything." Student 11 commented, "I have no real experience in art. I remember learning a little bit about some art in high school but that is about it." Student 7 expressed, "I am far from perfect

in my artistic abilities. I don't recall much knowledge about the history of art..." This was something I also noticed in my class observations—students who indicated they had an art class in high school didn't indicate they knew any more artworks than those who didn't have previous experiences. Students mostly named landmark artists and artworks from history that are in most people's general knowledge of art, which of course includes the Renaissance artists that the Teenage Mutant Turtles were named for.

This finding about students' perceived lack of knowledge and experience relates to students' valuing or making meaning of art because value connects to knowledge and to experience. Students indicated they valued perfection in artistic abilities, something which most expressed they lacked but desired, so it stands to reason, if they had more knowledge and experience with art, confident they would feel more confident in their abilities and they would ascribe more value to it.

This inference corresponds to John Dewey's (2016) insistence that when directly experiencing something, one goes beyond mere seeing to "being moved by it" (p. 340) and to appreciating it, and therefore, one needs opportunities to participate personally and directly through "play or active occupations" in "typical situations" (p. 341). School activities would be a type of situation that Dewey is referring to. Students' knowledge of or lack of knowledge about art informs how they perceive art, which aligns with Dewey's (1934) views that each individual uniquely perceives art differently due to their differing past experiences. By extension, the more varied one's life experience, the more aesthetic possibilities exist. Often, one can recognize the self through an art object and in so doing, transforms the self, produces emotion, and thereby creates what Dewey (1934) refers to as an "aesthetic experience" (p. 9). Aesthetic experience connects the self to a sea of

experiences, enhances one's ability to see beyond the self to see from others' perspectives, contributes to one's understanding of the world, and facilitates one's improving society (Dewey, 1934):

Art throws off the covers that hide the expressiveness of experienced things; it quickens us from the slackness of routine and enables us to forget ourselves by finding ourselves in the delight of experiencing the world about us in its varied qualities and forms. It intercepts every shade of expressiveness found in objects and orders them in a new experience of life. (p. 108)

Students' lack of experiences with art denies them opportunities for possible aesthetic experiences. This speaks to our public school system and the few art opportunities students have, especially in rural school districts that many of the students who attend this junior college come from (Fine, 2018; see Table 1). This is unfortunate because students with little art experience are ignorant of the meaning-making possibilities art could offer them for the rest of their lives, no matter the profession they choose.

The number of art and music classes offered in Oklahoma has fallen even as enrollment climbed.

Source: Oklahoma State Department of Education

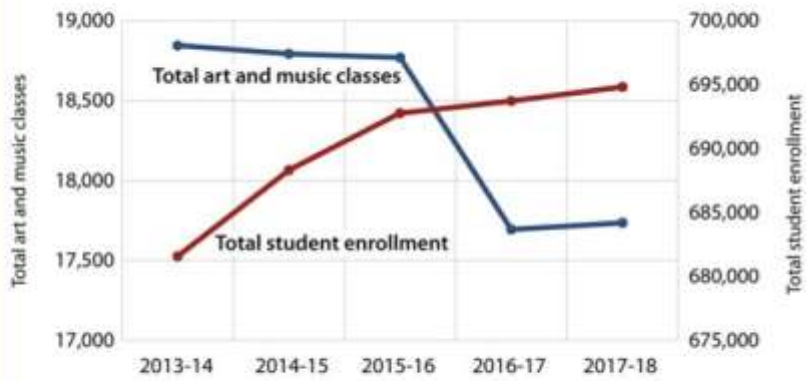


Table 1. Art and Music Classes in Relation to Oklahoma Public School Enrollment (Fine, 2018).

The students’ lack of knowledge about art and the history of art contributed to feelings of inadequacy in making judgment about artworks. For example, Student 20 expressed,

If I am being honest, I chose a piece of art that is entirely too famous for this section. Having me judge this piece is like asking my wife to judge Moonlight Sonata by Beethoven, or rate my gaming PC setup. Neither of us are even close to qualified to give those judgments.

This idea is something that Eisner (1997) echoes, “To understand the context of a work requires an understanding of the conditions that gave rise to the work as well as the way in which the work affected the times during which it was created” (p. 110). However, Dewey (1916) contends that indeed, standards of value concerning how one judges derive from one’s past education or experiences, but regardless of one’s knowledge, one sets

his/her/own standards by which to judge based not on that knowledge but on one's meaningful experiences. I contend with both Eisner and Dewey and feel that indeed one does judge based on one's past experiences, but the judgment of an artwork can only be enhanced when one has knowledge about the context of the work.

Many students, especially those who had very little to no experience with art, expressed frustration because they felt inadequate in their artistic abilities, using phrases such as "it's extremely difficult for me" or "I'm not very good." Some students' feelings of not being artistic contributed to their feelings of frustration because their design didn't turn out how they wanted, or they struggled with coming up with a design, which was evidenced in students' comments. For example, Student 9 stated, "This is the best I can do." Student 9 became very frustrated stating, "it ended up smearing so I just quit before I ruined it. I would have like to fill it out more." Student 24 echoed similar sentiments: "I kind of wanted [the art] to look a little bit better."

This finding of inadequacy and frustration was expressed throughout the semester. It makes sense that if one hasn't had artistic training, then one would be apprehensive about creating artwork, especially for others to view. This coincides with Eisner's (1997) exertion that satisfaction about one's creative work will suffer if one has not learned the necessary skills to be able "to control the material with which one works" (p. 81). And one's ability to successfully express oneself artistically, one must first acquire the necessary artistic skills in which to do so (Eisner, 1997). This feeling of inadequacy and frustration would apply to any skill set that one has little to no training in.

By the end of the semester, several students expressed enjoyment from the art assignments, but feelings of inadequacy, especially frustrations continued. This is

evidenced by Student 17 who stated, “I have always been scared of art to a degree simply because I didn’t feel like I was any good at it.” Student 15 commented, “I like to look at art more than I like to make art” but added, when referring to the final art production assignment, “I had fun doing it.” Feelings of frustration were revealed in students’ comments that expressed how their artwork didn’t turn out how they hoped or envisioned but many were still satisfied with the outcome. For example, Student 1 stated, “I wasn’t overly pleased with the outcome, but I still enjoy looking at it,” and Student 6 stated, “I would have liked it to look a little bit better but it turned out not bad.” Student 12 commented, “It did not turn out exactly how I envisioned. It still turned out alright, I think.” Student 27 revealed, “I eventually ended up with a painting that somewhat resembles my happy place, but it doesn't really do it justice.”

These comments suggest that by the end of the semester, students were recognizing their growth by expressing a humble satisfaction with their final artworks. Saying their art is “not bad,” that is “somewhat resembles” the intended object, and that the final product is enjoyable to look at indicates a change than what was expressed early in the semester. This speaks to students developing self-efficacy from their experiences in the course. According to Bandura (1977) who wrote extensively about self-efficacy, experience is the most effective way to increase self-efficacy. This finding also ties to the literature review of Brown and Jeannert’s (2015) study where students’ self-efficacy was increased after actively participating in an arts program for eight weeks.

It’s not surprising that students had low confidence and self-efficacy in their art making abilities due their lack of previous art experiences. Eisner (1997) makes note of this problem, stressing that the subjects given the most time allotment are translated to

the most important. Moreover, students learn about the significance of art often from how their school officials, parents and teachers discuss it. Eisner (1997) points out that:

If the teacher comments, ‘When you finish your work, you can do art,’ children learn that art is a less important task than ‘work.’ If the teacher does not concern him/herself with helping children learn what is important in the arts, there is little reason for children to believe that the arts have something worth learning. (p. 22)

This finding is similar to the high school students in Andrelchik and O’Neill Schmitt’s (2014) study from the literature review taking a ceramics class. These students also expressed feelings of frustration from their perceived lack of talent as well as pleasure from the experiences. Interestingly, however, the student participants in that study didn’t feel that the course would contribute any to their future success in life which mirrored the limited view of success that the authority figures around them had even though they indicated enjoyment, creative thinking and self-efficacy from their experiences in the course. These comments echo what students in this study indicated of viewing art or humanities courses as easy and not that important. For example, Student 10 stated, “For some reason my idea of humanities classes is that is going to be, like super easy and that really wasn’t it.” Student 13 expressed:

I had art in high school...and it was a blow off class...I took it because I didn’t have anything else to take. I just really thought this would be an easy class ...but I’ve had more homework and actually worked harder I feel in this class than even like my government class.

Although students in Andrelchik and O’Neill Schmitt’s (2014) study expressed changed viewpoints by the end of the course about their enjoyment for taking an art class, their

perceptions still were that art and humanities learning won't contribute to their future success; instead, art and humanities are just a pleasant past time or break from real learning. Eisner (1997) stresses that many educators and parents believe the focus in education should be on the "bread and butter" disciplines but argues that this contrasts with the idea "that education should help people learn how to live and not merely train them to earn a living" (p. 20). We are socially conditioned to think that success only involves struggle and goal achievement and rarely is pleasure or creative thinking included in our societal definition of success.

To conclude theme one, despite students' feelings of inadequacy and frustration from their lack of knowledge or experiences of art, they showed that their perceptions of their abilities and their self-efficacy increased from participating in the course. Self-efficacy is vital to students' feelings of worth and ability to try new things, to put themselves out there, so to speak. This sense of accomplishment that one can receive from doing things one initially perceived they couldn't do can transfer to other aspects of one's life to take chances.

Theme 2: What Students Are Drawn to in Art

Students were drawn to art by how they connected to it, whether that be connecting to its beauty, its meaning, the skills of the artist, or personal connections to their daily lives, loved ones, or time period.

Student Connections Based on Beauty

Aesthetic connections to beauty played a major role in students' indications of their attraction to art, especially a love of nature and the formal qualities of art that deal with the elements of art (line, shape, space, color, form and texture) and the principles of

design (rhythm, harmony/unity, balance, contrast, movement, pattern, proportion and variety). Students' responses about being drawn to art by their aesthetic connections to beauty, which included finding beauty in nature and the formal qualities of art, chiefly the element of color, were revealed through all time periods and data sets. For example, from the early semester, pre-instruction questionnaire, students made comments similar to Student 1's statement, "I place value on art based on beauty," or Student 21's comment, "I love being in nature. Seeing paintings like this also reminds me how beautiful the world is." Likewise, Student 8 said, "I love the colors, and the details of the sky make the picture very vibrant. The colors mesh well and it's just all around beautiful." These types of comments reveal that students were certainly connecting with the art but only on a surface level of personal connection from their background of knowledge. This coincides with Dewey's (1934) statement, "There is much applause for the wonders of appreciation and the glories of the transcendent beauty of art indulged in without much regard to capacity for esthetic perception in the concrete" (p. 8). In addition, students had a limited conception of art as being beautiful or emoting beauty. Gardner (1983) discusses beauty and says that a work that is "pretty or aesthetically 'proper' is also suspect; rather than being presented overtly to the reader, these attributes of beauty and form should emerge from the total experience of reading the work" (p. 87). At the beginning of the semester, students' statements indicated that they value beauty in art, or believed the world or nature is beautiful in general. They held universal notions of beauty from an imitational aesthetic judgment standpoint, but they failed to explain what beauty is to them, describe the essence of beauty, or articulate what makes something beautiful.

By mid-semester, students indicated they were still drawn to the aesthetic qualities of art but had a deeper level of comprehension. Students were able to articulate their reasons in clearer detail by discussing the formal qualities of art, particularly in their art criticism papers. For instance, Student 12 wrote, “I was originally attracted to the art because of the cool tones as it is altering my attention with the lines of texture on the top and mid-section of the bust.” Student 1 wrote, “The lines are easy to follow and make good contrast points against the smoothness of blank spaces.” Student 22, commented:

The visually stimulating effect produced by the movement and colors gives it a strong aesthetic appeal...The movement of the lines, the different shades of colors, the subtle horizon, the contrasting elements that break up the surrounding patterns, the illusion of depth, the stylistic beauty.

It is understandable that if students had limited knowledge of art elements and principles, they would rely instead on their own background knowledge or personal experiences to evaluate art. They’re staying in the realm of “making personal connections” (a reading/viewing comprehension strategy), because they don’t have knowledge to make a more critical or nuanced evaluation. The increased specificity by mid-semester with students using artistic terms such as, “cool tones, “lines of texture,” “good contrast points,” and “movement of lines” reveals that students had a better understanding of the formal qualities of art than they did in the early semester. Their knowledge of the elements and principles of art increased, giving them not only additional vocabulary for description but also an understanding of these components, so they were able to comprehend the art in a much different way than they did early in the semester.

This increased knowledge led them to not only greater appreciation for art, but they were also attracted to artwork that they may not have been attracted to before taking the course, which ultimately translates to greater valuing. Eisner (1997) stresses, “Seeing from an aesthetic perspective is a learned form of human performance, a kind of expertise” (p. 26). In other words, from learning, understanding, and applying the formal elements and principles of art, students added to their previous standards of beauty, which also added to their valuing of art. This finding starts to answer the overarching research question of how students make meaning and ascribe value to art.

By the end of the semester, students' detail in their responses about their aesthetic connections to art increased even further, which I attribute to students having more experience, not only from creating their own artwork and looking at their fellow classmates' artwork, but also from reflecting on the reasons they are drawn to certain artworks over others. For example, in the responses submitted concerning the three photograph assignments given toward the end of semester, students specifically addressed their judgment of beauty. The assignment asked students to take three photographs: one in the natural world they found beautiful or artistic, one in the human-made world they found beautiful or artistic, and one in the natural or human-made world that many would label “ugly” but they find beautiful or artistic.

The responses from this assignment revealed that students were evaluating how they value beauty. They were going beyond the surface-level, personal connections to thinking deeper to what it is that they feel makes something beautiful—the pure aesthetic quality of an image that they took themselves, which some articulated using art

vocabulary that was discussed throughout the semester. For example, Student 22 revealed,

I stepped outside today to find something around my house that was worthy enough to be called art. It really allowed me to notice things I hadn't noticed before, to appreciate the nature in my own yard. Plus, it's important that we all get out and get some fresh air during this historical period of social isolation. I stumbled across this flower in my front yard beside the porch (Figure 3). I had never noticed it before, but its beauty caught my eye as I wandered about with an open awareness of my surroundings. I really wanted to capture the beauty of the coral petals in contrast with the surrounding leaves and grass. I think I was able to do that. This picture certainly has artistic value in my mind.

The student was using artistic terminology with “coral petals in contrast with the surrounding leaves and grass,” but what I find most revealing in the student’s remark was that he demonstrated a new aesthetic awareness of his world. The photograph he turned in is a very nice picture of a rose, but to this student, who purposely went out looking for beauty, it became much more significant. This corresponds with Crane’s (1892) view that to truly perceive beauty requires one to have an idea of beauty in mind—it is a cognitive process. It is as if the student was seeing things with a new set of eyes through which to view and appreciate the world. Eisner (1997) contends “...seeing rather than looking becomes a sign of an achievement and not merely a task” (p. 97). In other words, the student had what Dewey (1934) describes as an aesthetic experience. Student 19 also commented about beauty but of something many would consider beautiful. She stated:

Something in the human made world that I find beautiful is the old tin side of my barn (Figure 4). My grandpa built this barn way back when he first bought this property, and it is still here today. The wave-like shape of the tin shows movement and with age the silver tin rusted to a beautiful red color.

This student was also using artistic terminology in discussing the formal aspects of art, especially with noting that the “wave-like shape” shows movement. She also revealed that the memory of the barn contributed to her connection to beauty. Past experiences shape how we view objects (Dewey, 1934). This student sees the barn much differently than someone who doesn’t have a past experience with the barn. However, one can view the student’s photograph of the barn and still associate it with beauty by the overall unity of the elements and principles in the composition. The student was viewing the barn and taking the photograph not only from a personal, individual perspective but also from anticipation of how the viewer of the photograph would perceive the work.

Another example came from Student 13 stated:

Old, rusted, plow (Figure 5). This piece of equipment was practical and utilitarian at one time but is now a common garden decoration. The shapes, lines and circles give it a very artistic feeling but its texture and rust color can be very unappealing for certain aesthetics.

This insight, again, is an example of a student who saw something with a new artistic vision, pointing out the art elements of shapes, lines, circles, texture, and color and finding the beauty from the interaction of the formal qualities of art. Crane (1892) stressed, “Design might be defined as the constructive sense of beauty. One may have plenty of energy, plenty of frank naturalism in a work, but if we have not the sense of

beauty in art, it profited nothing” (p. 33). This plow in the photograph in combination with its surroundings took on a different quality of beauty to the student than it would have before knowing and understanding the formal qualities of art.

This finding reveals that all of these students were interpreting beauty differently than they did early in the semester. They now had new tool box of information, gained from learning the foundations of art and design, which has widened students’ views of beauty. This shift in artistic thinking is important because they were connecting how the different parts make up a unified whole.



Fig. 3: Student 22
Photograph



Fig. 4: Student 19
Photograph



Fig. 5: Student 13
Photograph

Focusing on the beauty and the formal qualities of art carried over to some students’ final art production of creating a work of art that reflects how they value art.

For instance, Student 14 revealed:

I enjoy shapes and movement along with color in art, so I used those a lot in my artwork (Figure 6). It shows how I truly value art and the things in art. My process of coming up with it wasn't difficult, because for one I love elephants, and two, I love shapes and movement. So I combined all of those together. I think the

process we've went through learning about art did help me create this artwork. I love shapes, movement, and color. I think it influenced how I value art because of all of the things I have learned.

This student also is taking various things she likes, elephants found in nature, shapes, color, and movement and elements and the principle of design such as movement and combining them to create something totally new. Crane (1892) states, “Imagination is the creative force, and sense of beauty the controlling power” (p. 26). The student is using newfound knowledge of design along with imagination to create a product that the student finds to be beautiful. Student 21 expressed:

Making my art project was fun (Figure 8). I got to show how I felt art meant to me. I made a painting of a landscape to show how I love the natural world. Even if it isn't a real place, I tried to incorporate most landscape settings in my painting with the Savannah background, the snowy mountain in the distance, and the night sky to show the beauty of the galaxy.

There are several things that stand out from this student's comments. First, the statement, “I got to show how I felt art meant to me” indicates appreciation of having an opportunity to show what the student likes, and that the student feels their opinion is valid. Although, he doesn't mention the elements and principles of art specifically, it is apparent from his art work that he was applying them by using contrasting colors, overlapping shapes, and various implied textures and combining them with his love of nature through his imagination to create his own world as well as an aesthetically pleasing composition.



Fig. 6: Student 14
Final Art Production



Fig. 7: Student 21
Final Art Production

This finding of students' increased specificity of art vocabulary in their responses about their aesthetic connections, using words or phrases that call attention to the elements and principles of art, reveals students were going beyond merely noticing or admiring beauty to actively looking for it, thinking, perceiving, studying, making judgments, and determining the value they ascribe to beauty. Essentially, by immersing themselves into the photographs or artworks and thinking about beauty gave them a new experience—experiencing the art. Dewey (1934) describes these acts as “aesthetic experience” that is going beyond recognition or mere seeing and beyond objects associated with fine art to something personal and meaningful. Aesthetic experience also involves perception, for it is “living in the experience of making and of perceiving that makes the difference between what is fine or aesthetic in art and what is not” (Dewey, 1934 p. 27). Students' perceptions of their environment were altered by the knowledge they gained by searching for beauty using an art framework. In other words, they acted as artists, seeing from an artist’s view point, which in turn added to their valuing of art. This

finding also, in part, answers the overarching research question, “how do students make meaning and ascribe value to art?”

Students’ changed perceptions were also evident in the descriptions of their perceptions of nature. Comments such as Student 22 seeing nature differently than before and Student 21 creating art to show his love of nature reveal that nature—the beauty of nature, the peace one finds in nature—is relevant to students’ valuing of art. Viewing nature in art in a sense elevates nature to a higher realm of understanding. Edith Cobb (1977) posits, “In transcending the meaning of nature, the iconography of the arts can change the meaning and raise the value of our perceptual relations with nature and the world, nonverbally, as well as verbally” (Kindle location 752). Nature, then, is viewed with a different perspective than before. Students are aware they like nature but from viewing nature in art or creating artwork of nature, they are more equipped to ascertain the attributes of nature they connect with, which in turn gives them more insight into themselves.

