A Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist Approach to Art Education:  
A Framework for Social Justice through Art Curriculum

DISSERTATION

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By

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Abstract

The primary question that framed this study was “How does a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to art education facilitate the three broad goals of social justice (a) increase personal awareness, (b) expand knowledge and (c) encourage action among youth?” This inquiry was formulated based on a previous research project that indicated the need for a multicultural and reconstructionist approach in art education. Some art education curriculum has been identified as hegemonic in that it assists in maintaining the status quo. Curriculum can be oppressive if it consistently uses voices only from the dominant population and continues to neglect the needs of its receivers. Therefore, an art education curriculum that promotes inclusivity, transformation, social change and social reconstruction was the goal for this research. In addition, this study worked to examine the results of the implementation of this approach.

To attend to this objective, this study utilized participatory action research (PAR), a methodology theoretically driven by social justice and advocacy for change on a local level. Using this methodology initiated stakeholder engagement and helped to reveal the significance of student voice in curriculum.

Youth who attended Kaleidoscope Youth Center (KYC), in Columbus, Ohio, were participants in this study. Weekly artmaking workshops were held at KYC. Each workshop began with a discussion about a social justice issue that was chose by the
youth. The workshops ended with an artmaking activity that allowed the youth to explore and communicate personal feelings about that specific issue. The youths’ artworks served as data to be analyzed. A curriculum map that emerged from the student-researcher discussion and collaboration served as data as well. Additional qualitative methods such as journaling, observations, reflections, and interviews helped to obtain data as well. The youth at KYC organized an exhibition to share the artwork that was made during the artmaking workshops. An exhibition survey was given to the audience. This research method intended to measure the influence of Sleeter and Grant’s (2007a) multicultural and social reconstructionist approach outside of the classroom walls. The surveys attempted to address how the approach was communicated through the youths’ artwork and how the artwork additionally shared knowledge and/or ignited an interest in social justice issues. Data analysis included coding and categorizing information into predetermined foci. Emergent themes were then identified by using content analysis.

The results of the study revealed that a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach in the art education classroom did facilitate the three broad goals of social justice by its ability to give the youth a voice, question power and authority, practice democracy in the classroom, and collaborate in knowledge creation and knowledge sharing.
Dedication

First and foremost, this dissertation is dedicated to my father, Maurice Boyd, the most supportive, hardworking and caring human being I knew. I only wish we could share this moment together. I would not be where I am without you. I love you always and look forward to seeing you again one day.

I also want to dedicate this work to my husband, Jason Acuff, and my children, Jata Acuff and Jaysin Acuff. All of our names should be on this dissertation document because it was a family effort. Without your love, support and patience, this accomplishment would not have been possible. I love you all to no extent.
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Also, I want to thank Glenn Zermeno, director of Kaleidoscope Youth Center, in Columbus, Ohio, for being so open to my research. I was welcomed and treated with respect at all times. The amazing KYC youth taught me more about myself than any other art education teaching experience I have had. I thank the KYC youth who trusted me in their space and in their world and who opened up their hearts to show me something new.
Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends. I am especially thankful for my mother, Sharon Boyd for her relentless spirit and unwavering love. I called on that spirit and love to pull me through at times. I am grateful to my vibrant, inspiring sisters Freda and Trese for lending their ears and hearts during this process as well. To all of my friends, old and new, I appreciate the love and laughs you provided to help me along the way.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background to the Study

Twelve, rosy cheeked, gap toothed seven year olds listened attentively as I stood in front of the museum education classroom to teach the summer camp class titled, ‘The Plight of Picasso.’ All I could see was their blond and brown stringy hair as they looked down to steadily mimic the brushstroke that I had just made on the 24 X 32 inch canvas.

Twenty-five, caramel and mocha skinned, gap toothed seven year olds listened attentively as I stood in front of the elementary school classroom to teach an after school art class titled, “All About Me.” All I could see was their big brown eyes as they waited for me to communicate the next step in creating their self portrait with cardboard, construction paper and markers.

The above descriptions are personal encounters that initiated my investment in researching the relationship between curriculum and populations in community art programs. The excerpts suggest how curriculum varies, often depending on its audience of learners. Primarily, I am concerned about knowledge implicit in often lopsided curricula (hooks, 1994; Knight, 2006). Minorities are offered art curriculum embracing intergroup relationships, as well as fostering relationships amongst those from other races, especially the dominant population. These programs, often called “outreach” or “at-risk,” inadvertently publicize, “I am different!” On the other hand, the mainstream, White middle or upper class students are offered curriculum based primarily on Western art principles, which communicates, “I am the standard!” (Derman-Sparks & Ramsey,
Consequently, there are strong differences that arise in educational and social orientation outcomes between the two groups served in these programs.

I struggle to understand the educational benefits of populations being separated in these institutions of community learning. In *What if All the Kids are White: Anti-Bias Multicultural Education with Young Children and Families*, Louise Derman-Sparks and Patricia G. Ramsey (2006) illustrate the effects that accompany such divisions in populations.

‘Mommy, I’m really glad that I’m white,’ a 4-year old child remarked to his mother, who was driving him home from his preschool, which maintains two separate programs, one for affluent, mostly white children, and a subsidized one for low income children, mostly of color. As this quotation illustrates, children readily notice, absorb and behaviorally reflect patterns of racial and economic privilege that permeate their environments. (p. 39)

These varying systems promote hierarchies between cultures. I recognize how some art programs perpetuate this ignorance and rejection of difference. I identify the need for programs that engage in curriculum that aims to make change and helps to restructure the unjust systems that were created long ago. Therefore, being attentive to these issues, I suggest an alternative approach to teaching art curriculum that embraces social justice and collaboration amongst diverse people. A multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to education works to disrupt cultural hierarchies by encouraging teachers to
embrace counter-hegemonic teaching resources. In addition, this approach’s use of cooperative learning strategies allows teachers to highlight and honor the similarities and differences amongst people.

In 2007, I completed a thesis study in which I observed two populations of teens participating in two different community art programs, located in Austin, Texas. The first population, labeled “at-risk” (predominantly low income, people of color) participated in a program entitled Young Artists @ Arthouse.¹ The other population, labeled “mainstream” (predominantly White, middle or upper class) students engaged in a program entitled Club Arthouse.² Through observing both populations, I identified their need for an art education curriculum that takes a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach. This was evident through their candid conversations; which revealed biases, prejudices and implicit White supremacist thinking and privilege³. Additionally, after observations, I made claims that suggested that all of the teens would greatly benefit from a community art program that could accommodate both groups of students

¹ Young Artists @ Arthouse is a three-month art program for high school students in underserved areas of East and North Austin. The program is focused on helping students with a strong interest in art develop their art portfolio and learn more about opportunities in the arts. [Additionally] students will work directly with a local artist. Art supplies, transportation, and lunches will be provided. Each session culminates with a student exhibition and reception in the Jones Center’s Project Gallery. (Arthouse, 2007)

² Club Arthouse is an intensive program at Arthouse for high school students who have a strong interest in visual arts, allowing them to delve more deeply into contemporary art one afternoon each week. Activities emphasize learning about Austin’s contemporary art community, including career opportunities. During our weekly meetings, Club Arthouse participants meet artists, make art, take field trips to other galleries and artists’ studios, and get a behind-the-scenes view of Arthouse and our exhibitions. (Arthouse, 2007)

³ White supremacist thinking includes circumstances of privilege. This privilege allows the dominant group to believe that the “normal” way to be or understand the world is the way the dominant population is or understands it. White supremacist thought is imbedded even in those who are not a part of the dominant population. While these “othered” groups may not have the privilege, they have internalized those same understandings of “normal.” Western/White conceptions are always the frame of reference. See more in Definition of Terms 6 and 7.
simultaneously, instead of offering separate programs to the different populations. To support this assertion, I specifically noted any commonalities and differences that the students’ had that could support possible relationships among the students. Conclusively, I found that the students shared personal and social interests, such as family, politics, school issues, as well as the commitment to advance contemporary art. There were also differences amongst the groups, which would support an effective cooperative learning environment.

After concluding the thesis study, the next stage in my research was to implement an art curriculum with a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach. This was to be done in a diverse setting in which cooperative learning strategies could be effectively utilized. It is critical that curriculum and the classroom reflect the authentic racial, ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of our society. Omitting groups of people who have contributed to society’s growth indirectly teaches prejudice and disrespect of others (Banks, 2004; Tatum, 1997).

As suggested by Hicks (1994), we live in a society divided along hierarchical lines of class, gender, race, sexual orientation, ability/disability, religious belief, and lifestyle; therefore, arts education cannot help but be politically constituted. It is imperative that we are aware of what we teach and how we choose to teach it because our actions can either reinforce traditional social patterns of control and submission or question them in an effort to weaken them. I believe utilizing a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to teaching in the art classroom helps “promote social structural equality and cultural pluralism,” as well as supports “alternative life styles and equal opportunity”
I identify the art classroom as an ideal space for teaching social justice. Peggy Albers, the author of the 1999 article, “Art Education and the Possibility of Social Change,” shares my sentiments. Albers (1999) writes,

Educators must not ignore the propensity of the visual arts to make visible ideologies that position some groups as more privileged than others. By acknowledging that “difficult” artworks will arise, we can begin to openly discuss such issues that involve gender, race, and homosexuality and, with time and thoughtful engagements and questioning, we can forward art as a powerful way to instigate changes in students’ beliefs about themselves and others. (p.11)

Ultimately, contemporary art curriculum should be organized around current social issues that involve race, class, sex, gender and exceptionality. Furthermore, attention should be given to the experiences and perspectives of the many American and non-American groups (Sleeter & Grant, 1994). A multicultural and social reconstructionist approach enables teachers to be successful in attending to the needs of a diverse classroom population. With social justice at its core, a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach creates opportunities to build curriculum around relevant issues that readily connect with students’ lives, instead of teaching abstract ideas that may be lost as soon as the students walk out of the door.

In the text, *Making choices for multicultural education: Five approaches to race, class, and gender*, Sleeter and Grant (1994) address various teaching and learning strategies that can be explored within a multicultural and social reconstructionist
They suggest: “Involve students actively in democratic decision making; build on students’ learning styles, adapt to students’ skill levels; [and] use cooperative learning” (p.211). The latter suggestion, utilizing cooperative learning, is a significant aspect of my study because it supports advocating for and maintaining a diverse classroom. When students learn from one another, not only does academic achievement increase, but the experience helps students develop more positive racial and cultural attitudes (Banks, 2004; hooks, 2003). Cooperative learning strategies support verbalization; which can lead to students’ critical reflection, awareness, (re)organization, differentiation, fine tuning and expansion of knowledge (Van Boxtel, 2000 as cited in Veenman, et al, 2005). Additionally, joint learning situations thrive on student elaborations; a process that allows students to compare varied perspectives, recognize shared meanings, and co-create new knowledge by collaboratively resolving conflicting points of view (Veenman, et al, 2005). There is a significant need for deconstruction of privilege through collective critical practice and a need for the acceptance of more than one voice of authority (hooks, 1994 as cited in Hutzel, 2005).

I recognize that students feel safer when they are surrounded by those like them. For black students, this feeling of safety may be due to the environment being free of racialized stress (hooks, 2003; Tatum, 1997). Consequently, students become more open to learning. However, it must be recognized that it is not the segregation that creates this supportive context for learning; it is the absence of racism (hooks, 2003). This fact is true for all discriminated groups of people. Creating a cooperative learning environment that is integrated in race, gender sexual orientation and ability presents an opportunity for
students to learn through the context of diversity. Additionally, it allows students to be critically conscious of differences, while not allowing those differences to separate them (hooks, 2003).

**Statement of the Problem**

After a rigorous review of literature, I found numerous scholarly art educators who embraced social justice education, as well as supported the tenets of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach, specifically democratic learning and critical questioning. For example, Patricia Stuhr, Christine Ballengee-Morris and Vesta Daniel (2008) offer a text that supports a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach. The authors inform teachers about how to create a learning space that serves as an ideal model of a democratic society, wherein students learn how to care for one another. As a result, the students “feel safe and secure and encourage[d]… to be hopeful, joyful, kind, visionary and affirming” (Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris, & Daniel, 2008, p. 83). In addition, they assert that the goal of social justice in art curriculum is beneficial because it “helps students to view images in a thoughtful manner so they develop democratic ways of thinking and become informed consumers” (Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris, & Daniel, 2008, p.93). Another scholar who intertwines some of the tenets of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach with art education is Dipti Desai. Desai (2000) suggests that the art classroom is an ideal space for investigating how and why certain images are created and maintained. Activities that facilitate this investigation include dissecting damaging stereotypes of groups, studying media construction of certain populations, as
well as exploring the unfair museum practices that erase or silence certain voices of people (Desai, 2000; Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris and Daniel, 2008). Accordingly, students will begin to question “who controls the means for representation, who controls cultural artifacts, and who controls the methods of displaying and exhibiting these artifacts in cultural institutions” (Desai, 2000, p.120). This act of critical questioning is a primary tenet of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach.

Other art educations scholars such as Tom Anderson (2010), Elizabeth Garber (2004), Olivia Gude (2004/2007), Laurie E. Hicks (1994) bell hooks (1994/1995), Karen Hutzel (2004), and Enid Zimmerman (1990) have also offered research about using “art as a means through which social justice goals are achieved” (Garber, 2004, p.16). However, outside of the standout art educators I have listed, I question the praxis of this approach in not only community spaces, but in public school spaces. Suggestions given by these scholars are not often utilized (hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1999) in everyday art classrooms. This may be out of fear of teaching multiculturalism (Gall, 2004), or a result of school bureaucracy that restricts the content of school curriculum. With my research, I aim to present a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach in a way that is less intimidating for teachers who may be concerned about their lack of knowledge about diverse cultures. During my research, I worked with a population of people who had a culture that I was completely unfamiliar with; however, I was successful in teaching in that space. I hope that my experience helps teachers who fear the culturally unknown become more comfortable in these unfamiliar spaces and recognize the accessibility of a multicultural approach in the classroom. My research presents the
approach in a way that allows teachers to visualize themselves using it. This may improve the praxis of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach in the community and school classroom. I add literature to the field that highlights the results of using this approach in hopes that my actions inspire and ignite a more active field of teachers and prospective teachers. In its multidimensionality, this study explores how a multicultural and social reconstructionist art education influences youths’ knowledge and actions towards social justice. In addition, it investigates the dynamics of a diverse youth population as they engage in artmaking cooperatively and collaboratively. I document and analyze the students’ reception to a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to art education. I note how this curriculum approach affects the youths’ artmaking. Lastly, in an effort to understand if the benefits from these teaching and learning strategies transcend the immediate classroom, through a final art exhibition I examine if and how effectively the students’ finished artwork is able to communicate ideas of social justice to individuals who did not participate in any of the artmaking projects.

Primary Research Question and Sub-Questions

For this rhizomatic study, my central question is: How does a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to art education facilitate the three broad goals of social justice (a) increase personal awareness, (b) expand knowledge and (c) encourage action among youth? In addition to investigating this question, several sub-questions are addressed:
1. How does the participatory action research (PAR) process work to achieve the three broad goals of social justice?

2. How did the Kaleidoscope setting impact the research?

3. What role did artmaking play in the process of exploring social justice issues?

4. How do the finished artworks exist as dialogic tools for communicating and promoting social justice?

**Definition of Terms**

1. **Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist Approach** - This approach originated in the education field; it deal[s] more directly…with oppression and social structural inequality based on race, social class, gender, and disability….The approach prepares future citizens to reconstruct society so that it better serves the interests of all groups of people and especially those who are of color, poor, female, gay and/or disabled (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, pp. 209-210).

2. **Participatory Action Research (PAR)** - a method of inquiry that focuses on collaboration in research (between the facilitator and the stakeholders) and the creation of change on a local level (Stringer, 2007). Strategies used in PAR are informed by “Freire’s development of counterhegemonic approaches to knowledge construction within oppressed communities” (McIntyre, 2008, p.3), therefore, directly connecting with social justice goals.

3. **Cooperative Learning** - Cooperative learning is an instructional strategy in which students are asked to work together and support each other for the purpose of joint success (Gollnick & Chinn, 2006; Johnson & Johnson, 1998, 2007; Sleeter and Grant, 2007a, 2007b).
4. **Teaching for Social Justice**-Teaching for social justice refers to [teaching]…

“for enhanced perception and imaginative explorations, for the recognition of social wrongs, of sufferings, of pestilences wherever and whenever they arise…it is to teach so that the young may be awakened to the joy of working for transformation in the smallest places, so that they may become healers and change their worlds” (Greene, cited in Stovall, 2006).

5. **Diversity**- I assume Lindgren’s (2005) definition of diversity, which is “a better representation of groups that were both historically locked out in profound ways and are still substantially underrepresented...” (p.6). However, other groups should be represented as well, whether they are minorities or majorities (Lindgren, 2005). I conceptualized diversity as variety in race, class, gender, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, religion, and any other term of identity specification and/or categorization.

6. **White Supremacist Thinking**- “The assumption that ‘whiteness’ encompasses that which is universal, and therefore for everybody, while “blackness” is specific, and therefore ‘for colored only,’ is white supremacist thought” (p.39). Charles Mills (1997) contends that “the fact that standard textbooks and courses have…been written and designed by whites, who take their racial privilege so much for granted that they do not even see it as political, as a form of domination”. According to bell hooks (2003), “white supremacist thinking informs every aspect of our culture, including the way we learn, the content of what we learn and the manner in which we are taught” (p.25). Additionally,
racialy subordinated persons have also internalized White supremacist beliefs. This is exemplified well by recognizing efforts to physically alter themselves to fit a “standard”: the straightening of hair, bleaching of skins, surgical procedures to make noses sharp or eyes rounder (Lawrence, 1995; hooks, 2003). White supremacist thought transcends race. For example, examine heterosexual privilege. Discrimination against gay individuals or even hiding one’s homosexuality is a symptom of White supremacist thought (Lawrence, 1995).

7. **White Privilege**- “The concrete benefits of access to resources and social rewards and the power to shape the norms and values of society which Whites receive, unconsciously or consciously, by virtue of their skin color in a racist society. Examples include the ability to be unaware of race, the ability to live and work among people of the same racial group as their own, the security of not being pulled over by the police for being a suspicious person, the expectation that they speak for themselves and not for their entire race, the ability to have a job hire or promotion attributed to their skills and background and not affirmative action (McIntosh, 1992)” (Adams, Bell, and Griffin, 1997, pp.97-98).

8. **Heterosexism**- when heterosexuality has been established as the normative culture; the assumption that all people are heterosexual. “Heterosexism is a...system of bias regarding sexual orientation. It denotes favor of heterosexual people and connotes prejudice against bi-sexual and especially homosexual people....It is rooted in a largely cognitive constellation of beliefs about human sexuality” (Jung & Smith,1993, p.13).
9. **Ally**- in the context of this research, this term refers to someone who does not identify as LGBTQ; however supports and advocates for this specific group to have equal rights and privileges based on what they deserve as humans and citizens of the world. These types of cross-cultural partnerships are historical and are critical in collective change. Adams, Bell and Griffin (1997) write, “Whites with access to power and privilege not available to most black Americans acted as allies in the struggle for change by passing laws in Congress, using the media to publicize the struggle and joining in actions where while lives were more likely to gain police protection” (p.14).

**Significance of the Study**

In 2002, I was asked to teach a 'multicultural' art class called “Around the World from A to Z.” The class served approximately 99% White, six and seven year old boys and girls from upper to middle class families. There was one Mexican American, seven year old girl from a middle class family that attended the class as well. The curriculum that I created specifically for this class included activities such as molding 'wooden' shoes from Holland, sewing colorful berets worn in France, constructing kente cloth replicas from construction paper and making elaborate masks like those in Africa and creating didgeridoos that were used by Aboriginal peoples in Australia. As I reflected upon that experience two weeks later, I recognized that I was a proponent in maintaining cultural stereotypes. The curriculum truly exoticized other cultures and the information that I presented to the students was antiquated and hardly representative of the contemporary situations of those countries. In addition, I ignored the lack of diversity in the classroom and the opportunity that it presented in exploring various cultures in their authentic contemporary state.

This retrospective reveals the naïveté that can sometimes accompany teaching multiculturalism in the art classroom. There is a call for research in art education that reiterates that teaching multiculturally does not mean creating Native American dream
catchers and sand paintings, eating ethnic foods, reading folktales, singing and dancing (Chalmers, 2002; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995); and additionally shows how “multiculturalism in art education… [consists of] curricula guided by democratic social goals and values that seek to confront the ‘racial class, gender, and homophobic biases woven into the fabric of society’” (Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris, & Daniel, 2008, p.83). My research works in this capacity. Using the lens of critical race theory (CRT), I highlight the effects of embracing a multicultural and social reconstructionist art curriculum. We need curriculum that forces us to recognize our acceptance and/or perpetuation of biases of any kind (hooks, 1994), encourages social justice, and facilitates thriving, constructive communities (Banks, 1993; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris, & Daniel, 2008).

Libraries are saturated with literature that advocates multiculturalism in art education. Writings reveal that multicultural theory ranges from celebratory to social reconstructionist (Gall, 2008, p.20; Ladson-Billings, 1999). My research embraces a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach; however, it specifically involves using art to make critical inquiries examining where and how ideas originate and the role they play in forming cultural identities. Uniquely, this inquiry is exemplary of a critical race theory perspective (Ladson-Billings, 1999). The research purposefully integrates alternative voices of authority (Gunew & Rizvi, 1994 as cited in Chalmers, 2002; hooks, 1994), which is a central goal of CRT (Ladson-Billings, 1999).

My position on multiculturalism is not to accept everything and everyone, which consequently becomes “nothing for anyone, allowing the status quo to prevail (Ladson-
Billings & Tate, 1995, p.62). Instead, I maintain focus on the assertion that race was initially the grounds on which people were most frequently oppressed (Bonilla-Silva, 1999; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, Mills, 1997; Omi & Winant, 2000; Omi & Winant, 2004). Gloria Ladson-Billings (1999) writes, “Critical race theory begins with the notion that racism is ‘normal, not aberrant, in American society’ (Delgado, 1999, p.xiv), and, because it so enmeshed in the fabric of our social order, it appears both normal and natural to people in this culture” (p.213). However, while this is so, those who work towards social justice attempt to unmask and expose racism and other oppressions in their various permutations (Ladson-Billings, 1999). The ability to attend to other versions of oppression is integral for this study. Specifically, the site for this research is Kaleidoscope Youth Center (KYC). This community site supports youth ages 12-20 that identify as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, queer or questioning (LGBTQ). Initially, I chose this site specifically because it had a significantly diverse racial and economic population. The sexual orientation of the youth was always secondary. However, upon reflection, this characteristic became central because just like racism, heterosexism is “normal, not aberrant in American society”; it is indeed “enmeshed in the fabric of our social order” and it is also “natural to people in this culture” (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p.213). According to Patricia Beattie Jung and Ralph F. Smith (1993), “Heterosexism is analogous to racism and sexism” (p. 14). Therefore, I embrace a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach that is framed by CRT, but I additionally recognize that sexual orientation and heterosexism are critical components included in this framework of
investigation as well. This collaboration and intersectionality is exemplar of work for social justice.

Art education is important in this work because curriculum, similar to *Around the World from A to Z*, can be a primary enabler and contributor to oppression. In the art classroom, assumptions can be inferred by the inclusion or exclusion of certain artists that the teacher chooses to introduce (Knight, 2006). Therefore, art educators must “critically scrutinize their options [of artists and artworks] in order to clarify the social information they are conveying overtly or covertly to their students” (Knight, 2006, p.41; Desai, 2000; Wasson, Stuhr, & Petrovich-Mwaniki, 1990). There must be radical interrogation of the biases of conventional canons (hooks, 1994). CRT allows me to highlight how racism and White supremacist thinking, although initially structured by race, has created additional hierarchical, social systems for those that do not fit the Eurocentric standard—White, heterosexual, Christian male; and how this is maintained by using spontaneous (or voluntary) consent and hegemonic tools (Adams, 1997; Bonilla-Silva, 1997; Gitlin, 1994; Gramsci, 1930; Hall, 1996 as cited by Desai, 2000; Omi & Winant, 1994; Storey, 2006) such as classroom texts, curriculum and even teacher preparation (Adams, 1997; Ladson-Billings, 1999 as cited in Blanchett, 2006; Gramsci, 1930; hooks, 2003; Mills, 1997).

A tenet of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to education is the practice of cooperative learning. Engaging a diverse population is conducive to performing cooperative learning strategies (CoopLearn, 2007; Johnson & Johnson, 1989). Unfortunately, as exemplified in the above narrative, many classroom populations are homogeneous. Consequently, it is hard for educators to “conceptualize how the
classroom will look when they are confronted with the demographics which indicate that ‘whiteness’ may cease to be the norm ethnicity in the classroom settings on all levels. Hence, educators are poorly prepared when we actually confront diversity” (hooks, 1994, p.41). Additionally, teachers admittedly avoid teaching multiculturalism because of fear of misrepresenting other cultures (Gall, 2008). This reveals a lack of knowledge about what multiculturalism can be and is the essence of why theory has not progressed to practice in the art education classroom. Despite our current efforts in teaching multiculturalism in our society, there is not enough practical discussion that helps teachers prepare to teach in diverse settings and present information that is inclusive (Gall, 2008; hooks, 1994). Fortunately, my research adds to this conversation because to be attentive to cooperative learning as a component of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach means that I am also attentive to diversity. Additionally, I am conscientious of diversity because a key principle of CRT is that “people’s narratives and stories are important in truly understanding their experiences and how those experiences may represent confirmation and counterknowledge of the way society works” (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p.219). It is crucial for educators to closely recognize that students have plural realities and culturally diverse life experiences (Chalmers, 2002; Gall, 2008); multiple narratives told by a diverse group of students are necessary to support a dialogic process that aids in the negotiation of ideologies and the facilitation of social justice.
Limitations of the Study

Primarily, the scope of my study is limited to Columbus, Ohio, specifically the Kaleidoscope Youth Center. Kaleidoscope is open to youth ages 12-20; therefore, I am limited to participants in this age range. Kaleidoscope is a drop-in center, which means the students are not required to attend everyday. The center is open Monday through Friday from 3:30pm to 8:00 pm. The students may come to the center on any weekday at any time, based on their need and interest to visit. So, although I make valiant attempts to keep the students thoroughly engaged, participation depends solely on the students’ personal effort and continued interest. Lack of participation may affect the amount of art pieces created and included in the final exhibition. This may also affect the diversity of the population during each working session.

The curriculum I use is co-created with the youth; therefore it is based on that particular group of students’ needs and interests. Because of this specificity, I attempt to make no generalizable knowledge that can be used in all learning situations. PAR is “designed for practical purposes having direct and effective outcomes in the settings in which it is engaged” (Stringer, 2004, p.2). Therefore, executing a participatory action research study means that my central goal is to aid in affecting change for the stakeholders. Although the curriculum does have some specific, predetermined goals and objectives, the curriculum caters to the Kaleidoscope population since the students’ interests were used to formulate it.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Gloria Ladson- Billings (1995) writes,

One of the things that make developing a multicultural curriculum so difficult is the fact that multicultural education is as much an ideal as it is a reality (Banks & Banks, 1989). Like democracy, it is never finished. However, this more esoteric nature of multicultural education does not absolve educators from the responsibility of working toward developing relevant and multicultural curriculum. (p.333)

When developing a relevant multicultural and social reconstructionist curriculum, understanding justice and power is fundamental, as these concepts are foundational (Grant & Sleeter, 2006).

Justice encourages group interactions with the absence of conflict and societal breakdown. It promotes positive, productive social situations in which people work towards cooperation, instead of conflict (Tyler, 2000). Justice is a social virtue that guides us in our relationships and helps us realize what we must rightly do for one another (Miller, 1999). For justice to be effective, people’s behavior must not only be shaped by their judgments concerning what is personally beneficial; there must also be an
acceptance of rules and decisions that may not benefit individual or group self-interests (Tyler, 2000).

Michel Foucault (1982) asserts, “Power, with or without a capital letter, which is assumed to exist universally in a concentrated or diffused form, does not exist. Power exists only when it is put into action” (p.219). Additionally, Foucault (1982) suggests that power seems to always refer to actions being performed upon another person’s actions and reactions (Foucault, 1982). Looking at power from this hierarchical perspective means that someone is always in an inferior position. In the classroom, I acknowledge power from this perspective because it brings forth all notions of –isms; i.e. racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, handicapism, etc. However, while this position is addressed, power is also addressed in terms of empowerment and its possibilities to forge a common will and negotiation (Kesby, Kindon & Pain, 2007). In Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice, Adams, Bell and Griffin (2007) reaffirm Kreisberg’s (1992) assertion that we must establish “a ‘power with’ versus ‘power over’ paradigm for enacting social justice goals” (p.2). In the following body of literature, I address the possibilities of how social justice and art unite and the means in which this merger may be most successful. I include writings that support the facilitation of art for social justice through a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to education, as well as writings that have questioned aspects of such an approach. In addition, I attempt to connect the educational approach to a theoretical framework that allows me to explore different permutations of injustice.
Social Justice and Art: A Relationship

Social justice is a broad term that “brings together feminist, multicultural, disability rights, environmental, community-based, critical pedagogy, social reconstruction, and visual culture perspectives” (Ulbricht, 2009, p.8). Consequently, there are myriad of ideas associated with social justice. However, there is a common understanding of social justice that is shared by all and it is allocation-- of rewards, resources and punishments (Tyler & Smith, 1995). Tyler and Smith (1995) write, “Studies show that judgments about what is ‘just,’ ‘fair’, ‘deserved’, or something one is ‘entitled’ to receive are a central social judgment which lies at the heart of people’s feelings, attitudes, and behaviors in their interactions with others” (p.1). Social justice is not about self-interest, it is about fair treatment and equal opportunities for everyone. Efforts in social justice are especially important for those outside the dominant population because historically those groups of people are those most affected by discrimination and unequal resources (Tyler & Smith, 1995).

Social justice education is a means to liberation for all people (Freire, 1970; hooks, 2004). In my efforts in social justice education, art plays a central role. Through visual engagements with art and objects, I teach students how to identify sources of inequity and understand how to work against those forces. Art for social justice transcends emphasis on style and the application of technique; “it requires good art teachers who know about and can help students see, hear, and respond to the voices of others” (Ulbricht, 2009, p.8).
Combining social justice with art nurtures students’ inquiries about their immediate world and constructs explicit, sustainable knowledge that is practical and relevant. Art education for social justice places art as a means through which [social justice] goals can be achieved (Garber, 2004, p.16), providing students with opportunities to practice a democratic process and critically analyze imposed ideas and assumptions (Freire, 1970; hooks, 1994). This is an invaluable skill that cannot be taken away because of race, economic status, ability, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation or any other identity specification. In order to facilitate knowledge about social justice inside and outside of the art classroom, I have chosen to utilize Sleeter and Grant’s (2007a, 2007b) multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to education.

**Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist Approach to Education**

A multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to education was first introduced by Christine Sleeter and Carl Grant in the late 1980’s. This approach to education attends to oppression and inequality within marginalized, victimized groups. It works from the premise that teachers need to prepare students to be future citizens who desire to reconstruct society so that it improves the lives and satisfies the needs of all people, especially those who are of color, poor, female, gay and/or disabled (Sleeter and Grant, 1989, 1994, 2006, 2007a, 2007b). Some ideologies supporting this approach originated from efforts by James Banks (1989, 1993, 2004), Paulo Freire (1970/1993) and John Dewey (1973) in that these scholars invested in critical questioning, democracy and social justice facilitated through education. Additional scholars can be examined to
understand further components of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach, specifically, cooperative learning strategies.

James Banks (1989, 1993, 2004) is noted for early work on multiculturalism and his research can be considered foundational for Sleeter and Grant’s work on the five approaches to multiculturalism. Banks highlights multicultural education as a reform movement that works to change systems, educational and institutional, so that people from all social-class, gender, racial and cultural groups have an equal opportunity in education (Banks, 1989, 1993, 2004). However, he affirms that it is critical to recognize that regardless of our efforts, racism, sexism and handicapism will exist. Therefore, multicultural education should not be seen as a panacea for all the systemic problems that manifest in schools. Multicultural education should be viewed as an ongoing process. It is an ideal for education that needs continual attention and evolution. Working from this preliminary framework, Sleeter and Grant actively advance Banks’ (1989, 1993, 2004) ideas; this is shown throughout numerous texts that the contemporary writing duo have offered educational discourse. It is my attempt in this study to put these ideals into practice within an art education curriculum.

Critical Questioning. To advance multicultural education, Sleeter and Grant (2007b) embrace Freire’s development of critical questioning and the critical consciousness among groups of people who have learned to accept the status quo and succumb to powerlessness (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b). Freire recognizes institutional and structural oppression, including media impact of newspapers, textbooks, films and even libraries on the maintenance of power by the dominant class (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b).
For this reason, Freire asserts that empowerment begins with the questioning of everyday living conditions and refusing to simply accept ideas as “truths.” Sleeter and Grant (2007b) welcome Freire’s assertions and assume his practices within their construction of an approach to education that they call multicultural and social reconstructionist. To practically apply Freire’s ideas, Sleeter and Grant (2007b) suggest creating lessons specifically around critical inquiry, with emphasis on questions like, “Is it true?... Who says so? Who benefits most when people believe it is true? How are we taught to accept that it is true? What alternative ways of looking at the problem can we see?” (p. 260). Freire (1970) claims that freedom is something that is sought out, not something that is given. Critical questioning is a task that must be done to acquire this reward. It is apparent, through their suggested instructional approach, that Sleeter and Grant (2007b) accept this assertion as true.

**Democracy.** Practicing democracy, another central aspect of a multicultural and social and reconstructionist approach to education can be understood through the historical work of John Dewey. Dewey (1973) pointed out that democracy surpasses governmental practices and should be imbedded within everyday decision making. Thinking of democracy only in terms of governmental use alters its ability to make changes on a personal level (Dewey, 1973 as cited in Sleeter and Grant, 2007a). Sleeter and Grant (2007a) recognize the validity in Dewey’s affirmations in noting how student decision making opens conversations that include various voices and differences of opinion. Democracy in the classroom teaches students to listen to alternative points of view, especially those that have often been silenced. In addition, Dewey affirmed that to
live in a true democratic society, it is necessary for communication not only amongst members of the same group, but between one group and another (Creighton, 1916). Sleeter and Grant (2007a) accept this stance, as well as Dewey’s work against relationships of dualisms and divisions (Creighton, 1916). As a central component of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach, democracy promotes negotiation and multiple authorities (Creighton, 1916; Sleeter & Grant, 2007a, 2007b).

**Cooperative Learning.** Cooperative learning is one of many facets of Sleeter and Grant’s (2006, 2007a, 2007b) multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to education. Cooperative learning is an instructional strategy in which students are asked to work together and support each other for the purpose of joint success (Gollnick & Chinn, 2006; Johnson & Johnson, 1998, 2007; Sleeter and Grant, 2007a, 2007b). Sleeter and Grant (2007a) embrace this instructional method because it has a “strong and consistent track record in improving student-student relationships across race, gender, and ability/disability lines as well as boosting student achievement (Bowen, 2000; Cohen & Lotan, 1997; Gillies & Ashman, 20000; Johnson, Johnson, & Maruyama, 1983; Slavin, 1995)” (p.117). According to David Johnson and Roger Johnson (1998), key contemporary researchers in cooperative learning, cooperative learning is guided by three theoretical perspectives: cognitive development theory, social interdependence theory and behavioral learning theory. One understanding of cooperative learning can be linked to Lev Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development and his ideas that cognitive development is a social phenomenon (Doolittle, 1995; Johnson and Johnson, 1998). Vygotsky believed that when individuals work together in an environment, socio-
cognitive conflict arises and creates cognitive disequilibrium. This imbalance stimulates the individual to explore various perspectives; in turn, they develop cognitively (Doolittle, 1995; Johnson & Johnson, 1998). Social interdependence theory, led by Kurt Koffka and Kurt Lewin, works from the premise that interdependence among members can make the group a “dynamic whole,” and the change of any member, changes the state of another member (Johnson & Johnson, 1998). There are two types of social interdependence: cooperative and competitive. The latter creates a situation in which students must work against each other and only one or a few can attain a goal. Individuals’ goals are negatively correlated. On the other hand, cooperative goals are positively correlated—they can only reach their personal goals if the others in the group reach theirs as well (Johnson & Johnson, 1998). This type of social interdependence is preferred and has the most advantages because individuals are encouraged to want beneficial things for their counterparts since they are inextricably linked (Johnson & Johnson, 1998). Behavioral theory perspective focuses on group reinforcement and rewards for learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1998). According to Johnson and Johnson (1998), this theory was led by many, including Skinner, who “focused on group contingencies,” Bandura, who “focused on imitation,” and Homans, who “focused on the balance of rewards and costs in social exchange among interdependent individuals” (Johnson & Johnson, 1998, p. 2).

While all three theories made significant impact in the acceptance and progression of cooperative learning, it is evident that Sleeter and Grant (2007a) utilize the cooperative social interdependence theoretical framework because they write, “Students’ roles must
require interdependence—working and talking together” (p.119). Furthermore, Sleeter and Grant (2007a) discuss cooperative learning extensively, being especially attentive to the mutual assistance, support and interactions among students. The assumptions of the social interdependence theory are that cooperative efforts work from intrinsic motivations, but are generated by interpersonal factors in working jointly to achieve goals (INTIME, 1999-2002). In addition, this theoretical framework focuses on *relational* concepts that deal with what happens among individuals (INTIME, 1999-2002). From Sleeter and Grant’s (2006, 2007a) emphasis on group work and the relationships it builds, it is clear that social interdependence supports cooperative learning as a component of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to education. Furthermore, neither cognitive theory nor behavioral theory connect with Sleeter and Grant’s (2007a) literature because cognitive theory focuses on “what happens within a single person (e.g., disequilibrium, cognitive reorganization)” (INTIME, 1999-2002, para.6); and in behavioral theory, “cooperative efforts are powered by extrinsic motivation to achieve group efforts” (INTIME, 1999-2002, para.8); neither of which Sleeter and Grant (2007a) acknowledge.

Expanding on initiatives from intellectual forerunners like Banks, Freire, Dewey, as well as the leaders in cooperative learning, Christine Sleeter and Carl Grant developed a potent teaching method that challenges truths and silences, creates democratic spaces, disrupts systems of oppression and initiates civic action.

**Conceptualizing Diversity.** The United States is becoming increasingly diverse (Patterson, 2005; Morrell, 2010), which is beneficial for education because diversity
provides additional opportunities for learning (Lindgren, 2005; Sleeter & Grant, 2007b). Additionally, according to Sleeter and Grant (2007b) and Johnson and Johnson (2007), cooperative learning is most effective when implemented in diverse settings; therefore, it was important that I complete this research project in a heterogeneous environment. Unfortunately, in community spaces homogeneity is often a trait simply because community spaces speak to the community in which it belongs. A community is defined based on individualistic, unique characteristics such as its population, socio-economic profile, history, culture, its level of autonomy or dependence, its level of organization or its isolation (Hashagen, 2002). Following this definition, a community center is often unified similarly. The research site, Kaleidoscope Youth Center (KYC) is a community organization with the mission “to work in partnership with young people in Central Ohio to create safe and empowering environments for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth through advocacy, education and support” (Kaleidoscope Youth Center, 2009, para. 1). Each student who attends KYC travels from his/her respective family community to build a new community constructed by inquiries about sexual orientation. Fortunately, while the Kaleidoscope youth are bonded by their collective identity, the Columbus, Ohio, communities that they come from are diverse racially, economically, in religion and ability, therefore, creating a diverse community center. This provides opportunities to explicitly view content “from the multiple perspectives and varied experiences of a range of groups” (Saunders & Kardia, 2010, para.1). Making diversity work lies in the efforts of private citizens (Schuck, 2005, as cited in Patterson, 2005). Sleeter and Grant (2007b) recognize this by making diversity a primary aspect of a
multicultural and social reconstructionist educational approach; and thus the responsibility of the teacher and her applied curriculum.

**Using a Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist Approach within Art Education**

I have found educational objectives, similar to those communicated by Sleeter and Grant (2006, 2007b), written throughout the scholarly works of art educators such as Enid Zimmerman, 1990; Kerry Freedman, 2000; Graeme Chalmers, 2002; Dipti Desai, 2000, 2003; Patricia Stuhr, Christine Ballengee-Morris and Vesta Daniel, 2008; thus revealing a shared investment in social justice. Ultimately, the support for efforts in multiculturalism and social reconstruction within art education has been present. In particular, writing contributions made by Stuhr (1994, 2004) expand specifically on Sleeter and Grant’s multicultural and social reconstructionist approach. In support of this method, Stuhr (1994) acknowledges that not all versions of multiculturalism challenge the “dominant power and knowledge structures that tend to create sociocultural inequities” (p.171). For example, multiculturalism is regularly contested because it is seen as a method of teaching being used to speak for entire groups of people, especially subordinate people. This positions them in relation to the dominant group (Desai, 2000) and portrayals are often inaccurate. Additionally, others argue that multiculturalism has been industrialized and is now considered to be the “race industry, which employs the power of representation to ‘produce, codify, and even rewrite histories of race and colonialism in the name of difference”’ (Mohanty, 1989/90 as cited in Desai, 2000, p. 118). In addition, arguments have been made that multiculturalism teaches us to treat
each other civilly and to tolerate diversity instead of addressing the economic exploitation of groups. It recruits diverse people and introduces different curricula, but maintains the normative culture verses subcultures paradigm (Mohanty, 1990 as cited in Snider, 1996). However, as Stuhr (1994) emphasizes, the social reconstructionist approach to understanding multiculturalism helps students challenge structural inequalities and supports social and cultural diversity through the use of teacher-student collaborations, cooperative learning strategies, democratic classroom practices and critical inquiries. Therefore, in multiculturalism, instead of us asking, “How can we accurately or authentically represent another culture?” instead we ask “What can we know about another culture?” (Desai, 2000, p.115).

Although recognized as having the potential for social change, unfortunately, a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to education is a method rarely found in praxis (Ladson & Billings, 1999) and is often resisted and challenged (Desai, 2003). Because of this, the literature offered by Dipti Desai (2003) has been especially critical in my research on multicultural and social reconstruction within art education because while Desai has offered support for the approach, she has made arguments against it as well. Desai writes (2000) that the social reconstructionist approach to multiculturalism helps us acknowledge the partiality of representation and highlights how knowledge is shaped historically and culturally. She supports the ways in which it can help us acknowledge our location and position when teaching about diverse cultural groups (Desai, 2000). However, on the other hand, Desai (2003) contests specific aspects of the social reconstructionist approach to multiculturalism. She argues that its definition of culture
lacks investment in sexual diversity and produces an understanding of culture that is framed by the “heterosexual imaginary.” This particular framework normalizes structures as heterosexual and structures the way that culture is theorized in multicultural art education discourses (Desai, 2003). Desai (2003) writes, “I suggest that the concept of culture in the social reconstructionist multicultural art education takes for granted heterosexuality as the unquestioned, naturalized, and universal culture while race, ethnicity, and gender are understood as socially constructed, fluid, and multiple” (p.148-49). Since its inception in the 1970s, multiculturalism has left out sexual orientation (Snider, 1996) and based on its structure, it is questionable whether or not multiculturalism can be the site for sexual diversity to be addressed (Desai, 2003).

I recognize Desai’s (2003) contentions, and considerations. The population of students engaged in this research identify as LGBT, thus the curriculum that I embrace is particularly attentive to sexual orientation and sexual diversity. While a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach names sexual orientation within a list of social divisions like poor, female, and persons of color, there is indeed an un-naming of sexual diversity as a structural inequality (Desai, 2003). This lack of intersectionality amongst sexual diversity and race, ethnicity, gender and social class reinforces heterosexuality as the normative culture (Desai, 2003), a social construction referred to as heterosexism (Athanases & Larrabee, 2003). Steven Athanases and Timothy Larrabee (2003) suggest that a possible reasoning for heterosexism being excluded from equity and social justice issues is because in the Western society, homosexuality is deemed a White phenomenon. It is important to look at this particular assumption alongside the initial goals of
multiculturalism, which included the empowerment of “students from victimized groups” (Banks, 1989, p. 20). Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris and Daniel (2008) write, “Multicultural Education is a concept, philosophy and process that originated in the 1960s, in the USA, as part of the Civil Rights Movement to combat racism” (p.82). Noting both Athanases and Larabee’s (2003) assumption and multiculturalism at its conception, I understand why there may be a fear of naming heterosexism as a structural inequality that creates oppression- it has the ability to place Whiteness again at the forefront. This risk is powerful enough to rationalize the absence of heterosexism within Sleeter and Grant’s (2007b) social reconstructionist multicultural framework. But, on the contrary, homosexuality within communities of people of color is very real; it is simply not highlighted. Cornel West (1996) explains that although homosexuality and homophobia is prevalent in the Black community, these things are rarely emphasized because this is “a community under siege, dealing with institutional terrorism, Jim Crow, Jane Crow and so forth—you had to accent commonality…. [Homosexuality is] cast in such a way that it was subordinate to the survival of the Black community as a whole” (p.3). When it comes to those in the position of double oppression, the situation becomes a hierarchy of oppressions with one having to decide which fight is more important, racism or homophobia, while both are systemic deterrents to achievement (Snider, 1996; West, 1996). Kathryn Snider (1996), author of Race and Sexual Orientation: The (Im) possibility of these Intersections in Educational Policy, writes, “The inability to acknowledge multiple and intersecting oppressions, especially in terms of policymaking and establishing educational alternatives, highlights the hegemonic avowal behind the
blind insistence on visibility within the lesbian and gay communities” (p.3). The construction of heterosexuality as a normative identity creates oppression, dually for people of color. Thus, it should be recognized when aiming to teach for democracy (West, 1996) and social justice (Athanases & Larrabee, 2003; Desai, 2003).

The connections between White supremacy, patriarchy, and heterosexism are explicit (West, 1996) as they all contribute to an existing social order that fosters inequity. Therefore, I embrace Sleeter and Grant’s (2007b) multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to education, with the added articulation of heterosexism as an additional structural inequality.

**Critical Race Theory**

Gloria Ladson-Billings (1999) writes, “Critical race theory begins with the notion that racism is ‘normal, not aberrant, in American society’ (Delgado, 1999, p.xiv), and, because it so enmeshed in the fabric of our social order, it appears both normal and natural to people in this culture” (p.213). Those who work towards social justice attempt to unmask and expose racism and other oppressions in their various permutations (Ladson-Billings, 1999). Critical race theory, originated in the legal movement called critical legal studies, has been applied to many discourses including educational discourse (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Additionally, “Race must not be overlooked in research projects since the projects themselves are embedded in the theories and research practices that inform them—theories and practices that are themselves mediated by race (Bell, 2001 as cited in McIntyre, 2008, p.3). CRT has been used as a framework to understand
the maintenance of racism in the U.S. sociopolitical, legal, and educational systems (Adams, Bell & Griffin, 2007). Critical race theory’s interdisciplinarity relies on its overall central aim to investigate “how a ‘regime of white supremacy and its subordination of people of color have been created and maintained in America’” (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p. 214).

While there is no unified set of doctrines in which all CRT scholars subscribe (Ladson-Billings, 1999), there are some major principles that remain consistent in the application of a critical race theoretical framework. Specifically, there are three fundamental principles I am interested in using as conceptual tools in the classroom. One essential principle of CRT is the use of people’s narratives and stories to understand their experiences and the exploration of these experiences as confirmation or counterknowledge of the way society works (Ladson-Billings, 1999). Historically, aspects of society have aided in the construction of stereotypic images of minority groups in order to maintain power. Members of these groups often internalize these manufactured portrayals and begin to believe that they are indeed powerless. Therefore, storytelling was rendered a kind of medicine to help dress and heal the wounds caused by racial oppression. These stories explored one’s condition and often “lead to the realization of how one came to be oppressed and subjugated and allows one to stop inflicting mental violence on oneself” (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 57). Storytelling is an act that aids in analyzing race myths, presuppositions, and received wisdoms that are common culture and that “invariably render blacks and other minorities one-down” (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p. 213). Adams, Bell and Griffin (2007) write,
In addition to offering a focused analysis of systemic racism, critical race theory (CRT) offers educators an innovative approach to ‘voice’ by posing argument through the use of metaphorical tales, chronicles, and ‘counternarratives’ synthesized from multiple historical, sociological, and personal, anecdotal, familial sources. These ‘counternarratives’ dramatize and give voice to the experiences of people of color. p.25

Critical race theory questions what knowledge and whose knowledge counts (Ladson-Billings, 1999). A great deal of critical race theory scholarship focuses on the role of “voice” because it supplies an avenue for those who are oppressed to communicate their experiences and realities; and this is a significant step on the road to racial justice (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1999).

An additional aspect of CRT that I am attentive to is its critique on liberalism, color blindness and the notion of neutral principles of constitutional law (Ladson-Billings, 1999; Delgado & Stelfancic, 2001). It is argued that color blindness allows us to only focus on the egregious, most offensive acts of racism that everyone would condemn. However, CRT scholars believe that racism is embedded in our thought process and in social structures; therefore, conducting “business as usual” would keep minorities in inferior roles (Delgado & Stelfancic, 2001). Along with liberalism and color-blindness comes a lack of attention to a systemic racism that strengthens dominant power and maintains subordination of people of color. Therefore, critical race theorists argue that race must be acknowledged because racism is rooted in the systems that determine the advancement of all people. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) assert that multicultural
reforms are “sucked back into the system” because they are mired in liberal ideology that offers no radical change in the current order; therefore, multicultural reforms fail to create educational models that ensure justice. CRT in education radically critiques “both the status quo and the purported reforms” (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p.62). Delgado and Stelfancic (2001) assert, “Only aggressive, color-conscious efforts to change the way things are will do much to ameliorate misery” (p. 22).

Lastly, some CRT scholars embrace a strategy called interest convergence (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). This approach compels Whites and people of color to find a place where their interests intersect; therefore, supplying avenues for working together and satisfying needs of both groups, but especially people of color (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). If Whites were to believe that any aspect of working with minorities would benefit them, then the likelihood of change would increase. Richard Milner, IV (2008) writes, “Interest convergence stresses that racial equality and equity for people of color will be pursued and advanced when they converge with the interests, needs, expectation, and ideologies of Whites” (p.333). Inherent in this principle is a loss-gain binary in which someone or group, often the dominant group, must negotiate something in order for interests to align (Milner, 2008). Whites could be sacrificing “power, privilege, social status, linguistic status, and their ability to reproduce these benefits and interest to their children and future generations” (p.334). Although this practice results in very slow change, it alters the status of Whites and has the ability to advance social justice.
Ultimately, CRT is deemed a form of oppositional scholarship that challenges what Whites have established as universal and authoritative. It confronts the standard that “measures, directs, controls and regulates the terms of proper thought, expression, presentation, and behavior” of people of color (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p.215). Ladson-Billings (1999) asserts,

The task [for critical race theorists] is to identify values and norms that have been disguised and subordinated in the law…Critical race scholars…seek to demonstrate that [their] experiences as people of color are legitimate, appropriate, and effective bases for analyzing the legal system and racial subordination. This process is vital to…transformative vision. (p. 215)

The Convergence of Critical Race Theory and Art Education

Derrick Bell, Alan Freeman and Richard Delgado began the early work of critical race theory during the mid 1970s (DeCuir, 2004; Dixson, 2003, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1999, 2004b). Contemporary CRT leaders, such as Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995, 1999), Omi and Winant (2000, 2004), and Adrienne Dixson, (2003, 2005) identify these men as leaders of racial reform in the United States. Although originated in the legal movement called critical legal studies, CRT has been appropriated across disciplines, which reveals no unified set of doctrines in which all CRT scholars subscribe (Ladson-Billings, 1999). However, supporters and researchers of CRT are connected by the common interest to understand “how a ‘regime of white supremacy and its subordination of people of color have been created and maintained in America’” (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p.214).
Gloria Ladson-Billings is steadfast in recognizing CRT’s conception and theoretical underpinnings; but most importantly, unlike other race scholars, she utilizes CRT as an analytic tool for understanding educational inequity (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). In an attempt to “uncover or decipher the social-structural and cultural significance of race in education” (p.50), Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) make three key propositions, the first being race continues to be a significant factor in determining inequity in the United States. This assertion is based the recognition of the lack of theorization within the race discourse when compared to gender and class. They contend that although class and gender intersect with race, “class- and gender- based explanations are not powerful enough to explain all of the difference (or variance) in school experience and performance” (p.51) between Whites and students of color. The second proposition is that U.S. society is based on property rights. One translation of this is, simply, better property equals better schools. Neighborhoods with higher property values have schools that serve White affluent communities, while public schools serve mostly non-White and poor clientele. Another way Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) understand property rights is through the concept of intellectual property and the question of who has the right to certain knowledge. Affluent schools may have a significantly larger list of options for courses, while urban or public schools have modest lists. This not only questions who deserves to obtain particular knowledge, but this connects to the former idea of “real” property in that the poorer schools do not have the resources and technologies needed to support such a rich education. Ladson-Billings and Tate’s (1995) last proposition is the “intersection of race and property creates an analytic tool through which we can
understand social (and, consequently, school) inequity” (p.48). This proposition makes visible how race is the chief component in determining success in any area and how racism is endemic and ingrained within all systems, especially educational institutions. Ultimately, Ladson-Billings and Tate’s (1995) intertwining of race and education have offered foundational arguments that help me use critical race theory to investigate the relationship between race and art education curriculum.

Seeking social justice through art education is not a new effort. There are many ideologies that support the theoretical framework of this social movement, including research from educators like John Dewey, June King McFee, Graeme Chalmers, Eugene Grigsby, Laura Chapman, Elizabeth Garber and more (Garber & Costantino, 2007). However, even with all of the past and present work done in the area, continual revisions need to be made in order to support the contemporary, ever-changing needs of society. Therefore, with Ladson-Billings and Tate’s (1995) scholarly work in mind, I desire to merge CRT and art education. “Race is a matter of both social structure and cultural representation.” (Ladson Billings, 1995, p.50) in which art plays a significant role (Desai, 2000). For me, the connection between the two seems natural and necessary. To help me with this agenda, I look to bell hooks (1995) for her intersectionality of critical race theory and visual art and Desai (2000) for her attention to visual representations as a means to maintain dominance.

Although hooks’ (1995) primary focus is on visual politics and the underrepresentation of black artists and black art critics, she also communicates an understanding of how regimens of visuality enforce and secure racism (hooks, 1995).
Representation plays a key role in this maintenance because even though these portrayals may be partial or non-truths, they shape how we understand reality—representation is meaning-producing (Desai, 2000). The consequences of this system are harmful for everyone. It determines how marginalized people are understood by others, as well as themselves (Desai, 2000; Freire, 1970); additionally, White-supremacist capitalist patriarchy is internalized and preserved by everyone, including people of color (Freire, 1970; hooks, 1995). hooks’ (1995) writes, “Representation is a crucial location of struggle for any exploited and oppressed people asserting subjectivity and decolonization of the mind” (p. 3). Being spoken for and about stalls efforts by racially marginalized groups to “break ‘hegemonic modes of seeing, think, and being’” (hooks, 1992 as cited in Desai, 2000). Thus, they are not capable of seeing themselves outside of what has been (re) presented by others.

For marginalized groups to become liberatory there must be the freedom to re-imagine, re-describe and re-invent oneself in ways that negate imposed ideological representations (Desai, 2000). Freedom would require the oppressed to expel the imposed image and replace it with something created autonomously (Freire, 1993). Therefore, I want to invest in an approach to teaching art that can help students and myself “re-articulate meanings of race, ethnicity and identity in society in relation to power” (Desai, 2000, p.118). I understand Sleeter and Grant’s multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to education as a means to do so. Through its emphasis on critical questioning of structural inequities, there are ample possibilities for the redefining of identities. “Freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift” (Freire, 1993, p. 29).
Using these scholars and researchers as buttresses for my own study, I aim to be specific in embracing multicultural and social reconstructionist approach, assuming all of its principles and tenets in addition to the specific attention to sexual orientation as a structural inequality. Additionally, critical race theory and art education fuse together powerfully because art has communicative features (Chalmers as cited in Desai, 2003) that beckons initial and ongoing inquiries of “-isms” and the oppression that latch on to them. Furthermore, I recognize that art [curriculum] can be a catalyst that initiates dialogue about identity and the quest for democracy (Congdon, Blandy, & Bolin, 2001) - a specific goal of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach.

Summary

Social justice is foundational in Sleeter and Grant’s multicultural and social reconstructionist approach, and additionally flows fluidly through critical race theory. A multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to education has a transformative political agenda that is not just “another form of accommodation to the larger social order” (McLaren, 1994 as cited in Ladson-Billings, 2004b, p. 53). The core tenets, critical consciousness and democracy, led by Freire and Dewey respectively, build off of principles of equality (Sleeter and Grant, 2007b). In addition, Sleeter and Grant (2007a) promote cooperative learning strategies, a teaching and learning method that thrives on diversity and encourages and supports multiple voices in the classroom (Johnson & Johnson, 1998), a necessity in providing social justice through education.
Critical race theory is a framework that works toward social justice for all people. CRT does not desire to privilege race over other identity categories like class, gender, or sexual orientation. Instead, it attempts to understand all forms of human injustice. Therefore, scholars attending to issues of gender, class, ability and other forms of human difference can employ CRT strategies (Ladson-Billings, 2004b). Ladson-Billings (Ladson-Billings, 2004b) explains this notion further in the following excerpt:

CRT begins with a number of premises. First and foremost is the proposition that ‘racism is normal, not aberrant, in American society, (Delgado, 1995, p.xiv). Because racism is such an integral part of our society, ‘it looks ordinary and natural to persons in the culture’ (p.xiv). For instance, from time to time instances of racist behavior are exposed in ‘surprising’ places such as corporate board-rooms. These incidents are followed by public outrage and demands for redress. However, these instances keep happening over and over because they are normal, ordinary features of the society. Similarly, sexism, patriarchy, heterosexism, ableism, classism, linguisticism, and other forms of hierarchy that come from dominance and oppressions are also normal. Thus the theory’s identification of racism as normal provides an important tool for indentifying other such ‘normal, ordinary’ thinking in the society. (Ladson-Billings, 2004b, p.58)
The promise of CRT and its framework is its ability to “be deployed as a theoretical tool for uncovering many types of inequity and social injustice—not just racial inequity and injustice” (Ladson-Billings, 2004b, p. 61).

A multicultural and social reconstructionist approach and critical race theory frameworks drive my goal to identify and teach issues of social justice using art curriculum. Representation in art is a central focus in this study because they create inequalities (hooks, 1995; Desai, 2000). My use of a multicultural and social reconstructionist curriculum approach makes the inquiry of representation increasingly relevant and necessary because “inherent in multiculturalism as a pedagogical approach is the requirement that teachers represent a culture other than their own” (Desai, 2000, p.116). This creates an unequal power dynamic (Desai, 2000). Desai (2000) argues that no representations are neutral; they involve decontextualization of the subject, reducing them to partial characteristics. hooks (1995) adds that representation can cause lone students of color to assume the role of the “native informant,” as if she is the spokesperson for her race or ethnicity. Therefore, a critical questioning, as well as a rejection of representation is significant in working towards social justice. Art is a communicative act that can take on these pertinent social tasks (Garber & Costantino, 2007). However, to achieve social justice through art education, one cannot simply explore stereotypes and personal acts of bigotry; there must be an investigation of the institutional and organizational structures that constrict identity and imagination (Garber & Costantino, 2007).
Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The previous chapter was an extensive examination of relevant literature that is the foundation of this research. This chapter is a guide through the qualitative methodology applied in the study. I provide an overview of the research site, the research time and duration, and my methods to maintain ethics in research. Specifically, this chapter highlights participatory action research, the methods of data collection and data analysis.