Student Connections Based on Their Personal Lives

Throughout the semester, students expressed they were drawn to art or created art by how they personally connected to it and symbolically associated it with some aspect of their lives, whether that be a hobby or sport, a loved one, a time period of time or just how it made them feel. Early in the semester, students brought an object to class that “spoke” to them in some way. Overwhelmingly, students revealed the object they brought spoke to them because they were personally connected to it. For example, Student 27 stated:

The picture [a picture of a dog with a duck] speaks to me because it basically describes my lifestyle, and it is something that is a part of me. My grandmother gave it to me before she died, and I still feel I have a piece of her.

Student 4 stated:

My parents got it [a small blue ceramic pumpkin about 4 inches tall] for me, and I like keeping it on my desk. It reminds me of my family because my family gave it to me as a trinket, and it reminds me of how close I am with my family even if we're far away...

Although these objects weren't what would generally be considered art, they are objects that have meaning to the students and indicate the intrinsic value of the objects based on their experiences. Jackson (1998) discusses the connections between objects and experience stating, "The objects and events are as much a part of experience as we are ourselves" (p. 9). Barone (2012) states, "An object becomes a work of art with what it does to experience" (p. 46). These student's comments show what Dewey (1910, 1916, 1922, 1934, 1938, 1939, 1963) means when he expresses that experience is the key to value. In other words, it is not the objects themselves that resonate with the students, rather it is the experiences they associate with the objects that speaks to them. Although students were only given the prompt to bring something to class that "speaks" to you, student's brought objects that has personal meaning to them. This beginning exercise was a starting point to build students' skill of personal connection in judging or responding to art.

Mid-semester, students expressed they were drawn to artworks from history by how they personally connected to them. For instance, Student 27 revealed, "What

attracted me to this work is that I could connect to the hunter and the excitement that the hunter feels.” Student 16 stated, “I also like this painting because it expresses the unity between everyone in the community and seeing that within this painting makes me think of my community in my hometown.” Student 26 expressed, “While looking at this painting, I put myself in the art wondering what I could be talking about with a friend or dad, grandpa, etc.” These comments also speak to students past experiences and how they are connecting those experiences to the artwork. Dewey (1934) discusses past experiences and aesthetic perception, stating, “For in order to perceive esthetically, he must remake his past experiences so that they can enter integrally into a new pattern. He cannot dismiss his past experiences” (p. 8).

By the end of the semester, students expressed not only that they were drawn to art by how they personally connected to it but developed an awareness that these connections contributed to their valuing of the art. For example, Student 9 revealed, “I value art by if I relate to it or not. If I do not relate to it, then it holds little value to me.” Student 17 stated, “I know if I can relate to a piece of art that is of something I treasure such as nature, sports, or agriculture, I really value the piece because I cherish those things.” Student 20 stated:

I value a lot of different things and it’s just that valuing art isn’t much different...I value family...personal bonds and things. Things you get a feeling for and art can make you have those same feelings of emotion and bonding feelings sometimes.

Again, these comments demonstrate the role of students’ past experiences in what they are drawn to in art but more abstractly than earlier in the semester. Eisner (1997) posits, “What we make of a situation that we encounter depends in large measure not only on the

objective characteristics of the situation but on what we bring to the situation” (p. 68). From viewing art throughout the course, students were noticing that they connected to certain works more than others. By reflecting on what it was that drew them to certain works, they were able ascertain they valued art if they related to it. This conclusion provides one answer to the research sub-question of how students perceived changes in ways they valued art.

We are often drawn to art by how it connects with our own beliefs, values, and experiences, but art can also expand our awareness and understanding of the world. These findings reveal that the students’ interests and experiences played a major role in how they perceived, appreciated, and ultimately valued art. Students came to their valuing, despite how society or history values art or even what artists are expressing in art. I observed students becoming very engaged in the class when they talked about the objects they brought to class that “spoke” to them. Students also appeared more interested in hearing the stories of how the object spoke to their classmates than they appeared to be when listening to a lecture of art from history. Although this assignment didn’t have anything to do with visual fine art per se, I feel it became a significant starting point for many in thinking about what they value. Students felt they had autonomy in what they brought as well as most all of the art production and art criticism assignments. This agency contributed to their thinking about and becoming aware of what it was they really valued and not just relying on what others told them should be valued, which ultimately transferred to their developing their own system to value art.

Many theorists write about viewers’ connections to art. Dewey (1934) contends that until a work of art is experienced by a viewer, it is not yet complete. The students’

responses correspond to Dewey's (1934) position that experience is a key factor in "how the work of art develops and accentuates what is characteristically valuable in things of everyday enjoyment" (p. 10). Barone (2012) stresses, "Aesthetic vision is always from a specific point of view, filtered by a specific consciousness. It is personal and situational. It includes emotion, imagination, and paradox. It embraces complexity" (p. 29). Students' awareness of personally connecting with art from parts of their lives resulted in broadening their perceptions of art—seeing through their own eyes.

Student Appreciation and Admiration for Artists

Students were also drawn to art for their appreciation or admiration of artists with great talent, superb artistic skills, or the ability to express something well visually. For example, Student 11 commented, "The skill, patience, and hard work they put into these pieces is honestly insane...I commend those who can do it well." Student 16 wrote, "The artist was able to capture every little detail of this beautiful place the artist created and how he was able to create movement of the sails and the water on the lake." Student 22 revealed:

Artists don't create art out of thin air like a god. Art is produced by a human and a tool working in tandem to produce something meaningful (an artist and his brush, a musician and his guitar, or a sculptor and his clay).

Student 17 stated:

Many artists are trying to portray a message, and that has influenced both on my creative process and how I value art. It has opened my eyes to that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and if you look at art through their shoes, you can find value in almost every piece of art.

Students' comments about particular artists go beyond merely technical skills to something that drew them deeper into the work.

This finding is relevant because students' recognition and admiration of the artists' skills such as using formal qualities of art or expressing a meaning demonstrate their growth in understanding how different parts work together to make a unified whole. This finding in part answers the overarching research question of how students make meaning and ascribe value to art. Although students may not have the same ability as the artists they admire, they do have the ability to recognize that an artist is more than someone who just possesses technical ability.

Students' admiration of artists points to Eisner's (1997) view that some artists have the ability to draw us into a work—provide deep insight to conditions of our world so we can see and connect to them more clearly. Dewey (1934) contends that “skill is then admired not as part of the external equipment of the artist, but as an enhanced expression belonging to the object. For it facilitates the carrying on a continuous process to its own process and definite conclusion” (p. 145). This finding also corresponds to the earlier finding mentioned that students did not feel they were good at creating art but they did acknowledge that artistic skills are something to be recognized and admired or, in other words, appreciated. We, as humans, admire others who can do things we feel we do not have the skills or abilities to do ourselves.

Student Connection to Meaning in Art

Finally, students expressed they were drawn to art by how they found meaning in the art. Early in the semester, students' comments were fairly vague in how they found meaning in artwork. For instance, Student 23 expressed, “In today's world, most artwork

is valued by skill or meaning.” Student 28 stated, “I like this piece because it has a couple of messages in it.” Student 11 revealed, “it can mean so many different things, it just depends on the viewer what they get out of the piece.” These vague statements suggest that although students were aware that art can be valued for its meaning, they didn’t have skills or the experience themselves to deeply interpret art for its possible meaning.

By mid-semester, students' connection to meaning making in art was more apparent as students made associations with what the work meant and reasoned out their interpretation of the artwork they were viewing or critiquing. For example, Student 9 wrote, “I think he is trying to show that a person does not have to have money to be happy.” Student 13 said, “This means, to me, that the river moving represents the fact that life continues on, even after death; and the blooming of flowers and trees represent the beginning of a new season in our lives.” Student 10 commented:

I interpret the painting as an example of loneliness and quietness, based on the background of the painting and the atmosphere of the diner. However, I also can’t help but wonder what is going on with the people in the diner. To me, the couple and the worker do not strike me as being sad or anything. I imagine the couple stopping by after a nice night out, and the worker is just there to work his shift. That being said, I am curious as to what is going on inside the head of the man sitting by himself. For some reason, he doesn’t seem like he is there for the same reason as the others. He seems like he has a lot going on and is there to clear his head.

The student interpretations are quite profound and show growth in analyzing artwork. Not only were they indicating they were drawn to the work, but they are essentially

projecting themselves in the artworks. Dirx et al. (2006) contend the messages in art we gravitate to are “our inner world refracted through the lens of image and metaphor and story” (p. 127). Corresponding with Ghanbari’s (2015) and Guyotte et al’s. (2015) studies, the students in this study appreciated finding their own meanings in artworks. Students were not only using cognitive skills of analyzing the work to make judgments about the meaning, they were also using their imagination to create a story in their mind.

By the end of semester, many students indicated that understanding or finding the meaning in art was a reason they were drawn to it and valued it. For instance, Student 22 expressed, “I’ve never been around art or anything, but now, I kind of value art just the message it portrays.” Student 20 stated, “So, it’s just kind of knowing there’s a deeper meaning to most art pieces now, just based on the minute details, has kind of been impressive to me now.” Student 16 revealed, “When I first started the class, I wasn’t really interested in it, but as class went on, I started to understand it. And I realized that there is a deeper meaning to art than just judging the book by its cover.” These student statements show that they realized they gained a new skill from visual analysis that they didn’t have before the semester. This skill enhanced students’ meaning-making abilities with artwork.

Students’ newly developed meaning making abilities seemed to carry over into their art making skills as well. They incorporated frequent use of symbols and symbolic meaning. For example, Student 26 explained the meaning in his final art production (Figure 8). He stated:

I always say that us humans, including myself, that our heads and noses are always in a TV or phone, so I came up with a TV/phone head person. It says that,

us humans, that's where we spend most of our time in our entire lives: getting info and searching the web, social media, and news. I call it TV Head.

This student's artwork shows that he used formalistic elements in his work, but he was also successful in inserting his meaning. His explanation added to our understanding, but the general meaning was obvious. Student 18 also explained the meaning in her final artwork (Figure 9):

I imagine the roots are from all the past artists I have learned from, and the history of art that I have looked at this semester, and the ways I have seen art change through history. The light bulb to me represents my mind and how I think about art and my skill set. The idea for the middle of the light bulb I struggled with. I didn't know what would represent what I was trying to express in the best way. I decided on a butterfly because I think they are beautiful just like I find art. I also see a butterfly's wings as also expanding my knowledge and skills of art. The diamonds I drew around the butterfly kind of represent the light art brings into my life.

This student' artwork shows her skill of using art techniques such as gradated shading to create depth and show the implied roundness of the light bulb (she had previous art experiences before this course). However, she was very successful in portraying a message in her work. Even if we didn't have a written description of her message, we would still be able to ascertain meaning from this work because it is unusual, it is surreal, and it forces us to try to decipher its meaning. Student 22 expressed in his final art project (Figure 10):

What I'm try to represent is the kind of feeling associated with art. Here it's more of the feeling associated with creating art...it's kind of a reference to creating music as well but it's just the feeling. That's why I used warm colors and just kind of the heart and everything, just to kind of represent that art is like an expression of feeling and emotion and that I value it in that way. ...there's a dandelion and the petals are blowing off, and they're like in the shape of music notes.

This student was also successful in forcing the viewer to try to understand his meaning through juxtaposition. He incorporated symbols with the heart in the chest and the notes and flowers moving across the picture. He also incorporated expressive colors to create a mood. Although he did not have significant visual art training before this class, he was just as successful in creating a significant and meaningful work of art as someone who has many years of artistic training.

These students have shown in their artworks that they have put a lot of thought as to what they wanted to say and then had to figure out how to express that visually. This requires multiple levels of thinking. Eisner (1997) stresses this thinking incorporates:

...the realization of the cognitive perceptual complexity inherent in both the perception and creation of art. Learning to perceive what is subtle, learning to overcome visual constancies, learning to construct mental images of visual possibilities and learning to construct mental images of visual possibilities and learning to construct such images in another material is not simple tasks. (p. 1060)

These student artists considered all the components of what makes art meaningful.

Dewey (1934) contends, "Before an artist can develop his reconstruction of the scene

before him in terms of the relations of colors and lines characteristic of his picture, he observes the scene with meanings and values brought to his perception by prior experiences” (p. 93). Not only have the students applied competent art techniques in their work, they also incorporated formal qualities of art elements and principles that they experienced in various ways throughout the semester to create harmonious compositions. In addition, they used visual metaphor to convey the visual meaning in their works.



Fig. 8: Student 26
Final Art Production



Fig. 9: Student 18
Final Art Production



Fig. 10: Student 22
Final Art Production

In conclusion, how the students related to and valued art was enhanced by how they found or made meaning in their interpretation of the artwork, even if they didn't necessarily find it to be aesthetically pleasing. Although meaning may not be blatantly apparent in some artwork, students were consciously searching for the meaning from the various symbolic associations they made. By the end of class, students enjoyed participating in reading a work of art, demonstrating a change from early in the semester when they commented that there was meaning in artwork, especially landmark artworks, but they didn't give indication that they knew what the meaning was or what they

interpreted the meaning to be. Over the semester, students showed they were increasingly deciphering meaning in works, even when the meaning wasn't apparent. They were using critical thinking skills, looking for symbols in works, and then using symbols in their own artworks to express meaning. This action not only speaks to the overarching research question of how students make meaning and ascribe value to art but also the sub-question, how students perceive the changes in how they value art's practical use or function.

Many theorists point to the importance of meaning in a work. For example, Bruner (1962) emphasizes that, "Metaphor joins dissimilar experiences by finding the image or the symbol that unites them at some deeper, emotional level of meaning" (p. 63). Eisner (1997) comments, "The impact and import of an image is the sense of feeling that it generates in those who encounter it" (p. 73). Langer (1942) posits, "Meaning has both a logical and a psychological aspect. Psychologically, any item that is to have meaning must be employed as a sign or a symbol; that is to say, it must be a sign or symbol to someone" (p. 53). This finding shows that students connected to the meaning in artwork and recognized the role that symbols and visual metaphor contributed to in artwork. The data reveals that students were looking for or making symbols in order to find a meaning in art or to show a meaning in their own artwork.

To conclude theme 2, students were drawn to art through various ways they connected to it, such as beauty, formal aspects of art, appreciation for artists, connection to their personal experiences, and the meaning they found in art through analysis and interpretations. Students came to realize what they were drawn to in art from participating in the course activities and creating their own art. All of these experiences contributed to

changing how students made meaning and ascribed value to art, corresponding to the overarching research question and also the research sub-questions of how students perceive changes in the way they value art and changes in how they value art's practical use or function.

Theme 3: Benefits from Doing, Analyzing, or Viewing Art

Students expressed that they gained benefits to themselves, others, and society from a variety of art experiences. I separate this theme into subthemes. Subtheme one involves the students' art-based learning and understanding as a result of them viewing, analyzing, and interpreting art from history; engaging in class discussions; and participating in art production projects. Subtheme two is related to the socio-emotional benefits students expressed they received from participating in the course. Subtheme three addresses the communicating and connecting benefits that occurred from students viewing art and creating art as a form of expression. Finally, the societal benefits subtheme indicates students' views of how art benefits society.

Learning and Understanding Benefits

Students felt they benefited in their learning and understanding from creating art, from class experiences with art's history, and from viewing art in person.

Learning and Understanding from Creating Art. In the early-semester phase, students expressed their learning and understanding increased from doing the art production assignments, especially those students with little to no previous experiences in art. These assignments included art technique worksheets aimed to give students an opportunity to learn and/or practice art skills such as drawing, shading, perspective, and color theory. Another art production assignment was an individual/group art proportion

project where students together created replications of well-known ancient frescos, the Minoan “Toreador Fresco” in the MWF class and “Blue Monkey” fresco in the TR class.



Fig. 11: Photo by Erich Lessing of Minoan Toreador Fresco (n.d.)



Fig. 12: MWF Class, Art Proportion Production Project-Reproduction of Minoan Toreador Fresco



Fig. 13: Photo by Paul Williams (2012) of Minoan Blue Monkey

Fig. 14: TR Art Proportion Project- Reproduction of Minoan Blue Monkey Fresco

Each student individually drew and colored an enlarged, replicated thumbnail section of it. Students attributed their increased understanding to doing the assignments as well as being challenged. For instance, Student 7 expressed, “I think they [art technique worksheets] were very helpful in helping me understand the techniques of art.” Student 12 stated, “It [art proportion project] gives us a challenge, and we have to use line and visual points to know where to draw so it all lines up.” Student 21 stated, “It [art technique worksheets] let me understand different methods of drawing, which some I didn’t know were a thing,” Student 18 expressed, “I feel like enlarging the thumbnail challenged my ability to learn how to scale an image to make it larger or smaller.” These comments suggest the act of doing contributed to students’ new learning. Another revealing experience was that although many had expressed anxiety and intimidation in doing artwork, it didn’t appear to be an issue with these projects. I attribute this comfort to starting these production projects by first having students learn and practice basic art techniques such as contour drawing, hatching, cross-hatching, stippling, simple linear perspective, grid drawing, and color theory, which many hadn’t ever learned before. Everyone was starting with the same basic knowledge of these techniques, regardless of previous art experiences.

At mid-semester, students indicated they increased their learning and understanding of the elements and principles of art by being challenged to create an original puzzle piece that focused on one element and one principle of art; all the pieces were to be put together (Figures 1 & 2). For example, Student 1 reflected:

This art project was an exciting piece to make because of the freedom that came with it. This was the first art project we have done that I felt confident in my ability to create art in whatever format was necessary. The project helped me understand that different lines have different expressive qualities.

This comment not only indicates a shift in the student's confidence to create art in any form but also shows specified learning related to art elements and their affordances in meaning making. Student 27 commented, "When I was working on it, that's what really taught me to draw it a little more and better...I was just trying to have a pattern so where I could draw it...but then it started turning into me actually trying." These comments indicate that students' understanding was enhanced by applying the formal art concepts that were discussed in class, such as expressive qualities of elements and drawing techniques. This activity connects to Eisner's (2002) assertion that learning becomes more meaningful when it can be applied to activities.

By the end of the semester, student responses were more focused on what they perceived they learned or understood, especially when asked to reflect upon creating artworks over the semester in the final questionnaire and focus group interviews. For instance, Student 7 stated, "I've grown more into drawing and painting...you know, getting more into art. I've gone deeper, have a deeper understanding, a deeper connection to it." This comment shows that the student feels she has grown from a surface level of understanding to meaningful understanding of art. Student 1 revealed:

I was nervous at first...afraid to be judged about our abilities to create art, but I kind of feel it was necessary to really understand the steps that we were going

through. I think that it really helped me visualize what was going on in our lessons.

Again, this comment demonstrates another example that applied learning facilitates understanding. Student 28 also talked about the usefulness of opportunities for application:

I've taken an Art Appreciation class before, and we didn't do any kind of artwork or anything in it. I think that if you're going to understand art, then you should probably try to do it a couple of times...it still taught you about it, so it wasn't just something to mess around with it—it goes along with what you were trying to teach.

The student's statement that creating art "wasn't just something to mess around with" hints at her former perception that art was perhaps only for fun or play, but in this situation, she justified the usefulness of art production because it connected to what was being taught. This viewpoint coincides with Eisner's (2009) view that the arts are not taken as seriously for offering student learning as other disciplines. Student 22 noted the role of art production for synthesizing new learning:

It gave me lessons and experiences I've never had before. Not only did it make me a better artist, but it made me more knowledgeable on the subject of art...the final artwork piece really gave me an opportunity to utilize everything I learned throughout the semester.

Eisner (1997) states, development of art skills, "requires concerted effort or instruction" (p. 124). I feel that students doing these small and simple art productions increased engagement and enhanced their appreciation more than it would have without doing the

art production projects, but what is more relevant is that the *students* felt that the art production assignments enabled them to deepen and apply their art knowledge in necessary ways

This finding of students increased learning and understanding from being challenged in art production assignments is significant because it reveals that experiences outside of one's usual day to day experiences tends to stick. This direct learning of new skills such as art techniques or creating artwork was not only challenging, it was also a cognitive process that involved critical thinking and problem solving. This insight helps to answer the question of how students perceive changes in the ways they value art's practical use or function. Students were not only challenged in performing artistic technical skills to create an artwork in which they had little experience but they were also challenged to form an idea of what to create. Experiencing disequilibrium is essential to learning. Creating is, in fact, the highest level of learning according to Bloom's taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002).