Restatement of Research Questions

For this multidimensional study, my central question is: How does a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to art education facilitate the three broad goals of social justice (a) increase personal awareness, (b) expand knowledge and (c) encourage action among youth? In addition to investigating this question, several sub-questions are also addressed:

1. How does the participatory action research (PAR) process work to achieve the three broad goals of social justice?

2. How did the Kaleidoscope setting impact the research?

3. What role did artmaking play in the process of exploring social justice issues?
4. How do the finished artworks exist as dialogic tools for communicating and promoting social justice?

Overview of the Study

This participatory action research study intended to investigate how a specific multicultural art education curriculum approach increases personal awareness, expands knowledge and incites action. The multicultural and social reconstructionist approach originated in the education field by Christine Sleeter and Carl Grant; however, in this study I utilize it within the field of art education in hopes to facilitate learning of social justice issues through artmaking. Garber (2004) writes, “Art education for social justice places art as a means through which [social justice] goals are achieved” (Garber, p.16). Working towards social justice through art education is transformative because art can teach students how to critically analyze imposed ideas and assumptions.

For four months, I collected data through various, diverse means. Primarily, I kept a research journal that held observations and field notes. Also, the students and I collaboratively developed curriculum development, brainstormed social justice issues that would frame each artmaking workshop, and created visual art that addressed identified issues. The surveys, research journal, art curriculum, documentation of the brainstorming exercises, and the actual artwork serve as data. Also, my personal reflections of the experience and understanding of the research are also analyzed as relevant data. The data obtained from all of these sources were considered and analyzed.
**Setting of the Study**

**Kaleidoscope Youth Center**

The research site is Kaleidoscope Youth Center, located in Columbus, Ohio. Kaleidoscope Youth Center (KYC) is a community organization with the mission “to work in partnership with young people in Central Ohio to create safe and empowering environments for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth through advocacy, education and support” (Kaleidoscope Youth Center, 2009, para. 1). Each student that attends KYC travels from his/her respective family community to build a new community constructed by their inquiries about sexual orientation; therefore, the youth demographic is diverse in race, ethnicity, ability and class. The overall diversity within Kaleidoscope was a significant factor in my decision to use it as a site for research. Heterogeneity is central within a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach because one of its tenets, cooperative learning, thrives off of diversity (Johnson & Johnson, 1989).

**Time and Duration of the Study**

The study began Monday August 2, 2010, and ended Monday December 6, 2010. The youth and I met every Monday for one hour to engage in artmaking workshops. After four and a half months of doing art workshops, there was a final art exhibition inside the Kaleidoscope Youth Center. The exhibition had an opening reception. The week
following the exhibition opening, the students and I met again to share some concluding ideas about the workshops. There were four, one hour long meetings after the exhibition.

**Ethics and Politics of the Study**

In July 2010, my application to Behavioral and Social Sciences Institutional Review Board at The Ohio State University was approved (Appendix A). The application attended to issues such as protocol for obtaining consent, potential harm to subjects and the overall research agenda. I was required to gain assent from youth ages 12-17 and signed consent forms from youth ages 18-20. The assent and consent forms were detailed accounts of the research, including participant responsibility and potential risks to participants. The forms outlined their right to discontinue participation at any time and their right not to participate at all. The potential harm to the youth included possible discomfort during certain discussions pertaining to some cultural, social and/or personal issues. The risk was nothing beyond what is encountered during the performance of art activities in a school or community art classroom.

**Research Foundations**

**Qualitative Research**

Ultimately, there are two didactic approaches to inquiry: quantitative and qualitative. According to Ernie Stringer (2004), “[These] two major paradigms compete for interest and attention, both providing powerful, but distinct, ways in which to investigate phenomena in the physical and human universe” (p.15). Norman Denzin and
Yvonna Lincoln, editors of the 2000 *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, help distinguish the two in their explanation below:

Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry…They seek answers to questions that stress *how* social experience is created and given meaning. In contrast, quantitative studies emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes…Their work is done from within a value-free framework. (p.8)

Therefore, while quantitative studies rely on numerical comparisons and classifications, qualitative studies rely on direct observed comparisons as a source for finding new insights (Willis, 1978 as cited in Stockrocki, 1997). Each approach provides a different set of tools to complete research and they work off of a different set of assumptions about how to correctly and effectively acquire knowledge (Stringer, 2004).

Thorne (2000) suggests, “Qualitative research often takes the position that an interpretive understanding is only possible by way of uncovering or deconstructing the meanings of a phenomenon” (p.68). In this study, I explore human behavior and the ways that art can be a transformative tool in a social environment. Therefore, I chose to implement a qualitative methodology because it supports the observation and/or examination of the human experience in its natural, pure state. Qualitative research is described by Elliot Eisner (1991) as “the search for qualities—the characteristics of our experience” (Eisner, 1991 as cited in Stockrocki, 1997, p.8). I work on models of ideal,
inclusive curriculum that provides knowledge and creates personal connections with students on a common and practical level. Because of this role, my working pedagogy acknowledges and accepts the ideas of John Dewey; the authentic human experience is a primary means of constructing meaning and acquiring knowledge (Stringer, 2004). Qualitative research allows me to examine everyday social life and interpret it through rich descriptions, providing less abstract and more functional solutions to my research questions. Denzin & Lincoln (2000) suggest that “quantitative researchers…are less concerned with detail. Quantitative researchers are deliberately unconcerned with rich descriptions because such detail interrupts the process of developing generalizations” (p.10). With this in mind, I confidently assert that my naturally preferred research paradigm is qualitative inquiry.

**Theoretical Grounding of Participatory Action Research**

There is utility in academic writings and publications with grounded theoretical standpoints; however, I prefer to engage in research that aids in real life, personal and social transformations. In order for me to successfully execute a study that facilitates social justice, the methodology must support those same ideals. Consequently, I utilize participatory action research (PAR), a method of inquiry that focuses on collaboration in research (between the facilitator and the stakeholders) and the creation of change on a local level (Stringer, 2007). Strategies used in PAR are informed by “Freire’s development of counterhegemonic approaches to knowledge construction within oppressed communities” (McIntyre, 2008, p.3), therefore, directly connecting with my research goal of working towards social justice.
While positivistic science aims to produce a body of knowledge that is objective and generalizable so it fits a large population, PAR seeks to collaboratively construct descriptions and interpretations that allow stakeholders to come up with appropriate, acceptable solutions to their problems and situations (Stringer, 2007). In the 1940’s, Kurt Lewin developed action research based on the premise that as people explore and critically examine their own realities, they will be motivated to improve and/or change their own conditions (McIntyre, 2008). Those interested in the process and success of action research must work on the faith that people who are poor, oppressed, marginalized and disenfranchised will gradually transform their environment by their own praxis. Therefore, PAR thrives on collaboration and group dynamics in research. This mutual research inquiry can create change on a local level and is context specific.

PAR supports the dissemination of the hierarchy within traditional research approaches, researcher over participant. PAR works towards shifting the power over who holds and is able to obtain knowledge, as well as for whom social research should be undertaken. This is done by the facilitator working in a partnership with the marginalized or vulnerable persons. PAR is grounded in people’s struggles and their use of local knowledge to voice concerns and resist political powers (Kindon, Pain & Kesby, 2007), which is a very important goal in working towards social justice.

McIntyre (2008) insists, “There is no fixed formula for designing, practicing, and implementing PAR projects. Nor is there one overriding theoretical framework that underpins PAR processes. Rather, there is malleability in how PAR processes are framed
and carried out” (p.3). The PAR process is “fluid, open and responsive (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000) and can loosely be described ‘as a spiral of self-reflective cycles of

Planning a change
Acting and observing the process and consequences of the change,
Reflecting on these processes and consequences, and then
Replanning,
Acting and observing,
Reflecting, and so on…(Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000, as cited in Hutzel, 2004, pp.51-52).

PAR is an appropriate methodology for my research because it connects well to the other areas of the study. Primarily, Kurt Lewin, attributed founder of PAR (McIntyre, 2008), is also one of the leaders of social interdependence theory (Johnson & Johnson, 1998), one of three theories that drive cooperative learning. Sleeter and Grant (2007a) identify cooperative learning as a tenet of multicultural and social and reconstructionist approach and they frame it through social interdependence theory, driven by Kurt Lewin. Another connection that ties my research together nicely is Freire’s visibility in PAR and in Sleeter and Grant’s approach. Freire’s theoretical work helped PAR become a model of research for liberation; his views situated research as a form of social action (Herr & Anderson, 2005). Sleeter and Grant (2007b) use Freire’s critical consciousness as a framework to create lessons in a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach. Freire’s overarching goal in PAR and in critical consciousness is empowerment.
Ultimately, Lewin and Freire’s appearance in multiple areas demonstrate how, even in methodology, the sections of my research are inextricable intertwined.

**PAR and CRT: Social Justice and Reconstructionist Research**

Some theoretical agendas framing PAR include feminism, postructuralism, Marxism and critical theory (Kindon, Pain & Kesby, 2007). Critical theory is one major contributing theory of PAR. Critical theory suggests that researchers focus on how power in social, political, cultural, and economic contexts informs people’s actions when in everyday situations (Kemmis, 2001 as cited in McIntyre, 2008). For my study, I employed critical race theory (CRT) alongside PAR because they have many overlapping agendas. Torre (2008) writes, “While PAR and CRT have emerged from different intellectual and activist traditions they share a set of theoretical, ethical and methodological principles and practices fundamental to both” (p.111). Both CRT and PAR offer unique spaces for research through which the research process brings diverse people together in a collaborative exploration of identity—“not as what they are but who they are. Bridging individual and collective identities, histories, and social analyses” (Torre, 2008, p.111).

Primarily, PAR and CRT aim to expand notions of expert knowledge. Participatory action researchers see stakeholders’ local knowledge as some of the most vital information prevalent to the study. Research is often built around this local expertise (Torre, 2008). Likewise, critical race theorists encourage minority people to re-tell stories and make counter-narratives concerning history in order “to destabilize dominant explanations and ideologies” (Torre, 2008, p.111); this gives their knowledge the status
of expert. Another link between PAR and CRT is their recognition of people’s multiple, overlapping, potentially conflicting, identities, loyalties and allegiances. Critical race theorists stress the intersectionality within individuals because it forces the recognition of multiplicity within groups (Torres, 2008; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). In PAR, the recognition of multi-dimensionality allows people to look to various aspects of their identity “to better understand material, create distance uncomfortable experiences, or make connections across seemingly different theoretical positions” (p.112).

PAR and CRT complicate identity categories. Critical race theorists go beyond the rudimentary notion of race that emphasizes melanin. Instead, CRT brings forth concepts like “political race;” it investigates the way “power constructs [race] relationships” (Torre, 2008, p.112). In addition, PAR and CRT work to make the political nature of knowledge production explicit (Torre, 2008). Torre (2008) writes,

CRT argues that there is ‘no scholarly perch outside of the social dynamics of racial power to merely observe and analyze. Scholarship—the formal production, identification, and organization of what will be called ‘knowledge’ is inevitably political’ (Crenshaw et al. 1995, p.xiii). This understanding of knowledge is central to PAR which begins by questioning what constitutes knowledge, who is allowed to define it, produce it, decide how its produces, or determine the quality and method of its dissemination. (p.112)

A multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to education connects to the conceptual frameworks of both PAR and CRT. As does PAR and CRT, a multicultural
and social reconstructionist approach encourages teachers to ask themselves fundamental questions about the persistence of social inequity and to develop education that might be pivotal in the progression of social change (Ladson-Billings, 1999). The underlying premise of social reconstruction and social justice research is not grounded only in the specifics of justice for gender, sexual, ethnic, racial, class, or ability differences; it originated from Freire’s liberatory pedagogy and critical pedagogy, “which involves guiding students to know themselves and their worlds and to live and act within their communities and society as critical citizens, employing ‘the principles of justice, liberty, and equality’ to create a participatory democracy” (Garber & Costantino, 2007, p.1061). Furthermore, social reconstructionist research encourages and supports participation and collaboration, significant facets of both PAR and CRT.

Multiculturalism in art education is concerned with equality of opportunity, human rights, and combating prejudice through cultural identity (Garber & Costantino, 2007). However, in order to facilitate emancipatory goals and practices, “art educators must address the institutional structures and organizations that constrain them in terms of identity, imagination, and/or practice” (Garber & Costantino, 2007, p.1062). Important in this effort is Friere’s pedagogy; it helps the oppressed understand that oppression is not natural, but instead results from human and socially constructed forces, which can be changed (Adams, Bell & Griffin, 2007). This understanding initiates praxis, theory into practice, because the oppressed become actors in their own history, instead of internalizing the oppressors’ consciousness (Adams, Bell & Griffin, 2007). PAR and CRT have individual and shared elements that can guide research in such a way that
recovers the “voices, experiences, and perspectives of socially targeted participants from their ‘internalized oppression’” (Adams, Bell & Griffin, 2007, p.31).

**Research Design**

I implemented a participatory action research study in which I attempted to examine how a multicultural and social reconstructionist art curriculum facilitated social justice. I aimed to collaborate with the students to create a curriculum that attended to their interests and specific issues that affected their lives. In the spirit of action research, the students played a significant role in planning the weekly agenda and building the curriculum map that stands as data. Because I utilized PAR and CRT, a research practice and a theory with social justice goals, the design of my study emphasizes participation (voice), neutrality of the forum, maintaining trustworthiness and making sure stakeholders are respected during the research process (Tyler, 2000).

The study took place at Kaleidoscope Youth Center. The population of students at this site was diverse in that it was compiled of youth from various racial, economic and religious backgrounds. In addition, the gender and sexual orientation of the youth was diverse as well. This environment was conducive to cooperative learning in which collaborative artworks were created and exhibited.

At the final stages of the study, the students and I engaged in post-workshop dialogue in which I interviewed two youth who played primary roles in the development of the curriculum and projects. Finally, there was an exhibition that allowed the students to take ownership of their work and speak with other youth who did not participate in the
weekly workshops. The conversations had direction in that the students who participated desired to gauge whether or not their artwork communicated social justice to those who did not participate.

In addition to focusing on the student work and their progress, I explored my position as a facilitator of PAR and as a teacher. In the writing, *Participatory action research and critical race theory: Fueling spaces for Nos-otras to research*, Maria Torre (2008) asks some fundamental questions:

What does it mean for us as researchers—or as teachers, students, activists, community members, prisoners, politicians, immigrants—to be implicated in each others’ lives? How does it impact the design of our studies? How does it shift the knowledge we produce? How does it influence the products, actions or social policy recommendations that result from our research? (p.107)

It is critical that researchers realize that their positionality and their embrace of particular theoretical frameworks significantly impact all aspects of their study. Specifically, for my study, adopting a social justice/social reconstructionist standpoint means that each task from question identification to data analysis will strive toward democracy and equality. Additionally, there is a consistent focus on stakeholder engagement and participation. This is why the questions that Torre (2008) put forth were important for me to attend to during the process of my research. Democratic principles, emphasis on equality and the facilitation of a participatory process influences the design of the study, the actions that result from our (the stakeholders’ and my) engagement in collaborative research, and the overall knowledge that was gained by both stakeholders and me.
Data Collection Procedures

The methods used in PAR are diverse because the methodology continually
develops and shifts through the course of its spiral\(^4\) process (Herr & Anderson, 2005).
Ultimately, I used five key data collection techniques that offered principal data—a
research journal that includes personal reflections, observations and field notes; artifacts,
such as curriculum and student artwork; interviews; and one survey.

Research Journal: Reflections, Observations and Field Notes

Primarily, as many participatory action researchers do, I utilized a research
journal for observations, field notes and autobiographical data. Kathryn Herr and Gary
Anderson (2005) write, “If a researcher is the facilitator or instigator of a change process,
part of the research documentation is the researcher’s roles, actions and decisions” (p.77).
This journal is a record of my research decisions, thoughts and feelings about the action
research process in general. In addition, classroom observations and impression on my
application of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach in art education was
chronicled. I also noted information such as dynamics amongst students, dynamics
amongst students and myself, how open students were to receive knowledge, how willing
the students were to offer knowledge (especially through building the curriculum),
emotions that subject matters brought forth and the knowledge that was initiated and
supported by a multicultural and social reconstructionist curriculum.

spiral may remain the same—that is, iterative cycles of plan-act-observe-reflect (Lewin, 1948)—[but] these
are broad categories or steps that will be translated into actions in the field” (p.76).
I also documented in this journal via photographs. I photographed the students’ work in progress and upon completion. I also photographed the teaching materials I used and placed around the center throughout the duration of the research study.

**Artifacts: Curriculum and Art Making**

The students and I co-created a multicultural and social reconstructionist art curriculum. On the first day of the study, the students and I engaged in a conversation in which the students voiced specific social and personal issues that they were concerned about. The result of this initial dialogue was a compilation of issues that could be attended to during future art workshops. Since my interest is in art education, it was clearly communicated that creating art was a fixed aspect of the workshops. Therefore, the students understood that we would be exploring all of the social issues through art.

One of my roles was to bring forth projects that introduced them to new artmaking processes, as well as offered a means to investigate the issues that interested them. With the students’ input pertaining to the subject matter and my contributing the artmaking agenda, a collaborative balanced curriculum was formed.

The curriculum that emerged works to help communicate how oppression/domination is embedded in the structural systems that run our society. The curriculum made the students more aware of how injustices are entrenched in our daily activities, so much that they become undetectable. Embracing a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach when producing the curriculum allowed us to bring forth intersectionality, as well as hierarchies of oppression. Understanding complexities of oppression and issues of injustice encouraged students to reject the status quo and engage
in acts that work to reconstruct society. So, the curriculum served as an intervention that I introduced, but became a joint venture with the goal of social justice. Herr and Anderson (2005) assert,

The researcher conceives of an intervention [the curriculum]…but works to cultivate joint leadership and design with the participants…The researcher is not organic to the group under study, but is offering services or an intervention to them, perhaps for mutual benefit. Data gathering in these cases is documentation of the process and the outcomes. (p.82)

In addition to the actual curriculum document serving as data, data was collected through the implementation of the curriculum, which resulted in student artwork. I used these as tangible artifacts to analyze, in addition to the curriculum itself. The students created five collaborative works of art that had aspects to them that allowed the students to make personal claims. The student art provided visual representations of the ideas learned through the curriculum. In addition, the artworks delivered the students’ narratives and/or counter-narratives, a tenet of PAR and CRT. Scholars use “stories to analyze the myths, presuppositions, and received wisdoms that make up the common culture about race and that invariably render blacks and other minorities one-down” (Ladson-Billings, 1999, pp. 229-230). PAR and CRT scholars desire to deconstruct and reconstruct reality through the use of voice, words and stories “as interpretive structures by which we impose order on experience and it on us” (Ladson- Billings & Tate, 1995, p.57). These frameworks are designed to incorporate diverse voices into the received
wisdom or canon; it puts forward counterstories (Ladson-Billings, 1999). The curriculum and artworks work in a capacity of being a voice for the students.

**Interviews**

At the onset of this research, I intended to interview three youth. There were two students who had the most regular attendance and were integral in planning the largest art project we did, which was a mural. The third youth also had high attendance, but did not offer as much conceptual information as the other two youth. Unfortunately, after having art workshops from August 2010 to December 2010, I interviewed only one of the students. One of the youth who I intended to interview unexpectedly moved to Los Angeles. The last youth declined the interview. Therefore, I only received data from one youth interview. Fortunately, the director of KYC agreed to participate in an interview about the art workshops and the artwork that was created during the four months. This interview was not a planned aspect of the research. However, since I was unable to interview all three of the central participants, the director’s interview seemed necessary since he was the only other individual present during most of the workshops.

I scheduled the student interview during the final week of the art workshops. The students are not required to attend KYC; it is a drop in center that allows students to come and go at their own discretion. Therefore, in order to secure the interview, I had to attend KYC each day in hopes that the student would be present at least one day of the week. Since the interview with the director was not planned, it came much later in the research. The interview with the director was done approximately two weeks after I collected the other data.
The student’s interview questions (Appendix B) addressed his personal definition of social justice. The questions also addressed the relevancy of art in the stride towards social justice. I utilized an open-ended question format that supports real thinking and interpretation (Fear & Chiron, 2002). I attempted to formulate questions that were not leading (Fear & Chiron, 2002). The interview allowed the student to use the knowledge that related to his social and cultural milieu and communicated ideas in his own language (Sleeter & Grant, 2007). In addition, I was able to ask the student questions that directly related to my guiding research question and sub-questions in the interview. The interview with the youth was conducted in KYC director’s office. The director was not present.

The director’s interview questions (Appendix B) addressed his thoughts on the mural and the residual effects of having an artwork centered on social justice. The interview questions also delved into questions concerning working with an LGBTQ population. The interview with the director was conducted in his office.

**Exhibition Surveys**

While surveys are used mostly in quantitative studies, they have the ability to provide qualitative information. According the Web Center for Social Research Methods (2006) “All qualitative data can be quantitatively coded in an almost infinite varieties [sic] of ways. This doesn't detract from the qualitative information. We can still do any kinds of judgmental syntheses or analyses we want…. Recognizing the similarities between qualitative and quantitative information opens up new possibilities for interpretation that might otherwise go unutilized” (para. 12).
I created the exhibition survey, which consisted of eight statements. The audience had to use a Likert scale to determine if and how much they agreed or disagreed with the eight statements. The first two statements helped me determine the participants’ understanding or art and their personal use of art. Statements 3-8 were framed around the three broad goals of social justice increasing personal awareness, expanding knowledge and encouraging action. The questions were the following:

1. Art (i.e. visual, creative writing, music, dance/movement) is an effective way to communicate personal and/or social issues.
2. I use art to communicate personal and/or social issues.
3. The exhibition made me aware of my personal and social identity.
4. The exhibition made me conscious of how my identity affects how others treat me.
5. The exhibition made me question how I treat others that are different from myself.
6. The exhibition brought forth an issue/s that I rarely think about.
7. The artwork in the exhibition initiated communication between other viewers and me.
8. The artwork in the exhibition initiated an internal dialogue.

In addition to these eight statements, I proposed two follow up questions, using an open-ended format. The questions intended to probe a deeper evaluation of the viewers’ experiences with the students’ artworks. I received significant qualitative data from this portion of the surveys. The questions were:

1. Which artwork demanded your attention the most? Why? Did the issue that this artwork addressed influence your overall interest in the work? Yes / No
   If yes, how? If no, what aspect of the work caught your attention?
2. Which artwork received the least amount of your attention? Why? Did the issue that the artwork addressed influence your disinterest in the work? Yes / No
   If yes, how? If no, what aspect of the work turned you off?
After the art workshops concluded, two KYC youth and I organized an art exhibition for the KYC students who did not participate in the art workshops. With these surveys, I hoped to find out if the students’ artworks communicated themes of social justice. This helped identify if the curriculum approach had benefits outside of the immediate classroom. The surveys helped me explore how a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach facilitated the creation of artwork that disseminated knowledge about social justice? During the exhibition, the youth and I passed out assent and consent forms and then we collected the signed consent forms. Then we passed out the exhibition surveys (Appendix C) to other youth and adult volunteers who did not participate in any of the art workshops. The sole reason for the surveys was to answer sub-question 4: How do the finished artworks exist as dialogic tools for communicating and promoting social justice?

Analysis of Data

A central goal in data analysis is to clearly and critically identify information that directly informs the researcher about the primary research question and the additional sub-research questions. My method of analyzing data included major processes such as categorizing and coding, key experiences and emergent themes. Categorizing and coding is a “procedure that identifies units of meaning (experience/perception) within the data and organizes them into a set of categories that typify or summarize the experiences and perspectives of the participants” (Stringer, p.98, 2007). The framework for analysis was constructed around the three broad goals for social justice, which includes (a) increasing
personal awareness, (b) expanding knowledge and (c) encouraging action (Adams, Bell & Griffin, 2007). These three goals were positioned as pre-established categories for data collection and analysis and used to answer the study’s guiding question and sub-questions.

After attending to information that could be coded into the pre-established categories, I acknowledged key experiences and emergent themes. Noting key experiences unpacked the transformational moments to identify how they were composed so that the nature of those experiences was illuminated (Stringer, 2007). Emergent themes are areas that unexpectedly arise through the exploration of collected data (Wong & Blandford, 2002). Although the concepts brought forth as emergent themes were not specifically sought out, they were vital in generating an answer to my overall research question and sub-questions, as well as introducing information for future research initiatives.

**Research Journal: Reflections, Observations and Field Notes**

To analyze the research journal that included reflection, observations, field notes and personal reflections, I used content analysis, which is described as “a research technique for making…valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter to the contexts of their use” (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 18). Processes like reviewing the data, and unitizing the data for coding and categorizing (Stringer, 2007) aided in my content analysis because these techniques facilitated my understanding of particular phenomena (Krippendorff, 2004). I reviewed, coded and categorized data based on reoccurring themes that attended to the three goals of social justice, and helped answer my research
question and sub-questions. Additionally, while I extracted information relevant to my initial questions, I recognized emergent themes that were not pre-established as a category. The journal was a central method of data collection because it held personal reflective information that the other methods did not possess. As a researcher in PAR, addressing my place and my vantage point in the research is significant. The journal additionally provided narrative information that pertained to key experiences in the research process. Analyzing key experiences was central to my analysis because it identified moments most impactful to the major stakeholders, the youth. Experiences highlighted in the journal were often the “lightbulb” or “aha” moments that provided me with insight about particular phenomena (Stringer, 2007). I identified main features of each experience, elements that composed the experience, and themes. Emergent themes were also dissected from the journal. Identifying emergent themes allowed room for fresh ideas and relationships to arise. Wong and Blandford (2002) write, “By not trying to fit the data into a priori compartments or structures initially, this approach allows new and surprising concepts to emerge first and then used the concepts themselves to guide further exploration and data collection” (p.7). Because my research was an exploratory PAR study, my goal was to allow stakeholders to guide much of the research. Welcoming an emergent theme approach allowed this freedom.

**Artifacts: Curriculum and Art Making**

At the beginning of the study, I established curriculum objectives. The following objectives were taken from Sleeter and Grant (2007b) and other scholars who engage in social justice education. While the development of the curriculum aimed to be emergent
and collaborative in light of PAR, these curriculum objectives provided boundaries and guides to help me facilitate a collaborative process.

**Curriculum Objectives:**
1. Educate students about justice and power (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b)
2. Encourage students to be aware that the “isms” (e.g., racism, sexism) are continually being redefined in order to continue existing as society changes-analyze systems of oppression and critical questioning (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b)
3. Teach political action skills and a consciousness that affirms human worth (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b)
4. Create a democratic space in which collaboration thrives
5. Reveal how representations play a role in maintaining oppressive systems and identify how art can be used to counter oppression
6. Promote action (Bell & Griffin, 1997)

To begin analyzing the curriculum, I first analyzed to what extent it attended to these objectives. Then, I coded the data as it related to pre-established categories. Finally, as emergent themes formed, information from the curriculum was added to those categories as well.

The artwork was an aspect of the curriculum. After every art project concluded, the students wrote about their artwork, which provided information that assisted in coding and categorization. In addition, the artwork was explored during interview with the one youth and the director of KYC.

**Interviews**

I used content analysis to analyze the interviews. I repeatedly reviewed the interview notes to reveal themes in the data and I coded and categorized them accordingly. The interview notes offered significant information that directly correlated with the study questions. I identified reoccurring words, concepts and themes that the student and the director communicated. Emergent themes in the interview notes were also
acknowledged and examined alongside the other emergent themes located in the additional data sources.

**Exhibition Surveys**

The surveys were taken to The Statistical Consulting Services to be analyzed. The analyst created a data summary that I used for content analysis, which included coding and categorizing processes. I noted patterns and common themes in the viewer responses.

**Summary**

This research was an opportunity for me as a researcher, artist and art educator, to understand how a social justice approach to art curriculum creates practical knowledge about social issues and encourages action. Using a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to education in the classroom attempted to support democracy and promote agency within a youth community. In another capacity, this research was pivotal in advocating the use of art as a facilitator of knowledge building, as well as a tool for communication. Intertwining a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach with art education places art in a central position toward attaining goals for social justice.
Chapter 4: Presentation of Data

Introduction

In Chapter Three, I presented the methodology that was used in this research study. I discussed PAR as a research methodology that embraces the voice of stakeholders and has the goal of creating change on a local level (Stringer, 2007). In addition, I introduced the research methods and processes used to analyze the data, which included content analysis and identification of emergent themes relevant to the research questions. This chapter is dedicated to presenting the data. I begin by offering an overview of the research site and my point of view in the research. This preliminary background information is significant in understanding the data presentation because it provides the framework and circumstances under which the research was executed. The data is organized by methods of collection: research journal, curriculum and artmaking, interviews, and exhibition surveys. The research journal includes data such as the daily agenda, workshop attendance, and reflections about each workshop session. The information is primarily presented in narrative form and describes my journey as a researcher and as a stakeholding participant. This narrative account holds additional information such as observations on what was successful or unsuccessful during the sessions, my personal struggles as an ally in a LGBTQ setting, and “aha” moments that were significant during the workshops. In addition, it unveils my informal ongoing
analysis where I thought aloud about “what [was] happening in [my] classroom: the
responses of students, the results of data collection, informal observations and comments
by students…critical incidents, [and] how students demonstrated (or didn’t demonstrate)
their learning” (Phillips & Carr, 2006, p.111).

**Kaleidoscope Youth Center**

Founded in 1994, Kaleidoscope Youth Center (KYC) is described as “the only
organization in Ohio solely dedicated to supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender,
and questioning (LGBTQ) youth” (KYC, 2010). KYC is a non-profit organization with
the mission to create a safe and empowering environment for youth who identify as
LGBTQ. KYC provides advocacy, education and support in order to encourage and
promote a self-confident, healthy, productive life for youth. Programming includes HIV
prevention, safe sex education, peer-counseling, after-school activities, art workshops,
and tutoring. KYC is overseen by a director, an executive director, a fiscal advisor and
more than thirty program volunteers.

KYC is located on High Street in Columbus, Ohio. It is adjacent to The Ohio
State University and is just over two miles away from The Short North, an area of
Columbus that is well-known for its local shops and art galleries. KYC is in a central
location and is not centered in a specific neighborhood. Therefore, the demographics of
the students at KYC are diverse. Youth come from various Columbus communities and
economic backgrounds.

KYC is on a city bus route, which is convenient for youth since many receive
complimentary bus passes from the Columbus City School district. This aspect of the
location is also significant because most of the students do not have personal transportation or have a driver’s license, so public transportation is a primary means for students getting around Columbus.

**Point of View of the Researcher**

**An Ally in a LGBTQ Community**

I recognize that my position as an ally in KYC guides the interpretations of my data. My reports come from the perspective of a black heterosexual female. At the beginning of the study, the students did ask questions regarding my sexual orientation. My heterosexuality did not seem to alter the students’ thoughts and I felt they communicated their ideas freely. Also, while this difference in sexual orientation was present, I was still able to gain rapport with the students, which supported the complicated conversations we engaged in daily.

Working with youth who identify as LGBTQ was a challenge in that there was a community language amongst the youth who I was not familiar with. For example, as seen in the following report of observations and field notes, there were multiple exchanges in which youth used slang vocabulary that I was not familiar or comfortable with. While this may have been a result of the age gap amongst the students and me, I also credit this to my position as an outsider in this community.

I had an elevated awareness of my heterosexuality in this space and I believe that it affected me more than it affected the youth who participated. At KYC, I was in their domain, so they always seemed more comfortable with themselves in that space I was.
However, once they walked out the doors of KYC, they were forced to walk into a heterosexual world in which they may feel just as uncomfortable as I did in their space. This positionality is acknowledged throughout the delivery and analysis of the research data.

**Participatory Action Researcher embracing Critical Race Theory**

Participating alongside students through the research and identifying them as co-researchers displayed trust and respect. In addition, it acknowledged and nurtured the students’ capability to find original solutions for their life problems (Atweh, Christensen & Dornan, 1998), thus encouraging agency and facilitating autonomy and self-sufficiency. PAR provides forums to allow people to connect and interact as co-participants in the struggle and to jointly pursue rationality and democracy. My support of an ongoing connection helped students recognize how working together is meaningful and beneficial, while separation is artificial and ultimately hostile to all (Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998). The emphasis on working together initiated inquiries that caused students to question how group boundaries are framed, and simultaneously, helped students make identifications with other members of society (Tyler, 2000). Ultimately, using PAR introduced students to a place where “difference is allowed and dialogue replaces domination or consensus” (Atweh, Christensen & Dornan, 1998, p.316).

Enacting critical race theory (CRT) can similarly help youth transcend superficial, essentialized treatments of various cultural groups (Ladson-Billings, 1999). CRT suggests challenging students’ fixed notions of difference and diversity. My role in this process was to offer activities and questions that troubled students’ identity categories.
They might then begin to understand and promote these categories as invariable stumbling-blocks that require consistent troubling (Ladson-Billings, 1999). In addition, CRT assisted in helping the students recognize their own biases and the biases of others—a necessary task that helps people understand the connections between power, and wealth and injustice (Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris & Daniel, 2008).

Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris and Daniel (2008) assert:

The concept of justice and equitable opportunities for all are important goals. To help students understand them, it is necessary to create opportunities for them to actively participate in and experience these concepts firsthand. Examining and producing visual culture imagery and objects that lead to and end in understanding of justice and the complexities of social, political, and economic relations are valuable educational goals. p. 83

The commitments of PAR and CRT required me to engage students in the interrogation of issues of power. This was not done by simply “giving ‘voice’ to those oppressed” or “by counter-hegemonic challenge—encouraging those with privilege to express guilt and responsibility and redeem themselves” (Torre, 2008, p.117). There were steps that included acknowledging the situated knowledges in the room, creating a common project that helped to analyze patterns of social (in)justice, and layering social history (Torre, 2008).
Complete Summaries of Data

A Narrative Picture of the Research Process: Research Journal

Monday, August 2, 2010 was my first day back at Kaleidoscope Youth Center (KYC) since taking a leave of absence to attend to school and family life. I was a volunteer at KYC for one year, July 2008 to July 2009, before I requested to leave for a while. During that year that I spent at Kaleidoscope, I identified KYC as the site for my dissertation research study. Therefore, I informed the director that I would like to execute a research study at the site. I explained my research topic to her and she was excited about the idea of KYC having a weekly art workshop. She appreciated how it would offer the students a routine that they would be able look forward to each week. So, I let her know that I would return to KYC after I finished writing the research proposal, passing the candidacy exam and getting approved by the IRB. The process of completing all of these tasks took a little over a year.

When I returned to KYC, I was met by a new director who welcomed me with excitement and great support. Fortunately, he was just as thrilled about the art workshops as the previous KYC director. The new director was working on developing a regimen of programming to offer the students on a weekly basis. KYC was transitioning; it used to be a community drop-in center that was undefined with no real structure or purpose other than to provide a safe community space for youth to socialize. The new leadership was guiding KYC into a more organized and much more educationally relevant space, while still providing the safe space for youth. It was not my place to decide which administration was best for KYC; however, I will assert that the spaces worked
differently and offered different things; not better or worse things, just different things.

After engaging in many conversations and planning sessions with the new director, we titled the workshops Kaleidoscope He(ARTS). He and I set a date and time that the workshops would occur weekly, Mondays at 4:30 PM to 5:30 PM. We agreed upon the workshop start date, August 9, 2010. The director placed Kaleidoscope He(ARTS) on the center’s monthly calendar that was on the KYC website. Copies of this calendar in a paper version (Appendix N) were placed on the sign-in desk at KYC for all of the youth to see. While, August 9 was the start date of the workshops, Monday, August 2, 2010, was the date I would officially return to KYC to begin my research, starting with recruiting youth for the art workshops.

From Monday, August 2, 2010 to Friday, August 6, 2010, I was at KYC from 3pm to 8pm to recruit youth and get them interested in the upcoming art workshops. On the first day of recruitment, I was informed that the Columbus City Schools cut their contracts with COTA, the bus line that provides free public transportation to all students who attend Columbus City Schools and more than half of the youth who attend KYC. This meant that many students would not be at KYC because they would not have their normal means of free transportation. This was immediately noticeable because the attendance during the recruitment week was low. Fortunately, by the end of the week, the bus privileges were returned to the students. On Friday, I saw more students in that one day than I had seen all week. So by Monday, August 9, 2010, the first day of Kaleidoscope He(ARTS), eleven youth showed up at the center. I saw some of the same youth who I had conversations with during my visits the previous week, but many youth
were new. Although the workshops were scheduled to occur every Monday at 4:30 PM, as a volunteer I had to work a three-hour shift. So I was at KYC at 3 PM; well before the workshops began. I had no problem with this because this provided an opportunity for me to build rapport with the students I did not know.

After an hour of conversing with the youth, I went upstairs to the third floor, the location of the classroom, to begin setting up materials for the first workshop. Beginning the workshop was overwhelming. Even the mentioning of research can scare people off, a reality that supports the possibilities for PAR. I did not want to do this. So, realizing that this may occur, I wrote a script to use to introduce the workshops (Appendix D). In the script, I used very simple, accessible language that I hoped would make the students at ease about participating in research.

At 4:30 PM the students came to the third floor classroom and took a seat at the tables I had arranged. The students looked disinterested from the beginning, but after I explained some of the activities they would engage in, they seemed more attentive. I believe spending time with them beforehand aided in my ability to soothe their urge to walk out of the room, which is an option they always had.

After explaining the research and presenting the youth with consent and assent forms, I began talking about social justice. The youth were not quite sure what social justice was, so my definition seemed to help. Overall, the discussion was productive because they seemed to have to really think about examples of social justice issues. This information did not seem to be fresh in their mind. I used large butcher paper and markers to write down what we brainstormed about social justice. I gave them an
example of social justice that interested me: women and inequality in higher education.
After offering this example, they seemed to understand social justice better. The youth
began to voice social justice issues that interested them, such as illegal immigrants taking
jobs, the immigration law, California re-legalizing gay marriage, Columbus City Schools
revoking students’ bus passes, unfair imprisonment, gay equality, racism in occupation
and the inhumane treatment of animals. Personally, I was surprised sexual orientation
was not the very first social justice issue named. It was only mentioned very close to the
end of the list. This unexpected surprise made me aware that I did indeed have
preconceived ideas about what the students would want to explore.

After compiling the list of social justice issues with the youth, I introduced the
photovoice project. I intended for this first project to be an exploration that allowed the
students an “opportunity to develop their personal and social identities and…be
instrumental in building social competency. Youth should and need to be given the
opportunity to build and confirm their abilities, to comment on their experiences and
insights, and to develop a social morality for becoming a positive agent within their
communities and society” (Strack, Magill, & McDonagh, 2004, p. 49). So, to help them
understand the photovoice process, I gave them ideas about possible photo constructions
that could communicate some of the issues that were on the list we made. The youth
asked many questions, which exhibited a level of engagement that I was hoping for.

At the end of the workshop, I asked the students if any of them thought they
would be back next week. At least six of the students said that they would be back for
sure. Honestly, I did not believe all of the students who said they would be back. This
uncertainty came from the information that I learned from the session we had just finished. For example, I learned that one girl, Jenna, had just gotten out of jail for car theft. During the recruitment week at KYC, I overheard students talking about a troubled youth. Apparently, this young lady had been arrested and was featured in a weekly Columbus, Ohio, newspaper titled *Busted*. This paper highlighted people in Columbus, Ohio, who were arrested throughout the week. Jenna was the young lady who the other youth had been describing. During the workshop, Jenna was very vocal about her time in jail and made light of the situation. She was the individual who suggested unfair imprisonment as a social justice issue. I realized that the youth had a lot of personal issues that could make it hard for them to be reliable in attending the workshops. However, I was hopeful and took their word that they would be back. After this first workshop, I organized the social justice issues the students provided into a tentative calendar (Appendix E). Then, I decided on which artmaking processes I would introduce to the students. These processes would assist the youth in addressing each social justice issue they brought forth.

Monday, August 16, 2010 was the second Kaleidoscope He(ARTS) workshop. I came into the center with the plan to re-introduce the study and recap social justice issues with the students. I was hoping the students had taken some photos and we would be able to discuss aspects of photography like ethics and power and ways of seeing things. I wanted the students to engage in dialogue and share the positives and negatives of their experience. I was looking forward to hearing about unexpected occurrences such as, whether they thought it was fun or boring, how people responded to them taking pictures
of them, and what they found photo-worthy in their own community. However, only three students showed up to the second workshop session. Two of the three students were returning students from last week. However, neither of the two brought their cameras. One of the students admitted to taking only two pictures, and the other student had taken none. The KYC director told me that two cameras were left on the Kaleidoscope premises last week after class. This was a disappointment, but I was aware that it was a possibility.

As a researcher, I was familiar with unpredictable variables disrupting the flow of research expectations. However, I did not have anything planned in case this happened; therefore, I did not hold an art workshop that day. The three students and I did not engage in much conversation about the photovoice project because at that point, I realized the activity depended too much on the students doing work outside of KYC, remembering to bring the camera back, and simply coming back at all.

Charlie⁵, one of the youth who was present during the recruitment week and workshops one and two, made a disconcerting comment to me about the second workshop’s low attendance. Knowing my investment in the research and art workshops, he stated, “So, how are you gonna do art with no students? How do you feel about that? No one wants to do this.” I wondered if this was some kind of passive aggressive bullying. His comment was really off-putting and unfortunately, I did feel a little down, but I never thought it was because of something I did or did not do. I was comfortable with my rapport with the students, so I blamed the low attendance on the erratic schedules of youth, not my ability to maintain the youths’ interests (or relationships).

⁵ Participants’ names have been changed. Also, see Appendix O for youth demographics.
Overall, this particular experience made me more attentive to my research and the means for obtaining data. If the students are not attending regularly, how will I get an accurate idea of how their knowledge progressed over a period of time? I had to restructure the workshop agenda to be open so that each lesson was not based off of the previous one. The new calendar (Appendix F) that I created reflected this revision. My hopes were set high after the first workshop, but it was clear that I had to return to the planning stage to rework the research in a way that met the needs of the site.

Four students attended the art workshop held on Monday, August 23, 2010. One of the students from the previous two weeks was in attendance; he had been present at each workshop so far. Since he had experienced the failed workshop last week, it seemed as if he was eager to see what I had brought for this week. I went to KYC with a revised calendar that was open enough to work for unpredictable attendance. I made the decision to create individualized lessons that could be finished in one workshop session. Also, I came up with larger projects that were collaborative, so if the project had to be finished the next week, any youth could participate.

To begin, I initiated a discussion about social justice and how important it is for people to address injustice and act in ways that work against it. Then, I revisited the list of social justice issues that were developed during the first workshop session two weeks prior. The four students seemed to understand the concept of social justice, especially when the specific issue of the day was announced. Attending to the list, I chose to explore the Arizona Immigration Law. I handed out excerpts of the law (Appendix G) and the students and I dissected it and had a dynamic conversation about it. The students made
statements and asked questions such as, “Isn’t this unconstitutional?” “The police have no authority in this area.” “They cannot ask for immigration papers, can they?” “What does ‘looking illegal’ look like?” “Who defines what looking illegal looks like?” I was very excited that the students were raising these questions. After about 15 minutes of discussing the law and the discrimination embedded in it, I introduced the students to the project, which was a political cartoon. I gave the students 5 pages of political cartoons that attended to the Arizona Immigration Law. The students recognized the satire that was used and the way the artists played with language in an effort to confront discriminatory aspects of the law.

The students reacted well to this project. They quickly identified injustices in the Immigration law. The youth saw how there was a need for people to be active in addressing problems with the law. Their political cartoons (Figures 1-4) demonstrated this understanding. The students started the political cartoon project and did not want to stop. The workshop started on time at 4:30 PM, but ran over by 15 minutes. One student, Tammy, stayed in the room working on her artwork even after I left the center. Ironically, Tammy actually complained about doing visual art at the beginning of the day’s session. She claimed to be a writer and said she was not a good artist. Before the workshop concluded, I asked the students who were not finished if they agreed to other students finishing or adding to their political cartoon the following week. I let them know that if they did not come to the workshop the next week, their political cartoon may turn into a collaborative project that had another student’s input. All of the students stated that they understood and welcomed this possibility.
Figure 1. A student’s political cartoon in progress

Figure 2. A student’s finished political cartoon
Figure 3. A finished political cartoon. “You don’t look like a FRESHWATER FISH! Show me your PAPERS!”

Figure 4. A student’s political cartoon in progress
The next art workshop session was held on Monday, August 30, 2010. For this session, I planned to continue the political cartoon project with the youth, even if there were different youth present. I decided that the new students would begin their own political cartoon, and the students who came last week could finish the one they already began. There were only two students who completely finished their cartoon last week. If those two youth showed up to the workshop, they would have the opportunity to make another cartoon or collaborate with someone who was not done or just beginning the project.

When I arrived at KYC, there were two youth present for this workshop, neither who had attended the previous workshop. The attendance included Charlie, the young man who commented about students not returning to the workshops, and another young lady who I had never met before. Her name was Star. I noticed that the young lady had what I perceived to be very masculine mannerisms. She wore very baggy clothes that hid any hint of feminine curves if they were present. Star had her hair in cornrows that went from the front to the back of her head, a style usually seen on males that grow their hair out long. This youth let me know that she accepted any gender pronoun, meaning that she does not mind being referred to as he. Star called herself a “stud.” I believe I was attentive to this student’s gender and her overall disposition because her gender signifiers did not fit those identified as typically female. Honestly, I was unsure about her gender until she spoke. I immediately recognized how consumed I was with my uncertainty about this person, so I noted this struggle in my journal. I questioned why this was important to me and why there was need for me to know her gender.
At the beginning of the workshop, I initiated a discussion about social justice. I re-introduced the Arizona Immigration Law and the political cartoon project. I showed the students the political cartoons that were done the previous workshop session. I let them know that they could do a collaborative cartoon by working on the incomplete cartoons. Neither student was interested, even though they complained about making their own. Charlie understood the concept of social justice, political cartoons and the immigration law. Star did not know about these topics and did not show interest in wanting to know. Both students kept stating that they had just gotten out of school and did not want to hear what I was talking about. At first Star stated, “I don’t wanna do this, this doesn’t have nothing to do with me.” I had to explain that the cartoon did not have to be specifically about the immigration law; it simply should communicate the ideas of discrimination based on any aspect of identity. This could mean race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, and so on. Star was adamant about “not thinking about this type of information.” She called it “depressing.” She stated that she did not want to talk about prejudice, racism or any “stuff” like that because she is “messing with a White girl.” I told her that social justice does not have to be depressing, but instead could be empowering. Also, I tried to explain to her that just because she was addressing racism did not mean she had to hate White people. Star actually got up to leave three times, but kept turning around, pacing around her chair, saying “Man, I don’t understand this.” She seemed to want a lot of attention. Anytime I turned my attention to Charlie, Star would say, “See, you aren’t even listening to me, man, I’m leaving.” Eventually, she said “Okay, let me go ahead and do this so I can shut you up.” Instead of an image, Star
proceeded to create a poem. She asked me to write it on the canvas. I did (Figure 6). Charlie did not need as much guidance as Star did. He made a political cartoon which took about five minutes to draw. It was clever and quite effective as it represented the injustice associated with racial profiling (See Figure 5). After both youth initially complained about the project, they both ended up creating something completely unique that attended to social injustice. See Appendix H to read the text from Star’s canvas. After this workshop, I felt positive that the workshops would flow well. Each workshop was structured to stand on its own. The last two workshops did not rely on each other and they were both effective.
I was really excited about the Monday, September 13, 2010, workshop session. I intended to begin a mural project. Only two students, Charlie and another boy named Tim, were at KYC. Unfortunately, they both communicated that they were tired from a long day at school. So, being attentive to their needs, I decided to hold the workshop in the common area of KYC instead of going upstairs. The common area had couches and chairs that allowed the students to relax, instead of sitting in the workshop room’s chairs, which are too similar to a classroom.

For an hour, the two students and I conversed about ideas for the mural. To begin, I made sure to reiterate social justice goals and how this mural could act in a way that
communicates these ideas. I also mentioned the list of social justice issues formulated during the first workshop. The three of us sat on the couch together and brainstormed ways to portray some of these issues. The two boys seemed to focus on the issue of gay equality much more than any other issue mentioned. In addition, I saw how attending to gay equality was appropriate since the mural would be going up in the KYC site, a space that supports gay rights and human equality. Charlie suggested using a U.S. map and painting it the rainbow flag colors. Tim suggested we incorporate gender symbols (Appendix I) in the mural in some way. He stated that he just felt like the mural should communicate that “everyone is welcome here.” This was an ideal project to communicate gay and human equality.

After discussing the mural possibilities with Charlie and Tim, I placed a voting box downstairs at the table where the students had to sign in and out each day. I hoped the voting box would encourage KYC youth to offer input about the upcoming mural project. I placed the voting box in KYC to promote a democratic process of voting and to send the message that the KYC youth have a voice in what goes on in their space. Figure 7 is an image of the announcement that I made to accompany the voting box. This poster was taped to the table where the voting box sat. There were voting slips (Appendix J) that sat by the box. They requested that the students vote for one of three possible locations for the mural. These three locations were ones that Charlie, Tim and I discussed during the brainstorming session. In addition, I placed an open ended question on the voting slip that asked the students to write in their preference for the subject of the mural.
On Monday, October 4, 2010, I was set to begin the mural project with the students. When I arrived at KYC, there were no students present yet. I was excited to see how many votes the voting box held. It had been there for three weeks and I expected there to be a few votes in the box that allowed me to get a consensus about where the mural should be placed and what it should address. However, after three weeks of being at KYC, the voting box only held three votes, two were from Charlie and Tim because they voted on the day that I placed the box at the sign-in table. I was disappointed by the turn out. I thought I placed the box at an ideal location. The youth had to see the voting box when they signed in to KYC and sign out of KYC. The voting announcement poster was taped to the sign in desk so it was the first thing in sight upon entering KYC. I made a conscious effort to model democracy. The box was present and the instructions were clear. In addition, the director of KYC stated that he reminded the students to vote during
the check-ins\textsuperscript{6} for an entire week. I was not sure what else could be done to get more votes. I decided to simply use Charlie and Tim’s ideas for the mural. Both boys had insisted the mural be in the game room, so that is the location that was decided for the mural placement.

No students showed up at the center during the scheduled workshop time, so there was no workshop that day. Initially, I planned for the students to research ideas and images to be included in the mural. These images were to be associated with what the voters wrote on their individual voting slips. However, it was actually a good thing that no one came because there would have been nothing research. My only option at that point was to use what the two boys suggested. So, the next week’s agenda would be to start the process of creating a multidimensional image that included the U.S. map, the rainbow flag and multiple gender symbols.

October 11, 2010 was the first day of the mural project. I planned to have the students carve out relief stamps of gender symbols that would be on the mural. These gender symbols were to be placed on the mural, taking the place of the state abbreviations (See Appendix K for draft of mural concept). There were six youth at the art workshop. Charlie and Tim were both there and they made it clear to everyone that they came up with the idea for the mural. They showed excitement when I introduced the project and helped me explain the mural ideas to the other youth. I gave the six participating youth

\textsuperscript{6} Every day at 6pm the students at KYC sat in the common area and engaged in dialogue. Each student spoke aloud and addressed the “highlights” of their day and/or week and the “lowlights” of their day and/or week. There was also an add-on question that was different everyday. The add-on question was usually chosen by the first student that “checks-in.” Some past example add-on questions are, “If you could be any animal in the world, what would it be and why?” “What is the one thing you could eat everyday without getting sick?”
two 6 inch by 6 inch Styrofoam blocks that were about 2 inches in width. Also, I supplied the youth with photocopies of the gender symbols so that they could trace the gender symbols directly onto the Styrofoam blocks. After the students traced the symbols onto the Styrofoam, they carved out the symbols with Exacto knives. Figures 8-10 show the relief stamps that were created during this workshop session. I was happy with the session. The students seemed to like the mural idea even though they did not participate in creating the overall concept. Also, the youth were really interested in the gender symbols and they were surprised to learn a few symbols that they had never seen. The students appeared to be really engaged and interested overall.

The dynamics of this particular workshop session were interesting. All of the students conversed with each other, except for Tim. I am not sure why he was not communicating that day, but his demeanor on that day did not fit his usual disposition. Tim was a very sociable person that always had something funny to say. That session was different. I had overheard Tim speaking about a young girl named Sara earlier that day however. He stated that if she ever came to the center while he was there, he would leave. Well, she came to the workshop about five minutes after it began. About thirty minutes later, Tim left the workshop. However, even before Sara came to the workshop, Tim just seemed sad overall. After the workshop concluded, I found him in the director’s office. He was talking to the director with the door slightly cracked open. I realized that he may have simply had a personal problem that day.

The side discussions in the workshop were very candid during this session. At one point, Sara asked me if I was a part of “the family.” Assuming she was referring to the
LGBTQ family, I responded I was an ally. Her response to me was, “Oh, so you a Catholic.” I immediately said, “I am a Baptist.” Laughter filled the room. I did not know what she was talking about or what everyone was laughing about. Sara soon explained that the term “Catholic” was a slang term for people who do not identify as LGBTQ.

Charlie used the workshop session as a social time to talk about his life, his struggle to get a job and his hatred for his mother’s boyfriend. Every now and then, he would make side complaints about his inability to cut out Styrofoam shapes with an Exacto knife. I saw Charlie as an asset to the group regardless of his bickering. He had come to almost every workshop so far. I do not believe he came for the art, but instead for the company. From the workshops that I had completed so far, it was clear to me that the dynamics of this community center were very different from the dynamics that I experienced in community centers specific to art. I considered this space and these youth to be difficult to create art with; however, they seem to appreciate social justice as a significant concept to explore. This acceptance has not always been the case in my experiences teaching art with a multicultural framework.

Figure 8. Gender symbols relief stamps, carved in Styrofoam
The goal for the workshop on Wednesday, October 13, 2010, was to prime the wall for the mural. There were five students at KYC, so there were more than enough students present to help complete this task. Before 4:30 PM, the beginning of the workshop, I used a projector to impose the image of a US map on to the wall. This helped manage the time since we only had an hour to trace the US map on the wall with a white crayon and fill the map in with primer (Figures 11-13).
At the beginning of the workshop, I reminded the students that we would begin the mural today and I recapped how this project addressed the social justice issue, human equality. After this 5 minute discussion, the students and I used white chalk and white crayon to outline the image of map that was being projected on the wall. Then, we primed the outlined map. At the onset of the workshop, the students complained about possibly getting paint on their body and clothes. However, after they actually began painting, the complaining stopped. Tim, one of the young men who helped conceptualize the mural, was present. He was visibly excited about his ideas being actualized. While everyone painted, Tim spoke about the mural and explained why he felt like this image would be great for people to see when they entered KYC.

Once the outline of the map was completely primed, I could tell the students were proud of what they had done. The outline of the map was precise and distinct. The students discussed how realistic the map looked. The students kept returning to the wall to point out areas that were not as thickly painted. They suggested putting on another coat of primer. I insisted that those areas would be okay and that the primer should not be too thick or it would crack.

A few minutes before we finished painting, another youth, Liz, showed up at the center. As she entered, she overheard me telling the students that they must write their name down on a sheet of paper so they would be recognized as contributors to the mural. Liz really wanted to be included in the project. She shared that she enjoyed art and wanted to be associated with the project. Not knowing if I would ever see her at the workshops again, I told her that she had to add some primer to the map in order to
actually claim that she helped with the mural. She was excited. She went to the wall and added a bit of gesso to the map. Overall, this was an exceptional workshop session because there was active collaboration, the students and I had an ongoing discussion about social justice issues in the gay community, and the students were excited about the artwork they had created.

Figure 11. The youth priming the wall within the chalked perimeters
Figure 12. The youth continuing to prime the wall for the mural

Figure 13. Finished, primed map
Monday, October 18, 2010, was the next Kaleidoscope He(ARTS) workshop session. I planned for the students and me to continue working on the mural. There were four students present at KYC. Not surprisingly, Tim was there. He had become a faithful workshop attendee. Tim and Charlie were the only two students who had attended more than two workshops at that point. However, it was ironic that I had not seen Charlie at KYC recently. Although he offered the primary ideas for the mural, he had not actually worked on creating it. Liz, the young lady that came into KYC at the end of the workshop last week, was there. Also, another familiar face was Tammy, the young lady who stayed behind during the first workshop to finish her political cartoon. The fourth youth who attended was a workshop beginner, but a regular at KYC according to her.

Before the workshop began, I used a projector to project the rainbow colored flag onto the wall so that I could draw the lines on the map to separate the colors. I used crayons to draw the lines so that the students would know which colors to paint in each section. I assumed the painting process would take the entire hour of the workshop, so completing this first step saved us about 10 minutes. Similar to the previous workshop, the students initially complained about how messy the painting process was. They repeatedly communicated how they did not want any paint to get on their clothes or even touch their hands. Fortunately, the complaints eventually died down as they began to paint. Because I did not take the first few minutes of the workshop to discuss and recap the project, I began to talk about it as we worked together. We all shared some instances when we felt discriminated against. For instance, Tim spoke about how he experienced
being followed in stores on more than one occasion. We all communicated how we had experiences comparable to Tim’s.

After about 10 minutes of sharing these personal accounts, Tammy received a phone call from her girlfriend. Tammy’s girlfriend broke up with her over the phone. Tammy immediately removed herself from the mural project. She went to the library area, which is within earshot from the mural space, to talk to her girlfriend on the phone. Tammy’s friend and ex-girlfriend, the workshop novice, also left the workshop so that she could comfort Tammy. She kept coming back to paint, then leaving again to console Tammy. As Tammy was sitting close to the other students, talking loudly and arguing with her girlfriend over the phone, the other students were excessively concerned with what was happening with Tammy. The focus of the workshop was completely shifted once Tammy’s personal life was altered. The students and I continued to paint the mural, but we all kept talking to Tammy to offer her advice as she sat on the couch in the library. We could see Tammy and hear her clearly. She cried and cursed a lot. Tammy repeatedly stated that she did not want to live if she did not have her girlfriend. Once I heard her say that she did not want to live anymore, I stopped painting the mural and began to talk to Tammy more closely. I aimed to comfort her and let her know that her life was more important than a relationship with another person. She did not internalize much of the advice that we offered. I did not know if she was suicidal at that point, but I could not take her comments lightly. So, as the students continued to paint, I sat with Tammy to listen and offer support. Tammy and her friend left the center about 10 minutes before the workshop ended. I was really worried about her, especially after hearing her comments.
about not wanting to live. Although the students and I became more invested in helping Tammy, we managed to finish the painting for the day (Figure 14). However, Tammy was the conversation for the remainder of the workshop, even after she left KYC.

![Mural in progress](image)

Figure 14. Mural in progress

The episode with Tammy was very surprising to me. I did not see Tammy as a “femme,” a term that the youth called her. The youth described a “femme” as a lesbian that plays the feminine or womanly role in a same sex relationship. At one point, I experienced cognitive dissonance because what I heard and what I saw did not match. Tammy’s head was shaved, she wore baggy clothes and the way she walked and talked was very masculine. She cursed a lot and was very vocal about how much she loved sex. The signifiers that I associated with femininity were not visible and I was confused. I was
even more surprised to see Tammy cry. Even from the first workshop, I saw her as a hard-hitting girl who was unbreakable. She was assertive and very vocal about what she wanted to do and what she did not want to do during the workshop. She played the part of a tough girl who no one should mess with. However, the emotion that I saw during that workshop did not seem to come from the same person. She was quite vulnerable, which was completely the opposite of what she often portrayed at KYC. I then realized that the way Tammy presented herself was a façade.