The cognitive process of creating art is something that Eisner (1997) refers to as "qualitative intelligence," which first involves deliberately contemplating an idea from one's viewpoint, insight, or imagination and then metamorphosing that into a visual form. He states, "In this situation, he [the student] is coping with thousands of interactions among the visual qualities that emerge through his use of material and those he conceives as his artistic purpose" (Eisner, 1997, p. 113). This activity is even more challenging for students who may have an idea but lack the artistic technical skills to convey the idea in a visual form. Eisner (1997) also points out that even drawing a simple shape requires the capacity to develop a form that transmits what the individual intends in a medium other

than perception or imagination. The drawing of even the simplest shape requires and ability to invent in a material other than perception or imagination a form that conveys what the individual intends” (Eisner, 1997, p. 97). Cobb (1977) stresses that sensory experience is where knowledge begins. Jean Piaget, the renowned child psychologist, stressed that being challenged and experiencing disequilibrium is a key component to cognitive development (Flavell, 2020). Although students expressed tension from the challenge of coming up with ideas and then applying them in visual form, that challenge was essential for learning and developing new skills.

Learning and Understanding from Art History. In addition to art production activities, students also noted that their learning and understanding increased from studying the different cultures associated with historical artworks covered in the course. Throughout the semester, students analyzed, interpreted, and responded to art from history, which including viewing and discussing visual art works in class, submitting an art criticism paper, responding to quizzes or exams, and participating in class discussions about how past cultures valued their art. Students commented on how their learning and understanding increased from these experiences. For instance, Student 15 stated:

Experiencing how people valued art in the past has influenced the way I see art now. Now when I go to a museum, I will have a more solid understanding of what I am looking at and be able to value it more.

From this statement, I surmise that this student’s understanding of how culture affected the way historical art was valued when it was created will inform how she values

historical art viewed in a contemporary museum; she apparently lacked this insight before taking the course. Student 8 commented:

Discussing, interpreting, and judging gave me a new perspective on how to look at art and how others value art. It allowed me to look at the bigger picture and imagine what the artist was trying to say about their work.

Student 8 now looks for messages in artwork that he may not have noticed before, an ability he says developed from interpreting and judging artworks. Student 16 expressed:

I didn't know art had history... it helped me out a lot understanding the value of it, the interpretation of it, the approach they took, like the material they used or the styles that were popular. And that the time period, they're all different and they were all unique in their own way.

This statement is revealing about how little knowledge this student had before taking the course. Student 28 stated, "I think that viewing and interpreting art from the past has shown me that as time passes, so do the trends of what is valued in art. I thought it was highly interesting to see what cultures value in their art."

These findings reveal that students found viewing, studying, analyzing and interpreting historical art and the people who produced it valuable in their understanding of art of the past and present. Because they had limited previous knowledge of art history, their new learning shifted their perspectives of art and improved their ability to value both historic and contemporary art. This historical knowledge provided students with context to understand the reasons why the artwork was created and how it was valued at the time. It also facilitated students' thinking about contemporary art and how it is or

should be valued—what it means to our society and how it contributes to current culture. In order for students to fully appreciate art from history, they should have an understanding of the human experiences that sparked the making of the art. Eisner (1997) stresses, “This background of visual experience with works of art makes it possible to note the ways in which the particular work deviates from those seen before” (p. 111). Acquiring knowledge about our artistic lineage and the multiple forces that contributed to how that art was valued provides a foundation in which to interpret how that same art as well as contemporary art is valued today.

Socio-Emotional Benefits

Students received socio-emotional benefits such as finding interest, being engaged, feeling enjoyment, and increasing confidence as well as gaining positive and peaceful emotional feelings from creating, analyzing, and viewing art.

Student Interest and Engagement. Students expressed their interest in art and engagement in the class from sharing their own viewpoints, doing hands-on activities, and responding to their fellow classmates. At the beginning of the semester, students expressed a tepid and almost placating interest in art, as demonstrated in this comment: “I do not personally have a huge value for art, but I do think it’s interesting” (Student 10). As the class progressed, however, students indicated they were becoming engaged because of the hands-on art production assignments. For example, Student 11 stated, “I think it is very beneficial to have worksheets and activities in class. It is more hands-on and keeps me more focused.” Student 21 stated, “Doing things like this [art proportion project] makes class more interesting. It makes the class fun and teaches us new techniques in art. It even lets us have a chance to do something new.” Student 3

expressed, “I think it [art proportion project] keeps everyone involved. I find it very interesting and would like to do projects similar to this.” And Student 26 stated, “I like all the stuff we do that’s hands on. It keeps the class interesting.” Students saying things like “it’s fun” and “it’s not just lecture” suggest to me that often they don’t find classes fun and so they are not actively engaged in their learning. Having fun and incorporating play is something we all strive to do our lives. Students expressing that the activities make things interesting is important because interest sparks our curiosity and facilitates focus. Dewey (1939) discusses the importance of interest in learning. In fact, he describes it as starting point to valuing stating:

Whenever a person has an interest in something, he has a stake in the course of events and in their final issue—a stake which leads him to take action to bring into existence a particular result rather than some other one. (p. 17)

At the end of the semester, students reflected on their experiences and expressed their views about the things that helped them stay engaged, focused, and motivated in the class. For example, Student 6 stated, “I thought it was interesting. I wasn’t expecting really to do art in the Art Appreciation class, but I really enjoyed it. It really made you get involved.” Student 13 said, “I enjoyed being able to do a product and not just discuss things. It makes more of an impact in my mind that I can remember something because I physically did a project.” Student 30 stated, “the stuff that we’re doing for the pieces helps you learn stuff that we’re talking about in the lecture.” All of these examples reveal that students felt the hands-on experiences increased their engagement in the course.

Beyond doing art activities, students also expressed their engagement increased from discussing their opinion about art with each other. For example, Student 23

commented, “I feel like getting everybody’s opinion on how they value art and different things like...I feel like it makes the class not boring you know to actually get to talk to one another about art.” Students’ active engagement is what Dewey (1916) refers to as direct learning, and the comments show that this type of learning is something students felt was worth their time and effort.

This finding reveals that interest and the act of doing played significant roles in student engagement. From class assignments, students were pushed to be engaged with the class and with each other. Expressing their interests and learning about other students sparked their interest in what others were interested in as well. Participating in art productions, group projects, or class discussions gave students exposure to each other as well. Engaging in activities gave students a bigger stake in the class than just listening to lectures and taking exams. Students had a role in group projects that gave them accountability to each other. It is logical that the more students are engaged with the class and with art, the higher likelihood their valuing of art would increase as well as their perceptions of art’s practical use and function.

Dewey (1934) also points to the benefits of hands-on experiencing extensively.

He states:

As we manipulate, we touch and feel, as we look, we see; as we listen, we hear. The hand moves with etching needle or with brush. The eye attends and reports the consequence of what is done. Because of this intimate connection, subsequent doing is cumulative and not a matter of caprice nor yet of routine. In an emphatic artistic-esthetic experience, the relation is so close that it controls simultaneously

both the doing and the perception. Such vital intimacy of connection cannot be had if only hand and eye are engaged. (p. 50)

Students participating in hands on activities of creating art allowed them to have an experience as that of a craftsman, an artist, that evoked a sense of wonder and play rather than work. They became creators of their own world.

Student Enjoyment. Students overwhelmingly found enjoyment from viewing and analyzing artwork from history, from expressing their viewpoints in class, and especially from the art production assignments.

Early in the semester, students' expressed enjoyment from doing the art technique worksheets and art proportion production assignment, with most making statements such as this one: "I enjoyed it. It was challenging and fun at the same time to me" (Student 2). Student 23 agreed, "I think creating this art production was worthwhile because it was a fun activity." These comments indicate that although many students didn't have experience doing art and expressed they weren't good at it, they found the process enjoyable and worthwhile despite being challenging.

As the semester progressed, students revealed they were finding enjoyment from doing and viewing art. They expressed enjoyment doing the art production puzzle piece creation (Figures 1 & 2), making similar comments as they did early in the semester doing art production assignments: they liked doing it and they thought it was fun. Students also communicated enjoyment from looking at and analyzing art from history with comments of finding pleasure from the beauty or message of the work. Joy is

personal, so it shows that they are connecting to certain works on a deeper level than just finding it to be a good or beautiful work of art.

By the end of the semester, students continued to voice joy from doing art production assignments and from viewing and analyzing historical art. Students especially felt enjoyment from the Dada chance collage where students created a collage by cutting out images or shapes from a magazine, newspaper, construction paper, etc. and putting the shapes in a bag or container, then pouring them out and gluing the pieces on to a sheet of paper where they fell. For example, Student 6 stated:

Creating this project was surprisingly fun. I couldn't find any magazines or newspapers around the house, so I used construction paper and created unique square and rectangles with colors that I thought went well together...I definitely think it's really cool and I think that you could really play around with colors, shapes, and even textures. (Figure 15)

The student was using problem solving and creative thinking skills with finding materials and making their own shape but also expanded the other possibilities they could see.

Student 23 expressed: "My experience was pretty cool and chill. Definitely a fun time as it was relaxing...I enjoyed doing it. It was also fun to do something during a time like this [COVID-19 Pandemic] and I would do it again" (Figure 16). This student indicates that enjoyment is helpful during times of uncertainty and anxiety that he was experiencing. Student 28 stated, "I tried to incorporate something personal into the project, which was harder than I expected to do with magazine clippings. Overall, I had a really good time with this project and it has encouraged me to try more collage pieces" (Figure 17).

These statements suggest that although this project was extremely simple and didn't require a lot of deep thinking, students found it to be enjoyable activity. Because this experience was enjoyable, the feelings about the artwork produced was enhanced as well as their learning understanding about the Dada art movement. This connects to Dewey's (1934) statement, "The act of producing that is directed by intent to produce something that is enjoyed in the immediate experience of perceiving has qualities that a spontaneous or uncontrolled activity does not have" (p. 49). Students were also using their critical thinking skills, making adaptations and including ways to put themselves personally into their work, which took their minds off of the pandemic.



Fig. 15: Student 6
Dada Chance Collage



Fig. 16: Student 23
Dada Chance Collage



Fig. 17: Student 28
Dada Chance Collage

Students also revealed in the final reflection questionnaire and the focus group interviews that they found special enjoyment from the final art production assignment, creating a work of art that shows how they valued art. For example, Student 1 stated:

The final art project was very fun, and I liked the idea of coming up with my own artwork. I fully enjoyed the time I spent doing this art project because it gave me something creative to do for myself. (Figure 18)

Although this was an assignment required for the class, this student saw it as doing something for herself and enjoyed the process of creating, which indicates she wasn't worried about others' judgement of her work. She received satisfaction from doing the assignment that had nothing to do with her grade. Student 29 expressed "It was a lot of fun. "I'm not very good at painting, but I enjoyed this project so much. I might take up painting" (Figure 20). This comment shows a transformation in the student. Even though she doesn't think she is good at painting, it brought so much joy that it is worth continuing to do in the future. Dirks (2006) states, "Learning experiences that we find personally meaningful, however, may challenge at a deep and fundamental level our existing ways of thinking, believing, or feeling... We are left with the feeling that life will not be as it was before..." (p. 132). It would be interesting to know if she did continue to paint after the course.



Fig. 18: Student #1
Final Art Production



Fig. 19: Student 15
Final Art Production



Fig. 20: Student 29
Final Art Production

These findings of students discovering enjoyment from viewing, doing or discussing art is significant because enjoyment and pleasure are things one values. To

experience enjoyment is what we all seek in life. Finding enjoyment in viewing art speaks to art's ability to provoke feelings—a visual, pleasurable experience with art on a deep level. The ability to stimulate emotion is a purpose of art and speaks to the research sub-question related to students' perceptions of valuing a practical use of art. Students finding enjoyment from creating art speaks to experience and creating one's self.

Dewey (1934) stresses that a pleasurable experience contributes to an aesthetic experience. Jackson (1998) expands on this explaining that many times we are disappointed in the lack of pleasure we receive from experiences, however there are experiences that surprise us and exceed our expectations. Vygotsky (1971) states:

We can show not only by means of individual works of art but also by means of entire areas of artistic activity that in the end form transforms the material with which it operates, and the pleasure and enjoyment as pleasure given by art. (p. 63)

Finding enjoyment in art connects to the self. Berenson (1949) contends that when he truly enjoys a work of art, he—in some sense—becomes it. Students' enjoyment of doing, analyzing, and viewing art reveals they connected to art in a personally meaningful way.

Psychological Health. Students revealed benefits of receiving emotional feelings from special objects and looking at or creating art. Early in the semester, students brought to class and discussed an object that “spoke” to them. Most all students brought objects that they intrinsically valued and that evoked emotional feelings. These feelings align with Dewey's (1934) claims any object if it is used as anything beyond its function can be enjoyed intrinsically. The experience of bringing and discussing the objects in class

called forth powerful feelings full of psychological, and sentimental meaning and helped students understand what it means to intrinsically value something. In mid-semester, students reported emotional feelings from analyzing and critiquing art from history. For examples, Student 7 wrote, “It is calming for me to look at. There is a comfortable atmosphere about this painting.” Echoing this sentiment, Student 23 stated, “When you look at this artwork it seems real and for me it gives me a calm and joy feeling and the beauty of nature” Similarly, Student 16 revealed, “Everyone is so relaxed and enjoying the rest of their evening, whether it be on the water, taking an evening stroll, etc. I reminds me of how peaceful and relaxed I feel whenever I am outdoors enjoying nature.” Students using words such as calming, comfortable, relaxed, and peaceful suggest that just viewing artwork has the power to evoke emotional feelings—the kind of feelings that one seeks out in daily life.

By the end of semester, students continued to express positive, peaceful, or emotional feelings in their art productions, final reflection questionnaires, and focus group interviews. For instance, Student 22 stated:

Not only did I enjoy talking about my own creations and what they meant to me, but I also deeply enjoyed looking at what other people in the class made and getting to express to them the value I see. It was really cathartic and pleasant and I’m really happy I got to partake in it.

This student using the word cathartic reveals the power that art can have on one’s emotions. It can be a cleansing, healing experience. Student 23 had similar comments from participating in the three photograph art production assignment:

When I look at this image, it gives me a relaxing and peaceful feeling. Not many photos catch my attention to where I feel relaxed and peaceful. I believe that seeing photos like this leaves a certain effect on people's feelings and that is what effect I got from this photo. I felt a peace when I saw this and it also makes me feel comfortable. When I think of this photo, I think about relaxing and being free from everything in the world I could go and look at this image everyday just because I know that I would be at peace with myself and I would want to get that relaxed feeling. (Figure 21)

The student found peace, relaxation, and comfort from the photograph and mentioned those particular emotions several times, which indicates that these emotions are not only important but desired for him.

From the Dada Chance Collage art production, Student 13 expressed:

This piece of art was cathartic for me. I enjoyed cutting up the pieces and watching them flutter down to the paper like butterflies. These colors are bright and represent the happiness of the promise of spring. Being able to create helps me to center myself... This was a way for me to have a creative outlet. (Figure 22)

As indicated before, students using words such as cathartic suggest a needed release from stress. Vygotsky (1971) expresses, "the action of art, when it performs catharsis and pushes into this purifying flame the most intimate and important experiences, emotions, and feelings of the soul, is a social action" (p. 249). Students using words such as peaceful and relaxed indicate feelings that are synonymous with the spiritual that elevates one to a higher plane of existence.

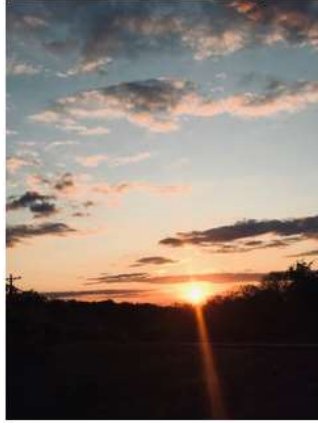


Fig. 21: Student 23
Photograph



Fig. 22: Student 13
Dada Chance Collage

In the final focus group interviews, student expressed how creating art contributed to their well-being. For instance, student 25 expressed:

It's [creating art] turned out to be quite the stress reliever in certain cases. I used to write in a journal a lot because that was one of the ways that I could safely like relax and not like, I don't know, freak out on anybody, I guess. And painting is just a much more creative way to relieve stress.

Here is an example that creating art, not just viewing, has benefits in relieving stress. Student 18 expressed, "Drawing a piece of art lets me get out what ever emotion I am feeling at that moment and relaxes my mind." Student 22 stated, "Yeah, well really just the process of doing it [creating art] I think was pretty relaxing, almost meditative, just getting in the zone and just doing it." All of these statements reveal how creating art can have significant therapeutic benefits.

This finding of students expressing therapeutic benefits is important because it shows that art can offer people a benefit to their emotional health. This can occur from viewing art but most especially from creating art. Viewing art and especially creating art

can stimulate feelings in some way, either from connecting with past experiences, positive feelings of the sensations felt in a present experience, or projecting possible future or hopeful experience. The act of creating allows one to find pleasure through exploration, experimentation, and then completion of a product that is unique and personal. These findings correspond to the research question of making meaning and ascribing value to art, the sub-question related the practical use and function and art and the sub-question related to art's benefits to individuals and society. When one creates, they are engrossed in the action of their inner world, free of others' opinions, where their problems can take a back burner for a while.

Many theorists elucidate their views about how art and creating art contributes to emotional benefits and in developing wholeness. Langer (1942) expresses that the dynamic shape, the rhythms, the ups and downs, of our direct physical and emotional lives is compatible with artistic form because we can identify with it on a personal level. Cobb (1977) stresses creativity contributes to the creation of the self and contributes to overall psychological health by decreasing a myriad of anxieties. The psychoanalysis D.W. Winnicott (1986) theorized all individuals have an inner world—a world known only to the individual, and an outer world—the world associated with reality of the world. Between the inner and outer world, there is a “potential space”—a space of “cultural experience” (Winnicott, 1986, p. 35). John Dirkx, a theorist in transformative learning, also discusses one's inner and outer world, arguing that one's interaction between the two contributes to how one sees their connection to a larger whole (Dirkx et al., 2006). I posit that looking at or creating art facilitates a “potential space” by providing a holistic experience that adds to one's sense of well-being.

Increased Confidence. Students benefited from increased confidence from doing something they hadn't done before and feeling it's okay not to be perfect in creating art or expressing their views about art. Although there were few of these types of responses early in the semester, there were a few students who indicated hopefulness of increased confidence from doing art productions. For example, Student 23 responded, "Re-creating the thumbnail made me skip outside my comfort zone and see how good I would do," and Student 16 stated, "I feel like these projects [art production projects] can improve art skills and boost people's confidence." These early comments show that students were willing to try new things. By the end of semester, there were a striking number of student responses revealing increased confidence or feelings of it's okay not to be perfect in their final reflection questionnaire and the final focus group interviews. For instance, Student 9 stated:

I was afraid I was going to come up with, you know, something that was really ugly and then get a bad grade on it, so I was nervous about that. But once you let me know that that wasn't the case, then I feel like the nerves went down. I felt a little bit more confident in my ability. I also liked responding to other classmates, it helped me be more confident in myself.

This comment reveals that she lacked confidence in her skills but also that having discussions with fellow classmates contributed to her feeling not alone in her fears, which increased her confidence. Student 16 expressed:

I think you being very accepting of everyone's art is good because it builds everyone's confidence...I like how you incorporated that in class. And definitely

a high point for me was the Dada. The second experience that helped me value art was the puzzle piece design assignment. I was able to develop more confidence with my artwork with this assignment.

Students' statements indicate feeling their art would be accepted and valid helped ease anxiety but they also indicate they felt art was good if it met some perceived standard and if they felt they couldn't meet that standard, then they were reluctant to do it. Student 3 stated:

I finally got the drawing down and it was not exactly how I envisioned it, but I remember that art doesn't have to be perfect to be valued. I can still say that I'm not very artistic, but I really don't think I would change a thing. Something I have learned is art doesn't have to be perfect, it's something we create with our minds and our hands.

This comment reveals that even though the work didn't turn out how she wanted it to, she was okay and allowed herself not to be perfect. She also realized that perfection is subjective in art. Student 26 revealed:

It's not the best work but I can say I did my best and really tried. This piece, the way it turned out boosted my confidence. It honestly went above and beyond my expectations. Drawing it was challenging, but after a few mistakes and tweaking, it came together.

This comment shows that being challenged, going through obstacles but following through to the end increased his confidence.