The experience with Tammy was not the first time I had noticed how some of the youth played a role. During the recruitment week of the art workshops, I met a young boy who presented himself as a “goth,” short for gothic. He wore all black clothes, a long leather trench coat, had jet black hair, thickly applied eyeliner, and dark purple lipstick. I must say that I was nervous to approach this young man to chat with him about the art workshops. Eventually, I did approach the young man. As soon as I said hello to him and asked him about art, he smiled and began talking. His high pitched voice squeaked for about 15 minutes non-stop. I did not respond to most of his questions because he answered them for me. For example, he asked, “Do you like comic books?” Then he immediately stated, “I like comic books. I create avatars online.” He talked on and on for a while. I was completely speechless and I thought to myself, this young man looks so intimidating and hard. He looked like a loner who did not want to be talked to or even looked at. However, in reality, he was such a sociable person that yearned for someone to listen to him. His voice was light and had excitement in it.
As I reflected on the experience with this young man, I started to wonder if the students portrayed themselves in this way for protection. They are completely vulnerable on the inside and the only way for them to assert themselves is to create somewhat of an alter ego that can defend the true person and keep them safe. I felt like both of these experiences revealed how I judged people based on socially created, imposed signifiers. I reflected on the experience as I prepared for the next week’s workshop. I noted the personal need to work on myself, as a part of my goal of guiding the students in social justice work.

Monday, October 25, 2010 there were four students present at the workshop. Tim was at KYC to participate as normal. To my surprise, the young boy who I previously noted as having a “goth” look was there. I was excited about working with him and providing him with the chance to engage in artmaking. Liz was present, and so was Jenna, the young girl who was arrested for car theft. The day’s agenda was very easy. I planned for the youth to paint the last two colors of the rainbow flag onto the mural. So far, the mural looked amazing to me, and the youth agreed. I was glad there were only four students present because painting two stripes did not take many hands. When we began to paint, I intended to engage the youth in a discussion in which they shared an experience they were involved in an act for social justice, such as a march, rally, or even voicing injustice with words. Before I could initiate this dialogue, the young boy who I perceived to be “goth” began to talk nonstop, similarly to how he did when I conversed with him during recruitment week. At first, he talked about his girlfriend and how he loved her because she enjoyed the same things that he did. From these comments, I
assumed he was a heterosexual male or bisexual. After a slight pause in his rambling, I asked him his name. His name was Tracie. His name confused me a bit because I expected a “male” name. I questioned him about his sexual orientation. Tracie physically appeared to be a boy, but stated the she was a “transgendered lesbian.” The only reference to this term I could find, came from UrbanDictonary.com (2011) and it states that a transgendered lesbian is “A lesbain [sic] female trapped in a man’s body; Many times unnoticed since the male will appear to be straight” (para.1). Also, a transgendered lesbian refers to someone “being born a male and being attracted to females but is mentally a female so the person gets a sex change” (para. 1). At the time, I did not know this term or the definition of it. The only thing that I knew was that the term lesbian referred to two women, so when he added transgendered to the concept, I was not sure if Tracie was male or female. Taking this into account, I did not know which gender pronoun he preferred, so I made sure to call him by his name each time I spoke to him.

As Tracie continued to engage everyone in a one person conversation, the workshop became overwhelmingly depressing and sad. I was really surprised by the deep pain, anger, and depression rooted in Tracie. When I first talked to him, the conversation topic was light and very neutral. For some reason, the workshop conversation was the complete opposite. During the workshop, Tracie let everyone know that at the age of 12 he tried to kill his mother. He claimed that he was sent to a psychiatric hospital for homicide attempt for 18 months. When he was released he moved in with his father. The next topic of conversation for Tracie was his obsession with serial killers. He knew the names and the habits of many serial killers. Tracie continued on and on with this
conversation; some topics that he discusses were the following: he did not want to live past 30 years old; he liked to kill baby rabbits; he took depression medication on a daily basis; and he and his girlfriend liked to light bugs on fire. I was really uncomfortable listening to Tracie and so were the other youth. The entire time he spoke, the youth looked at him with disgust and disbelief, and then often turned to me to see if I was going to make him stop talking. I believe they were mostly annoyed by him speaking for the entire workshop nonstop.

Jenna was especially irritated by Tracie’s tales. Jenna often looked at Tracie with cutting eyes and sighed loudly during Tracie’s stories. Jenna expressed her dislike for Tracie from the first moment she saw Tracie in the center. It was like she knew what kind of day it was going to be because Tracie was there. So, as Tracie took a breath before he continued on with his stories, I communicated my discomfort with what he was saying. I asked him to discontinue the conversation. At that point, I was bewildered and quite torn about the situation. This was partly because I felt like I was supposed to create an atmosphere where the students were encouraged to be themselves and speak their minds. However, I could not condone such conversation at the expense of others’ comfort.

Just after I asked Tracie to refrain from sharing anymore, Liz let everyone know that she took 8 pills a day so that she would not be suicidal. This statement was shocking in itself, but even more shocking was the fact that she let everyone know this personal information. At the time, I asked myself what children this age could be experiencing that would cause them to want to take their life or make them so depressed that they had to take medication. What could be so bad about being a teenager? As a teen you are bill
free, living off of parents, and your only responsibility is homework and housework. However, immediately after pondering this, I had to take a step back and recognize that my perception of teenage life is that of someone who is heterosexual, from a small town and whose parents were married for 28 years until death did them part. I realized that those youth have many problems that I did not have to deal with, specifically unveiling their homosexuality to a heterosexist society and maybe unsupportive family. I can not say that Tracie and Liz’s personal issues and psychological battles were correlated with their sexual orientation. However, I recognized that identity and their life experiences are correlated, just as my life experiences are specific to me as a black heterosexual woman. I experience certain things because of my identifying characteristics and so do the youth.

After the last colors were finally painted on mural, I asked the students if they wanted to leave the mural as a rainbow flag and do away with the gender symbols. Tim immediately responded by saying that KYC already had enough rainbow flags around the center. He suggested we continue with our plans to place gender symbols on the map. Tim explained, “If we are going to spend our time doing something, it needs to mean something, not just a rainbow flag, something deeper!” We all agreed that Tim was right and we should continue to be progressive in our artwork. So, we planned to finish the mural the next week and add the gender symbols to each state.

The task for the workshop on Monday, November 8, 2010, was to finish the mural by adding the gender symbols. We were going to use the Styrofoam stamps we had carved out in the previous workshop. However, over the weekend, I attended a bell hooks speaking engagement in which I obtained a flyer that displayed an all-inclusive gender
symbol (Appendix L). I thought it embodied all of what the students hoped to portray with the mural. I asked the young lady who gave me the flyer if she knew where I could obtain a jpeg of the symbol. I took her contact information and emailed her later that week. She sent me the symbol as a jpg. So, when I arrived at KYC to do the workshop, I showed the new symbol to the seven students who were present and asked them if they wanted to use it. They all absolutely loved the symbol, including Tim. After I projected it onto the wall in the middle of the US map, he stated that he liked having one symbol in the middle better than the multiple symbols all over the map. Tim and the other students said that they loved the raised fist, known as the Black Power fist 7 (Appendix M) that united the gender symbols. They liked the strong message and agreed that it was exactly what they wanted the mural to communicate.

I used a projector to impose the image on the wall and the students traced the symbol onto the map. It was great to see both Tim and Charlie finishing the mural they envisioned together. The youth and I had worked on the mural for over a month at this point, but this was actually Charlie’s first time working on the mural. You would never know this was Charlie’s first time painting on the mural by the way he talked about it as if he had painted the entire image himself. During the workshop, he reminded everyone that he developed the mural idea. However, he never mentioned Tim’s contribution. Tim reminded Charlie that he helped establish the idea for the mural and made sure this was communicated to the group.

7 The Black Power fist or “Salute” is recognized cross-culturally. This clenched fist has been used around the world to signify life and pursuit of liberty and justice (Aleman, Taylor, Hjornevik, 2010).
The finished mural (Figure 15) looked amazing. The youth seemed excited and proud to connect their name to the work. They ended up using the gender symbols stamps on the adjacent wall. The students painted the stamps and pressed them onto the wood paneling. However, the stamps did not make great contact against the wall. The students had trouble getting them to lay flesh. I do not think the multiple gender symbol stamps would have been as effective as the single symbol on the mural. The youth complained a lot about how the gender symbol stamps looked on the adjacent wall, so I am sure they would have been upset if the stamps had destroyed their mural. I was pleased by the students’ effort and how much they communicated their excitement about the mural. They risked a lot, such as, their clothes getting dirty! This was the number one concern throughout this entire project. After seeing the finished project, I think they believed the risk was worth it.
Figure 15. Finished mural with gender power symbol in the center

After my perceived success of the mural project, I was really excited about the possibilities of other art workshops at KYC. Monday, November 15, 2010, I planned for the students to do a sculpture project that assessed their understanding of social justice. I wanted to understand how the students interpreted social justice. At the beginning of the workshop, I asked the seven students to think about social justice and what it personally meant to them. Then, I instructed them to browse through some handouts which consisted of about 20 pages of American Sign Language (ASL). They were to find one word/hand gesture in the handout they thought would communicate how they felt about social justice. I told them that if they could not find a term in the handout that I offered, I would let them look in the entire book of ASL to obtain a word. This took the students about 5
minutes. After choosing the term/hand position, I asked the students why they chose that particular term. A couple of the students’ responses were vague and confusing and I could not understand the logic they used to come up with the terms they chose. This let me know that they were a bit confused about social justice. Once they saw the confusion on my face, they actually asked me to recap social justice. I did. However, it hit me that maybe it was the term social justice that was causing the problem. From previous conversations, it was clear that the students were thinking about social justice in their life; they simply were not connecting those ideas with the actual term “social justice.”

The language that I used did not help them make relationships either. So, when I spoke about social justice, the youth did not know if they were active in social justice work. I realized how caught up I was with using specific language and how it was inhibiting the progress of the students’ critical thinking about the social world and injustice. At that point, I recognized the need to focus more on the action of social justice. So, I stopped using the term social justice and starting describing political and personal actions that supported equality. This transition was quick and cleared up the confusion almost immediately. The girl that seemed most confused stated, “Oh, yeah, I do that stuff. I do the gay pride walk every year.” Every time I had reviewed the idea, some students would have a puzzled look on their faces. So far, I had to review social justice each week, even if the present students had participated in the workshops before.

Once the discussion concluded, I introduced the artmaking aspect of the workshop to the youth. I did a demonstration on how to sculpt their hands with the plaster material. I thought this project would be relevant to the overall topic of the workshops because
while it did not attend to one of the social justice issues that the students listed on the first
day, it connected to social justice on many other levels. Primarily, the project attended to
ability because of its use of American Sign Language (ASL). Then, on another level, it
would give the students the chance to think about their own interpretation of social
justice. In addition, it assisted me in assessing the youths’ comprehension of social
justice. Unfortunately, however this project received the most rejection. I knew that the
students did not like to get dirty because they complained about the possibility of paint
getting on them during the mural project. So, with that in mind, I made adaptations to the
sculpture project by giving them the option to wear gloves when molding their hands
with the plaster. Unfortunately, the students could not see past the messiness of the
project. They completely disregarded my mentioning the modification of using gloves for
creating the hand mold.

Once I completed the demonstration, six of the seven youth who were present left
the workshop. They opted out of the project and preferred to actually leave the center so
that they would not have to complete the project. Charlie was the leader of this “walk-
out.” He expressed his dislike for the project and then invited other youth in the room to
leave the center and get something to eat with him. I asked myself if this was another
instance of Charlie’s bullying.

On other occasions, not during the workshops, I noted how Charlie consistently
got into power struggles with volunteers. In those instances, it was as if he wanted to
show volunteers that he was more influential over the youth than they were; it was
confusing to watch. None of the volunteers ever played his games, but he continued to
provoke reactions from them. This exchange happened between us before. When he was present and noticed any student’s disinterest in the art workshop, he asked me, “How does it feel to be rejected?” It was really interesting to see this behavior from someone who appeared to be a confident leader; he was a KYC advisory board member. I asked myself why he would want to see my feelings hurt. Fortunately, I was always confident in myself and my abilities at the center; otherwise, my feelings would have been hurt, if not by people leaving, for sure by Charlie’s comments.

Tim was the only person to stay at the workshop session and in some way, he was forced to do so. The KYC students can only leave the center twice and after the second time, they cannot return. Tim had already left the center earlier in the day to get food. So, if he left again when the other students left, he would have not been able to return that day. He was visibly upset that he was the only youth left in the workshop. However, Tim opted to stay at the workshop and complete a mold of his hand using a glove. Fortunately, after about 10 minutes, three of the girls who had previously left with Charlie and two other boys returned to the workshop. Once the girls saw the results from Tim’s mold, they thought it was cool and wanted to do one for themselves. They both used gloves. Almost 5 minutes before the workshop was over, Liz came to the center and wanted to complete a hand mold as well. She did the mold without a glove. So, after initial rejection from the youth, the artmaking aspect of the workshop was actually successful, in addition to the discussion. When the workshop concluded, Chris suggested that I should have done the demonstration with gloves on because it would have given the artmaking a more positive light. I thought his suggestion was insightful and I appreciated
his sharing it with me. I had not thought to do the demonstration with a glove. I thought that simply mentioning that the youth could use gloves would have been enough.

The last aspect of the project was a writing component. I asked the students to come up with a short phrase that would accompany their sculpted hand. The phrase was to emphasize or concisely explain a term the student chose. This phrase was written on a piece of paper and the students cut out the ASL hand signs that correspond with each letter (Figures 16-25).
Figure 16. Awaken

Figure 17. Accompanying English/ASL description offered by student
Figure 18. Lonely

Figure 19. Accompanying English/ASL description offered by student
Figure 20. Anger

Figure 21. Accompanying English/ASL description offered by student
Figure 22. Safe

Figure 23. Accompanying English/ASL description offered by student
Figure 24. Dumbfounded

Figure 25. Accompanying English/ASL description offered by student
Taking notes from the previous workshop, I decided to keep the medium for the art workshop on Monday, November 22, 2010, very simple and clean. Also, I decided to refrain from using the term social justice. The art project was to make a personal collage in which each youth addressed a social justice issue that was important to them individually. However, instead of instructing them to choose a “social justice” issue, I stated the following: “Think about something that you believe is truly unfair in the world. Why is this an issue that you feel really strong about? Why do you see it as being unfair? Is it something that really gets you fired up to the point that it makes you want to do something about it?” These questions ignited interesting conversations from the five youth who were present.

The first issue that the youth mentioned was the legalization of marijuana. While I did not intend to encourage drug use, I did want to hear their arguments concerning the issue. The youth brought up medicinal benefits of marijuana and how the drug was natural since it came straight from the earth. They debated about why marijuana was illegal in most parts of America. One argument the youth made was that marijuana was only illegal because the government would not be able to tax it and take control over it if it was legal. They asserted that it was all political and about power. Charlie and another young man brought up a historical case about the legalization of liquor and the controversy over how it was to be taxed and controlled by the government. The youth acknowledged California as one of the only states that legalized the drug. They all agreed that it was an ideal example of how legalization could possibly work for all of the US states. However, another student chimed in to remind everyone that California had been
having problems controlling the drug and its legalization may be overturned soon.

Although marijuana was the topic of conversation for about ten minutes, no one chose the topic to address in their collage. The youth were concerned that they may get reprimanded by the director for talking about drugs at the center. KYC recently adopted a rule that no student should engage in drug use or even discuss drugs at the center. I understood that this rule was made as a result of an incident that occurred the previous year. A youth was kicked out of the center for selling drugs on the site. Therefore, anything remotely related to drugs or drug use was strictly prohibited.

After about 20 minutes of discussion, I explained the collage project. To begin creating the collages, I gave each youth a 9X9 inch frame as their canvas. I told the youth to imagine that the only means of communication left in the world was their 9X9 inch canvas. This was supposed to encourage them to make clever decisions about what to include in the small space. All of the youth chose individual issues to address. Ironically, all of the youth chose to address issues similar to those suggested during the very first workshopping session. However, this was not too surprising because three of the five students present during this workshop were present at the very first workshop. There was a collage created about legalizing gay marriage (Figure 26), as well as animal cruelty and animal testing (Figure 30); both were social justice issues listed during the first session.

Tammy was at the workshop. This was the first time I had seen her since the workshop where she was battling the personal issue with her girlfriend. During the workshop, Tammy seemed back to her normal self, sharing in detail how all she cared about was sex. Her end work was interesting; she focused on safe sex in her collage.
(Figure 28). Watching her ideas evolve was great. She initially wanted to place condoms all over her space, but she reconsidered that idea and decided to use other materials as well. She use faux flowers, acrylic paint and sexualized images from magazines. The aesthetic of her work was both masculine and feminine. All of the students looked through magazines, cut out images, text and anything that they felt strongly communicated their specific issue. They were encouraged to use paint and other used materials as well. I offered them materials such as string, plastic floral arrangements, beads, seashells, wall paper, square cutouts of carpet samples and more.

Liz was also at this workshop. She came into KYC with some personal issues. I knew this because when I entered the center earlier that day, I saw her crying and being comforted by another attending youth. When I asked her about her collage during the workshop, she stated that she wanted to keep the subject private. I let her know that it was fine if she did not want to share. So, I did not know what she addressed in her work. At any rate, I saw her artwork as a way for her to work through whatever she was going through. By the end of the workshop session, she was conversing with other students and less melancholy overall; whereas, she had been quiet for most of the hour-long workshop. Her entire 9X9 inch frame included multiple White, blonde hair and blue eyed babies(Figure 27).

At the end of the session, Rick, a young man who had been to about three of the workshops, including the very first one, commented, “That was fun Joni, Thank you!” I was happy. The students seemed to really enjoy this project. For one, it was not messy and no one complained. Second, the artmaking assignment was open enough for them to
do what they wanted. Although at the onset of the workshops, it was clearly communicated to the students that I would be introducing them to new artmaking processes, they just could not get into the more advanced artmaking media. I saw collages as creatively safe. No one could mess up a collage. I was having a bit of trouble getting the youth to appreciate and become more interested in more complicated art processes.

Figure 26. Untitled, “My image trys to show dat I want gay marriage to be legalized for All The Gays.”
Figure 27. Untitled work, “Babystud.”

Figure 28. Untitled, “SAFE SEX…is the best SEX unless you…want to risk DEATH!”
Figure 29. Subjective, “The mood or message of this painting is that no matter how good or pure the intentions, things always get corrupted.”

Figure 30. Untitled. “2 million animals are killed everyday? FOR WHAT? So we can eat steak and chicken? WHAT! STOP THE MADNESS!”
Figure 31. STOP IT! “STOP. We're all getting too old for needless violence against any sort of people. This is retarded.”

Taking cues from the success of the collages during the last workshop, I recognized silkscreening as an artmaking process that may be accepted by the KYC youth. Like constructing a collage, it was not a messy process that would potentially ruin the youths’ clothes or get their hands dirty. So, on Monday, December 6, 2010, I introduced silkscreening as the focused artmaking process.

Before we began the actual artmaking, I initiated a discussion about an issue that I noticed had been a significant topic around the youth center. KYC was focusing a lot of its programming on bullying and the violence against the gay community, specifically the adolescent and youth gay community. This focus at KYC was in response to the unfortunate deaths of six young people from various states in the US. These young
people committed suicide, all during the month of September 2010, because they were being bullied for being gay. In various spaces around KYC, the director posted a newspaper article that addressed these recent teen deaths. In addition, the director had planned to screen a film titled *Bullied: A Student, a School and a Case that Made History*. The film was to be viewed two weeks from the day of this workshop. I saw this as a wonderful opportunity to engage the youth in an art project that initiated action toward social injustice. Therefore, I planned for the students to silkscreen t-shirts that had anti-bullying statements on them. I hoped that they would be finished with the anti-bullying garments in time for them to actually wear them the day of the film screening.

When I introduced this project as a silk screening project in which we would make t-shirts, Rick, who complimented me during the last workshop, was excited and talked about the things he was going to put on his shirt. However, when I introduced bullying as the topic of the t-shirts, Rick sighed. I did not understand this discontent; however, I could only assume that the students had been overwhelmed by so much emphasis on gay bullying. There is bullying information posted all over KYC and there are many upcoming events to address the topic. Maybe at that point, the topic of bullying had been over-emphasized.

At any rate, the initial discussion on the topic was effortless. The students were well versed in this subject and did not delay in answering initial questions such as, what is bullying, what ways do people bully others, and how is this an issue of inequality? As

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* Bullied: A Student, a School and a Case that Made History, tells the story of Jamie Nabozny, a gay teen who was bullied in Ashland, Wisconsin and whose parents' lawsuit against their school district led to a federal court decision holding school officials accountable for stopping the harassment and abuse of gay students. (Davis, S. (2010). Retrieved on January 23, 2011 from http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/blogs/inalameda/detail?entry_id=74127
we discussed the topic more, I began to explain how the silkscreening project was ideal to address the bullying issue. I told the youth that they would be printing an anti-bullying statement on t-shirts they could wear. I shared with them my idea about them wearing the shirts to the screening of the bullying documentary. Immediately, Rick communicated his lack of interest in this action. He stated that if he wore a shirt that emphasized NO BULLYING, his peers would think he got bullied. He said that they would think that he was wearing the shirt because he gets bullied. I can understand his logic; he thought the t-shirt would be a sign of weakness. But I wondered if wearing a t-shirt that communicated objection toward bullying really caused you to get laughed at, gossiped about, or even bullied more? After recognizing the objection Rick had about wearing the t-shirt, I told him that he did not have to wear it if wearing it would make him feel vulnerable. He seemed relieved and did not have any issues with completing the project after that. Rick was the only student who did not want to wear the t-shirt; the other two boys present, including Charlie, thought it would be a great way to speak out against the injustice.

During this session, we completed the first few steps of the silk screening process which included applying the photo emulsion onto the screens. Unfortunately, the youth did have some concerns about getting photo emulsion on their hands, but they quickly saw that they would not get messy doing these preliminary tasks. After we placed the screens in a dark room to dry, the students and I went to the computer lab to look for images to be transferred onto the screens. The printers in the KYC computer lab were not set up yet, so the students had to send me the images they chose via email.
I returned to KYC on Monday, December 20, 2010 to complete the silk screening project with the youth. This was the last scheduled artmaking workshop for my research. My planned agenda included recapping the bullying project that had already been started. I was prepared to describe and demonstrate how to apply the fabric paint to the screen and fill the spaces with paint before laying it down onto the shirt to make a clean print. When I arrived at the center at 3:00 PM, there were two students present at KYC. By the time the workshop was scheduled to begin at 4:30 PM, there were nine youth in attendance. This was the first challenge of the day. Last week, there were only three students present; therefore, there were only three screens with prints on them. However, during this workshop, the room was packed to capacity. This was uncomfortable on multiple levels. There was no work space for everyone and there were only three screens for nine people to share. I had to get additional poster boards for students so they would have something to print on; I only brought five t-shirts for printing.

The workshop room was so crowded that no one wanted to move. Only five people elected to print, the others seemed too irritated by the limited space. Another challenge in this workshop was the screens. I burned the images onto the screens in my home basement. I created a homemade light stand and I had to run tests on extra screens to determine the light exposures for the prints. Silk screening was not a process I was completely comfortable with, so I did a lot of research beforehand. I did my best to burn the images to precision; however, there were areas of the screen that were overexposed. Therefore, some parts of the images were completely burnt out.
As I completed a test print in front of the youth, I could tell they were turned off. Some of the image did not show up on the shirt. This can be seen clearly in Figures 32-33. It was evident that the image was not clearly exposed on the screen. The text should have read, See IT, Solve IT, Stop IT. Thankfully, after completing more test prints with the other screen, I found that the other screen produced some pretty clear prints (Figure 34-35).

Overall, each step in this silk screening project was a challenge because of my lack of experience with the medium. But I felt that this project was worth the challenge because the students were intrigued by the silk screening process. Ultimately, I believe that the youth did enjoy the project because they expressed a positive response about their t-shirts and posters. In addition, the three students who provided images for the project continuously asked about the silkscreening process, including the image burning. They were genuinely interested in the whole process of silkscreening.

An unexpected challenge during this workshop was a youth named Star. This was the same young lady I had struggled to work with during the political cartoon workshop. I had not seen her since that workshop, four months prior. This time, she came into the workshop and tested me differently than she did before. Star detested the “No Bullying” campaign that the t-shirts communicated. She actually advocated bullying. She stood at the front of the room and talked about how being a bully was good. Star was a self-proclaimed bully. She explained to everyone in the workshop how the bully role makes others respect her. Fortunately, the other students at the workshop challenged her assertions. I was pleased that the other youth stood up for the anti-bullying message.
Specifically, the youth argued against Star’s comment about respect. They insisted that she could get respect in other ways. Tim was very verbal during this debate as well. He asked Star if she was going to base her morals, beliefs and actions off of something that is controlled by other people- referring to respect from others. I was happy to see that I did not have to take the lead in challenging Star. It was more meaningful because it was done by her peers. Everyone seemed to have the consensus that bullying was ignorant and damaging. For this workshop, the breakthrough discussion and youth confrontation was definitely more successful than the artmaking.
Figure 32. Silk Screen with Charlie’s image burned into it

Figure 33. Image transferred onto the shirt.

It is clear that the entire image did not burn onto the screen, causing a disruption in the print
Figure 34. Silk Screen with youth’s image burned on it

Figure 35. Image transferred onto a t-shirt. This was the most successful print because a significant amount of the image burned onto the screen thoroughly
Kaleidoscope He(ARTS) research workshops concluded with this project. The students were slightly disappointed about this, but I let them know that I would come back to the center after two months and begin more workshops. I thought the theme for this project was an exceptional one to end with because it was relevant and raised awareness about a prevalent issue in the LGBTQ community. Although all of the youth did not come away with clearly printed t-shirts to wear, the simple idea of using graphic garments to make commentary on an issue was fruitful. Art was used as social criticism. The power of text
and image was communicated. Clothing was recognized as a counterhegemonic tool that could be used to raise awareness and assert specific beliefs and agenda.

**Artifacts: Curriculum and Art Making**

The curriculum that resulted from this study was emergent in that it was created throughout the research process, forming as results were evaluated. It continuously evolved as the study progressed. According to Essa, Young and Lehne (1998), “An emergent curriculum evolves through continuous dialogue and documentation, frames learning as children devise and engage in projects” (p.80). Therefore, the information that was shared in the above research narrative heavily informed this curriculum. The narrative demonstrated how I observed and reflected on the weekly experiences in KYC. It also shared personal information such as how I understood the disappointments and successes of the art activities that we engaged in, my reflections on the students’ social and personal worlds and how these worlds influenced the workshops. All of this information informed the development of the emergent curriculum that I created for KYC (Wellhousen & Crowther, 2004).

Below, I present a curriculum map (Figure 39) that can be utilized in other settings. The curriculum map is significantly relevant to the research done at KYC because the topics explored in the curriculum were chosen by KYC youth. However, others can use the map by replacing the KYC topics with topics chosen by another population. The map is preceded by the curriculum rationale (Figure 37), and the predetermined curriculum objectives (Figure 38); both can be used without alterations because they are relevant for social justice approaches to curriculum development. The
curriculum rationale and objectives, although predetermined, were situated in knowledge that supported any curriculum that attended to social justice, artmaking and the union of the two.

### Curriculum Rationale

Seeking social justice through art education is not a new effort. There are many ideologies that support the theoretical framework of this social movement, including research from educators such as John Dewey, June King McFee, Graeme Chalmers, Eugene Grigsby, Laura Chapman, Elizabeth Garber and more (Garber & Costantino, 2007). However, even with all of the past and present work done in the area, continual revisions need to be made in order to support the contemporary, ever-changing needs of society.

A multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to art curriculum can be integral in identifying how oppression/domination is embedded in the structural systems that run this country. This approach works to help students become aware of how injustices are entrenched in our daily activities, so much that they become undetectable. This approach to curriculum is important in teaching students that regardless of the target group they identify with, oppression affects everyone; everyone plays a role—either maintaining the unequal systems or helping to break them down (hooks, 2004; Sleeter & Grant, 2007b). Additionally, a multicultural and social reconstructionist curriculum brings forth the intersectionality and the hierarchies of oppression. Understanding the complexities of oppression and issues of injustice should encourage students to reject the status quo and engage in acts that work to reconstruct society.

### Curriculum Objectives (C.O.)

C.O.1 Educate students about justice and power (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b)

C.O.2 Encourage students to be aware that the “isms” (e.g., racism, sexism) are continually being redefined in order to continue existing as society changes—analyze systems of oppression and critical questioning (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b)

C.O.3 Teach political action skills and a consciousness that affirms human worth (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b)

C.O.4 Create a democratic space in which collaboration thrives

C.O.5 Reveal how representations play a role in maintaining oppressive systems and identify how art can be used to counter oppression

C.O.6 Promote action (Bell & Griffin, 1997)
# Emergent KYC Curriculum Map

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Driven Topics</th>
<th>Immigration/ Arizona Immigration Law</th>
<th>Gay Equality</th>
<th>What does Social Justice mean to you?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Skills**

**SWBAT:**
- Use various used and new materials to create a collage
- Create their own political cartoon by using irony and satire
- Recognize how something as small as a cartoon is used as propaganda, but can also be used to address injustice and or create a revolution
- Paint with acrylics
- Understand the multi-dimensional process of creating a mural
- Understand the layering of images
- Understand how art can communicate ideas
- Work in collaboration to create a shared work of art
- Understand how to use plaster on the body to create molds
- Understand the ability of plaster as a sculpting medium
- Recognize some American Sign Language
- Appreciate internal dialogue

**Concepts**

- Political cartoons
- Irony
- Satire
- Representation
- Racial profiling
- Power and authority
- Propaganda
- Murals
- Dialogic imagery
- Personal definition of social justice
- ASL
- Plaster as a sculpting material
Emergent KYC Curriculum Map, Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Driven Topics</th>
<th>Free Choice Day: Examples that students chose to address for their personal projects (1) Legalizing gay marriage (2) Inhumane treatment of animals (3) Violence against gays (4) Safe sex</th>
<th>Bullying</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>C.O. 1 C.O. 5</td>
<td>C.O. 1 C.O. 3 C.O. 4 C.O. 5 C.O. 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills SWBAT:</td>
<td>• Use random/vague/abstract images from magazines to create a cohesive artwork that communicates a social justice issue that they are interested in • Experiment with constructing an artwork that communicates something specific</td>
<td>• Mix photo-emulsion and apply it to silkscreen to dry • Understand the process of obtaining an image, creating a transparency and burning an image onto a screen • Know the steps to create a print by using a silkscreen • Understand how common objects (t-shirts) can be used to work towards social justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts</td>
<td>• Collage • Conceptual art • Representation</td>
<td>• Printmaking processes • Power and authority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 39. Co-constructed Emergent Curriculum

The multicultural and social reconstructionist curriculum evolved over the four month period of the research. During the first workshop, the students and I identified social justice issues the curriculum would explore. However, even those issues were not the exact ones this finished curriculum attended to. Yu-le (2004) affirms, “Emergent curriculum is a constructive curriculum in which the teachers, students, teaching materials and environment interact in the context of dialogue. It departs away from the
idea ‘everything is predefined’ and maintains that ‘everything is developing’” (p.1). The overall curriculum was formed in these organic terms.

**Voices of Kaleidoscope He(ARTS): Interviews**

I planned to interview three youth, Charlie, Tim and Rick on Monday, December 27, 2010. Charlie and Rick were present at KYC on this day; however, only Charlie agreed to participate in the interview. When I approached Rick about engaging in a five question interview, he stated that he was shy when it came to interviews and they made him uncomfortable. Therefore, I did not ask him again. Charlie happily agreed to complete the interview. I was not completely disappointed by Rick’s decision to decline the interview. Although Rick had the third highest rate of attendance, his effort in the workshop discussions and the artmaking were not exceptional. I believed that Charlie and Tim were most present during the workshops anyway. By present, I mean physically and mentally. Both of these youth had almost perfect attendance at the workshops and both also revealed a mature critical thinking that I did not see in the other youth most of the time.

**A Portrait of Charlie.** A person’s life experiences frame his or her way of thinking and understanding the world. Charlie is an African American male who described himself as bisexual and he prefered the gender noun “he.” Charlie is originally from Columbus, Ohio, and has been visiting Kaleidoscope for two years. He was 17 years old during the research period. He attended the Columbus Afrocentric School in Columbus, Ohio. His economic background can be considered working class. Every time I saw Charlie, he was
in his school uniform, a black polo shirt and black khaki pants. For about the first two
months of the research, Charlie often spoke about how he struggled to get a job at Taco
Bell. After two months of talking about it, he eventually let me know that he had began
working at Taco Bell. Charlie told me that before he began his quest to work at Taco
Bell, he worked as a salesman, selling newspaper subscriptions for *The Columbus
Dispatch*. He quit after two weeks of working there.

Charlie and I often engaged in conversations in which he shared stories about his
strained relationship with his mother and her boyfriend. He explained how this ongoing
domestic quarrel resulted in him moving out of his mother’s house in September 2010.
He began living with friends after a fight happened between him and his mother’s
boyfriend. Charlie shared with me that his mother did not support his bisexuality and she
allowed her boyfriend to disrespect him when he was at home. This family issue was
often the topic of Charlie’s conversation at KYC. Charlie attended 9 of the 14 total art
workshops that I led at KYC. This total does not include the instance in which he left the
workshop after learning about the project.

Charlie was really open and articulate during his interview. However, he also
complained a lot during the workshops. He stated that he was not an artist, but enjoyed
conceptualizing ideas. Accordingly, he was most effective during workshop discussions
and not so much during artmaking. Some of the youth often sat in the workshops waiting
to get back to the computer lab to get on Facebook or they would continuously look at
their phone and send text messages. While he did openly resist the projects at times,
Charlie never ignored me or directed his attention to other things. So, while the other
youth did not verbally resist, they did mentally resist. Charlie may have verbally resisted, but he always demonstrated how he was mentally prepared to engage in the workshops.

During the interview, I noticed that Charlie was easier to talk to when he was not around his peers. He seemed to be more positive when he was alone. During the interview, he revealed some things that I would have never guessed; like he actually enjoyed the art workshops and that they did make him think about issues of injustice.

**Interview Transcript: Charlie**

**Question 1: What does the term social justice mean to you?**

“Social justice, I think, refers to a demographic set of people who have been treated wrongly… and social justice, I believe is that group of said people getting what they rightly deserve… what is just human rights.”

**Question 2: I have noted you saying some very mature things during the art workshops. For example, you made some strong claims during the collage project, in which you made a work title Subjective and communicated that it was about people’s minds being corrupt regardless of their initial desires. What can you say has guided you in your life to have these ideals?**

“Honestly, it’s just having the outlook on life I have. I don’t have a unique background or anything. I came from a pretty average family. It’s just, growing up I was always precocious. I always liked to read. So, I guess it was just maturing myself a little faster at a young age and always being several steps ahead of my own peers.”

**Question 3: Do you see yourself as a person that cares about social justice issues? If yes, give examples. If no, why not?**

“I do, I see myself as a person that cares about not just social justice issues, but just justice, I want everybody to have what they rightly deserve.”

**Will you share any experiences of being involved in social justice activities?**

“I really can’t say. I have touched people’s lives independently but so far as a whole, I can’t say that I have led rallies or marches, but I have touched individual people and even
changed the way they thought about certain things. So, I guess just changing the world one person at a time is how I try to look at it.”

**Question 4:** While doing the art projects that you were actually involved in, which one or ones do you believe offered the most possibility to explore social justice? Why?

“Honestly, I enjoyed the painting collage the most because it gave me a chance to, kind of, write everything down on paper that came from me, rather than using other clippings. It’s actually hard to communicate how I feel with other people’s writing. So, being able to sit down and create something of my own definitely was helpful.”

**Question 5:** You offered significant help in deciding what the mural would be about and look like. Why did you choose the ideas that you chose?

“Well, I remember looking at a flag the other day, a gay pride flag, and there was a picture of America across the wall from it as well…and it struck me that I often see the United States of America painted in red, white and blue with stars on it. So, I just wanted to spice that up a little bit and make it a gay United States of America.”

**Question 6:** Do you think the finished mural communicates the ideas you initially proposed?

“I do, I think it just…the idea of the mural is to say that no matter what, you are not alone. There are other people all around the world that share your insecurities about certain things and just by seeing the United State painted gay, my hope is that, you know, maybe one person won’t feel so alone if they know that, you know, this isn’t just you. It happens all over the place.”

**Question 7:** If you had to explain the mural to someone that had never seen it or never walked into KYC, how would you explain it?

“I would explain that the mural is just an idea; a new frontier for homosexual people, people in the gay community in general, that it’s just a way to show that even though there are people against us, we’re still a community as a whole and that you can find people like yourself all over the world.”
A Portrait of KYC director, Glenn Zermeno.

According to the Kaleidoscope Youth Center website (2011),

Glenn is a licensed social worker and is the Program Director at Kaleidoscope Youth Center. He has worked with LGBTQ youth since 1999. Prior to his move to Columbus, Ohio, Glenn worked in New York City as a case manager with LGBTQ youth at the Hetrick-Martin Institute, home of the Harvey Milk High School, in congregate care with LGBTQ youth aging-out of the New York City foster care system as a part of St. Christopher Ottilie’s Family of Services’ GLBTQ Program. From 2002 to 2007, Glenn worked for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center’s Youth Enrichment Services Program, providing HIV and substance abuse prevention services to the larger LGBTQ youth population.

Glenn has worked in social services for 12 years in a range of areas including youth leadership and program development, case management, advocacy work and training in work with LGBTQ adolescents, HIV & substance use prevention and comprehensive sexuality education. Glenn has been an advocate for creating safe communities that are inclusive of all forms of gender expression and sexual orientation. His approach to youth work has been defined by his work in strength based, youth leadership and empowerment models as well as prevention and harm-reduction, group and community-based, creative arts programming. (para. 3-4)
Interview Transcript: Glenn Zermeno

Question 1: Have you received any responses to or feedback on the mural from outsiders or new youth?

Yes, whenever the new youth come in or volunteers come in for interviews it’s part of the tour. I’ll explain to them that it’s one of the projects that youth have worked on. The youth who participated in it are very proud of it, and so sometimes they’ll talk about it to new youth. So, it’s just become like a talking point for what we do here and how we journey into learning about issues related to coming out, identity, social justice.

Question 2: Do you think the youth at KYC understand the concept of social justice?

Generally, no. I think the youth are dealing with internalized homophobia. And so it’s not so overt; it’s more about how they see themselves in relation to stereotypes that are often negative or negatively represent queer people. So, there is just a lot of kind of un-doing and then trying to affirm their identities and teach them about the history of the LGBT movement. Like who have been the players, the big players, in changing the way that queer people are represented. And you know, we try to do some queer history stuff. We actually have a program that we are going to be doing, which includes things like watching videos, doing some reading by different authors, you know like Audre Lorde, or James Baldwin, or bell hooks [pause] you know there’s a ton of people.

Question 3: Do you believe teachers in schools need to have trainings on teaching youth who identify as LGBTQ? What implications would it have?

I think that teachers need training around making schools more inclusive for all youth. Like there’s a stigma attached to difference. So, I mean, specifically training around just recognizing that there are gay and lesbian youth, and things like separating sexuality from sexual orientation. There is so much fear associated with sexualizing youth, and people don’t want to go there and they’re afraid it’s going to get them in trouble.

Question 4: Do you think art could be a means to explore social issues?

Yes, I wish you were at that thing on Saturday at the Wexner. Part of what happened was there was a dance performance that was sort of in response to how gender…youth express themselves differently based on gender and there are these rules they have to abide by. So, I believe art creates opportunities for youth to be able to articulate some of those things they may not have the words for, or the language for. So, you know, it’s like I think it reaches more people depending on what kind of learner you are and depending on how skilled you are at talking about feelings. I think it’s really hard for youth to talk about feelings, so they can express that in creative ways.
Question 5: What do you see as the implications of teaching social justice through art?

The youth always talk about how they aren’t good at art and they hate doing art projects, but it has actually turned out to be a way to build up their self-esteem. Letting them know that they are creative and by *that* they have something to contribute. Then connecting ideas of social justice to art, I feel like it builds [pause] it’s like another way of building up young people to have a voice and encouraging them to use their voice. It shows them that being smart and creative doesn’t fit just into this rigid idea, but instead it’s broad, there’s a million different ways to be creative [pause] be an artist.

Exhibition Surveys

On Monday December 27, 2010, Charlie, Rick and I organized the art so that each piece was visual and able to be examined by others. I chose these two particular youth to help because they had participated in the workshops more than any other youth who were present that day. They were most familiar with the research and played larger roles in the study than other youth. There were 13 youth at KYC on this day and it seemed to be an ideal time to collect surveys about the workshop artwork. In addition, Pancake Paul was at the center to make some delicious homemade pancakes. Pancake Paul was a volunteer who came once a month to cook pancakes with a secret recipe. I knew he was coming on this day and I knew everyone would be standing around, eating by the kitchen, which is adjacent to the game room where I had planned to organize the art.

After some discussion, Charlie and Rick agreed with me that this space would be the most effective space to organize the work. We presented the artwork based on each project idea. So, all of the plaster hands were together, all of the political cartoons were together, all of the collages were together, etc. There was not much room downstairs, so we used the pool table as a pseudo pedestal for the plaster hands. The other works were
propped up against the wall, surrounding the mural, making sure that the mural was viewed as an artwork as well. We decided not to place nametags on the works because all of the artists were not there to communicate whether or not they wanted their name attached to their work. After constructing this exhibition of the artworks, Charles, Rick and I invited the other ten youth to come downstairs to view all of the completed work. We passed out assent forms and consent forms to obtain permission to use their surveys in the research. After collecting the forms, the two youth and I passed out the exhibition surveys to each attending youth.

The youth who completed the surveys had not been regular attendees at the Kaleidoscope He (Arts) workshops; however, two of them had attended at least one time. Charlie and Rick did not complete a survey because their familiarity with the artwork would have resulted in a very biased survey. I received eleven surveys from the youth and four surveys from the adult volunteers who were present. I returned to KYC the following day, Tuesday, December 28, 2010, recreated the exhibition and collected five more surveys from different youth and two surveys from different volunteers. In all, I collected 21 surveys. Below are the survey results that were analyzed and summarized by Matthew Yin, a consultant from the Statistical Consulting Services on The Ohio State University campus.
1. Art (i.e. visual, creative writing, music, dance/movement) is an effective way to communicate personal and/or social issues.
2. I use art to communicate personal and/or social issues.
3. The exhibition made me aware of my personal and social identity.
4. The exhibition made me conscious of how my identity affects how others treat me.
5. The exhibition made me question how I treat others that are different from myself.
6. The exhibition brought forth an issue/s that I rarely think about.
7. The artwork in the exhibition initiated communication between other viewers and me.
8. The artwork in the exhibition initiated an internal dialogue.

Figure 40. Survey Statements

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<th>Neither</th>
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Figure 41. Survey Results

Figure 40 shows the exhibition survey statements and figure 41 is a chart that identifies patterns in exhibition viewer responses to the survey. In all, there were 21 surveys that were collected and analyzed. Figure 41 represents the overall responses of the exhibition viewers in numbers and percentages. This survey yielded multiple assertions that attended to how the using multicultural and social reconstructionist
approach in the art classroom resulted creating artwork that communicated social justice issues. The conclusions will be shared in the analysis and interpretation of sub-question 4: *How do the finished artworks exist as dialogic tools for communicating and promoting social justice?*

**Summary**

This participatory action research was executed throughout a four month period in which I collected data via various methods. This chapter has offered data from my research journal, which includes images of artifacts, a curriculum map, interviews, and surveys. These resources have provided critical information that has guided me in answering the specific research question: How does a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to art education facilitate the three broad goals of social justice (a) increase personal awareness, (b) expand knowledge and (c) encourage action among youth? In addition, the data in this section is significant for answering subsequent questions relevant to the study including:

1. How does the participatory action research (PAR) process work to achieve the three broad goals of social justice?

2. How did the Kaleidoscope setting impact the research?

3. What role did artmaking play in the process of exploring social justice issues?

4. How do the finished artworks exist as dialogic tools for communicating and promoting social justice?

Primarily, in this chapter, I acknowledged my point of view as an ally of the LGBTQ community and as a PAR researcher embracing a CRT theoretical framework. I
communicated that these factors were relevant for understanding the specific data that I collected and what I believed to be important. I acknowledged that “our meaning making is always partial and influenced by our own values and beliefs… [and] rooted in your individuals context and self” (Phillips & Carr, 2006, pp.96-97).

A significant amount of the data that was reported was taken from my research journal. It held the agenda for each workshop and my personal reflections after each workshop. In addition, images of the art projects were provided in this section. This data collecting method was significantly helpful because it provided me with an opportunity to analyze informally throughout the study. This ongoing analysis allowed me to address specific issues and see if and where revisions were necessary (Phillips & Carr, 2006).

This PAR study provided information that aided in the development of a curriculum map. The map was offered in this chapter. The curriculum map is specific to the KYC population. Herr and Anderson (2008) assert, “Action research produces knowledge grounded in local realities that is also useful to local participants” (p.98). This suggests that it is desirable that the curriculum map satisfy the needs of its stakeholders because this is an objective of a PAR study. However, while this is so, there are aspects of the map that are transferable and accessible for use in other settings, by other facilitators.

I administered interviews with two KYC youth on separate occasions. The transcripts that are provided in this chapter revealed the students’ understanding of social justice, art as a communicative tool and how the art workshops worked in a capacity to encourage social justice. Also included in this chapter is a synopsis of results from the art
In the next chapter, I analyze the data that I presented in this chapter. I make assertions that attend to my primary and sub-research questions. Additionally, I identify emergent themes, share some conclusions and evaluate the implications for the field of art education.
Chapter 5: Interpretation and Conclusions

Introduction

Research is about telling stories that are partial; we do not tell an “entire story” (Elam, 1994). As teacher/researchers, our “conclusions” are tentative because we recognize our partial knowledge; we can never know all of the “truth” of our stories (Haraway, 1996; Lather, 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 2003). In the retelling of our experiences, we resist grand narratives or statements. As student teacher/action researchers, your retellings are located in your limited experience and engagement with students and school communities. (Phillips & Carr, 2006, p.105)

This chapter delivers the interpretations of and conclusions that can be inferred from the data that was presented in Chapter Four. The interpretation of any data is affected by the “cultural, social, and political context of who we are as teacher/researchers” (Phillips & Carr, 2006, p.101). Therefore, the meaning that I construct from the data will be partial and situated in a specific context and place. In addition to this subjectivity, it is important to keep in mind that participatory action research studies are not executed in hopes of proving something, but instead have the goal to “find insight and meaning in our practice that results in positive changes for ourselves, our students, and the school and communities in which we teach” (Phillips &
Carr, 2006, p. 102). It does not aim to make grand statements of truth or draw conclusions; data interpretation initiates more inquiries, more hunches, and guides teacher/researchers towards their next journey in professionalism and research (Phillips & Carr, 2006). My analysis works in this capacity.

The primary research question that guided the interpretation of the data is: How does a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to art education facilitate the three broad goals of social justice (a) increase personal awareness, (b) expand knowledge and (c) encourage action among youth? In addition to investigating this question, the sub-questions for this study are also explored. They are:

1. How does the participatory action research (PAR) process work to achieve the three broad goals of social justice?
2. How did the Kaleidoscope setting impact the research?
3. What role did artmaking play in the process of exploring social justice issues?
4. How do the finished artworks exist as dialogic tools for communicating and promoting social justice

Phillips and Carr (2006) write, “Interpretation is revelation based upon information” (pp. 95-96). Therefore, to interpret and analyze the research experience, I utilize (a) data that is relevant and supplies information that guides my interpretations and (b) literature that supports my assertions. I will begin by attending to the sub-questions of the study, and then I will attend to the primary research question.
Analysis, Interpretations and Implications for Sub-question 1:

How does the participatory action research (PAR) process aid in achieving the three broad goals of social justice?

Analysis and Interpretation

This inquiry can be answered by examining the weekly observations and reflections in my research journal. The observations and reflections reveal the critical thinking process and ongoing revisions that had to be made for the specific population of participants. The process of PAR is multidimensional, but can be summed up by identifying the iterative cycle of plan, act, observe, and reflect (McIntyre, 2008). In addition, PAR allows the researcher to be an equal stakeholder in the research. This means that I examine my own teaching practice and setting in addition to answering the research questions (Phillips & Carr, 2006). The PAR procedure affected how I approached each artmaking workshop. It allowed me to adjust aspects of the research, and continue to maintain the ultimate goal of the study, which was to provide a social justice education.

As asserted by Adams, Bell, and Griffin (2007) the three broad goals of social justice are to increase personal awareness, expand knowledge, and promote action. These goals can be identified throughout each step of the PAR cycle of plan, act, observe, and reflect as it was used throughout the four month study.

Plan. Increasing Personal Awareness. Planning increased my personal awareness and the students’ personal awareness about social justice and what it meant in
art education. Before the first workshop, I created a curriculum rationale and eight curriculum objectives that would guide the co-constructed multicultural and social reconstructionist curriculum. These two items were general and they focused on explaining why a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to art education was important to use in the classroom. The rationale and objectives communicated why and how to operationalize social justice (Donnell et al., 2008). According to Donnell, et al. (2008), “Teachers commonly teach about social justice, but teaching for social justice—teaching that has action-consequences—needs much greater attention” (p.37). Understanding this differentiation guided the rationale and objectives in a specific way that supports the actualization of this teaching goal. Personal awareness about my role in the success of the creating a true multicultural and social reconstructionist curriculum was increased. Efforts to create multicultural curriculum are vast, but the attempt to incite action do not accompany many of these efforts. They simply highlight the oppressive systems and talk about inequality. However, I understand that it is the educator’s job to take a step further and make suggestions about ways to actively counter such injustices.

The students’ role in planning the curriculum and project activities was integral. In PAR, the stakeholders’ voices are acknowledged as valid. The participants’ local knowledge was used to initiate deeper learning; which made them proponents of their own change (Freire, 1970; Stringer, 2007). During the first week of Kaleidoscope He(ARTS), the students compiled a list of social justice issues that they wanted the curriculum to address. Their active participation in the planning process altered their understanding of research, as well as their comprehension of the researcher-stakeholder
(and teacher-student) dichotomy. My relinquishing of power and role as expert resulted in students’ increased personal awareness about their place in their own learning. In addition, initially, the youth did not recognize the hierarchical teacher-student relationship as a possible social justice issue because of its normalcy. Eventually, they understood the democratic, collaborative process of the workshops as social justice. By acknowledging their ideas as valid, I helped them identify the hierarchical nature of some educational practices. Therefore, the students’ active role in planning increased their personal awareness about how their life intersects with social justice issues everyday.

*Expanding Knowledge.* Planning expanded my knowledge and the students’ knowledge concerning social justice. Primarily, the planning stage of the research helped me understand how to identify active social justice in the classroom. Social justice in the classroom means that the students actively participate and engage with others regardless of whether or not the tasks directly benefit them; and, while there may be confrontation in interactions, negotiation is practiced (Tyler, 2000). This negotiation process is evidence of growth and maturity—students understand why structure is needed and they participate in forming and establishing that structure (Grant & Sleeter, 2007). Coming to this knowledge allowed me to plan for artmaking activities that fostered collaboration and mutual engagement in hopes to witness such cooperation.

The students’ knowledge was expanded through the dialogic process I facilitated during the workshops. For example, during the first workshop, the students engaged in a conversation about what they thought were important human issues needing attention. This reciprocal sharing of information expanded the students’ knowledge about issues
other people thought were worthwhile. The youth were not always interested in discussing the same issue, but they respectfully listened to others’ ideas. As the students conversed, the session became one of knowledge sharing. There were some issues brought forth that students had never considered to be social justice issues. For example, a student wanted to discuss the morality of adopting children from other countries and taking them away from their native culture. While the topic did not make it to the actual curriculum, it was discussed for about five minutes. The students understood that there was no hierarchy of ideas and they displayed a willingness to accept outcomes, policies, and statuses that may not have been as desirable as they wanted. When students reveal their capacity to accept such terms, justice and power is cognitively present (Miller, 1999).

*Promoting Action.* The planning of this research process encouraged me, as well as the students, to take action, the third goal of social justice. I recognize the propensity humans have toward prejudice, ethnocentrism, racism, and violence (Vietze & Hildebrandt, 2009). Thus, I felt compelled to act by planning to co-create a rich curriculum that would call out some of these issues and begin students on their own journey of social inquiry and political and/or personal action. The curriculum was an intervention (Herr & Anderson, 2005) that was devised under a framework that supported the democratic process, critical questioning and collaborative, cooperative learning—educational strategies proposed for learning that creates socially responsible citizens who desire to reform the social order so that the needs of all people can be met. The art projects that I planned alone and with the students were successful in not only identifying
and commenting on social justice issues, but they involved an element of confrontation. For example, the students explored and created political cartoons to investigate and make commentary on the Arizona Immigration law (Appendix G). To attend to gay equality, the students painted a mural that portrayed Kaleidoscope as a more open and welcoming space that supports all people. These two examples reveal how the collaborative planning process of PAR presented opportunities for students to not only create relative, action-oriented projects, but it gave them a more active, autonomous role in deciding what they learned and how.

**Act. Increasing Personal Awareness and Expanding Knowledge.** After the planning period in which the youth identified issues that would be investigated during the workshops, I developed art projects that I felt would appropriately support student exploration. Each workshop began with a discussion about one of the predetermined social justice issues and the latter half of the hour was dedicated to artmaking. “Act” is a step in the PAR process that primarily refers to the dissemination and absorption of information, as well as the execution of the research agenda.

The workshop discussions served as a time for personal discovery and self reflection. This social process provided those who are often silenced with the opportunity to communicate alternative viewpoints, as well as take note of others’ ideas. Because various cultural and racial groups were represented in the workshop room, there were cross cultural conversations, which according to Dewey (1973), is exemplary of a true democratic society. The new ideas that the students left the workshops with reveal how the “act” component of the PAR process provided instances in which personal awareness
increased and knowledge was expanded. The students offered information based on their understandings of the world. These established ideas were subjective and directly related to that person’s life experiences. The workshops worked as cultural informationals in which students could come to understand each other and recognize issues that people from diverse groups and backgrounds are concerned with.

Through the process of discussing issues and creating artwork, the students’ interests in social justice increased and their knowledge expanded as well. An examination of Charlie’s activity and engagement from the first workshop to the end validates this assertion. The political cartoon workshop was the first activity that Charlie participated in. Although he contributed to the discussion and the artmaking project, overall, his interest was extremely low. I had a hard time getting him to create his own political cartoon and he complained until the last minutes of the workshop. Charlie continued to come to the workshops and complain each time. However, during about the fourth or fifth week, Charlie’s involvement in the workshops escalated. The mural project confirms Charlie’s elevated engagement in the interest of social justice. His ideas played a central part in guiding the mural’s conception. After the mural project, Charlie’s high engagement continued. In Charlie’s (2011) interview, he cited the collage project as the one he appreciated the most during the workshops. Comparing Charlie’s disinterest during the first workshop to his communicating his favorite project at the end of the research confirms how the continuous process of “acting” (or in this case executing lessons) plays a role facilitating the three goals of social justice.
Promoting Action. The act of creating art provided opportunities for increasing personal awareness and expanding knowledge about social justice. However, it additionally incited action. For example, the political cartoon project, which attended to the Arizona Immigration law, introduced the students to the idea of counterhegemonic tools that work against institutional and structural oppression, including the impact of media like newspapers, textbooks, films and even libraries (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b). This process provoked critically questioning about power and justice in America. The students developed inquiries such as, “Isn’t this unconstitutional? The police have no authority in this area. They cannot ask for immigration papers, can they? What does ‘looking illegal’ look like? Who defines what looking illegal looks like?” The students empowered themselves by actively questioning everyday living conditions (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b). Their questions touched on issues of truth, such as what do we accept as the “truth” and who has the power to establish “truths”. The students realized how social power is imbalanced and those on the lower end of the class hierarchy, usually those in historically oppressed groups, are at a disadvantage. The questions the students asked tackled White supremacist thinking (Mills, 1997; hooks, 2003), although they did not specifically use this term in their discussion. With the political cartoon project, students addressed economic exploitation of groups (Snider, 1996) and made satirical commentary on the issue. Most of the art projects had similar effects to the political cartoon. The projects ignited a session of critical questioning and resulted in action. Another example of this process would be the project in which the students and I silkscreened t-shirts that
communicated an anti-bullying message in an effort to honor teens who committed suicide after being bullied for being a part of the LGBTQ community.

**Observe and Reflect.** *Increasing Personal Awareness and Expanding Knowledge.* Observing and reflecting in the PAR process is most critical in attending to social justice goals. Observing and reflecting during the research process was integral to the success of the research as a whole. This step in the PAR process had many implications for my role as the researcher. It increased my personal awareness and expanded my knowledge about the needs of this specific population of students and how to be successful in this particular community setting.

The PAR process is a spiral of self-reflective cycles. The researcher should use observations and reflections to re-plan the research activities accordingly (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000). For me, this process was necessary during week two of the research. For example, when the same students from the first workshop were not present at the second workshop, I was forced to transform the workshop agenda to be in line with the students’ sporadic, undependable attendance. Initially, the art projects were designed as activities that would progress as the weeks passed, taking three to four sessions to complete. Using this approach meant that the workshops’ success relied on the students returning each week. In addition, it left little room for new participants to enter and be able to fully engage in the project. Through observing and reflecting it was clear to me that a stringent workshop structure did not support the needs of the site as a drop in center.
Promoting Action. Observing and reflecting was a continuous task throughout the entire study. The projects were planned, yet fluid enough to change based on the results of my weekly observations and reflections of the workshops and the students’ interests. For example, bullying was not a topic that was initially established during the brainstorming session of the research. However, my interest to address this subject in the workshops was guided by the Center. The administration at KYC was making an increased effort to teach the youth about bullying in light of the multiple suicides of LGBTQ teens around the country. The director introduced anti-bullying films to the students and implemented new programs at the Center that attended to bullying. Therefore, I saw the need to address this topic in the workshops and create art that would act against the bullying issue. The idea for silkscreening t-shirts was a result of my observing and reflecting on what affected the students’ lives at that point in time. This is exemplary of how the observing and reflecting steps in the PAR process encouraged action, the third goal of social justice.

Implications

The nature of PAR is fluid and open and responsive (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000 as cited in Hutzel, 2004). The theoretical underpinnings of PAR are connected to social justice; therefore, using it in this research project was ideal. Each step in the PAR process guides researchers and teachers into work that is meaningful and relevant to everyone involved (Hashagen, 2002). The implications of using PAR in a study attending to social justice are many. PAR can be overwhelming for teachers, students, researchers, and participants who are more familiar with the hierarchical relationship. In this research, the
participants did initially seem apprehensive about asserting their power in the research and curriculum planning process. However, the students eventually realized that I perceived them as the experts and recognized their ideas as valid by structuring the workshops around their ideas. The students transitioned from listener and observer to active contributor and discussant (Perumal, 2008). I believe that Charlie’s transformation was related to the PAR process as well. PAR emphasizes “shared learning, shared knowledge, and flexible yet structured collaborative analysis” (Kindon, Pain & Kesby, 2007, p.17). Once Charlie realized that he had the power to control his learning and be a proponent of change, his interest in social justice and outlook on the workshops evolved positively. When students guide their learning and control how their time is spent, the knowledge built is sustainable. PAR supports student autonomy, which results in building student agency. The goals of social justice are to encourage critical thinking about the world and its political structure. They provoke agency in inquiry. The process of PAR assisted in working toward these goals. It supported the aspiration to de-stabilize naturalized power hierarchies (Torre, 2008).