This finding reveals that many students lacked confidence and felt that they had to be perfect but participating in the course—viewing, analyzing, interpreting, and creating

art over the semester—they were able to step out of their comfort zone and take chances, which in turn increased confidence. I relate students’ feelings of needing to be perfect to the testing culture in education where there is only one right answer. I feel students are so fearful of making mistakes or showing their vulnerability that they opt out of doing things they may really want to do. Our social-media generation of filters and editing of images in order present visual perfection plays into this sense of needing to be perfect.

Participating, creating, analyzing, and viewing art expanded students’ perspectives of what art is; there is no right or wrong—it doesn’t have to be aesthetically pleasing to be art. Unlike artists of the ancient past, artists today are free to follow their own standards. Encouraging students to form opinions about art throughout the semester contributed to their self-confidence, not only in expressing their opinions but also in believing their opinions, verbal or visual, were valid.

Dewey (1934) reveals, “Perfection in execution cannot be measured or defined in terms of execution; it implies those who perceive and enjoy the product that is executed” (p. 27). Students branched out of their comfort zone of observation to active, creative participation, something Winnicott (1986) views as “creative living”—where separate from talent, one feels the power to create their own world. From early in the semester, students expressed their fear in of creating art because they felt they didn’t have the ability. Viewing all types of art through the semester as well as being pushed to do face their fears not only increased confidence, it also brought to light that perfection is not necessary.

Communicating and Connecting Benefits

Students benefitted from developing their visual communication and connection skills by interpreting art from history or other classmates' work for the story, message, or meaning. Communication and connections skills were also enhanced by creating art to express themselves through a visual story, message or meaning and by connecting with other classmates through collaboration in creating group artworks and from group discussions.

Expressing Oneself. Students recognized the power art has for visually expressing oneself. Early in the semester, students recognized that art was a way to visually communicate their ideas and feelings. For example, Student 8 commented, "We tell stories through art; express our feelings and show who we truly are... I think art is a unique way of expressing how we feel or what we value in life." Seeing art as a form of expression was echoed by Student 16 who stated, "I believe art is a good way for people to express themselves in unique ways. I also believe that art has impacted the human race in a tremendous way that we discovered a new way to communicate." This student recognizes that visual communication has always been a powerful form of communication. Student 12 discussed we are similar to the Greeks: "We have phones and all kinds of technology now but we are similar in the way that we still use art to express ourselves and the things that mean the most to us." These early comments evidence that students were familiar with the concept that art can communicate one's thoughts, feelings, or views in a visual way. However, in order for the communication to be successful, the viewer must be able to read the visual messages portrayed.

As the semester progressed, I observed students working to read the images in a work of art we viewed in class to decipher what the artist was trying to express. They

seemed to enjoy practicing visual literacy. Students recognized how art can be used as a form of expression and how they expressed themselves in their artwork. For example, Student 13 said, “It may not be, you know a verbal thing, so you may want to see something and then a piece of art can tell you if something is angry or happy or good or bad.” Student 7 revealed, “Expressing my viewpoint in a creative way might help get my viewpoint across. Sometimes it’s easier to speak through drawing or painting than with words.” Student 20 reflected on the unique communicative affordance of art. He stated:

I also like to think of art as a way of expression that words can sometimes not do. I think creating something to show my viewpoint was actually really good. ...to be able to show people things that you want to show them that you can’t necessarily put into words through something like art.

This finding reveals that students were able to recognize the communicative power of art has and also that art is a valid means in which to express oneself that words may not be able to do as immediately or as effectively. Learning to read or communicate through art opened students up to another way of understanding the world in which they live. Visual images are as important for communication as the verbal or textual. By learning and practicing reading visual images, students were developing visual literacy skills that are beneficial in a society that uses persuasive visual images. Being able to express yourself in any form is important as well as satisfying.

Eisner (2009) sought to reconceptualize literacy, stressing that literacy goes beyond language and can encompass many forms; literacy allows one to create meaning from representation. Barone (2012) also discusses visual literacy:

Many in the academic community, not having been taught to read aesthetic forms, reject them as representations of knowledge. If, however we are to become literate in a wider range of the forms in which knowledge may be encoded, we must give attention to these forms. (p. 39)

Students using art as a means to express themselves corresponds with Dewey's (1934) view that expressive objects have the power to communicate. Eisner (1997) emphasizes art brings the personal out into the open allowing one to share cultural experiences. Also, seeing differing cultural experiences such as art in a unique way exercises human potential and is a means of learning and expressing human values. By learning about art through history and what was being communicated, students' added knowledge and exercised their visual literacy skills, something they indicated they had little to no experience with before. This new understanding added to their valuing of art.

Connecting Through Collaboration. Students perceived benefits from working in a collaborative group environment and finding connections with their classmates. Early in the semester, students gave positive comments about working on a group art proportion production project where each student drew and colored a section of a replica of a Minoan fresco and then all sections were put together. For example, Student 16 stated, "I really enjoyed doing this assignment with everyone!" Echoing that sentiment, Student 14, revealed, "It's crazy how one piece of something could become bigger with other pieces brought together to make an altogether beautiful piece." Similarly, Student 28 commented, "I thought it was cool to see how different people interpreted the things we were supposed to draw or put a collage together. Everybody's got a different technique for stuff like that, so I thought it was pretty cool." Although students didn't

elaborate, it is apparent from their comments that working on a project together was an enjoyable activity but their comments also indicate there was an element of surprise when all their sections came together it looked good. They saw that together they could make something that would be difficult for them to complete individually. The collaboration was intended to continue for this process through the semester but unfortunately, all group projects had to be altered due to the class being forced to go virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the final reflection questionnaire and the focus group interviews, students really opened up about their feelings about the positive communal relationship they experienced in the class. For instance, Student 3 expressed, “The high point was being in class and being more involved. It helped me expand my knowledge of art and how it is valued and also expand my creative process.” Student 16 stated, “I’m glad that it was very active as far as within the class, like everyone participated, and I really like that. And I think that’s what really made me like this class.” This comment shows that being “active” had a positive effect. Student 23 responded, “Getting everybody’s opinion on how they value art and different things like that, I think was pretty cool...to actually get to talk to one another about art. Some things that some people might not know could actually help them out.” This comment reveals that students do gain knowledge and understanding just from talking to each other. Students expressing that working with each other was a “high point” or that it was as the thing that made them like the class as well as it was way to help each other shows that students benefit from feeling part of a community. Although the collaborative group projects were altered due to the COVID-19 pandemic, students still connected with each other through the class Zoom meeting. It is apparent that these

connections were very important to them, not only by increasing their enjoyment in the course but also helped with their understanding. This correlates with students' positive reactions to collaboration projects presented in Ghanbari's (2015) and Guyotte et al's (2015) studies from the literature review. Although these studies were interdisciplinary in nature, the findings revealed that the students' understanding and retention of the material increased as well as enjoyment from collaborating with each other.

This finding reveals that students benefitted from participating in collaborative group projects and discussing content with each other. It also suggests that students do not always feel part of a group in courses they are enrolled in. Often times college classes have lecture, with little discussion, so students feel somewhat isolated from their fellow classmates. Having group discussions allowed them to voice their opinions as well as made them accountable to each other. I feel like the initial group art production project was the catalyst that provided a collaborative experience that broke the ice and allowed students to get to know each other by working together on a group project. Doing a project together also helped reduce feelings of inadequacy because students were given tasks that were within their ability, no matter their previous art experiences, which allowed them to come together as a community.

Maxine Greene (2001) emphasizes the importance of community stating, "We come to share values here, and norms, and a sense of craft, and a feeling of what excellence is" (p. 144). Dewey (1897) also discussed community contending that real education comes from socially interacting with the needs of a community with the communities' welfare given the utmost importance. Students felt their contribution to the project was essential for the entire project to work well. In other words, they felt

accountable to the group. By having group discussions, students were able to claim agency with their opinions but then collaboratively shared with the group.

Societal Benefits

Students expressed that art experiences can benefit society and individuals, including benefits of learning and understanding, well-being, and self-expression. By the end of semester, students shared viewpoints on how creating, viewing, and analyzing art is beneficial for others or society. For example, Student 21 commented:

It [creating art] lets people have, like, an outlet and show other people as well what's happening in the world around them... It helps them to have an outlet to help cope with that mental illness. So in the long run, it benefits both the community as well as the individuals.

This student perceives what benefits an individual as far as functioning well in the world also benefits society. Student 19 stated, “I think that art can affect society in that way, like, it can change the way that you feel about something or, like, introduce a new thought.” This student perceives that art has the power to alter or persuade society. Student 26 expressed:

...for someone to paint something that expresses their feelings might catch someone's eye that their dealing with, like the same thing of some sort, so it kinds of eases it and it relaxes it. It's almost like a meditation—self-meditation viewpoint on things.

This student perceives that art is beneficial to one's well-being, particularly if the viewer has an emotional connection with the artwork—if they're "dealing with the same thing" that's being conveyed in the art. These comments, correlate with several studies in the literature review that art is a means by which to explore and positively contribute to societal and individual life issues.

This finding reveals that students recognize the value of experiencing art and this could extend to others outside of the class to society as a whole. It reveals that students believed they benefited from art experiences, whether that be learning about art, studying art's history, or creating art and that society and other individuals could benefit in the same way. They specify art's potential benefits to individuals and society include a means for self-expression, a way of seeing the world differently, a coping mechanism for mental illness, and a stress reliever. This finding speaks directly to the research sub-question, what changes do undergraduate students perceive in how they value art's benefits to individuals and society after taking an Art Appreciation class?

Eisner (1997) discusses that an art function "transforms the personal and the ineffable into a public forum in which others may participate" (p. 11). Cobb (1977) stresses that creative knowledge allows one to enter into the world of others' and recognize their issues and needs. Student's detailed evaluations of how art can benefit society or others by the end of the semester reveals also that students were recognizing their perceptions changed over the course of the semester.

To concluded theme 3, and echoing many of the findings from the literature review, students recognized benefits from participating in viewing, analyzing,

interpreting or creating art which include learning and understanding, socio-emotional, communicating and connecting benefits as well as recognizing the benefit possibilities to others and society. By viewing, analyzing, interpreting and creating art, students' increased their understanding of art's role in culture and history through exercising critical thinking and problem solving skills. Students found viewing and doing art promoted positive feelings of well-being, stress relief and self-confidence. Students developed visual literacy skills through viewing, interpreting and creating art, recognizing art as a form of communication to express oneself. Students benefited from collaborating with other students in the classroom by giving them a sense of community and accountability. Students recognized and pointed out the benefits they felt art has on others and society. These findings correspond to the overarching research question of how students make meaning and ascribe value to art, as well as the sub-question of how student perceive changes to valuing art, art's practical use and function and art's benefits to individuals and society.

Theme 4: Judging and Valuing

Students developed skills of judging and valuing from experiences they participated in throughout the course, which contributed to their defining how they valued art, their changed viewpoints about art, and also an understanding of what they valued beyond art.

Through class experiences, students participated in judging and valuing. Judgment included peer judgment and personal judgment. Peer judgment occurred when students analyzed, critiqued, and offered comments on their classmates' artwork. Personal judgment occurred through frequent reflection about their skill, but more

importantly about the artistic meaning they communicated in their art. Valuing included societal and personal value. Societal value looked at art from a historical or cultural perspective. Comments of personal value reflected what art meant to students individually and their changes to valuing art. Following are examples for these subthemes.

Peer Judgment

In judgment responses of their fellow classmates' artwork, students expressed they enjoyed looking at classmates' artwork but also revealed they felt uncomfortable giving their views or judgments about their classmates' art for fear of hurting feelings or being wrong in their interpretations.

Early in the semester, students expressed positive and encouraging comments to their classmates concerning the group art proportion production project. Statements included how well the project worked together and how good everyone did on their portions. As the semester progressed, students continued to give fellow classmates' positive encouragement and also conveyed they enjoyed looking at their fellow classmates' final art production work. For instance, Student 2 expressed, "I like seeing other people's work. I ain't very good, so I like looking at other people's." Similarly, Student 17 stated, "it was just neat to see...how people, you know, would put what comes across in their mind and then what they put on the canvas or drawing." These comments are very general and don't provide much in the way of judgment but they do indicate the support they wanted to show their fellow classmates. It also shows that students were feeling part of a class community.

The final art production required students to create a work of art with the prompt of how they valued art as well as interpret each other's work to make judgments of how they thought their classmate valued art from only "reading" the artwork without any other information provided. Students offered support to their fellow classmates. For example, Student 14 stated, "I feel like you value art by using movement and flow and you enjoy the use of colors also." This comment shows that the student used aesthetic judgment of formalism when discussing movement, flow, and color but didn't go very deep in interpreting the work. Student 17 expressed:

If I had to guess, you might value elephants? I also would say you cherish color by the way you incorporated bright colors into your picture. I think when it comes to art you also value pattern considering all the panels that are incorporated into your picture.

This student added the subject of the artwork in the interpretation as well as using a formalistic aesthetic judgment. Student 22 stated, "I'm guessing you value the beauty that color brings to the world and the way art utilizes it to create truly beautiful images." This student also doesn't put much in the interpretation. Although the students weren't going very deep in their interpretation, they were going beyond making comments such as liking it or it's neat as they did earlier in the semester. They were applying critiquing skills that were discussed and practiced over the semester. They were including art language in their comments pointing out the elements and principles of art such as color, pattern and movement which is a formalism aesthetic judgment. They also pointed to an imitational aesthetic judgment with commenting on the recognizable subject matter as well as emotional aesthetic judgment when discussing the feelings they interpreted in the

artworks. These additional reasons for their judgments show a growth in how they make judgments.

Students' shallow interpretations of meaning in fellow classmates' artwork could be explained from what students revealed in the final reflection questionnaire and focus group interviews. Students revealed they were uncomfortable making judgments about other classmates' art, especially when it came to analyzing the art and interpreting how their classmate valued art. Students expressed that their uncomfortable feeling stemmed from their fear of giving a response that was different than what their classmate was trying to communicate in the artwork. Despite their hesitancy, most students revealed they felt it was a good thing to do. For instance, Student 1 expressed:

I think it was weird at first just having to judge somebody else...I thought about all the time and effort that I've put into whatever piece we were doing...and it just made me feel uncomfortable until I realized that it's not me judging them for their ability, its judging for the amount of work that they put in...

This students comment shows that she didn't understand the assignment as it was intended. Instead of making judgments of how the student artist valued art based on their interpretation, she took it as judging on how well executed the work was. Student 12 stated:

At first it was kind of weird because I didn't want to, like step on no one's toes or nothing, or upset no one, you know, but the comments and stuff it all helped me. Like, when someone commented on mine, I could go back and read it and kind of understand what they saw in it.

This student does understand the assignment but is hesitant to interpret the work because it may be something different the student artist was trying to express. Similarly, Student 21 revealed:

I didn't know what they were thinking when they made it so whatever I say could be completely contradictory to whatever they would think so it would, like put me out of what I was comfortable with of discussing someone else's artwork. Cause if I could, like discussing my artwork to somebody else, I could explain what I was going through to them but when someone just posts their artwork and doesn't say anything then we have to figure out what they're thinking... I just felt like I wasn't like, I just wasn't in the right to say what their painting is without actually knowing what they were going for.

This student was more explicit in his hesitation. These comments reveal students' hesitancy in fully interpreting fellow students' artwork for meaning for fear their interpretations would be taken negatively.

This finding is significant because it points to students' fears of not being accepted or doing well. Giving positive surface responses shows not only their support for their fellow classmates but also points to their own fears concerning their artistic technical abilities and lack of experience doing art and their vulnerability in expressing themselves in art and being judged. It also reveals that students may have not grasped that interpreting art is subjective and it doesn't have to align with what the artist was thinking. Interpretations of art change over time, space, and viewer. Although prescribing the activity for students to view a fellow students' artwork to interpret how their fellow

student valued art was never intended to be critical or negative, students' comments indicate that they associated judging and art criticism with being negative. Art is very personal and it doesn't take much to hurt someone's feelings.

Theorists discuss emotional aspects of interpreting art. Vygotsky (1971) stresses "Art is the social technique of emotion, a tool of society which brings the most intimate and personal aspects of our being into the circle of social life" (p. 249). In this same line of thought, Dirkx (2006) describes that learning and interpreting is always personal. Eisner (1997) contends that understanding from visual viewing is learned from art experiences and we assume that we the artist reveals their personality in the creation. Barone (2012) states, "Aesthetic vision is always from a specific point of view, filtered by a specific consciousness. It is personal and situational" (p. 37) Students felt judging a peer's artwork was extremely personal. Having students judge a fellow students' art to interpret how they valued art is something that I will not do again in the same way because it was so personal and caused undue stress. This finding gave me important information the make adjustments to course assignments. I will be more thorough in my explanation in future courses and check that students are understanding that they are not being asked to judge whether or not they feel the artwork is good or bad but rather it's their interpretation of how their classmate values art and it's okay if they interpret it totally different than what their classmate intended or how they actually value art.

Personal Judgment

Students expressed recognition of their growth and progress through learning about art, creating art, and interacting with each other over the course of the semester. Early in the semester, there was some acknowledgement of growth in developing art

technique skills. For example, Student 25 expressed, “I thought it was nice to see the steps it takes to create different pieces of art. It was also good to see my progress on those skills.” However, the end of the semester comments were the most revealing of students’ changed perceptions. They expressed satisfaction, pride, and astonishment, especially concerning how their final art production turned out. Most students indicated they were pleased with their work, even when it didn’t turn out how they envisioned. For example, Student 5 stated:

The process of doing the artwork was first drawing it out then painting it. When the artwork was finished, I was very proud of myself. The only problem I ran into while creating it was trying to decide what all colors to use. Overall I am very happy with how this piece turned out. (Figure 23)

This student indicated pride in her work but also struggle. Student 7 also discussed struggle in creating her work. She revealed:

It did not turn exactly as I had envisioned it but I am satisfied with the result. I would have liked to paint this picture and I did try but the painting did not go as I had wanted, so I had to resort to coloring the drawing I had made. I would have liked to do a bit more with it, but overall I am happy with what I completed.

(Figure 24)

Although this work didn’t turn out as the student wanted and that she had to change directions, these actions reveal the thinking, the trial, and error that is often involved in creating a work of art or creating anything. Often we learn the most from when things don’t turn out as expected. This student shows resilience to keep going until she came to a satisfactory result. Student 17 stated:

...the last assignments you had us do, I was actually kind of, like, really, really proud of them so, I would definitely say that was my high point. I struggled thinking what to make. I grew up in New Mexico and we run a herd of cattle. So I combined our bright blue sky, cactus, and old cow skull with a desert look and put our brand on top of the image and it all come together. I don't really have an artistic hand, so when my project came out looking good, I was very pleased. My biggest problem was finding the supplies since a lot of stores are closed [due to COVID-19]; however, I improvised and found the wood background and paint at a Walmart about an hour away. (Figure 25)

This student indicated resilience by overcoming obstacles but also extreme pride as well as surprise in his work. This student stated early in the semester that he was scared of art because he didn't think he was good at it, showing growth and a change of attitude with his pride and pleasure in his last product. Student 24 revealed:

I wanted to create a transforming painting. One side I painted without color then on the other side I created an image with color. The sunset is meant to represent how color, a form of art, can transform your entire world and you can't take advantage of it. I originally had a whole other plan with the art piece but it didn't turn out how I wanted so I decided to create this sunset picture. I wanted the trees to actually be green but I ran out of blue to mix with so I decided to use black instead which kind of took away the message. The black and white side turned out absolutely perfect. (Figure 26)

This is another example of problem solving by overcoming obstacles as well as resilience by continuing on despite the problems. Expressing struggle and running into problems

and making decisions indicate students were exercising their problem solving skills. This coincides with Heise’s (2014) view that “art is a meaning making endeavor that develops creative problem solving, flexibility, and resourcefulness” (p. 28). Students think about possible solutions to problems they encounter, realizing that there could be a number of solutions. Students are using cognitive skills to resolve the problem. Eisner (2002) contends this cognitive process is achieved through “inner monologues—inner speech, a form of self-regulation” when considering possible solutions (p. kindle location 1076). These practices are important to not only create a work of art but in all aspects of life, both personal as well as professional despite the chosen profession.