In addition, I believe the process of PAR encouraged me to take a step back to examine how I was teaching social justice. Donnell, et.al. (2008) suggest that teachers often teach about social justice instead of teaching for social justice. While my intentions were to teach for social justice, my observations and reflections allowed me to see that I was not accomplishing this objective. The action-consequences (Donnell, et.al., 2008) component that is necessary in teaching for social justice was not initially visible in the workshops. I was able to identify this absence during the research and alter my approach
to teaching the youth. Primarily, a shifting of language was required. I decided to talk
about social justice only as an action. I no longer defined social justice as work for those
who have been oppressed based on identifiable characteristics such as race, gender,
sexual orientation, class, religion, ability and age. The youth often zoned out about
halfway through that definition. I simply began asking them to talk about instances of
wrong-doing that made them want to do something about it and create change. This
simple inquiry propelled group conversations, which often resulted in the youth
questioning why these unfair things happened. Consequently, the youth began to identify
characteristics such as race, gender, sexual orientation, class, religion, ability and age as
the basis for the unfair treatment and wrong-doings. The students’ autonomy in coming to
this understanding of social justice on their own seemed to create a more sustainable
understanding versus my defining social justice for them during each workshop. As a
result, the projects were more action oriented. For example, creating t-shirts with anti-
bullying messages.

Analysis, Interpretations and Implications for Sub-question 2:

How did the Kaleidoscope setting impact the teaching and learning environment?

Analysis and Interpretation

When embarking upon research, there is an initial span of time when the
researcher’s focus is on finding a research site that works appropriately with their goal(s).
On my journey to find this space, I was introduced to Kaleidoscope Youth Center by a
faculty member who had personal affiliations with the center. As the researcher, I had the
goal to find a site that had a diverse population. This was a goal because my research explores a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach, in which cooperative learning is a tenet. Furthermore, cooperative learning strategies thrive off of diversity. The faculty member advised me that KYC was a heterogeneous place that lent its resources to youth from varying parts of Columbus, Ohio. Therefore, I entered the site as a creative writing instructor while I began to construct my research proposal. After volunteering at KYC for over a year, I established this space as my designated research site. However, I knew that by accepting this space as so would mean I had to attend to the make-up of the site and how it impacted my research agenda. There were three aspects of this setting that impacted my research the most: the site’s position as a community drop-in center, its position as a community center that is not art centered, and the specific population that the site serves.

Community Drop-In Center. Each student who attended KYC traveled from his/her respective family community to build a new community constructed by their inquiries about sexual orientation. The Columbus communities that the students came from were very diverse, therefore there was not an immediate meshing of cultures. Albeit the students are connected by the shared interest of sexual exploration, conflict still arises within the KYC community. Dean Corrigan (1996), author of Teacher education and interprofessional collaboration: Creation of family-centered, community-based integrated service systems describes community as the following:

Community is envisioned in the way that Tonnies (1957) defined it years ago: community of kinship, place, and mind. Community of kinship
emerges from the kinds of relationships among people that create a unity of being, similar to that found in families and other closely knit collections of people. Community of place emerges from the sharing of a common habitat or locale for sustained periods. Community of mind emerges from the bonding of people around common goals, shared values and shared conceptions of being and doing. Together, the three kinds of community represent webs of meaning that link diverse groups of people by creating among them a sense of belonging and a common identity as human beings who are capable of affection and caring for others as well as themselves. America’s future depends on the ability of its citizens to create healthy, humane communities and on the commitments of its leaders to act on the values embodies in such communities. (p.143)

Embracing such a definition of community guides me in understanding a community center’s purpose. Community centers are considered safe spaces where groups of people go to socialize, share knowledge and be comfortable simply being who they are (Merz & Furman, 1997). KYC worked in this capacity. KYC was the ultimate safe space to a vulnerable population of people- youth who identify as LGBTQ. Therefore, my entering this site as an outsider, moreover an ally, with a research agenda was socially dangerous. This impacted my research heavily because I was aware of the repercussions of my attempt to penetrate a vulnerable group to complete research before I was an established community member. Therefore, I worked to earn my place as a community member by engaging with the youth for over a year before I introduced any aspect of the research.
Once I began the research, I was mindful of the things that I requested from the students. In this space, I did not want any of the youth to feel threatened or pressured to do anything associated with the research. For example, when Rick declined to complete the interview, I did not press the issue. KYC was not a school and the interview was not an assignment that could be graded and count against him if not completed. Therefore, once he made his decision, I had to accept it, leaving me with one less interview than I initially planned for. I considered his feelings and moved on.

KYC’s position as a community center also worked in favor of my research. The students were comfortable in the space and maintained comfortable relationships with one another. Even when in confrontation with each other, the youth debated like siblings. Therefore, the workshop discussions were always dynamic because the youth did not feel apprehensive about expressing their ideas or alternative viewpoints. They respectfully challenged each other’s’ justifications for certain beliefs and life practices. For example, Tim felt completely at ease when he somewhat reprimanded Star about being a self-proclaimed bully. Their five minute dispute did not result in a torn friendship. I am sure that if Tim and Star were strangers and they were in a different space, the debate would not have been so uneventful. Even a school site would have offered a different result. In community centers, members become like family, although sometimes a dysfunctional family. This space was considered non-threatening, which supported peer debate and open negotiation of ideas. The youth had built dynamic partnerships in which candor and mutual trust was present (Chadwick, 2004).
KYC’s role as a community drop-in center brought forth a completely different set of challenges that impacted my research. A drop-in center has no requirements for when and how often youth must attend. It was completely up to the youth when they would attend and what programs they would participate in. During the first two weeks of the research, this characteristic of the site significantly impacted my research. I was forced to immediately revise the calendar agenda based on the irregular attendance. It presented problems with obtaining art materials as well. I could never plan to bring a specific amount of materials; I was constantly overcompensating. It was not until the last workshop that my lack of materials affected the workshops. Only three youth had been present for three consecutive weeks. Therefore, there were only three screens that had images burned on them and ready to print with. When ten youth showed up, I felt unprepared and unprofessional as I had to come up with alternative printing options for those who did not have a screen.

In addition, because KYC was a drop-in center, the youth had a choice regarding whether or not they wanted to participate in the workshops. The alternative to participating in the workshops was to leave the center for an hour. During one particular workshop, a few youth exercised this right, which in turn affected the workshop attendance, as well as resulted in a lack of perspectives during the discussion. Ultimately I had to accept what the community drop-in center offered. The year that I spent as a volunteer before engaging in research led me to believe that the positives of KYC as a site of research outweighed the negatives. I entered this site knowing what it had to offer and understanding what I must adjust to.
Non-Art Focused Center. Over the years, I have worked in many community spaces. However, most of these community spaces have been specifically dedicated to art and art programming. KYC was not in this category and this significantly impacted the research. An aspect of the research it affected most was my ability to maintain the youths’ interest in artmaking. Most of the art experiences the youth had were from school, in which discipline-based art education was probably practiced. This fact was confirmed during workshops as youth often asserted that they could not “make art” and were terrible artists. I heard this statement during almost every workshop; therefore, I inferred that the youth only understood art from a technical standpoint, not a conceptual one. Some of the youth let me know that they had never taken art courses while in middle school or high school. Therefore, in most instances, using art as a tool for teaching and learning about the world, knowledge building, and knowledge dissemination (Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris & Daniel, 2008; Desai, 2000) was unfamiliar.

Fortunately, the issues that the youth chose during the first workshop helped me introduce artmaking processes. It was easier to guide students in creating art by using the concepts they decided upon. Without this direct connection with the students, the task would have been quite challenging. People go to community art centers specifically to learn about and engage in art because art is where their interests lie. This community site was different in that the youth did not attend the center to learn about art; it was up to me to sustain the youths’ interest in the subject. Additionally, because the youth had no initial desires to create art when they visited the center, they often complained about getting dirty during workshops. The choices I made about art projects and artmaking
processes were impacted by the youths’ consistent complaining. After the plaster project, I decided to use less messy materials. I did not want the youth to be so caught up in the materials that it hampered the information that the workshops delivered. Unfortunately, during the plaster workshop, the youth were driven away. On that day, more than half of the participants chose to leave the center instead of participate. In a community art center, this would not have been an issue. The KYC youth just simply preferred mundane collages that used magazines images. They thought this simple project was the one of the most exciting projects I brought forth.

Overall, the youth were not confident in their ability to create “art;” as they considered art to be a product that is created with precise skill and technical expertise. Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris and Daniel (2008) suggest, “Process rather than product should be the consequence of [art] curricula guided by democratic social goals and values that seek to confront the ‘racial class, gender, and homophobic biases woven into the fabric of society’ (Bigelow, Harvey, Krap & Miller 2001, p.1)” (p.83). The weekly workshops were developed around this assertion. They attended to relevant, world-related topics in addition to teaching artmaking processes. This meshing provided the workshops with equilibrium. The youth learned artmaking processes but did not focus too much on the product, as they were busy developing ideas and thinking critically about the concept and context of their work.

**Population of Youth.** Community centers are usually located in the center of neighborhoods to provide resources to members of the community. The commonality of living in the same area is one aspect that usually connects individuals and strengthens
relationships in such a space. Alternatively, the KYC community drop-in center was located in a central area of Columbus, Ohio that was not specific to any one neighborhood. KYC provided support and resources for youth who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning. The homosexual population is an oppressed group in multiple ways. Primarily, there are people who believe that “heterosexuality is natural and homosexuality is perverse” (Vietze & Hildebrandt, 2009, p.34). In addition, homosexuality in adolescence has even more negative connotations within society (Pace, 2009). Heterosexuality has been established as the normative culture and therefore frames and drives human beliefs and social power systems (Jung & Smith, 1993). Therefore, while the youth came from varying neighborhoods around Columbus, Ohio, the strength of the KYC community “developed out of the collective identities that resulted from oppression and marginalization” (Sleeter & Grant, 1999 as cited in Hutzel, 2004, p. 137).

Working with this population of participants impacted the research in a couple of ways. The first way can be described through a discussion of Freire’s (1970/1993) literature, Power of the Oppressed. Freire (1970/1993) suggests that during the initial struggle of oppressed groups, instead of striving for liberation, they almost always become the oppressor. The mind has been conditioned to understand that being a [hu]man means being an oppressor. This situation seemed to play out at times during my workshops. Each week, I entered KYC as a heterosexual, but as an ally. The youth understood that some of the volunteers were allies. Regardless of the fact that allies support and work towards the same goals as the LGBTQ population, it seemed as though being LGBTQ provided the youth with a significant amount of power over anyone.
heterosexual in this site. It was as if they were guarding territory and they used any means necessary to protect their freedom in this space, even belittling, bullying or intimidating adults. This assumption can be affirmed through the examination of the consistent remarks Charlie made to me about the success (or lack thereof) of the first few workshops. During week two when the students from the first workshop did not show up like they said they would, Charlie asked, “So, how are you gonna do art with no students? How do you feel about that? No one wants to do this.” Charlie displayed this type of attitude at the workshops many times. Eventually, he stopped interacting with me in this way; however, it played out in other ways around KYC.

Another encounter that displayed this type of intimidation and bullying was when Holly, a fairly new ally volunteer, asserted her authority and asked the youth to leave the kitchen because it was to be closed at 4:30pm per new center rules. Charlie ignored Holly’s request and did not leave the kitchen. As she began to repeat the request, Charlie interrupted her and said, “Excuse you, but I know the rules, I have been here much longer than you have.” I concluded that Charlie’s defensive actions and condescending statements stopped after he recognized my committed involvement (Freire, 1970/1993) to the center. Charlie was not at KYC for the year that I volunteered before the research began. Therefore, he initially saw me as having an agenda that did not take into consideration the needs of the youth. I had to earn his trust and I assume this was the same for the other allies in the space. Maybe he saw me as an ally trying to research an “exotic” group of people. Therefore, my dedication to them had to be strong enough to abolish Charlie’s preconceived interpretation of me. I was adamant about being present
every single week and tried to show no reaction when Charlie made condescending remarks. As Charlie recognized my unwavering commitment to the youth and to the workshops, his behavior changed positively. In addition, Charlie’s defensive disposition diminished after he continuously participated in the workshops in which multiple voices were accepted and used to frame the curriculum and activities (hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 1999; Nordlund, Speirs & Stewart, 2010).

In addition to Charlie’s behavior, I believe that Star’s bullying role that she claimed was also exemplary of Freire’s (1970/1993) theory about the oppressed. She stated she was a bully because she wanted respect. She sincerely believed this. It was clear that she identified power with being an oppressor. Unfortunately, Star was only present during two workshops, so she did not engage in the frequent conversations about power and the dominance of knowledge, information and law. I believe these dialogic encounters would have provided her with alternative perspectives about respect and power, as well a sense of liberation (Freire, 1970/1993).

Not all of the youth reacted like Charlie and Star. Some of the youth who had reservations about me were more passive aggressive. This played out during the workshops; sometimes they would not complete projects or they participated half-heartedly. However, after about two months into the workshops, the youth recognized my face and understood that I was not leaving. The shift in attitudes was noticeable. I believe that this shift can be understood by taking into consideration Freire’s (1970/1993) notion of committed involvement in which there is a significant emphasis on being consistent with oppressed groups in hopes to facilitate change.
The Kaleidoscope setting impacted the research in another way that was more personal. Specifically, I saw the way this specific site was transformative for my thinking about and understanding of group marginalization. While I maintained the focus and goal for the workshops to encourage the youth to think critically about social justice issues and act on them, the mere experience in this LGBTQ environment highlighted my faults and the socially misguided ideals that were imbedded in my mind. As a black woman, I am always cognizant of how black people and other non-White groups are unfairly and disproportionately positioned socially, politically and economically. I never considered myself to be a member of the dominant culture that does not perceive “the ways in which their community creates an atmosphere of exclusion of or insensitivity to persons or groups who are not part of the dominant culture” (Prystowsky, 2008, p.37). However, almost always, I only identified injustice from a racial standpoint. I knew about the inequalities that other minority groups (i.e. those with varied sexual orientation, ability, age, religion) experienced, but I was able to speak about their problems from a distance. My heterosexuality placed me in the dominant population while in KYC and I did not recognize this relationship until I was in this space. My experiences with these youth, especially with Tammy and with Tracie, forced me into situations that I was used to examining from a distance. I was immersed in unfamiliar territory and it was frightening to recognize my ignorance. I often discussed challenges of the LGBTQ population in my research, and in my academic and personal circles. However, I had never been as deeply grounded in those challenges as I was at KYC. I am a black woman; I am a minority and am familiar with the challenges of being black and being a woman. However, while at
KYC, I was perceived as a majority by the youth because I am heterosexual. At times, I felt the uncomfortable feelings in the KYC space that the LGBTQ youth must feel once they exit the center. The self reflection that I did throughout the research allowed me to see myself as potentially being one of the people who the youth were protecting themselves from; not in the sense of discrimination, but in the sense of not completely understanding their struggle. I determined this self reflection to be a large part of the success of this research, in addition to the overall execution of the artmaking workshops and student engagement. The heightened awareness of my status in KYC forced me to approach the youth with even more sensitivity and candor. I know that this revelation would not have happened had the setting of the research been different.

**Implications**

Initially, I believed that the Kaleidoscope setting was not ideal for conducting art education research. The youths’ lack of knowledge in artmaking affected how information was disseminated and explored. However, I eventually began to realize that the learning environment that KYC offered actually played a critical role in the success of this research. The space provided a context for meaningful encounters and experiences (Freedman, 2010). It held “a space for learners to acknowledge their own self-doubt and develop and express their emerging understandings” (Freedman, 2010, p.3). Embarking on a research journey in a space that provides this type of nurturing is the best possible scenario for a study focused on social justice goals.

Additionally, there is an ongoing debate that questions whether or not someone has the right to teach about a specific group of people if they are not a member of the
group themselves (Collins, 2002; Howard, 2006; Smith, 2005). For example, can men be feminism instructors? Can a White person teach a course titled Black Culture in America? Who can be a Black feminist? In addition, how do you build rapport, make connections and understand a group’s needs when you are seen as an “outsider” (Hutzel, 2007)? Ultimately, the critique states that knowledge of a society must be from a position in it (Smith, 2005). Desai (2000) asserts, “No representations, whether visual, textual, or verbal, are neutral. Rather, they all involve some act of violence or decontextualization to the subject being represented. The act of representing the other tends to reduce the other to some partial characteristics” (pp.115-116). Primarily, “authentic” representations of the other are not often attentive to positionality; therefore, culture gets reduced to an unrecognizable state. It results in cultural diversity being packaged and sold by corporations, museums and even academic institutions; this can be called corporate multiculturalism (Desai, 2000). So, the question is: How do you obtain the right to represent a group of people if you are not a member of that group, enmeshed in their culture and its problems? A person can spend a lifetime researching a specific group; however, research only provides a certain amount of information that sometimes cannot be considered completely accurate. In addition, this brings up the inquiry of whether or not a group has a definite “culture” or has characteristics that are so specific that they can be summed up by a person or a course. There are many dimensions to this debate. I do not intend to delve into them all, nor do I intend to assert my position on the dispute. I will state that I have always been conflicted about what side of the argument I reside.
However, the setting of this particular research has provided me with an additional perspective that allowed me to reflect on my personal beliefs about the debate overall.

Although I witnessed only a fraction of the youths’ lives during my time at KYC, I was able to better comprehend how a person can be empathetic and advocate for a group of people without being a member of that group. I was not completely convinced of this assertion before my research experience at KYC. The literature that first initiated my investigation on this topic was John Howard Griffin’s 1961 novel *Black like Me*. This autobiographical work described the author’s experience in the South as a Black man. The critical part of the tale was that Griffin was not born Black; he was a White man who put himself through painful medical processes that turned his skin a darker pigment; therefore, allowing him to pass as a Black man. Griffin explained that the purpose of his desire to be Black and move to the South was to understand the mental anguish of being considered inhumane based on something as uncontrollable as skin color. He wanted to experience discrimination and investigate how one could survive under such conditions of injustice. At first, I was impressed by this story and touched by Griffin’s life-changing decision. However, after reflecting on the text, I questioned the experience’s authenticity. Griffin was not born Black and had not grown up as a Black person, which means he had not internalized the dehumanization that a Black born man does. This was the privilege Griffin had, although he was “Black” for many months of his life. Being oppressed from birth can often result in negative thinking about life and the world in general; one often feels powerless (Freire, 1970, 1993). However, being born with power and privilege, and then later experiencing oppression does not completely diminish one’s
optimism about the world. This is evident through Griffin’s attempt to create change through relationships with White people during his journey; whereas, a Black man would not had initiated such relationships. The suffering of Black people in the South transcended any ideas about building a respectful relationship with a White person.

I believe that my entrance into Kaleidoscope is similar to Griffin’s story. Griffin only grazed the surface of the Southern Black experience and my window of experience in KYC was even smaller. I could only make conclusions about the homosexual experience from my four-month engagement with the youth at KYC. Neither Griffin, nor I could truly comprehend the mental struggles that groups of people unlike us face each day. Furthermore, one experience should not frame how an entire culture is perceived and represented (Desai, 2000). However, I believe I learned something from Griffin’s (1961) text and my own experience at KYC. Regardless of my ability to comprehend the vastness of the youths’ mental struggle, I have enough understanding to assert knowledge about how discrimination of the LGBTQ population affects me and especially the larger world. In addition, what is my role, where is my place in this conflict? The acknowledgement of this positionality is critical and results in having “authentic” and fair discussions about other cultures (Desai, 2000). The implications of this position are grand. The Kaleidoscope setting facilitated an acknowledgement of intersecting oppressions and attention to the hegemony behind the invisibility of the homosexual population as an oppressed group (Snider, 1996; Desai, 2000). Applying this experience to my efforts in curriculum development and in establishing educational alternatives is critical. In addition, the ally relationships and coalition support dialogues that help
explore how “relations of domination and subordination are maintained and changed” (Collins, 2002, p.166). Adams, Bell and Griffin (1997) assert, “Heterogeneous coalitions among different groups can then develop strategies further and build support for change that draws on the energies, and differential insights and access to power of members from various groups” (p.14). For me, the parallels between the experience as a Black woman and those of different oppressed groups can now become the focus of investigation (Collins, 2002).

**Analysis, Interpretations and Implications for Sub-question 3:**

*What role did artmaking play in the process of exploring social justice issues?*

**Analysis and Interpretation**

Art educators who combine social justice and art education usually have the commitment to “create art that draws attention to, mobilizes action towards, or attempts to intervene in systems of inequality or injustice” (Dewhurst, 2010, p.7). This goal has always been the driving force behind my research in art education. Creating art requires critical thinking, problem solving and higher order thinking. Attending to and working toward social justice calls for the use of identical skills. The process of creating art not only allows people to practice and strengthen those mental abilities, but also acts as a tool for communicating, teaching and learning ideas. As I embraced art in this way for my research, I identified how art played a significant role in exploring social justice issues through the language of the media.
Language of Media. The art media was significant in the exploration of social justice. The media offered the youth a means for communicating. At times during the workshops, dialogue was not always fruitful; however, most of the youths’ artwork was notable in making assertions about social justice. For example, the workshop in which I introduced the multi-media collage process to the youth produced dynamic commentary on many social justice issues. In particular, the youth who created “STOP IT” (Figure 31) did not speak during the initial conversation. So, as the youth and I debated about the legalization of marijuana, the young man sat quietly. However, as I watched him create his artwork, he worked with intent and never hesitated in his quest to find the right images to communicate his assertions. His collage spoke out against violence in the homosexual community. After the workshop, looking at his work, it was clear that he understood the impact of injustice and the marginalization of certain people. The organization of art media represented his thinking process about the issue. Regardless of whether or not this young man had the vocabulary to verbalize his thoughts on the issue or was simply shy, he chose to speak through his art, This choice should always be an option (Dewhurst, 2010, hooks, 2003). In addition, Charlie’s interview confirms art’s place in the workshops as well. He shared that he appreciated the collage workshop the most because it gave him a chance to communicate his ideas without using the words of someone else. The art allowed them to choose images that defined how their reality was shaped (Atkinson, 2002). Additionally, when the students chose to represent themselves with text and/or images, the representations were accurate and served as counter-narratives to the imposed narratives that are often inaccurate (Desai, 2000; Ladson-
Billings, 1999). This demonstrated the youth recognized how art works in a dialogic capacity, as well as a means for deconstructing “truths” or myths. The art media, specifically the collage project, provided them with agency in creating visual narratives in which new self-constructions were made.

Using art to explore social justice issues is beneficial because art can be interpreted in similar ways by a culturally varied mixture of people. Kathy Hubbard (2010) asserts, “Art is a vehicle for communicating meaningful messages across cultures” (p.74). I support this assertion and believe that art is effective in helping develop empathy and appreciation of various cultures (Chalmers, 1996). For example, at KYC, I experienced youth artwork that attended to homosexual issues. This was a cross-cultural experience because the homosexual culture is unfamiliar to me. During workshops, the youth used a lot of culture specific vocabulary that I did not recognize. For instance, one youth called me a “Catholic,” which describes someone who does not identify as LGBTQ. I was consistently reminded of how I was infiltrating another cultures’ territory. The youth called each other terms like “femme,” “diva,” “twink,” and “stud.” I asked the youth about the definitions of some of these terms. I noted how the definition of each term was connected to the sexual orientation or disposition of an individual. This specific language was common throughout the four months of the research.

While I had a problem interpreting this cultural language, I had no issues with interpreting and understanding the youths’ collages and other works of art. This

9 “Femme” describes a gay man that has a feminine disposition or physical appearance.
10 “Diva” describes a gay man or woman with a strong attitude or is high maintenance.
11 “Twink” describes a gay man that looks like a very young boy.
12 “Stud” is a gay female that has a masculine disposition. She usually dates feminine lesbians.
transparency in art validates its role as a means for cross-cultural communication. The mural project is also an exceptional example of how art can facilitate a cross-cultural dialogue. The mural (Figure 15) displays an image of the US map, painted with rainbow flag colors. A Black power fist is in the center of the painted map. Each of these images alone are recognizable and are interpreted similarly by people around the world. The rainbow flag is a universal symbol of LGBTQ or gay pride (Gay Pride, 2009). The shape of the US is also a familiar and recognizable shape. The gender symbols are well-known universally. The raised fist has been used in many countries and cultures to represent power and an expression of solidarity, strength or defiance (WorldLingo, 2011). Cross-cultural communication is not just text-based, it is also image based. Art facilitates the breaking down of linguistic barriers (Freedman, 2003 as cited in Hubbard, 2010).

Implications

While the art media allowed the students to explore social justice issues, the social justice issues provided youth with the opportunity to expand their understanding of what art is in general; the workshops were transformative in this way (Zermeno, 2011). By the end of the workshops, the youth no longer understood art as a set of technical skills that only one who has been trained in the subject can use. To them, drawing was no longer “an activity concerned with developing an accurate perception accompanied by competent hand-eye coordination to achieve a good representational image” (Atkinson, 2002, p.47). This change was clear to me after the youth stopped emphasizing how they could not make art and were not “good” artists. Eventually, students in the workshops came to know art through its ability to incite curiosity about social, political, historical
and ideological issues. Art became something that encouraged dialogue and told stories. It worked as a counter-hegemonic tool that could operate against social injustice. This understanding of art is critical in the advancement of not only social justice, but art education.

Maintaining a historical, classical definition of art as a set of skills that helps one create work that conforms to certain aesthetic rules is limiting (Guide to Meaning, 2011). This leaves us with only the verbal capacity to understand the world. Art can and should be understood as an action verb that aids in communicating experiences and feelings not easily explained verbally. Art provides a level of communication often restricted by language (Stephens, 2006; Zermeno, 2011). Additionally, if we employ only criterion such as line, texture, perspective, balance, harmony and color to assess the efficacy of art, we overlook the various perceptual and cognitive experiences that lead to its production (Atkinson, 2002). In addition, approaching art in such a linear way continues to discredit it as a valuable tool that builds cognitive skills such as critical thinking, organization, problem solving and emotional and expressive intelligence (Stephens, 2006).

An argument against art as a means for cross-cultural communication can be made. Some critics may suggest that non-artists have a hard time interpreting art. They believe there is specific art language or jargon that must be known (Perkins, 1977) to have an “accurate” perception of an artwork. However, the artistic experience is not an isolated one that can only be enjoyed by those who understand and use “art talk.” If art is defined in different, non-skill specific terms critics’ arguments are not valid. Therefore,
the possibility for cross-cultural dialogue is yet another reason art educators should continuously work to redefine understandings and definitions of art.

**Analysis, Interpretations and Implications for Sub-question 4:**

*How do the finished artworks exist as dialogic tools for communicating and promoting social justice?*

**Analysis and Interpretation**

This research is an inquiry into a curriculum approach that aims to teach democracy, introduce social responsibility, encourage critical questioning, guide students to identify systemic injustice and incite action towards creating change (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b). The execution of such an approach in the classroom should result in immeasurable benefits. However, as a researcher of this approach, I aimed to delve deeper to understand the possibilities of this approach to education. I aimed to learn if a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach transcends the art classroom and affects the larger community? The survey portion of this study offered valuable information that helped me understand how the specific curriculum approach fostered dialogic artmaking that inspired inquiry and/ or offered knowledge to the audience. After receiving the analyzed and summarized surveys from the statistics consultant, I was able to detect patterns amongst those who identified themselves as artists and those who claimed to be non-artists.

**Artists.** All of the survey participants addressed specific statements concerning their individual use of art to communicate personal and/or social issues. If the participant answered “Strongly Agree” or “Agree,” I labeled them “Artists.” After identifying this
category, I noted the patterns of the “Artists” participants’ answers to questions 3-8, which covered the effectiveness of the overall art exhibition. Figure 1 displays the exhibition specific survey question and Figure 2 displays the responses from the artist group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q3</th>
<th>Exhibition made me aware of identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>Exhibition made me conscious of how my identity affects how others treat me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>Exhibition made me question how I treat others that are different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>Exhibition brought forth an issues I rarely think about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>Artwork initiated communication between other viewers and me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8</td>
<td>Artwork initiated an internal dialogue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 49. Exhibition survey questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 50. Survey results from “Artist” group**

Overall, six out of eighteen participants asserted that they did use art for personal and social issues. All six participants agreed that the exhibition made them aware of their personal and social identity. Only one of the six survey participants disagreed with the statement that the exhibition made them conscious of how their identity affects how
others treat them. Also, only one the survey participants disagreed with the statement that the exhibition brought forth an issue/s that they rarely thought about. The remaining participants agreed with these statements. All of the participants agreed to the following statements as well: The exhibition made me question how I treat others who are different from myself; The artwork in the exhibition communication between other viewers and me; The artwork in the exhibition initiated an internal dialogue.

The results from this analysis suggest that for artists, the exhibition successfully acted as a dialogic tool for communicating and promoting social justice. The survey statements were strategically constructed to question how art contributed to the three broad goals of social justice: to increase awareness, expand knowledge, and encourage action. For example, questions 3-5 focused on how the art helped to increase awareness of social justice. Question 6 is specific to understanding how the art fostered the creation of knowledge about an issue: did the artwork teach them about something or guide them to think about an issue more deeply? The last two questions, 7-8, inquired about the ability the art had to encourage dialogue amongst viewers in the space and its ability to incite an internal dialogue within the viewer. These were the preferred actions that were encouraged in the space. Almost 100% of the people in the “Artists” category agreed with all of the survey statements, which suggests that the artwork played a role in how a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach can and does transcend the classroom. Unfortunately, I cannot make the assertion that this groups’ practices in and familiarity with art guided their responses because in the next section I offer similar trends within the “Non-artists” responses.
**Non-Artists.** If any of the survey participants disagreed with the statement, “I use art to communicate personal and/or social issues,” I categorized them as “Non-artists.” After identifying this category, I noted the patterns of the “Non-artists” participants’ answers to questions 3-8, which covered the effectiveness of the overall art exhibition. Figure 3 displays the responses from the participants in this group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nonartist</th>
<th>Nonartist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>83%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 51. Survey results from “Non-Artist” group

There were twelve of the eighteen survey participants who I labeled “Non-artists.” Of the twelve participants, eleven agreed to questions 3, 4 and 7 (See questions in Figure 1). This is particularly significant because agreeing with these questions suggests the artwork facilitated the three broad goals of social justice. Specifically, agreeing with question 3 implies that there was an increase in personal awareness; agreeing to question 4 implies that the art worked to expand their knowledge of an issue; and agreeing to question 7 suggests that the artwork encouraged action by initiating an internal dialogue.