Fig. 23: Student 5
Final Art Production



Fig. 24: Student 7
Final Art Production



Fig 25: Student 17
Final Art Production



Fig 26: Student 24
Final Art Production

This thinking process is also apparent with other students' comments as well as finding satisfaction from the process, positive feelings, and increased confidence in their abilities. For instance, Student 11 expressed:

I knew I wanted to do something rainbow themed because one of my favorite things about art is the colors that are used but I wanted to do something a little different than just a rainbow. I really liked my painting when I was finished with it. I was a little nervous about it because I did not have a [picture to] go by, I was just trying to create what I saw in my head. I think it did turn out how I envisioned it and it is one of my favorite paintings that I have done. (Figure 27)

This student is articulating her thinking process. Her revealing that she “did not have a go by” shows her trusting herself without relying on something else, using just her own creativity. Student 16 stated:

I had a great experience with this project. I thought it was fun and I noticed my art skills improved. It took me a little bit to come up with something but I knew from the start I wanted to do something that was outdoors. I was really surprised of how my drawing turned out. I was very pleased and proud of myself at the end result. The only problem I had was the shading. (Figure 28)

This statement of being surprised is important because it shows the student that trying something new and challenging can be rewarding and work out well. Student 19 stated:

I was extremely happy with the finished product. Since I don't really ever paint, I was pleasantly surprised by how easy it was and how good it turned out. I do think my skills that I've learned through drawing transferred over though. I'm extremely happy with it. (Figure 29)

This student also felt surprised by the final outcome of the work and revealed that he believed that he was successful because of the activities he participated in throughout the course. It's apparent that the few art technique opportunities early in the semester made an impact on this student and helped him feel confident in his abilities. Student 8 stated:

During quarantine the city was dull from all the sadness and the lights weren't shining as bright so I wanted to paint how I saw Tulsa before COVID-19. I was very happy with the way it turned out, it was challenging to get my lines pretty straight and not get paint everywhere but the process was very relaxing. (Figure 30)

This student's response is revealing how the pandemic affected her and how art can be therapeutic in times of stress.



Fig. 27: Student 11
Final Art Production



Fig. 28: Student 16
Final Art Production



Fig. 29: Student 19
Final Art Production

Fig. 30: Student 8
Final Art Production

Students finding surprise and satisfaction demonstrates a significant change from their initial responses where they indicated inadequacy and frustration in their artwork. This element of surprise is a consistent theme from students creating artwork. Eisner (2003) contends that surprise is “a fundamental reward of all creative work” (p. 7). I feel that taking the plunge and creating a work of art helped the students realize that they can find satisfaction in their work, even if it doesn’t rise to their perfectionist standard. This connects to Jackson’s (1998) viewpoint:

In that fuller form of perception that we associate with the arts, the object is looked on not as something to be used for some other purpose but as something, worthy of attention in its own right, an entity or event of intrinsic value. (p. 57)

Students comments of being proud of themselves, being happy with the results, or a piece being their favorite artwork reveals that students were emotionally and intrinsically connected to the work they created. They valued it intrinsically, which came from the thinking, planning, and creating, essentially putting a part of themselves in the work. This also speaks to students’ self-efficacy and to students having an experience that was particularly meaningful.

Eisner (1997) connects aesthetic satisfaction in one’s work with contributing to a holistic experience. Jackson (1998) states, “Such art experiences are distinguished by their unity and wholeness. They are consummatory. They are accompanied by feelings of fulfillment and satisfaction” (p. 124). Dewey (1934) relates receiving satisfaction of an artwork connects to having an aesthetic experience. Walter Crane (1892) expressed:

Make a man responsible, and give him the credit of his own skill in his work; his self-respect at once increases, and he is stimulated to do his best; he will take pride and pleasure in his work; it becomes personal and therefore more interesting. (p. 188)

Barone (2012) states that creating a genuine work of art in all likelihood takes more intelligence and thinking than those who claim to be intellectual. I observed students in the focus group interviews showing pride in their work. Most were happy to discuss their process and some of the issues they faced and they all appeared to enjoy seeing each other's work. Although this activity had to be done through a Zoom virtual class meeting, it was certainly a highlight of the semester.

Societal Value

Students expressed various ways that art can be valued by society and these perceptions increased over the semester as students participated in viewing, analyzing how art from history was valued and then progressing to making their own judgments of how art is valued.

In the early and mid-semester time periods, students' responses in a pre-instruction questionnaire indicated that art is valued but were vague about their views on how art is valued. For example, student #2 stated, "I think art is very undervalued especially old pieces. They have so much history, like the development that art has had of the hundreds of years." Student 4 expressed, "Art to me could have any value on it as it depends on the piece." Student 6 expressed, "Art tells us about the history of people before us." These early comments are general comments and didn't indicate much information of how students felt art was valued.

As the semester continued and there were several class discussions over the course about various ways art is valued, students expressed understanding that art from history was valued by how it connected to the culture of the time period it was created in but the same art may be valued differently today. For example, Student 10 wrote, “This code [Law Code of Hammurabi] was valued because, at the time, people had to follow these rules. It probably had a psychological value more than anything because of what some of the rules were. I feel like this work is valued today because it is interesting and it is a part of history. It is also valued because it is an old set of laws that gives us insight as to what people living during this time had to live by. I feel like the value today is more of a “historical” type of value.” This statement reveals that the student is thinking about value and how value can change over time. Student 9 stated:

I think they [Pyramids of Giza] were valued as a religious piece of art. They were used as tombs for their dead. They are not valued the same today. It has more of a cultural value. It has changed so much.

These comments reveal that students thinking about value were using critical thinking skills to compare how art can be valued differently at different times in different situations.

By the end of the semester, students were able to articulate various ways art can be valued such as for its aesthetic, emotional, sentimental, financial or religious leanings. For instance, student #1 indicated, “Art can be valued in many ways by different people. Some people value art in an emotional way where other people could value art for the beauty.” Another example is from Student 9 who stated, “It [art] can be valued for its

depiction of reality or fantasy. It can also be cherished for its sentimental or aesthetic appeal.” The student’s statement using artistic terminology such as “aesthetic appeal” indicates that the student grew over the course of the semester. Student 30 expressed, “There are several ways that art is valued today, most times art is valued for its religious significance, for its monetary value and even its sentimental importance.”

This finding reveals that viewing, analyzing and doing art does increase students understanding of how art can be valued. This understanding is important to adding to one’s ability to think critically and make judgments. In order to evaluate how cultures of the past valued art required students to learn how to interpret symbols and make meaning of the work and what those symbols meant to the people of the society that created the work, why the work was created, who the patron and audience of the work were, their motivation in creating it. All of this requires critical thinking abilities. Only from learning about the particulars of past cultures could student adequately postulate how people of the past valued their art. By ruminating on the present culture and society students used critical thinking skills to determine how the perceptions shift over time.

Eisner (1997) conveys that how one perceives art depends on their ability to decipher icons for meaning. This understanding along with learning about the various cultures was necessary for students to make a determination of how an art work was valued at the time. However, one’s own culture comes into play as well when making such determinations. Cobb (1977) stipulates “...individual men and women ultimately create cultural and social history in terms of their particular world imagery and their capacity to lead others or participate in the world as they see it, politically, aesthetically, philosophically, or otherwise” (kindle location 453). Students expressed that learning

about art and how it was connected with the art that was created not only gave students greater knowledge and understanding but also allowed them to better understand their place in the world.

Personal Value

Separate from recognizing different ways art can be valued, over the course of the semester students also expressed how they personally valued art which mainly was how they personally connected to it. Students also expressed specific changes to their valuing from participating in the course.

Early in the semester, many students expressed they valued art in a pre-instruction questionnaire but their articulation of how they valued art was somewhat lacking because they lacked knowledge and experience in discussing ways art is valued. For example, Student 7 stated, “I hold art in high regard.” Echoing that sentiment, Student 11 expressed, “I place a very high value on art.” Similarly, Student 28 stated, “I place no value on art because to me it is priceless.” Again, students were general and vague in their descriptions early in the semester. Although students revealed they valued art, the details of why or how were lacking.

By mid-semester, students expressed they valued art when they could experience it first hand with statements seeing details better and getting a fuller experience which speak to the value experience has on perceptions. When you view art in person, not only does the art affect you but it is intermingled with the experience which makes more of an impact.

By the end of semester students expressed specifically how they valued art in their final reflection questionnaire and focus group interviews but provided more descriptive explanations than they did in the early semester and revealed they valued art particularly on a personal level. For instance, student 4 revealed. I think it's like a personal connection...if you have like a connection to it then you hold that value. I value art kind of like sentimentally...but also I like realistic art.” This statement shows this student has reflected on what it is she values in art. Student 7 expressed:

I value art based on its appeal to me. Art that I like may not be appealing to others, and that is fine. Everyone has their own taste in art. I value art as a fun and relaxing way to spend my free time. It is calming for me to just sit and draw or paint every once in a while.

This statement is revealing that she has come to her own valuing system. Student 10 stated:

I'd say if a piece of artwork reminds someone of a better time in their life, then that person values art. I value art based on that, so if I feel a connection or feeling nostalgia when I look at art, then I consider that valuing art.

This statement relates to the feeling that the art evokes in the student. Student 11 expressed, “I value art aesthetically, I like looking at it and thinking of the meaning of it.”

Student 28 commented:

I value art because the creative process has helped me develop as a person and helped me through some very hard times. To me, the art itself can have deep meaning but actually creating it is what I value the most.

This student values art for the effect it has on her when she is creating it. Student 29 revealed:

I value art for the way it makes me feel. There is some art that makes me extremely happy, also several that make me curious in different ways. Sometimes I'm thinking what was going through the artist's head when he created this, or more about the subject they were painting.

Comments such as connecting with the art personally from interpreting meaning the feelings it gives as well as the therapeutic benefits is interesting because little was said about beauty or aesthetic qualities. These comments suggest that the art students value most is in what they can get from the art whether that be viewing or creating.

This finding reveals that students value art mostly by their own value system and how the art appeals to them in a personal way. The fact that students were able to better articulate how they valued art at the end of the course then they did early in course reveals that from participating in art experiences from the course did in fact increase students valuing of art. This finding speaks directly to the sub-research question, "What changes do undergrad students perceive in how they value art after taking an Art Appreciation course?" Students' vague responses early in the semester indicated they did not have much experience with art and didn't really think about how they valued art. By their responses at the end of the semester, students indicated they had much more of an opinion, they took agency in their valuation for their own reasons, not because it was famous and in a museum with art works that are considered highly valued. Students

valuing art for what it means to them indicates students are intrinsically valuing the art which goes above and beyond how others have judged it.

Dewey (1934) notes, art most admired, art most famous from history becomes insignificant in aesthetic theory by being “remitted to a separate realm,” like a museum, “where it is cut off from that association with the materials and aims of every other form of human effort, undergoing, and achievement” (p. 2). He also posits that separate from any historical perspective and unique to each person, an art object is not a work of art until the viewer uses his/her experiences to create the art, to experience it aesthetically— aesthetic experience belongs to the “normal process of living” (p. 9). Barone (2012) discusses that art is meant to exemplify a “personal, inner, subjective ‘truth’” (p. 15). Although students found interest and gained knowledge and understanding from learning about formal qualities of art, the history of art and so on which influenced coming to know how they valued art, they primary connected it to themselves above all else.

Changes to Valuing. Although there have been numerous previous examples to students changed perceptions, students specifically expressed changes that they recognized at the end of the semester to their perceptions and appreciation for art as well as their valuing process in general that extended beyond art. These included changes in their knowledge, understanding and interest in art, their pleasure from viewing and creating art, their appreciation of art, their future plans with art and their valuation changes to things beyond art.

Students revealed before and after changes in their viewpoints about what is considered art. For example, Student 16 stated:

In the beginning, I did not understand art. Most of the paintings were just paintings to me. For me that was the low point. Now, I am able to really get into depth and detail and express how I truly feel or what I think about the art.

This student reveals that she values knowing about art and learning to interpret art.

Student 26 commented “I have definitely started viewing art differently. Started to study it when looking at the art piece and realizing the many different things you can find if you really look hard and analyze it.” This student also reveals a significant change to how he looks at art. He has a different perspective than he did early in the semester. Similarly, Student 30 shared, “For me I feel that now after taking this course that I value art even more than before. Before I was never really into art and now I find it so fascinating to look at and learn about.” These statements show that students previous lack of experiences with and knowledge about art contributed to their limited valuing of art.

Dewey (1922) stresses, “If we perform an act of a specified kind, we shall have, and only in that way shall we have, the data for more conclusive value judgement” (p. 333).

Viewing art for students after the course becomes a cognitive experience something more than just a picture to look at and admire which enhances appreciation for and value of art.

Some students made a point that they would continue to create art beyond the class. For instance, student 29 enjoyed creating the final project that she stated, “I might take up painting!” This comment shows the experiences from the course will stick with her after the course which is the goal for all courses. Student 9 expressed “Photography is something that I really enjoyed and I would like to get a nice camera and start a hobby.” This is another example of how art experiences were meaningful to the students’ lives.

Student 23 expressed, “I believe that in the future I could see myself doing a few

activities with art such as painting just because it's something easy and you can have some fun with it." The student's statement that he felt painting was easy is revealing confidence in his abilities. Student 4 commented:

Although a few years ago I probably wouldn't really understand the reason for this project or like it, I now do as I love creating abstract art...I thought it was interesting because before this section, I would not have thought of something like this as art.

These comments show a change from the beginning of the semester with many saying they can't do art to now wanting to do it on their own outside of class requirements.

Students recognize doing and experiencing art can add a new dimension to their lives that they may have been lacking before which contributes to the wholeness of their world.

Students also expressed changes to their appreciation for art which increased from taking the course and learning more about the history of art, as well as critiquing and making art. Student 17 commented, "I do feel like creating this art production was worthwhile simply because we are in Art Appreciation and we are able to do art and helped me appreciate it a great deal." This statement evidences that having students create art in an Art Appreciation course is a worthwhile activity. Student 13 revealed, "Because I learned so much on how art was so important in the past it has given me a new appreciation for all art not just things I find pretty." This comment evidences that including art history is worthwhile for students to develop a deeper appreciation for art. Student 15 went further and expressed that art will continue to be a part of her life, stating, "I plan to have artwork hanging in my future home. I also plan to be very involved in the arts throughout my future life."

These changes to students' appreciation for art such as appreciating art they don't personally find pleasing and wanting to continue being involved with from their experiences in the course are significant and transformative. Dirkx et al., (2006) contends when learning extends beyond getting a grade or meeting some external award or expectation this learning becomes "part of a broader landscape of learning made more vivid and alive through our awareness of and work with our inner world" (p. 129). This awareness is evident in the students' comments and indicates the value of providing these multiple types of experiences to because they offer much to students' lives after college.

Finally, students expressed that thinking about how they valued art extended to their recognition of finding value in other things. For instance, Student 17 stated, "...I think this class has improved my ability to view something differently than I did before." This understanding will be of benefit to the student in all aspects of his life. Student 22 revealed, "I feel like a more civilized human having taken the course... This art course has definitely improved my ability to critically analyze things as well as how to ascribe value, and I find those to be very important skills." This statement shows that what this student will take away from the course much more than coming to value art. Student 28 stated:

If you start to think about what you value in art it can lead to how you value your family, school, and other parts of your life. Overall I think that this course sets you up for a higher train of thought with the questions in it.

These comments suggest students view taking an Art Appreciation course with a broader lens than they did in the beginning of the course. They recognize that they are more well-rounded from the experiences and see how they can apply the new found skills

to other parts of their lives. They have found meaning not only from art but from participating in the course.

These findings about students recognizing specific changes of their perceptions of art, their valuing and appreciation of art and changes to their thought about valuing not only aligns with sub-research question of changes to students valuing of art but extends beyond art speak to the sub research question of student perceptions of how they value art's practical use or function. From learning about the formal, the historical and the expressive qualities of art, from experiencing being in a classroom, discussing, and collaborating together to create art and creating their own art led to students developing a valuing system an intrinsic value system from having a direct experience in the course.

Dewey (1934) posits that direct experience can alter perceptions and “qualitative changes of value” (p. 215). Similarly, Barone (2012) stresses that beyond speech, truth belongs to experiences that produce meanings. Eisner (1997) connects appreciation to thinking. He states:

What is clear when one begins to analyze the factors that come into play in the production and appreciation of visual art is that its creation and appreciation is a complex cognitive-perceptual activity that does not simply emerge full blown on its own. (p. 113)

Students who have the opportunities to have educative art experiences have a new set of tools in which to think. Jackson (1998) points to this writing, “Another way of thinking about these interchanges with art objects that result in enduring changes in both the experiencer and the experience is to label them educative” (p. 6). I believe that having

students reflect over their experiences through the course contributed to students evaluate the experiences that contributed to the changes in their perceptions.

To conclude Theme 4, students developed judging and valuing skills over the course of the semester. Students used applied aesthetic judgment to their fellow classmates' artwork and their own artworks. Students determined how society valued art in the past and today. Despite how society valued art, students derived their own valuing system of how they valued art which was based on personal connections and they extended this valuing to other things in their lives. Students recognized changes to their valuing from the course assignments and reflection. From course experiences, students' appreciation of art increased as well as their intentions of incorporating art into their future lives.

Summary of Chapter IV

In this chapter I presented the thematic findings, provided evidence for the findings and connected the findings to educational and philosophical theory. I have alluded to how the findings provide answers to the research and sub-research questions. In the final chapter, Chapter V, I provide final conclusions specifically addressing the research questions and relating them to the thematic findings. I then add further discussion of the study and provide implications for this research.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

In this qualitative inquiry, I have interpreted from documents, artifacts, and focus group interviews how students made meaning and attached value to art from their experiences in the natural setting of an Art Appreciation course during the Spring 2020 semester at an Oklahoma Junior College. In this chapter, I extend conclusions related to the findings revealed in Chapter IV to answer the research questions. I then summarize the study, pointing out the key components, and finally, I present the limitations and implications from this study.

Conclusions of Findings to Answer Research Questions

My goal for this study was to explore the perceptions of undergraduate college students' experiences with art and their valuing of art. In chapter IV, I articulated the thematic findings that revealed several expected but also unexpected results. Expected findings were that students benefited in multiple ways such as increased learning and understanding about art, increased confidence in doing art, and increased valuing of art. Unexpected findings included students thinking about what they valued more broadly such as their families, school, etc. from the course assignments that focused on valuing and that students are hesitant in critiquing peer's artwork. I now align the findings in

relation to the research and sub-research questions. The overarching research question was—How do undergraduate students make meaning and ascribe value to art based on their experiences in an Art Appreciation class that fulfills a Humanities' General Education requirement? The sub-questions are 1) How do undergraduate students perceive the changes in ways they value art, 2) How do undergraduate students perceive the changes in how they value art's practical use or function, and 3) How do undergraduate students perceive changes in how they value art's benefits to individuals and society? However, because the findings showed that students perceived the similar changes to how they value art's practical use or function to how they perceive benefits to individuals and society, I combine sub-questions two and three below.

Summary of Findings Connected to Sub Question One: What changes do undergraduate students perceive in the ways they value art?

The findings revealed that students did perceive changes in the ways they valued art from 1) learning, understanding, and applying the formal qualities of art, 2) recognizing the value they found in objects outside of art, 3) learning basic art techniques and creating art productions, and 4) learning, analyzing, and interpreting art from history.

Formal qualities of art. Very few students had established a value of art in the beginning of the semester beyond surface level general valuing. From students' experiences in the course, the findings do in fact indicate that students perceived changes in the ways they valued art through developing their own standards of value. For instance, as described in theme two in Chapter IV, students were drawn to the beauty of art but their surface level judgments of beauty in the beginning of the semester expanded to an aesthetic judgment of beauty by the end of the course. This change of perceptions

was facilitated from their growth of knowledge about aesthetic components of beauty from learning and applying the formal qualities of art—the elements and principles which subsequently expanded students valuing of beauty. This added knowledge and understanding of beauty enhanced not only the way the students saw and valued art but also nature, with many students expressing they were seeing nature in the world around them differently than they did before taking the course. They were seeing the world as artists, seeking out beauty rather than just being mere observers.

Value in objects. Another way students were able to recognize changes in their perceptions of their valuing of art came from establishing what they valued in objects that “spoke” to them in some way. As revealed in theme two of Chapter IV, the objects that the students brought to class were not what most would consider to be art, such as key chains, necklaces, seashell, etc. Students said these objects “spoke” to them by their personal connection, mostly from their memorable past experiences associated with the object. This activity contributed to students’ recognition of why they valued these objects—their personal connection to the object—which in turn contributed to determining how they value art. Their personal connection to an object was reinforced with a personal connection to the interpretation of art through meaning derived from visual symbols and metaphors. This interpretation process of reading artworks visually was developed over the course of the semester by analyzing artworks from history and expanded students’ visual literacy skills. Developing visual literacy skills is important in today’s society for students to decipher the messages and meanings in visual images that are prevalent in daily life. “As images continue to evolve as the dominant text of our society, students of all ages need to experience the reading of such texts in order to be

successful” (T. L. Williams, 2007, p. 642). Visual literacy is a cognitive activity beyond describing a work of art to creating an inner narrative of the work.

Art techniques and productions. Furthermore, students recognized changes to their valuing of art by creating art productions. In the beginning of the semester, students expressed anxiety from their lack of experience and didn’t feel they had the talent or skills to create artworks. By the end of the semester, students expressed enjoyment and surprise in their abilities to create a work of art that they not only liked but were proud of, which contributed to their intrinsic valuing. The art they created was personal to them, as revealed in theme four of Chapter IV. Students also experienced increased confidence, adding to their self-efficacy and a lessened fear of making mistakes. These changes of their perceptions were facilitated by first learning and practicing simple art techniques and then by applying some of these techniques to a collaborative group project and an original creation from various prompts. These experiences contributed to students building a foundation of what it takes to create art—the thought and planning that goes into the design and the skills it takes to successfully create a unified whole and to communicate a message visually. This understanding led to students expressing an increased appreciation for artists through history.

Art history. In addition to creating art, students indicated their change of perceptions of how they valued art came from learning, analyzing, and interpreting art from history. As indicated in theme four from Chapter IV, beyond increased knowledge from viewing and analyzing artworks, students made judgments of how landmark artworks from the past were valued by learning about the culture of the people of the time, then making judgments of how that same work would be valued in today’s time and

culture. These experiences allowed students to recognize how valuing perceptions can differ depending on time and place, which in turn increased students understanding of valuing, what it means to value and making their own interpretations of value using critical thinking skills. From this knowledge, they felt their interest and appreciation for art increased and informed their valuing of art.

In the final focus group interviews, students identified the experiences in the course that facilitated changes to how they valued art. Students recognized that they mainly valued art for what it did for them such as providing a personal connection or a experiencing a positive feeling from viewing or doing art.

Summary of Findings for Sub Question Two and Three Combined: What changes do undergraduate students perceive in how they value art's practical use or function as well as art's benefits to individuals and society?

The findings revealed that students did perceive changes in how they value art's practical use or function and benefits to individuals and society in these ways: 1) socio-emotional benefits; 2) communicating and connecting benefits; and 3) judging and valuing benefits.

Socio-emotional benefits. Initially, students indicated they did not have the knowledge or experience to have established a significant standard with which to value art's practical use or function or benefits to individuals and society. By the end the semester, students perceived changes in how they valued art's practical use or functions and benefits to individuals and society from participating in the course. Students identified several socio-emotional benefits they experienced such as finding enjoyment for viewing, analyzing, and mostly creating art, enhancing class engagement,

psychological health, increased confidence and self-efficacy. The benefits they received, they perceived would also benefit others and society as well.

Although in the beginning of the semester, students indicated they didn't have art skills, by the end of the semester, they recognized that viewing or creating artworks can evoke positive psychological feelings such as calming, peaceful, joyful, relaxing and cathartic feelings. Students found that creating art was a stress reliever for them and allowed them to go inward and reflect on their lives. They also felt that art is a type of meditation that could relieve the psychological stresses on other individuals and society as a whole.

Students expressed enjoyment (i.e. "It was fun!" or "I enjoyed it.") from creating artworks and felt others could also experience enjoyment as well. They found being challenged to problem solve by coming up with an idea and then expressing that idea or message in a visual way was also enjoyable. This enjoyment resulted from viewing art and learning to read the visual symbols and metaphors. Students also indicated that learning about art and its cultural history benefited others by expanding understanding of today's society. As students were drawn to art that they could interpret, meaning influenced them to create art using symbols and metaphors to show significance and express themselves visually. Students found creating art added to the wholeness of their world. Therefore, they planned to continue to be involved with art such as creating art or going to museums. Students found learning about art and the formal qualities of art contributed to their application of art knowledge to other aspects of their lives.

Students indicated creating art and working in a collaborative project increased their engagement in class. Initially students expressed a general interest in learning about

art. In contrast at the conclusion of the semester, students said that doing the art productions, working in a collaborative environment, and expressing their opinions made them more engaged in the course. They stated these in-class experiences helped them stay focused, increased their interest, and kept class from being boring.

Students indicated their experiences increased their self-confidence and lessened their fear of making mistakes. In the beginning of the semester students lacked confidence in two ways: 1) fear of being wrong for expressing their opinion 2) fear of creating art from because they lacked experience. By the end of the semester, students expressed changes in their perceptions that were facilitated by group discussions where they could freely expressions about art from history. Students' personally created artworks also fostered increased confidence. Sometimes they were surprised, they liked the process, or they liked the outcome, even if it didn't turn out exactly as they had envisioned.

Communication and connection benefits. Students also found a practical use or function for art: it enhanced their communication and connections skills. Students revealed that art benefits others and society as a means of communication that could be more specific or expressive than words, at times. In the beginning of the semester, students indicated that art was a way to communicate and express oneself but lacked the skills to read visual messages. Students perceived these changes were a result of several course activities and engagements: 1) viewing art from history, 2) reading visual messages, and 3) creating their own artworks with visual messages, 4) using cognitive and problem-solving skills to analyze and interpret art, 5) collaborating with fellow students. Students found enjoyment in collaboration and felt part of a community.

Community is important because it gives students a sense of belonging through shared experiences that add to the richness of life and contribute to social development (Eisner, 2009).

Judging and valuing benefits. Students indicated that their valuing and judging skills were enhanced from participating in the course. This was facilitated by discussing different ways art is valued and then asking students to make judgements of how certain art from history was valued and making judgements of how society today valued that same art. By the end of the semester, students identified they developed visual literacy skills to read artworks for meaning and as a form of expression. Students expressed that they were developing their own value system to judge art, but coming to that judgment made them think about value beyond art to recognize how they value other things in their lives. Students found learning about art and the formal qualities of art contributed to them applying that knowledge to other aspects of their lives such as noticing elements and principles of art in nature. Students felt uncomfortable giving interpretations about other students' art in fear that their interpretations would differ from the student who created it. Students associated judgment with being negative and critical. This finding could mean that students didn't feel confident enough to express their own interpretation of the artwork, or it could indicate that students are prioritizing community, interpersonal relationships, and empathy, not wanting to risk hurting feelings. Either way, it shows that students have difficulty forming and expressing opinions of their peers' work.

Summary of Findings for the Overarching Research Question: How do undergraduate students make meaning and ascribe value to art based on their experiences in an Art Appreciation class that fulfills a Humanities' General

Education requirement?

The findings revealed that students made meaning and ascribed value to art from their experiences in the course. As the previous sub-research questions indicate, from viewing, analyzing, interpreting and critiquing art through history, students identified the art attributes they were most drawn to were beauty, degree of personal connection, and the degree of meaning they found visually reading the work. Students recognized their learning and understanding increased as a result of creating art and learning the cultural history of art. From participating in the course, students expressed they became more interested and engaged in art. Students found enjoyment from viewing, interpreting, and creating art. Students found viewing artworks could be peaceful and creating artworks were a way of relieving stress and helped their overall well-being. Students expressed increased confidence from expressing their opinions, taking chances and creating art they didn't initially feel they could do well. Students expressed that art was a way of communicating and expressing yourself that could be better than words. Students expressed viewing artworks and determining how art was valued in the past and today, learning art techniques, engaging with the class, working collaboratively on art projects, and critiquing artwork from history all helped them develop a standard from which they make meaning and value art. Students also recognized that thinking about and reflecting on how the value of art transferred to their valuing of other things in their life.

These perceptions were reinforced in the final anonymous course survey asking direct questions about their experiences in the course at the end of the semester. Ten students responded that they had come to value art, eight students responded that they already valued art but valued it more, and three students responded that they already

valued art and their valuing of art remained the same.

Discussion

Experience, in my view, is essential for ascribing value to anything. This holds true for how one values art, which is dependent on the amount and quality of one's experiences with art. Those with little or few art experiences value art less than those who have experience with art. Valuing art is gained through knowledge of its cultural history, reading symbolic meanings as well as creating art. In the beginning of the course, these students usually expressed they valued art but merely mimicked societal clichés about art being important, giving no responses as to why. By the end of the course, students almost always expressed a positive change of attitude towards art and said they viewed art differently than they did at the beginning of the semester. Seeing students' changes in valuing of art from their art experiences in the course led me to formulate the problem that because many undergraduate students in Oklahoma have had little or no previous experiences in producing, analyzing, interpreting, critiquing or learning the history of art, they have had little experience in which to assign value to art. Like other researchers, this study found that sensory experiences are meaningful and enhance interest and engagement with learning.

My study contributed to filling the gaps of literature by investigating students' processes of value and judgement. This research involved students' perceptions of their valuing of art and how they come to that valuing by making judgments of art, considering both artistic and aesthetic value. This study focused particularly on students' recognition of their own valuing of art, their judgments on arts' practical use, and their own judgments of ways art benefits individuals and society. It also offered insight into

students' learning about value, developing their own standards with which to value art and distinguish that what counts as art to them, in their lives, by understanding of what they value outside of art.

Theorizing Art Appreciation Education

Grounded from the data, a theory emerged for art appreciation education based on students' experiences in the course. Students indicated six main components they felt had the greatest impact their artistic understanding and valuing development: 1) a comfortable and safe learning environment; 2) foundational knowledge and application of the formal qualities of art (elements and principles of design); 3) foundational knowledge of art history and art criticism; 4) collaborative class participation opportunities through group discussions and projects; 5) hands-on low-stakes art creation experiences; and 6) reflecting on valuing.

A comfortable safe learning environment. Students indicated that having liberty to express themselves freely without being judged contributed to the level of comfort and was a major reason for becoming more involved and engaged in the course and with others, which in turn increased their artistic understanding and valuing of art. Providing a supportive environment facilitates a sense of security and promotes students to step out of their comfort zone and take risks (Elbow, 2000).

Foundational knowledge and application of the formal qualities of art (elements and principles of design). Students expressed that learning about the foundational elements and the principles of design of a work of art increased was a major component that contributed to their making aesthetic judgments about a work of art. Barone exemplifies this view, stating, "It is only to the degree that artistic elements of design are

employed effectively can the work achieve, to that degree, a special sort of utility” (p. 20). Furthermore, learning foundational art skills such as simple drawing and modeling techniques, one and two-point perspective and color theory, students indicated contributed greatly to their confidence and comfort level in applying the formalistic qualities of art to their own artist creations.

Foundational knowledge of art history and art criticism. Students expressed that learning the background and culture from major artworks throughout history and then applying art criticism techniques of description, analysis, interpretation, and judgment was a key component in students developing artistic understanding and valuing. Students considered historical art as valuable, but they were not drawn to art unless it moved them emotionally. They initially recognized arts’ value as financial, historical, or social, all of which are extrinsic values. However, the coursework experiences and assignments enabled them to move to an intrinsic value of art.

Collaborative class participation opportunities through group discussions and projects. Students expressed that the collaborative environment was another component that contributed their overall artistic learning and valuing. These collaboration experiences included open, non-judgmental, collaborative discussion about their interpretations of art from history as well as creating group artistic projects. These experiences not only increased students’ sense of being part of a community and contributed to their social learning but also made them accountable to each other.

Hands-on, low stakes art creation experiences. Students indicated that having hands-on art creation experiences allowed them to synthesize their learning and to engage in artistic problem solving. Initially, students didn’t associate themselves with being

creative; they viewed creativity as something separate from themselves. By creating art, they touched on their own potential, not that of being a great artist with great technical abilities but the potential of having an opinion and expressing that opinion in a different and satisfying way that was beneficial to their lives and their emotional well-being.

Reflecting on valuing. Students developed their skills in valuing by viewing and comparing artworks, creating artworks, making decisions about value, and determining what they valued both intrinsically and extrinsically. As referred to in the literature review, Dewey (1916) contends that valuing is a process that is active and cognitive. This valuing system however went beyond art to include other aspects of their lives. Value is unique for everyone and is constantly changing. In the beginning of the semester when asked if they value art, they were thinking about how art in museums shows how art is valued but they were not connecting to it themselves. They saw it as something separate from their lives and felt art makers were only those who were trained in art. Exploring artistic value, looking at how art has been valued from the past to the present, comparing that to the art that they were drawn to, and then reflecting on why supported students in developing their own value system. This cycle of engagements became a catalyst for recognizing what they intrinsically value across a multitude of connections and seeing the world with a new, self-generated lens. One's experience is instrumental to intrinsically valuing.

Research Limitations

Any qualitative study conducted in a natural setting will have limitations. Here I describe three limitations: the data were course assignments, the pandemic affected

students' experiences, and researcher bias. One limitation in this study is that much of the data came from student assignments that were submitted for a grade in their Art Appreciation course, for which I was the sole instructor. Because of this design, the responses may not be an accurate depiction of their true viewpoints. Although I clearly expressed to students that their opinion was valued for various assignments and would not affect their grade, no matter their opinion, students may have responded with what they thought I would want to hear in order to get a good grade or have a good standing with their instructor. There is little that could have been done to completely eliminate this limitation short of interviewing students after the class was completely over or even after they graduated which would have been at the cost of rich naturalistic data. Moreover, the naturalistic inquiry used in this study was beneficial because it allowed me to gain insider, ethnographic data that I would not otherwise be privy to. So the limitation is balanced by this affordance.

Another limitation is that the observations, collaborations, and data for this study were initially gathered from students who met face to face in one of the two campuses but who later had to switch to meeting completely virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Because this change, the experiences of the students were atypical and limited compared to types of experience they would have had attending face-to-face for the entire semester. Students attended class via Zoom, so they didn't have the typical in class experiences; some experiences had to be adapted for a virtual setting. The depth of data was also diminished, especially in the area of collaborative projects. For instance, the art proportion production assignment had to be revised due the students not being able to work together on this project (Figures 12 & 14). One way a collaboration art project

could be modified and still meet the same learning and experiential objectives when students couldn't meet in person would be for the class to create digital artwork. This could be done in a number of ways. For instance, students could create an individual section using their own art conventional art materials, then take a picture of their work and upload it to be part of a bigger, combined group work that would be assembled digitally. Another way would be for students to create their section digitally using a computer program or each person work on a section of a digital work that they digitally modify individually. These possibilities would work for an online course as well.

Another limitation is my (the researcher's) strong beliefs about art due to my past experiences with teaching art. I believe that learning about art, having experiences with art, and creating art are beneficial and contribute to how one values art and the world beyond art. Although naturalistic inquiry supports the subjective analysis of the research, I strove to keep an open mind when analyzing the data. However, this research may be viewed differently by someone without my subjectivity. Although this study was not intended to generalize students' valuing of art to any college Art Appreciation course, I suggest implications for Art Appreciation course design below.

IMPLICATIONS

The goal of my research was to investigate students' valuing of art, their recognition of their coming to value, and their views of art's use and benefits to others and society to inform my future curriculum design for Art Appreciation and to contribute to the body of research in understanding students' experiences in art. I draw implications

in the following areas: 1) implications for myself; 2) implications for other art educators; 3) implications for all educators; and 4) implications for future research.

Implications for myself. Conducting this study in the natural setting of my own Art Appreciation course has provided useful information for developing curriculum related to art history, art production, and art critique assignments in my future semesters.

In art history assignments, I will strengthen the discussion component because students perceived autonomy from participating in the discussion. In future courses, I will not require only their opinions of how art was valued in the past but also request them to elaborate with specific reasons for their opinions. I plan to present some discussions as a debate with the class divided in groups who have differing opinions in order to provide a more robust and meaningful discussion and promote argument development skills that will benefit them in other courses and in other aspects of their lives.

In art production assignments, I plan to add more to the curriculum, especially activities involving learning and practicing art techniques and those that concentrate on a process. Because there was an overwhelmingly positive response in areas such as finding joy, building confidence, and gaining therapeutic benefits from students doing art productions, I plan to add more simple art technique assignments early in the semester, such as simple contour drawing exercises or creating expressive lines and shapes. These technique activities will be short five-to-ten-minute exercises to increase engagement and skill development, which will in turn increase student confidence and lessen their anxiety about creating original art later in the semester. Because students expressed positive reactions to creating the puzzle piece assignment and the Dada art production assignment, I will also add more art production assignments that focus on the activity of doing rather

than their perceived success or failure of the results. One example of a process activity would be a string-pull painting where students would dip a string in paint and then pull in in different directions on a canvas, which gives a unique design but requires little art technique other than color choice. This type of activity would provide the unexpected but pleasing surprise that students previously expressed was enjoyable. The more joy that students perceive from activities, the more interested and engaged the students become with the overall content in the course, which ultimately increases learning and understanding.

In art critiquing assignments, I plan to modify the peer critique judgment assignment at the end of the semester because most of the students expressed hesitation in critiquing and judging their fellow classmates' final art production. Instead of just one open-ended question asking how they felt their classmate valued art from just viewing their artwork, I will include three of the four steps of art criticism that the students will exercise in critiquing artwork from history. These steps include describing the artwork, analyzing the artwork by discussing the elements and the principles of art in detail, and then providing their interpretation of the work. I will not include the judgement step of art criticism in which one takes an aesthetic stance, either imitationalism, formalism, or emotionalism, on the work. I will also emphasize that it is okay if their interpretation of the work is different than what the artist intended.

Implications for other art educators. This study has implications for higher education Art Appreciation educators to consider incorporating art production activities as part of the curriculum to increase student self-efficacy, engagement, enjoyment, satisfaction, and pride. Most Art Appreciation courses do not incorporate art production

assignments in the curriculum. Leading Art Appreciation textbooks, such as *Understanding Art* by Lois Fichner-Rathus (2017), *Art Appreciation* by Dave Plouffe (2017), *Art Matters, A Contemporary Approach to Art Appreciation* by Pamela Gordon (2019), include units of the ways art functions in society, the elements and principles of design, the multiple art mediums and how they're used, and art history from certain time periods. Deborah and Zoe Gustlin (2019), authors of an open source Art Appreciation textbook state:

Art appreciation is centered on the ability to view art throughout history, focusing on the cultures and the people, and how art developed in the specific periods. You cannot understand art without understanding the culture, their use of materials and sense of beauty. Art is also conveyed by the simple act of creating art for art's sake. Every person is born with the innate desire to create art and similar to other professions, training is essential in honing skills to produce art.

<https://human.libretexts.org/@go/page/27295>

Although the authors point out that it is human nature to want to create art, they don't include any art production activities in the Art Appreciation textbook. In a recent Art Appreciation textbook, *Art for Everyone* by Chemeketa Community College Art Faculty, Beausoleil et al. (2022) include art engagement activities that students have the option to do. One example of these activities asks students to walk around their environment noticing the elements of art they see and then use their phone to capture ten elements they find. Another example is to look through magazines and notice visual focal points that draw their attention. Another example is practicing art techniques with filters on their phone. Although the optional art engagement activities that I saw weren't as in depth as

the art production assignments that were incorporated in this study, I am very pleased with my preliminary review of this art appreciation textbook to give students the opportunities to learn through direct learning. It gives me hope that Art Appreciation textbooks will incorporate a more holistic approach to student learning in college Art Appreciation courses.

The data in this study indicated that incorporating art production projects along with teaching about various art mediums and the elements and the principles of design and reviewing, discussing and critiquing art history helped to increase students' appreciation and valuing of art. This approach of engaging students in art production to enhance their appreciation and understanding of art is apparently novel, given that several leading art appreciation textbooks omit art production engagement. I highly recommend incorporating art production projects in and Art Appreciation course. The art production projects can be simple, not requiring advanced art techniques. Simple art technique assignments are easy for everyone, such as completing a shading chart, a color wheel, or drawing simple boxes using one-point perspective. There are many worksheets readily accessible on the internet as well as videos showing the processes step by step. From engaging in simple art techniques, students will have the practice to do other simple art productions that utilize those particular techniques. One such assignment would be creating a work of art using only geometric shapes and warm colors. Collage is also another art assignment that doesn't require much previous experience. For instance, students could complete an assignment requiring them to reveal an area of emphasis or a focal point by cutting out shapes or images and pasting them on a sheet of paper. Actually creating art gives students much more perspective of what it takes to create art,

the thinking that is required, which enhances not only their cognitive problem-solving skills but also their appreciation of art. However, the findings in in this study are unique to this time and place and not generalizable.

In addition, a class like this in high school would help students learn these skills so they can grow further and faster when they have another art class. Art is a mode of knowledge. Providing and promoting art experiences in our public schools is a valid avenue for giving students opportunities to increase their self-efficacy by encouraging them to think creatively and then producing something in which they can find enjoyment and satisfaction.

Implications for all educators. This study has implications for instructors in all disciplines to incorporate more hands on and collaborative activities as well as giving students opportunities to express their opinion without judgment of being right or wrong. This study has shown that these experiences increase involvement, students' desire to learn, and their developing a sense of community within the classroom.

Implications for future research. A follow up study to this one would be to inquire from the same students that participated in this study if or how their valuing of art has changed two years after the data for this study was collected. The best approach for this would be to try to locate the participants and then conduct Zoom focus group interviews or arrange for individual interviews. Questions would inquire if their valuing increased, decreased or stayed the same. Another question would be what art experiences have they experienced or participated in after the course ended. Several students said they would continue creating art after the class was over and others said they would seek art out by going go to museums and even include their families in the experience. It would

be interesting and beneficial to know if they did. A follow up study using the same students would add to the research to see if the experiences in the course had a lasting effect and if so, what experiences contributed to that result the most and if they didn't, what do the participants feel could have been done differently to have achieved that result. Since this study was conducted in part completely virtual it also has implications for possible future research to investigate students valuing processes from experiences in online courses. Students expressed changes to their valuing of art as well as their valuing outside of art which has the potential to serve students in areas outside of art appreciation. Another study that I feel could expand on this study is to inquire more specifically about student engagement. Since students expressed that there were experiences from the class assignments that really engaged them in the course and since engagement facilitates lasting learning, a new study inquiring about what experiences most motivate students that also enhances learning would be beneficial not only for me as an educator but would provide possible implications for other educators in all disciplines.

Researchers Comments

My hope is that although many students indicated they initially viewed an art appreciation course as blow off or easy course, they went away feeling that they were better for taking it and hopefully what they learned will stick with them, using newfound analysis and valuing skills in other aspects of their lives. Directing students to focus on the valuing of art from history, contemporary society, and in their art productions, I believe, contributed to students being more engaged in the course. From the positive comments I received from students indicating the course had meaning for them, I will incorporate this valuing focus as well as art production activities in future courses. I will,

however, not require students to “critique” each other’s works in the same way because the comments indicated students were uncomfortable doing so and in fact, they avoided doing a real critique in fear of hurting a classmates’ feelings. Students also associated critique and judgment with negativity although that is not what was intended. In future courses, I will have students critique the work following the same critique process they will do in critiquing art from history. Before the critique, I will include a class discussion about intentional fallacy, the debate whether or not the viewer should know the artist’s intentions when viewing a work of art. I will also stress for the purpose of critiquing their classmates’ art, it is okay if their interpretation of the work is different than their classmate’s intention for the work. This structure, I believe will alleviate confusion that they’re judging the work for quality of art technique or an obvious intended message.

All in all, however, I believe the students who participated in this naturalistic inquiry had mostly positive experiences in the course, which propelled them to not only set a standard for valuing art but valuing life as well. I hope participating in the course set them on a path of living a more creative and holistic life. Art is universal, learning about it, participating in art making, and experiencing it provides a broader lens in which to see, understand, and connect with the world in which we live—and in turn, allows us to live a richer and fuller life.

REFERENCES

- American Library Association. (2011). *ACRL Visual literacy competency standards for higher education*. <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/visualliteracy>
- Anderson, E. (2016). Learning from an artistically crafted moment: Valuing aesthetic experience in the student teachers' drama education. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 17(1), 1–19.
- Andrelichik, H., & O'Neill Schmitt, R. (2014). Students' perception of success in the art classroom. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 15(13), 1–24.
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191–215.
- Barone, T. (2012). *Arts based research*. Sage Publications, Inc.
- Barthes, R. (1975). *The pleasure of the text*. Hill and Lang.
- Barthes, R. (1980). *Camera lucida*. Hill and Wang, A division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Benton, J. (2002). *An investigation of the effects of including studio production activities in an adult art appreciation course* [Dissertation]. Florida State University.
- Berenson, B. (1949). *Sketch for a self-portrait*. Pantheon Books.
- Bottoef, E. A. (1947). A study comparing two methods of developing art appreciation with college students. *The Journal of Educational Psychology*, 38(1), 17–44.

- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77–101.
- Brinkmann, S. (2018). *Philosophies of qualitative research*. Oxford University Press.
- Brown, & Jeanneret, N. (2015). Re-engaging at-risk youth through at-the evolution program. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 16(14), 1–18.
- Busbea, S. D. (2006). *The effect of constructivist learning environments of student learning in an undergraduate art appreciation course* [Dissertation]. The University of North Texas.
- Cambridge University Press. (2019). *Appreciate*. In *Cambridge academic content dictionary*. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/appreciate>
- Cambridge University Press. (2019). *Appreciation*. In *Cambridge academic content dictionary* <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/appreciation>
- Cambridge University Press. (2019). *Knowledge*. In *Cambridge academic content dictionary*. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/knowledge>
- Cambridge University Press. (2019). *Learning*. In *Cambridge academic content dictionary*. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/learning>
- Cambridge University Press. (2019). *Value*. In *Cambridge academic content dictionary*. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/value>
- Chung, S. K. (2009). Autobiographical portraits of four female adolescents: Implication for teaching critical visual culture. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 10(11). [www.http://www.ijea.org/v10n11/](http://www.ijea.org/v10n11/)
- Ciganko, R. (2000). Embedding life issues in cultural narratives for the third millennium. *Art Education*, 33–39.

- Cobb, E. (1977). *The ecology of the imagination in childhood* (revised e-book edition (2015). Columbia University Press.
- Crane, W. (1892). *The claims of decorative art*. The Riverside Press.
- Denzin, N., K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). Strategies of inquiry. In *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed., pp. 243–250). Sage Publications, Inc.
- Detlefsen, J. D. (2012). A conversation about a/r/tography: What are the qualities of living inquiry that foster a qualitative whole in art education? *Visual Arts Research*, 38(2), 71–82.
- Dewey, J. (1897). My pedagogic creed. *The School Journal*, LIV(3), 77–80.
- Dewey, J. (1910). *How we think*. D.C. Heath & Company.
- Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education*.
<https://www.fulltextarchive.com/page/Democracy-and-Education/>
- Dewey, J. (1922). Valuation and experimental knowledge. *The Philosophical Review*, 31(4), 325–351.
- Dewey, J. (1934). *Art as experience*. The Berkley Publishing Group Published by the Penguin Group.
- Dewey, J. (1939). Theory of valuation. *International Encyclopedia of Unified Science*, II(4), 1–67.
- Dirkx, J. M., Mezirow, J., & Cranton, P. (2006). Musings and reflections on the meaning, context, and process of transformative learning: A dialogue between John M. Dirkx and Jack Mezirow. *Transformative Education*, 4(2), 123–139.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1541344606287503>

- Dudovskiy, J. (2019). *Interpretivism research philosophy*. Research-Methodology.
<https://research-methodology.net/>
- Eisner, E. (1997). *Educating artistic vision*. The Macmillian Company.
- Eisner, E. (2002). *The Arts and the creation of mind*. Yale University Press.
- Eisner, E. (2003). The Arts and the creation of mind. *Language Arts*, 80(5).
- Eisner, E. (2009). What can education learn from the arts. *Art Education*, March, 6–9.
- Elbow, P. (2000). *Everyone can write: Essays toward a hopeful theory of writing and teaching writing*. Oxford University Press.
- Erlanson, D. A., Harris, E. L., Skipper, B. L., & Allen, S. D. (1993). *Doing naturalistic inquiry: A guide to methods*. Sage Publications, Inc.
- Fichner-Rathus, L. (2017). *Understanding art*. Cengage Learning.
<https://faculty.cengage.com/titles/9781285859293>
- Fine, R. (2018, December 18). *Fine arts education matters: How shrinking budgets deepen inequalities*. Oklahoma Policy Institute. <https://okpolicy.org/fine-arts-education-matters-how-shrinking-budgets-deepen-inequalities/>
- Flavell, J. (2020). *The developmental psychology of Jean Piaget* (Kindle). Barakaldo Books.
- Foundations Recovery Network. (n.d.). Art therapy. Retrieved May 22, 2019, from <https://www.dualdiagnosis.org/treatment-therapies-for-dual-diagnosis-patients/art-therapy/>
- Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of mind. The theory of multiple intelligences*. Basic Books.

- Ghanbari, S. (2015). Learning across disciplines: A collective case study of two university programs that integrate the arts with STEM. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 16(7), 1–21.
- Goldkuhl, G. (2012). Pragmatism vs interpretivism in qualitative information systems research. *European Journal of Information Systems*, 21, 135–146.
- Gordon, P. (2019). *Art matters: A contemporary approach to art appreciation*. Oxford University Press.
- Greene, M. (2001). *Variations on a blue guitar*. Teachers College Press.
- Grube, V. (2015). Something happens in room 13: Bringing truths into the world. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 16(16), 1–16.
- Gustlin, D., & Gustlin, Z. (2019, October 10). *A world perspective of art appreciation*. Humanities LibreTexts.
[https://human.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Art/A_World_Perspective_of_Art_Appreciation_\(Gustlin_and_Gustlin\)](https://human.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Art/A_World_Perspective_of_Art_Appreciation_(Gustlin_and_Gustlin))
- Guyotte, K., Sochacka, N., Costantino, T. K., & Walther, J. (2015). Collaborative creativity in STEAM: Narratives of art education students' experiences in transdisciplinary spaces. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 16(15).
- Haberlin, S. (2017). Using arts-based research to explore peak experiences in five gifted children. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 18(24), 1–22.
- Hanquinet, L. (2013). Visitors to modern and contemporary art museums: Towards a new sociology of “cultural profiles.” *The Sociological Review*, 61, 790–813.
- HarperCollins (2019). *Design-studio*. In *Collins Dictionary.com*
<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/design-studio>

- Harris, E. (2018, Fall). *Trustworthiness Table* [Course documents] from Qualitative Research II.
- Heaton, R., & Crumpler, A. (2017). Sharing mindfulness: A moral practice for artist teachers. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 18(26), 1–20.
- Heise, D. (2014). Steeling and resilience. *Art Education*, 67(3), 26–30.
- Hunter-Doniger, T., & Sydow, L. (2016). A journey from STEM to STEAM: A middle school case study. *The Clearing House*, 89(4–5), 159–166.
- Iser, W. (1978). *The act of reading: A theory of aesthetic response*. John Hopkins University Press
- Jackson, P. (1998). *John Dewey and the lessons of art*. Yale University Press.
- Krathwohl, D. R. (2002). A revision of Bloom’s Taxonomy: An overview. *Theory into practice*, 41(4), 212–219.
- Langer, S. (1942). *Philosophy in a new key: A study in a symbolism of reason rite, and art* (3rd, Kindle ed.). Harvard University Press.
- Lessing, E. (n.d.). *Photograph of the Minoan toreador fresco*.
<https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-sites-places/biblical-archaeology-sites/minoan-frescoes-at-tel-kabri-2/>
- Lipe, A. W., Ward, K. C., Watson, A. T., Manley, K., Keen, R., Kelly, J., & Clemmer, J. (2012). The effects of an arts intervention program in a community mental health setting: A collaborative approach. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 39, 25–30.
- Oklahoma State Department of Education. (2021). *2021 Core curriculum graduation checklist*.

<https://sde.ok.gov/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/2021%20Core%20Curriculum%20Graduation%20Checklist.pdf>

Parson, M. (1987). *How we understand art: A cognitive account of the development of aesthetic understanding*. Cambridge University Press.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Sage Publications, Inc.

Pavlou, V., & Athanasiou, G. (2014). An interdisciplinary approach for understanding artworks: The role of music in visual arts education. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 15(11), 1–24.

Perniola, M. (1995). *Enigmas: The Egyptian moment in art and society*. Verso.

Plato, L., & Meskin, A. (2013). Aesthetic value: Unedited draft entry forthcoming. In *Encyclopedia of Quality of Life Research*. Springer.

Plouffe, D. (2017). *Art appreciation*. Cognella Academic Publishing.

Preece, C., Kerrigan, E., & O'Reilly, D. (2016). Framing the work: The composition of value in the visual arts. *European Journal of Marketing*, 50(7/8), 1377–1398.

Rose, G. (2016). *Visual methodologies* (4th ed.). Sage Publications, Ltd.

Spear, A. (2011). Steam: Experts make case for adding arts to stem. *Education Week*.

<https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/steam-experts-make-case-for-adding-arts-to-stem/2011/12?tkn=UZNF%2BMiYoLmipbRL2XKiLQ0Vmx1S1z7PVU5%2F&cmp=clp-edweek>

Stecker, R. (2012). Artistic value defended. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 70(4).

- Stickley, T., & Eades, M. (2013). Arts on prescription: A qualitative outcome study. *Pu*, 127(May), 727–734.
- Stride, Y., & Cutcher, A. (2015). Manifesting resilience in the secondary school: An investigation of the relationship dynamic in visual arts classrooms. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 16(11), 1–17.
- Summers, P. (2018). The gravity of the decline of arts education. In *The spirit of this place: How music illuminates the human spirit* (pp. 100–104). University of Chicago Press. <https://doi-org.argo.library.okstate.edu/10.7208/9780226095240>
- Tutt, K. (2014). U.S. arts education requirements. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 115, 93–97.
- United States Census Bureau. (2010). <https://www.census.gov/en.html>
- Vygotsky, L. (1971). *Psychology of art* (English Translation). The M.I.T. Press.
- Williams, P. (2012). *Photograph of Minoan blue monkey fresco*. <https://www.pinterest.de/pin/167899892336471397/>
- Williams, T. L. (2007). “Reading” the painting: Exploring visual literacy in the primary grades. *The Reading Teacher*, 60(7), 636–642.
- Winnicott, D. W. (1986). *Home is where we start from: Essays by a psychoanalyst*. W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- WynSculley, C. (2012). A working definition of critical citizenship. *Critical Citizenship*. <https://criticalcitizenship.wordpress.com/2012/01/17/hello-world/>
- Yilmaz, D. (2015). A qualitative study to understand the social and emotional needs of the gifted adolescents, who attend the science and arts centers in Turkey. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 10(8), 1109–1120.

Zimmerman, M. J., & Bradley, B. (2019). Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic value. In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Edward N. Zalta).

<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2019/entries/value-intrinsic-extrinsic>

APPENDIX A

FINAL REFLECTION AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Final Reflection Questionnaire

1. Throughout the semester, we discussed several ways art is valued. We also discussed how appreciating differs from valuing: Appreciating is something you understand, recognize, acknowledge, admire, realize, etc. where valuing is something that you prize, cherish, treasure, hold dear, transforms you, etc. In 3-5 sentences, describe the ways art may be valued, and then describe how you value art.
2. In 3-5 sentences, describe your experience of creating the final art project. What was your process of coming up with the idea and your process of doing the work?
3. In 3-5 sentences, describe your feelings about the work when you finished it. Did it turn out how you envisioned it? Describe any problems or frustrations you encountered.
4. After going back and tracing your creative process. Are there things you would have done differently? Describe what you learned from the process?
5. In 3 or more sentences Discuss your experience about viewing, discussing, interpreting, and judging art from history that others have highly valued. Did these experiences influence your creative process? Did these experiences influence how you value art?
6. During the semester, we talked about art and its connections to politics, society, culture, among other things. Describe your view on the ways artists may or may not contribute to society through their creations. Does art benefits individuals or society? Explain.
7. I would like for you to think about your progress through the semester and then identify the 3 experiences that you feel contributed most to your valuing of art and why.
8. In 3- 5 sentences, discuss what you feel were the high and low points throughout the semester and any changes to your thinking about art from the beginning of the semester to the end.
9. In 3-5 sentences, describe your feelings about responding to questions or expressing your viewpoint in a creative (visual) way.

10. From the experiences of ascribing value that you have applied in this course, describe any ways you feel could transfer to other areas of your life (school, family, friends, activities, etc.).

Focus Group Interview Questions

Some of these questions are similar to what you have already been asked but now were talking to each other about it

1. We've talked a lot about value throughout the course. Talk a little bit about your views of what it means to value something?
 - Follow up question: Did you always feel that way?
2. In your reflection questionnaire, I asked you the different ways art is valued and then how you valued art. Talk a little bit about how you value art.
 - a. Follow up question: Have you always valued art this way?
3. I'm interested in knowing how you felt when you were first asked to create art in an Art appreciation class? Were you surprised, upset, etc.-talk a little about what you went through.
4. Talk a little bit about your feelings about creating art in an Art Appreciation class now after you've done it.
5. From time-to-time, I have asked you to analyze your classmates' art. Talk about how you felt about doing that the first time I asked you? What did you think?
6. One of the things people often do in an art appreciation course is looking at art history. I'm wondering how you feel about the assignments in art history. Talk about your experiences.
7. If you think of journey, you stop and look at sites and you have to stop at a gas station or perhaps fixes a flat tire. If you think of this class as a journey, we did quite a lot of different activities and assignments such as:
 - Reviewed/lectures of major artworks from history, discussing their political, societal and cultural significance.
 - Discussion assignments about different artworks from history.
 - modeling techniques, face-vase, 1 & 2-point perspective worksheet
 - Color Theory Worksheet
 - Section of a class mural-proportion, drawing and color.
 - Bringing an object to class that speaks to you
 - Puzzle Piece design using an element and principle of art.
 - Art Criticism Paper
 - Photography- 3 photos of what you consider to be artistic
 - Dada "Chance" collage
 - Artwork that reflects your valuation of art.
 - Responding to other classmates' discussions, artwork.

How would you describe your semester's journey? Did you have some high points? Did you have some low points? Did high points turn in to low points or visa versa. At the end of the journey—how do you feel about it all.

8. How has this experience influenced you? And It doesn't matter what you talk about. You can talk about your personal life, you can talk about your school life, etc.
9. You have to take 6 Humanities credits for your degree. You may have ended up in Art Appreciation for any number of reasons—including there was nothing left to take or this course was the only one that fit into your schedule. Now that you have taken Art Appreciation, how do you feel about taking it to fulfill you Humanities requirement? What are your takeaways?
10. During the semester, we talked about art and its connections to politics, society, culture, among other things. Describe your view on the ways artists may or may not contribute to society through their creations. Does art benefits individuals or society? Explain.

APPENDIX B

Trustworthiness Table

Technique	Results	Examples
Prolonged Engagement	Build trust Develop rapport Build relationships Obtain wide scope of data Obtain accurate data	In the Art Appreciation classroom 2.5 hours per week from January 13, 2020 – March 15, 2020. In virtual class zoom meeting for 1plus hours per week from March 23, 2020 to May 5 2020; built trust and developed rapport through weekly classroom discussions over art that was reviewed from history through lecture; Collected class assignments that became data for the study that included art production, history, aesthetic and valuing responses. Presented study and asked for consent to students after the class was finished and final grades where assigned so students didn't feel pressured to participate. I revealed the questions before the group focus groups which contributed to trust building.
Persistent observation	Obtain in-depth data Obtain accurate data Sort relevancies from irrelevancies	Observed both classes during class. Kept observation field notes making note of relevant occurrences. All students responded with their unique responses to same questions to all assignments given.
Triangulation	Verify data	Used using multiple data sources such as class and virtual class observations, student documents, student artifacts and focus group interviews from all the students who consented to participate in the study contributed the verifying the data.
Peer Debriefing	Find alternative explanations	Shared interview questions and findings with doctoral peers.

Member checking	Test categories, interpretations, or constructions	Shared interview transcriptions with participants to verify their words were
Reflexive Journal	Generate data for emergent design	Took notes after each class period and recorded by day and time of my reflections of what occurred in field notebook.
Thick Description	Data base for transferability judgment and vicarious experience for the reader	Included participant quotes in findings form art production, history, aesthetic and valuing responses. Included artifact examples of student and group artwork in findings.
Purposive Sampling	Gains maximum amount of data regarding the subject	Purposeful selection of students taking Spring 2020 Art Appreciation class.
Audit Trail	Adequate record keeping	Cataloged all documents, field notes, artifacts and focus group interviews.
<i>Note: Table from Dr. Edward Harris' Qualitative Research II course documents (Fall 2018).</i>		

Table 2

APPENDIX C

IRB APPROVAL AND CONSENT FORM

IRB APPROVAL



Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: 02/14/2020
Application Number: IRB-20-77
Proposal Title: College Undergraduate Students' Valuing of Art in a General Education, Art Appreciation Course at one Midwestern, Two-Year, Community College

Principal Investigator: Lori Palmer
Co-Investigator(s):
Faculty Adviser: Virginia Worley
Project Coordinator:
Research Assistant(s):

Processed as: Exempt
Exempt Category:

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in 45CFR46.

This study meets criteria in the Revised Common Rule, as well as, one or more of the circumstances for which continuing review is not required. As

Principal Investigator of this research, you will be required to submit a status report to the IRB triennially.

The final versions of any recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are available for download from IRBManager. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be approved by the IRB. Protocol modifications requiring approval may include changes to the title, PI, adviser, other research personnel, funding status or sponsor, subject population composition or size, recruitment, inclusion/exclusion criteria, research site, research procedures and consent/assent process or forms.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any unanticipated and/or adverse events to the IRB Office promptly.
4. Notify the IRB office when your research project is complete or when you are no longer affiliated with Oklahoma State University.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact the IRB Office at 405-744- 3377 or irb@okstate.edu.

Sincerely,
Oklahoma State University IRB

Participant Consent Form

Research Subject Consent Form:

Title: College Undergraduate Students' Valuing of Art in a Humanities Art Appreciation Course at a Midwestern, Two-Year, Junior College

Protocol No.:

Sponsor/Advisor: Dr. Virginia Worley

Investigator: Lori Palmer

Daytime Phone Number: [REDACTED]

- You are being asked to participate in a research study.
- Before you agree, the investigator must tell you about (i) the purposes, procedures, and duration of the research; (ii) any procedures which are experimental; (iii) any reasonably foreseeable risks, discomforts, and benefits of the research; (iv) any potentially beneficial alternative procedures or treatments; (v) how confidentiality will be maintained.
- When applicable, the investigator will present key information to you before presenting other information.
- Where applicable, the investigator must also tell you about (i) any available compensation or medical treatment if injury occurs; (ii) the possibility of unforeseeable risks; (iii) circumstances when the investigator may halt your participation; (iv) any added costs to you; (v) what happens if you decide to stop participating; (vi) when you will be told about new findings which may affect your willingness to participate; (vii) how many people will be in the study, (viii) use of your biologic specimens for commercial profit, (ix) whether you will be told about your research results, (x) whether the research might include whole genome sequencing (xi) information about the research has been or will be submitted for inclusion in a clinical trial registry, and (xii) future research use of your information or biologic specimens.
- Because we are sheltering in place, due to Covid-19, I am asking for and recording your oral rather than your written consent. You may contact the research team at the phone number above any time you have questions about the research.
- You may contact the IRB at 918-561-1400 if you have questions about your rights as a research subject or what to do if you are injured.
- Your participation in this research is voluntary, and you will not be penalized or lose benefits if you refuse to participate or decide to stop.

I have already asked you if you feel comfortable consenting orally in the whole class setting. Based on your response, I will call out your name, and you will answer orally either “yes” or “no.” If you are uncomfortable consenting publically or do not consent to me using all the sources of information, I will ask you individually for your oral consent in a separate, one-on-one, Zoom meeting.

- Orally saying “yes” means that the research study, including the above information, has been described to you orally, and that you voluntarily agree to participate.

Name of Participant:

You are invited to participate in a research study with me, Mrs. Lori Palmer, a doctoral student at Oklahoma State University. This form outlines the purposes of this study and provides a description of your involvement and rights as a participant.

The purposes of this study are:

1. to examine college students’ perceptions of their experiences with and valuing of art during their entry-level, college, Art Appreciation course designed to meet the 3-credit, Humanities, General Education requirement most students take for their degrees. The duration of participants’ involvement will be through the spring 2020 Semester. Any participant involvement after the semester will be to confirm accuracy.
2. to use the research for my dissertation and for any presentations and publications based upon this research. The study will employ qualitative research methods including student-generated documents, student surveys, focus groups, field observations and field notes, and artifacts.

Your identity will not be specifically revealed in my dissertation or in any research presentations and publications that emerge from that dissertation.

Your consent to participate means you consent to my using information from your individually and collaboratively generated documents, survey, focus groups, my classroom observations and field notes, and your individually and collaboratively generated artifacts.

As the researcher, I agree to meet the following conditions:

Participation is not required. Your participation does not influence your grade. To ensure that your grade is not affected, the grade you currently have on Blackboard, after I record

your final bonus points and drop your lowest test grade, is your final grade for the course whether or not you choose to consent or not to consent to participate in this study. If you choose not to participate and do not consent, I will remove any work you submitted, any interview contributions, and any observation field notes from the study. Also, to protect you, the demographic survey you take on Blackboard is completely anonymous; I will not know how you responded.

1. The focus groups that were audiotaped will be transcribed for accuracy. I will give you a copy of the transcript so that you may check to see if I have captured your words correctly and make changes if I have not. Your identity will not be revealed in my dissertation or any research presentations and publications that emerge from that dissertation. At the end of the study, the tapes will be erased or destroyed.
2. Pictures will be part of the study. Your identity will not be revealed in my dissertation or any research presentations and publications that emerge from that dissertation. If a classmate were to see your work pictured in a research journal, that classmate might recognize that work as yours.
3. Your real name will not be used in the dissertation, in any publication, or in any presentation.
4. All of the procedures mentioned above except for a final demographic survey will be from assignments that you submitted or participated in throughout the Art Appreciation course. The demographic survey is completely anonymous and will be used for research purposes. To ensure that your grade is not affected, the grade you currently have on Blackboard, after I record your final bonus points and drop your lowest test grade, is your final grade for the course whether or not you choose to consent or not to consent. If you choose not to participate and do not consent, I will remove any data submitted as part of the course from the study.

No known risks encountered in daily life are associated with this research. You will be allowed to read the transcripts that will be copied verbatim from the interviews to ensure that what I have recorded correctly represents your intentions.

As participant in this research, you are entitled to know the nature of my research. You are free to decline to participate, and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. No penalty exists for withdrawing your participation. Feel free to ask any questions at any time about the nature of the class research activity and the methods I am using. Your suggestions and concerns are important to me. Please contact me or Dr. Virginia Worley, the OSU committee chair person of my dissertation committee should a suggestion or concern arise.

If you agree to full participation, you have agreed to the following:

I agree fully to participate. I have read this consent form. I understand my full participation includes your using student-generated documents, student surveys, my focus group contributions, your field observations and field notes, and my artifacts for research purposes.

Please indicate your willingness to participate in this research process by raising your hand. I will then call out your name confirming your willingness to participate. Orally saying “yes” means that the research study, including the above information, has been described to you orally, and that you voluntarily agree to participate. Your recorded “yes” indicates an acknowledgement of the terms described above and your consent to participate.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER

DATE

05/06/2020

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT WHO PROVIDED ORAL CONSENT DATE

05/06/2020

(The participant and doctoral researcher receive a copy)

APPENDIX D

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

Questions	Final Anonymous Survey Chart														
I self-identify as	Female			Male			Total Participants (both classes)								
	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	31								
	15	4	19	6	6	12									
What is your age?	18-24			25-34			35-44								
	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total						
	20	8	28	0	2	2	1	0	1						
I self-identify as	Native American			White/European American			African American			Native Am. & Mexican			Hispanic/Latino		
	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total
	7	5	12	12	4	16	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1
This semester I am taking	6 credits			9 credits			12 credits			15 credits			18 credits		
	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total
	1	0	1	1	1	2	9	4	13	9	3	12	0	2	2
I am working ___hours	0-5			5-10			11-15			16-20			21-25		
	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total
	5	1	6	1	1	2	0	2	2	1	0	1	1	1	2
	26-30			31-35			36-39			40			40+		
	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total
2	0	2	1	1	2	2	2	4	3	1	4	3	0	3	
If you selected other from above,	Other			Responses to "Other"											
	MWF	TR	Total	MWF						TR					
	3	0	3	I did work a Work-study Program and was working						Before COVID19 I was working 36-40 hours a week					

please write in your answer.				20 hours a week or more depending on my personal life. I could easily go to work if I wanted to, but due to COVID-19 I have chosen to stay at home. I help around my neighborhood and I also babysit on the weekends and get paid by parents' choice	but we just started working again on May 1st.										
The majority of my college expenses are paid by	Financial Aid (loans, grants, etc.)			Parents/Guardians through loans			Grandparents, Out of pocket, not loans			Other (scholarships, grants, family assist)					
	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	1	0	1			
	16	4	20	3	4	7	1	2	3	1	0	1			
As a result of Covid-19, my socioeconomic situation has	Remained the Same			Dropped dramatically			Dropped but still financially stable			Risen					
	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total			
	9	3	12	10	5	15	0	2	2	2	0	2			
Before Covid-19 pandemic, I would have classified my socioeconomic status as:	Low			Middle			High			Prefer not to answer					
	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total			
	3	3	6	15	6	21	1	0	1	2	1	3			
Which of the following best describes you?	I am a first-generation college student			I am a second-generation college student			I am a third- or more generation college student								
	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total						
	8	5	13	8	3	11	5	2	7						
I am taking Art Appreciation as	A requirement for my major						A general education requirement that I wanted to take								
	MWF		TR	Total		MWF		TR	Total						
	8		3	11		13		7	20						
I have declared my major.	Yes			Yes, but I do not know if it is the major I want			No			No but I know the major I want			Other		

	M W F	T R	To tal	M W F	TR	To tal	M W F	T R	To tal	M W F	T R	To tal	M W F	TR	To tal			
	10	6	16	5	2	7	3	2	5	1	0	1	2	0	2			
If you selected other from above, please write your answer here or write in NA	MWF Responses						T/R Responses											
	Honestly confused myself about this question.																	
	I am a general studies major.																	
	I have declared General Education as my current major at Connors, but I plan to move on to IT.																	
I know what I want to major in	Yes						No											
	MWF			TR			Total			MWF			TR			Total		
	16			7			23			5			3			8		
I want to major in	AS Business Admin.			AA Psychology			AS Nursing			AA Gen. Studies			AAS Physical Therapy Asst.					
	M WF	TR	Tot al	M WF	TR	Tot al	M WF	TR	Tot al	M WF	TR	Tot al	M WF	TR	Tot al			
	2	1	3	3	1	4	6	0	6	2	2	4	1	0	1			
	AS Agriculture			AS Physical Educ.			AA Pre-Elem. Educ.			AA Sociology			I do not know or other					
	M WF	TR	Tot al	M WF	TR	Tot al	M WF	TR	Tot al	M WF	TR	Tot al	M WF	TR	Tot al			
2	1	3	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	1	1	5	1	6				
If you selected that you did not know what you wanted to major in or other, please write in what you think you want to major in or write in NA.	MWF Responses						T/R Responses											
	I always wanted to own my own business in cosmetology.																	
	I want to pursue a BT in IT, major in Network Infrastructure. I can do this at OSU-IT, where I already have an AAS in IT.																	
I would recommend to other students that they take an Art Appreciation course	Yes						No											
	MWF			TR			Total			MWF			TR			Total		
	21			10			31			0			0			0		
I see value in taking an Art Appreciation course	Yes						No						Unanswered					

	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total			
	20	10	30	0	0	0	1	0	1			
When I chose this course	I saw value in taking an Art Appreciation course			I did not see value in taking an Art Appreciation course			I saw it as a blow off course					
	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total			
	8	5	13	6	4	10	6	1	7			
Select the statement that best describes your feelings about your experiences in Art Appreciation:	I have come to value art			I already valued art but now value it more			I already valued art and my valuing of art has remained the same			Other		
	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Total	MWF	TR	Other
	10	4	14	8	5	13	3	1	4	?	?	?
If you selected other from above, please write in your answer here on write in NA	MWF Responses						T/R Responses					
	I never really knew how much art is until I took this course. Art is really something amazing to look at.											

Table 3

APPENDIX E

DATA COLLECTION CHART

Data Collection Chart					
Time Period Color Coding	Early-Semester Time Period (Weeks 1-5)	Mid-Semester Time Period (Weeks 6-11)	End of Semester Time Period (Weeks 12-16)		
1) Pre-instruction Responses					
Week #	Assignment	Assignment Description	M W F 20	T R 10	Total Participants 30
Week 1	Pre-Instruction Questionnaire	Student responses to questions regarding their past art experiences, art they like, art they dislike and how they feel they value art.	18	9	27
2) Art Production Responses					
Week #	Assignment	Assignment Description	M W F	T R	Total Participants
Week 2-3	Art Worksheets (technique)	Student responses about doing art worksheets (various art techniques (Wk. 2-shading, perspective and proportion—Wk. 3-color wheel).	12	6	18
Week 2-4	Art Proportion Project	Student responses about doing individual/group project of Mayan fresco copy.	18	10	28
Week 10/11	Puzzle Piece Creation	Student response transcripts of Zoom meeting recording about decorating individual puzzle piece focusing on one element and one principle of art.	13	9	22
Week 13	Three Photographs	Student responses to assignment of taking 3 photographs (one in natural world you find beautiful/artistic, one in human made world you find beautiful/artistic and one in natural or human made world that many would	18	9	27

		label “ugly: but you think is somehow beautiful or artistic).			
Week 14	Dada Chance Collage	Student responses to assignment of students making their own “chance collage” by cutting out images or abstract shapes from a magazine or newspaper, putting them in bag/container, pour them out over paper and past pieces where they fall.	13	7	20
Week 15	Final Reflection Questionnaire- Student responses to creating artwork	Student responses in the final reflection questionnaire (questions: 2, 3, 4 & 9) Student responses to creating an artwork that visually represented how they valued art and any other responses concerning art production assignments done throughout the semester.	19	9	28
Week 15	Focus Group Interview- Student responses concerning creating artwork	Student responses in the focus group interview to creating an artwork that visually represented how they valued art any other responses concerning art production assignments done throughout the semester.	20	10	30
Week 16	Finalized Mural Response	Student responses to an optional discussion board to the question: What do you think of the mural after it has been unified by the instructor?	13	8	21
3) Art History Responses					
Week #	Assignment	Assignment Description	M W F	T R	Total Participants
Week 1	Pre-Instruction Artist/Artworks	Student responses to how many artists and artworks they could name before instruction	16	8	24
Week 2	Artworks from textbook chapters 4-5 (Mesopotamia and Egypt)	Student responses of artwork they found most interesting, how they thought it was valued and views of how it is valued today from chapters 4-5.	16	7	25
Week 5	Greek art-classical period reflection discussion	Student responses of their analysis of the meaning of classical Greek art/how the Greeks valued art and how contemporary society values art.	15	4	20

Week 6	Roman architecture reflection discussion	Student responses of their analysis to the construction, style, and purpose of Roman buildings and structure, how important were aesthetics to Roman architects and engineers and what do the structures suggest about how the ancient Romans valued art?	13	6	19
Week 7	Medieval communal art reflection discussion	Student responses of their perspective about what the communal construction of churches suggest about medieval society and what they valued in art.	12	6	18
Week 8	Renaissance Illusionism reflection discussion	Student responses about their thought of what early Renaissance illusionism suggested about early Renaissance views of artists as creators? How does that view relate to early Renaissance humanism and how they valued art?	12	9	21
Week 9	Last Supper Comparisons	Student responses from their comparisons of Leonardo Da’Vinci’s painting of <i>The Last Supper</i> to Tintoretto’s painting of <i>The Last Supper</i> .	16	5	21
Week 11	Rococo art discussion	Student responses to examining Rococo in its broader social and political context. The values Rococo art celebrated and the concerns displayed in subject matter.	14	8	20
Week 12	Photography discussion	Student responses of their opinions about photography—is it a form in its own right or just a technical and mechanical creation, not the creation of an artist’s own “hand.”	15	8	23
Week 15	Final reflection questionnaire- Students responses to Art’s contribution to society reflection .	Student responses in the final reflection questionnaire (questions: 5 and 6) about their views on the ways artists may or may not contribute to society through their creations and their views on whether art benefits individuals or society.	19	9	28
Week 15	Focus group interview- Students responses to Art’s contribution to	Student responses in the focus group interview about their views on the ways artists may or may not contribute to society through their creations and their views on whether art benefits individuals or society.	20	10	30

	society group discussion				
4) Aesthetic and Critique Responses					
Week #	Assignment	Assignment Description	M W F	T R	Total Participants
Week 5	Object that “speaks” to you	Student responses about how the object they brought to class “speaks” to them.	18	10	28
Week 9	Art viewing in person	Student responses to comparing and contrasting their viewing a picture of a sculpture then seeing the same sculpture in person.	17	9	26
Week 9	Art criticism paper	Student description, analysis, interpretation and judgement of a work of art they chose that was not covered in the textbook.	20	9	29
Week 15	Criticism response of classmate’s artwork	Student responses to another classmates artwork that represents their valuing of art.	18	9	28
5) Valuing Responses					
Week #	Assignment	Assignment Description	M W F	T R	Total Participants
Week 15	Final Reflection Questionnaire- Student responses to valuing questions	(questions: 1, 7, 8 & 10). in the final reflection questionnaire that reflects their views of how art is valued, how they value art, course experiences that contributed to their valuing of art or valuing to other aspects of their lives.	19	9	28
Week 15	Focus Group Interview- Student responses to valuing	from the focus group interview that reflects their views of how art is valued, how they value art, course experiences that contributed to their valuing of art or valuing to other aspects of their lives.	20	10	30
6) Post-Instruction Responses					
Week 1	Assignment	Assignment Description	M W F	T R	Total Participants
Week 16	Anonymous demographic Survey	Student responses to specific multi-choice demographic and valuing questions.	19	12	31

Table 4

VITA

Lori Anne Palmer

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: STUDENTS' VALUING OF ART IN A HUMANITIES ART
APPRECIATION COURSE AT A MIDWESTERN JUNIOR COLLEGE

Major Field: Education, Professional Education Studies, Arts and Humanities

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Education,
Professional Education Studies, Arts and Humanities at Oklahoma State
University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 2022.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies at the
University of Oklahoma at Norman, Oklahoma in May, 2010.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in Art Education at
Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma in May 2000.

Experience:

Division Chair of Communication and Fine Arts, Connors State College,
Warner, OK July 2017-Present

Humanities Instructor at Connors State College, Warner, OK July 2013-Present

Adjunct Art Education Instructor, Northeastern State University, Tahlequah,
OK, August 2021-Present

Art and Music Teacher, 3rd-12th grade, Canadian Public School District,
Canadian, OK, August 2000-May 2013

Professional Memberships:

Oklahoma and National Art Education Association

ⁱ Please note that some experts do not distinguish between artistic and aesthetic experiences.

ⁱⁱ Detlefsen (2012) uses "a/r/tography methodology," a methodology she asserts "embraces relational acts of living inquiry that are participatory and evolutionary" in order to explore a "relational understanding of community," art, and research with each participant assuming roles as artist, teacher, and researcher (p. 72.)

ⁱⁱⁱ Philosophers continue to examine the relation between learning and knowledge; between information and knowledge; and between experience and knowledge. Because philosophers throughout history have written books in which they work through the relation among these terms, I have chosen to use their common dictionary definitions. To do otherwise would be to shift focus from my project and entangle my examination of value and valuing artistic experiences with questions of meaning and knowledge evolving from experience.

^{iv} Much of what educators are "passing down" to their students is not knowledge at all but information. Students would then have to use this information in conjunction with experiences to construct knowledge.

^v A design studio is a space where an artist or designer plan and create new designs (*Design-Studio*, 2019). For these researchers' study, the researcher uses a "transdisciplinary design studio" focused on team collaboration from differing disciplines to create or design solutions to presented problems (Guyotte et al., 2015).

^{vi} As most educators know, many elementary teachers with little or no visual art training have absorbed art education responsibilities since administrators have eliminated art educators and therefore quality art education from elementary schools.

^{vii} To foster new knowledge construction, visual culture educators also facilitate visual culture experiences using such contemporary, visual forms as television and the internet (Chung, 2009).

^{viii} Australia has a high, secondary-student, dropout rate: one fourth of secondary students drop out of school (Brown & Jeanneret, 2015).

^{ix} Evolution-employees tracked student participants for three months after they completed the eight-week program to learn if they re-engaged in "education or training" (Brown & Jeanneret, 2015, p. 6).

^x First formed in the 1980's, the Columbus Group consists of educators, parents and psychologists who first met in Columbus, Ohio and redefined "giftedness" to focus primarily on one's experience rather than his/her achievements. The Columbus Group is currently affiliated with the Institute for the Study of Advanced Development (<https://www.gifteddevelopment.com/isad/columbus-group>).