The other questions in the survey also received a very high number of “Agree” responses. Only one person in the “Non-artists” group did not agree with questions 5-8.
However, to clarify, the person who answered “Disagree” in question 5 is not necessarily the same person who disagreed with question 6, and so forth. So, this should be considered when determining how the art worked within the “Non-artists” group. The results from the “Non-artists” did not significantly differ from the “Artists” results. The implications of this similarity are explored in the next section.

Implications

When comparing the “Artist” responses to the “Non-artist” responses, there was not much variability. This suggests that regardless of whether or not the viewer practiced and/or valued art, the artwork was understood and viewed as a dialogic tool that communicates and promotes social justice. Using a multicultural and reconstructionist approach in the art workshops helped me redefine what the youth understood as art. In the workshops, the goal was not the product, but instead about the process of developing an idea and creating a work that shares that idea. Art was less skill-centered and was used more as a method for critically analyzing the social world (Garber, 2004; Hicks, 1994; Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris, & Daniel, 2008). The youth work displayed a thinking process that was evident through the work. As a result, the artworks communicated significant social issues effectively enough to influenced artists and non-artists equally.

Understanding the youths’ artwork did not rely on the viewers’ understanding of art jargon such as symmetry, perspective, line, texture, balance and harmony. While the people in the group labeled “Artist” may have understood these art principles, the “Non-artists”’ lack of knowledge in this area did not restrict their comprehension of the work or how they were affected by it. My guiding the art workshops in a way that rejected the
traditional definition of “good” art as something that only trained, skilled people can do provided these dynamic results.

The results of this question also have implications for my teaching. My initial desire to leave behind the more traditional means of teaching art came from my own experiences in an art classroom. After creating multiple meaningless artworks, I reflected on how those hollow art experiences would drive my goals for teaching art in the future. Seeking out a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to education and applying it to the art classroom has resulted in engaged, driven youth. In addition, this approach assisted me in teaching the youth how to create effective, dialogic work that can be shared with the world, regardless of their pre-existing knowledge about art. I have and continue to understand art as an action, not a product. My beliefs have been validated by the results of the exhibition surveys.

**Emergent Themes**

According to Wong and Blandford (2002) emergent themes surface as the researcher repeatedly explores the collected research data. The data I collected from the research journal, collaborative curriculum, artworks, interview and surveys offered multiple emergent themes in addition to the pre-established foci described in the above sections. These emergent themes are relevant to the study in that they contribute to answering the primary question concerning how a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach in art education facilitates the three broad goals of social justice.
There were three themes prominent throughout my continuous investigation of the data. Primarily, language (the students and mine) was central in the success of the overall research. *Language* can often be a barrier that restricts a person from learning (Freire, 1970/1993). Next, the students’ *personal issues* also affected the research in ways I did not expect nor did I prepare for. I was constantly reminded that the Center was a community space where the youth came to relax, as well as flee from problems, personal or social. Their personal issues often superseded any workshop agenda I had. The last emergent theme that relates to the research was the *new center rules*. The new administrators at KYC were completely different from the old administrators. Therefore, there were many new rules at the center that affected how the youth approached the Kaleidoscope He(ARTS) workshops. These three themes are described below.

**Language.** During the first few workshops, I was uncertain about how the youth understood and interpreted social justice. I pondered about whether or not the youth made connections to the ways social justice played out in the world, in addition to how it affected their personal lives. At the beginning of every workshop, I would review what social justice was and why it was important to address. Although I did this every week, the term social justice never seemed to stick with them. I had clear expectations of what I thought the youth should be demonstrating: a language that exhibits understanding of the definition of social justice and the application of critical thinking to address social justice issues. I am not sure these goals were conceived, but they were mentally present. After a month of implementing the workshops, I assessed their success based on these goals.
During my assessment, I realized how often the youth asked me to re-define social justice throughout the hour long workshop. If I used the term four times, three out of the four times the youth asked me to explain it again. I did not see this as success. After reflecting on the situation, I decided to stop using the term social justice. Instead, I spoke about it as an action verb and described experiences where people were treated unfairly based on group identifiers. I also spoke about actions taken against injustice. The first workshop in which I altered my language, I saw significant change in their understanding. The continuous requests for reminders stopped. The language that I initially used in the workshops was too scholarly. I had to use rhetoric that the youth comprehended. Even the term social justice seemed too overwhelming for them. It was as if I was teaching them a vocabulary word that they were disconnected from. However, once I began to use their language to describe social justice (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b), the youth were more receptive and engaged in discussion with much more ease. There was less prompting done by me.

After I became less stringent about what social justice thinking looked like, I also opened up to the possibilities of how social justice was defined. Initially, I believed some of the issues the youth suggested did not fit into the category of social justice. However, Dewhurst (2010) affirms, “‘Social justice-ness’ is not tied to specific subject matter. If critical pedagogy is about learning to critically examine the world around us—to pull apart the structural factors that lead to injustice—then why stop at the obvious examples of equality?” (p.9). I embraced this freer, more dynamic concept of social justice by offering less guidance during the conceptual development of the artworks. I accepted the
fact that my understanding of an issue was different from the youths’ understanding. This meant that an issue they believed was important may be insignificant to me. Who was I to say that it was not a social justice issue? Therefore, if students wanted to use their art to venture off and explore an issue that was important to them, the freedom was there. For example, Liz came to the workshops at least twice and created her work around a personal topic. I still cannot interpret her work titled “Babystud” (Figure 27) and I do not understand how the word she chose for her ASL project, “Lonely” (Figures 18 & 19), connects to social justice. Nevertheless, I am okay with knowing that whatever her work addressed communicated her social justice, not mine (Adams, Bell & Griffin, 1997). She declined to share the topic with the other participants. I understood this autonomy as social justice because regardless of what topic the youth focused on, she was engaged in a critical reflection and explored how an issue related to her life on a personal level.

Dewhurst (2010) affirms this assertion,

> While people often assume that social justice art education must be based on controversial or overtly political issues (i.e. race, violence, discrimination, etc), this is not always the case. As long as the process of making art offers participants a way to construct knowledge, critically analyze an idea, and take action in the world, then they are engaged in a practice of social justice artmaking. (p.8)

Once I dropped the unrealistic goals that were embedded in my mind, the students’ connections, questionings and translations (Dewhurst, 2010) of social justice were more fluid and so were mine.
Personal Issues. The youths’ personal issues were a reoccurring theme that presented itself in the collected data. On multiple occasions, the youth came to KYC battling personal situations that began outside of the center. The preoccupation with their problems almost always took precedence over the workshops. A brief description of the first workshop provides an effective example of how the students’ personal issues had a way of guiding the day and the overall level of participation. During the first workshop, one of the youth communicated that she had been arrested for car theft earlier in the month. Her incarceration opened the dialogue of the workshop and lasted for more than 10 minutes. The workshop was only an hour long; therefore, the agenda was not carried out that day. At any rate, I supported this dialogue because I recognized how the center played a role as a place to vent. It was a community center; therefore, offering the youth a safe place to unload and be themselves was an aspect of my responsibility as a volunteer at KYC. However, eventually, I did redirect the conversation because the youth began to talk about the situation as if the imprisonment was something to be admired.

Another example that exhibits the effect of the youths’ personal issues with the research is the day when Tammy’s girlfriend called her and broke up with her while she was at KYC. All of the youth at the center were completely involved with Tammy’s personal situation. Either students dismissed themselves from the workshop to console Tammy, or they stayed at the workshop, but continued to talk to her from across the room. The possibility to participate in a meaningful conversation about the day’s issue, gay equality, was small. Fortunately, the youth and I began the workshop with a short discussion about the topic before Tammy’s girlfriend called. We had been engaging in
dialogue about the topic for approximately three weeks prior to this day, so I was not too concerned about how little verbal interaction we had during that particular workshop.

I do not want to suggest that the youths’ personal issues disrupted the workshops because that would insinuate that the research was more important than their lives. Instead, I suggest that their personal issues altered the movement of the workshop activities. But overall, the intersection of the youth’s personal issues and the research were positive. At times, the youth used the workshop time and art projects as a way to relieve tension built up by their problems. In addition, connections could be made between their personal issues and how they understood certain justice issues (Adams, Bell, Griffin, 1997). Liz’s works, “Babystud” and “Lonely” support this assertion. The only time I felt uncomfortable with the intersection of the youths’ personal issues and the research was when Tracie spoke about his daily medication dosage, his attempt to murder his mother, his desire to kill small animals and his wish to die before he turned thirty years old.

**New Center Rules.** The program Kaleidoscope He(ARTS) was given the time slot 4:30 P.M. to 5:30 P.M. The research benefited from having this time slot because all of the students present at KYC during this time period were required to participate in the scheduled programming. This was a new rule that had been enacted by the new director of the center. The situation was ideal for the research because there were always participants at the workshops. However, the situation also had its problems. There were always youth attending the art workshops that had little to no interest in art or the subject matter we discussed. Some of the youth felt forced to participate, which resulted in me
having to work with youth who had horrible attitudes. Much of the time, I had a youth in the workshop who was adamant about not being present. Fortunately, I was always able to get the disengaged youth stimulated at some point within the hour-long workshop. However, I noticed how those particular youth never excelled at the discussion and the artmaking aspects of the workshops. For instance, if the youth was very vocal during the discussion portion of the workshop, then their artwork was not very thoughtfully constructed, conceptually or aesthetically. If the youth was quiet during the entire discussion, their artworks were thought provoking and well-orchestrated. I do not know the reasoning behind this dichotomy. At any rate, knowing that I had the task of igniting interest in noticeably disinterested youth forced me to be much more effective in my instruction methods. The new center rules inadvertently allowed me to assess how well I facilitated the workshops and efficiently used instructional strategies that encouraged dialogue and critical thinking from sometimes silent youth.

Other new rules at the center included the following: the computer lab was closed between the hours of 4:30 P.M. and 6:30 P.M.; and the kitchen was closed between the hours of 4:30 P.M. and 6:30 P.M. The youth could only leave the center twice during one day. After leaving the second time, they are not allowed to return until the following day. The youth often complained about the implementation of these new regulations. When they did this, I sometimes used their objections as points of entrance to discuss social justice.
Answering the Primary Research Question

During the four month participatory action research project at Kaleidoscope Youth Center, I accumulated data such as a research journal, a collaborative curriculum, artwork, interviews and surveys. In the previous section, I used this data to attend to the four sub-questions and extract emergent themes from the research. The sub-questions and three emergent themes work to support and build validity for the assertions that are made about the primary research question, which is: *How does a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to art education facilitate the three broad goals of social justice (a) increase personal awareness, (b) expand knowledge and (c) encourage action among youth?* Essentially, my assertions are guided by the analyzations and implications made about sub-questions 1-4 and the three emergent themes that surfaced.

Analysis and Interpretation

Sleeter and Grant’s (2007b) multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to education is multidimensional. The approach is theoretically situated in a social justice framework; therefore, it claims to lead students into thinking critically about concepts such as equity, human decency, social responsibility, systemic oppression, and the hierarchal power structures that guide this country (Sleeter & Grant, 2007). These objectives can be placed under the categories: increase personal awareness, expand knowledge and encourage action; the three broad goals of social justice. My primary research question ponders how a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach successfully does this. So, essentially I address the praxis of the approach.
I looked to the tenets of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach as categories that would assist me in answering the primary question. The categories are critical questioning, democracy, and cooperative learning. I attend to how each of these categories work to either increase personal awareness, expand knowledge, or encourage action; and in some instances, all the above. In addition, I used the curriculum as another category. This section discusses how the curriculum works as evidence to support how a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach might facilitate the three broad goals of social justice: to increase personal awareness, expand knowledge, and encourage action in youth.

**Critical Questioning.** *Increasing Personal Awareness.* Critical questioning is essential for critical thinking and vice versa (Adams, Bell & Griffin, 1997). At times, it became a task of mine to use probing questions that required students to explain, clarify or verify assumptions and/or beliefs (Thoms, 2011). In many instances, this process of justification made the youth more aware of some underlying systemic problems. An ideal example of this increase of awareness is the political cartoon project that attended to the Arizona Immigration Law. The youths’ dialogue evolved from making statements about how unfair the law was to making inquiries about the power of determining what looking illegal looks like. This dynamic dialogue was integral in the creation and development of critical consciousness. Adams, Bell & Griffin (1997) confirm,

> Because dialogue requires critical thinking, it can also generate critical thinking. In this sense, dialogue is not a ‘technique, a mere, technique, which we can use to get some results’ (Shor & Freire, 1987, 13); rather, as a communicative process
that reflects social experience in order to understand the social and historical forces at work, it enables participants to develop ‘critical consciousness.’ (p.39)

Other workshop sessions provided youth with opportunities for critical thinking and critical questioning. For example, the collage project involved using multiple magazines in which the youth had to decide on effective text and dialogic images to convey a specific message. Although the collage project did not take much artistic direction, it resulted in some notable findings and conclusions about the content of media. During this activity, the youth identified how language, text, and images, which can be viewed as hegemonic tools, help maintain power by the dominant group (Freire, 1970; Sleeter & Grant, 2007b). After the youth spent significant time sorting through magazines, they recognized a steady trend in the representations of gay men. The youth talked about how over-sexualized gay men were in the magazines and how this representation may be the sole reason for stereotypes in the gay community. This dialogue lasted for only a few minutes; however, I believe this was a point in which the youth realized just how much power media has to secure ideas about groups of people. This attends to the question, “How are we taught to accept that it is true?” (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b). To counter the messages that the magazines communicated, the youth used some of the over-sexualized images of gay men and juxtaposed them with men that were represented as heterosexual. I believe that the youth aimed to communicate the diversity in what a gay male can be and look like. Student art examples Figure 26 and Figure 31 both show this juxtaposition. In this instance, critical questioning increased personal awareness, and also resulted in encouraging immediate action. Critical
questioning works to reject the stereotypes that people have of one another, in addition to the ones we have placed upon ourselves (Collins, 2002).

**Encouraging Action.** I appreciate Adams, Bell and Griffin’s (1997) assertion, “Raising awareness without also raising awareness of the possibilities for change ‘is a prescription for despair. I consider it unethical to do one without the other’” (Tatum, 1992, as cited by Adams, Bell & Griffin, p.38). Therefore, attempting to maintain the dual goal of raising awareness and advocating change, I orchestrated the workshops in a way that supported both. The workshop format fostered critical thinking and critical questioning through dialogue, as well as encouraged using art as a means for change. Using art as a means for change is a realistic action plan that did not force the youth into immediate confrontation with others (Adams, Bell & Griffin, 1997). It gave the youth a chance to interpret and investigate injustices personally and intimately before interrupting the injustice on a public level. This public intervention can be overwhelming and leave someone feeling powerless. In addition, I had to consider the fact that I was working with a group that is already considered a vulnerable population. Taking this into account, the action that I encouraged the youth to engage in was not emotionally expensive. The act that I desired the most was the youth to share their knowledge with others outside of the workshop. The inquiries and knowledge that evolved during the hourly workshops had potential to ignite critical questioning from others. Spreading information not only to the youth in the KYC community, but to those in the youths’ respective Columbus communities could yield dynamic results. While sharing this information may stretch the
KYC students beyond their comfort zone, it would not be so overwhelming that rejection would halt their work towards change.

**Democracy. Expanding Knowledge.** It is a teacher’s responsibility to create a classroom atmosphere that serves as an ideal model of a democratic society, wherein students learn how to care for one another. As a result, the students “feel safe and secure and encourage[d]… to be hopeful, joyful, kind, visionary and affirming” (Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris, Daniel, 2008, p. 83). Fortunately, most of the youth at KYC already had a rapport with one another. These pre-established, secure relationships aided me in facilitating a democratic classroom. The youth gave their input about issues without a feeling of reprisal. Since there was not much effort needed to create this comfortable environment, the youth were able to spend time in knowledge sharing and knowledge creation.

During the first workshop, the youth and I created a list of social justice issues for the curriculum. This democratic process emphasized how the youths’ ideas were valued and how their needs would be addressed. Everyone was encouraged to offer information, as well as comment on others’ ideas. The youth helped one another communicate the significance of certain problems. For example, one youth identified illegal immigrants as a social justice issue. However, another student was unclear about what aspect of illegal immigration the youth wanted to stress. Those two students then lead all of the attending youth in a discussion about the various issues associated with illegal immigration. The youth who initially suggested the topic confirmed that he was more concerned about how illegal immigrants took jobs away from citizens than he was concerned about the racial
profiling of the group. Many of the youth spoke about how they never identified their unemployment as a possible result of the overpopulation of illegal immigrants. I saw this interaction as an ideal example of increasing personal awareness and knowledge expansion.

By the end of this collaborative brainstorming session, the youth and I had listed over ten social justice issues. However, the youth understood that there were only going to be five issues selected to cover the workshop curriculum. Therefore, to support the democratic process, I guided the youth in a vote to determine which issues would be included. Fortunately, none of the youth seemed disappointed in the outcome. The youth whose ideas were not chosen, were content with the results as well.

Most of the workshop dialogue generated significant information that added to my knowledge about certain issues. In particular, the youth were very educated in the politics around medicinal marijuana. Some of the youth had extensive knowledge in the subject. They had historical references, such as court cases, to justify their assertions about the legal issue. Other youths’ knowledge was expanded through this dialogue. However, while the youth conversed about the issue for a significant amount of time, none of the youth opted to make commentary on the issue in their artwork. They knew the KYC rules prohibited such attention to drugs; therefore, the youth managed their own behavior and chose to address other issues. This self management of behavior is a goal of facilitating a democratic classroom. Once teachers decide to relinquish some of their power and provide students with agency in their learning, teachers must also begin to
trust that the students will make responsible decisions as well (Freire, 1970; Teaching Tolerance, 2011).

*Encouraging Action.* The efforts I made to create a democratic space transcended the weekly, hour-long workshops. For the mural project, I offered all of the KYC youth an opportunity to vote on the mural’s overall concept and its location. The voting box and voting slips (Appendix J) were placed at the front desk for participants of the workshops, as well as those who had never participated, to vote. The mural was to be placed in KYC; therefore, it was necessary that the youth have a voice in what happens in their space. I also created an advertisement for the mural; it stressed the importance of voting and the role each youth had in deciding on what happens at KYC. While only three youth placed votes in the box, my actions demonstrated the democratic process to the students. It communicated how their voice was welcomed during the workshop decision making.

Democracy is a vital aspect of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach. I believe my effort to create a democratic space was timely for the KYC setting in particular. The KYC administration had recently employed some new rules that the youth had no voice in creating; the youth were quite displeased. I was in the middle of this struggle, being that the art workshops ran during an hour of the day the youth were required to participate in the programming- one of the new rules. However, I did an effective job of relieving tension and anger students had when entering the workshops. This was done through my work to create a democratic classroom. For an hour, the workshops allowed the youth to assert some power. This agency in the workshop seemed
to help diminish the overarching dilemma of the youth being forced to participate in an activity that they may have not initially been interested in.

**Cooperative Learning, Increasing Personal Awareness and Expanding Knowledge.** There is a power in collaborative creativity and action (Torre, 2008). The emphasis on working together can initiate inquiries that help students make identifications with other members of society (Tyler, 2000). Since cooperative learning thrives off of diversity, I was attentive to the dynamics amongst the varying youth in each workshop. However, since attendance was so sporadic, I initially believed there were no conclusions that could be asserted concerning the overall effect of diversity on cooperative learning. However, upon reflection I realized that even when there were only two youth in attendance and both were gay, Black males, diversity was still present in the workshop because the youths’ understanding of the world always differed. The class difference, home life and values provided varying positions on issues. Of course when numerous youth were in attendance the discussions were more dynamic because there were more perspectives to sort through and learn from. But even in instances when numbers were not high, cooperative learning was effectively, and successfully implemented.

In the Kaleidoscope (He)Arts workshops, cooperative learning worked in multiple ways that helped increase personal awareness and expand knowledge about social justice and about one another. The first and most frequent mode of collaboration was the direct interaction and dialogue amongst the youth. One of the principles of cooperative learning is simultaneous interaction, which champions the idea that the more students talk to each
other the more engaged they become and “the better they will learn” (Sapp, 2006, p. 51).
The discussions that the youth had were always a collaboration of thoughts in which multiple perspectives were shared, compared and respected (Adams, Bell & Griffin, 1997; Veenman, et al, 2005). While some youth were more vocal than others, there were steady verbal transactions that created an environment of engagement. The collaborative dialogue helped construct and deconstruct knowledge; the youth received others’ points of view and made connections with their own prior knowledge and beliefs. My encouraging such interaction supported healthy debates in which the youth could question each others’ ideas and assertions about issues. In addition, together, they worked on ways to resolve confrontation if it arose (Veenman, et al, 2005). Tim’s and Star’s discussion about the significance of bullying is an ideal example of this collaborative exchange. Star, the self-proclaimed bully, and Tim, the anti-bullying advocate, debated about why bullies assume they receive respect when they put others down. The confrontation climaxed when Tim asserted that bullies should re-evaluate how they understand “respect.” In addition, he asked Star to reflect on her need to acquire respect. Tim stressed how respect was something given out by other people. So, demanding respect means you are trying to control the actions of others. Tim asked, “What is your need for control?” This inquiry was met with silence from Star. For Star, I assume this was a moment of critical self reflection, awareness, and hopefully a re-organization of knowledge, all goals of cooperative learning (Van Boxtel, 2000 as cited in Veenman, et al, 2005). Principles of cooperative learning do not suggest that peoples’ beliefs, ideas and understandings of the world will be immediately transformed; cooperative learning
simply provides an opportunity for this transformation to begin. In addition, this is the
kind of action that cooperative learning promotes.

The collaboration in artmaking was unique. Most of the projects did not involve
the youth explicitly working together as a group. However, I recognized how some of the
projects inadvertently used cooperative learning. For example, I established projects that
allowed the youth to finish in one workshop session. However, the youth understood that
if they did not complete their work and was not present the following week to claim and
complete their project, someone else would have the opportunity to rework and/or
rearrange the ideas they already put in place. For example, two participants did not
complete their political cartoon during a workshop session. I continued the project the
following week; however, they were not present to finish their work. I allowed two
completely different participants to work with the undone political cartoons. However,
after examining the half-done cartoons, the two new participants were not interested in
using the same ideas and images. Regardless of this, the two new participants saw and
had to interpret those initial ideas and decide on whether or not they wanted to continue
on with them. I see this implicit interaction and subtle transfer of information as critical
in knowledge creation. The silkscreen, bullying project utilized a similar mode of
collaboration. There were only three youth who chose the images to be burned on the
screen. However, during the last workshop, about nine youth were able to use the three
prints. The nine youth had a chance to see and understand the images chosen by the first
three youth. In addition, the nine youth were able to take those images, add to them as
they desired and mesh ideas together, which resulted in a conceptually collaborative artwork.

The mural project was a more direct exemplar of cooperative learning. The youth worked together on one collaborative artwork, in which the success of the work depended on the contribution from all participants. This, called positive interdependence, is a tenet of cooperative learning (Sapp, 2006). The mural project extended for over two months. During this time, I noted multiple benefits from the cooperative work.

Some of the youth were visibly uncomfortable working so close to other youth they did not know or have rapport with. These were instances in which I was pleased to have larger, more diverse groups in attendance. For instance, when Tracie, the young man who I perceived as “goth,” shared information about his life, the other youth were quite unhappy. In particular, Jenna had a continuous look of disgust on her face as Tracie explained his fascination with things like serial killers and killing baby animals. These two youth working together on the mural was a collaboration that would never happen otherwise. Although Tracie dealt with having divorced parents, they were wealthy and lived in an upscale area of Columbus, Ohio called Upper Arlington. Jenna lived on Livingston Avenue, which is on the east side of Columbus, Ohio, and known for violent crimes. Neither or the youth’s problems trumped the other; they simply had different understandings of the world. The chance of these two youth working together in any other circumstances was minimal. So, even while I was uncomfortable with Tracie’s stories, I was excited about the possibilities of the youth learning about each other and
building bonds with people they had never bothered to interact with (Sapp, 2006; Veenman, et al, 2005).

The mural project represents more than just a collaboration of physical work; it displays cohesion of worlds. I have noted throughout the research that I utilize CRT as a theoretical framework because it encourages those who work for social justice to identify variations of oppression. In addition, it maintains the assertion that racism is the most normalized form of oppression (Ladson-Billings, 1999). The mural plays a significant role in supporting this affirmation. In the center of the US map, which is painted to mimic the rainbow flag, there is a black power fist that holds gender symbols representing males, females and transgendered individuals (See Appendix I). This symbol can be viewed as a theoretical and conceptual union that communicates how two groups of people desire and deserve equality in the world. It is the ultimate power symbol that represents the possibilities that could result from group collaboration.

However, collaboration between oppressed groups should not be mistaken for parallels between oppressed groups. Arguments have been made by scholars, of color and not, that the oppression and marginalization in the homosexual community cannot be paralleled with the oppression and marginalization that people of color have endured for centuries (Lane, 2004). An argument that is central in this debate is that people of color cannot hide their skin color, but homosexual people can walk around in the world without anyone knowing their sexual orientation. This “passing” is a privilege, similar to that of white privilege. In addition, it has been asserted that those who most often make this comparison are white gays and lesbians (Lane, 2004). Therefore, this comparison

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13 “Passing” is not foreign in the black community either; many mulatto people have this capability.
becomes threatening because it appears that the dominant group has somewhat “hijacked” black civil rights progress for their own self-benefiting civil rights work (Lane, 2004; Lee-St. John, 2005). While I do deem these arguments as valid, we should not discredit the hardships of other groups of people. We can and should discuss rights and issues without comparing the suffering of one group with another. There should be respect for all oppressed groups, which supports collaborations amongst us. This only builds the possibilities for change to occur. The symbol used in the mural represents these possible coalitions that should be made in order work towards change for all groups of people (Collins, 2002). The symbol also communicated the idea that “identities are not ‘mutually exclusive categories of experience:’ rather they intersect” (Crenshaw, 1989, as cited in Lane, 2004, p. 326). This visual symbol was the epitome of what cooperative learning looks like.

Art Curriculum.

A quality art curriculum does not just disseminate art historical, technical, or formal knowledge. Through a quality art education, students become familiar with, are able to use the languages of multiple art and cultural discourse, and are thus able to generate new insights into their lives and into contemporary times. These abilities to investigate, analyze, reflect, and represent are critical skills for citizens of a participatory democracy. (Gude, 2007, p. 14)
The art curriculum that emerged from using a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach was dynamic in the way that Gude (2007) describes above. The curriculum supported the three broad goals of social justice, increasing personal awareness, expanding knowledge and encouraging action in a variety of ways. A component of the curriculum that exemplifies all three of these goals is its content. The curriculum content was initiated by the KYC youth. It was meaningful and had implications for their everyday life. The youths’ personal experiences were intertwined with artmaking which provided a venue for exploration and the communication of those experiences. The curriculum fostered critical inquiry and a foundation of artmaking principles.

While I call the curriculum emergent, there were aspects of it that I constructed pre-workshops. The rationale and the objectives were two pre-established components that framed how the content, provided by the students, would be addressed. Specifically, the curriculum objectives were constructed with the three broad goals of social justice in mind. Therefore, to communicate how a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to art education facilitated these social justice goals, I address how these objectives were met and assessed during the Kaleidoscope He (ARTS) workshops.

The curriculum objectives were the following:

Objective 1. Educate students about justice and power (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b)
Objective 2. Encourage students to be aware that the “isms” (e.g., racism, sexism) are continually being redefined in order to continue existing as society changes-analyze systems of oppression and critical questioning (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b)
Objective 3. Teach political action skills and a consciousness that affirms human worth (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b)
Objective 4. Create a democratic space in which collaboration thrives.
Objective 5. Reveal how representations play a role in maintaining oppressive systems and identify how art can be used to counter oppression

Objective 6. Promote action (Bell & Griffin, 1997)

Objective 1. Educate students about justice and power (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b).

According to Tom Tyler (2000), author of Social justice: Outcome and Procedure, when justice is present, students show a readiness to perform prosocial actions. This means that students actively participate and engage with others regardless of whether or not the tasks directly benefit them; and, while there may be confrontation in interactions, negotiation is practiced. This negotiation process is evidence of growth and maturity—students understand why structure is needed and they participate in forming and establishing that structure (Grant & Sleeter, 2007). The KYC youth practiced this during every workshop discussion. The workshop discussions forced the youth to confront ideas that conflicted with their own. Even during the discussion concerning illegal drugs, I became that alternative voice that conflicted with the dominant assertions. At any rate, the youth were knowledgeable about the underpinning political reasons for maintaining the illegal status of marijuana. Ultimately, they understood why the structure was in place, although they may have disagreed with it.

An essential problem that arises when social cooperation is expected is the desire for everyone to have everything they want at the same time. During the workshops that required the youth to vote and make decisions about content, the students understood that there was no hierarchy of ideas and they displayed a willingness to accept the outcomes that may not have been as desirable as they wanted. When the ideals of social justice and power are comprehended, students realize that “everyone cannot have the resources they
desire for themselves and/or the groups to which they belong” (Tyler, 2000, p. 118). David Miller (1999) asserts, “Justice fundamentally requires us to treat people as equals; or we should understand justice as what people would agree to in advance of knowing their own stake in the decision to be reached (p.22). When students reveal their capacity to accept such terms, justice and power is cognitively present.

In addition, by examining the art products from the workshops, I assert that the curriculum successfully taught the youth about justice and power. I came to this conclusion after analyzing the ASL project in particular. I asked the youth to choose one ASL sign that communicated their definition of social justice. After molding their hand in the ASL sign position that related to the word, the students wrote a phrase to accompany their sculpted hand. These short expressions were effective in revealing how the youth understood social justice. For example, one youth used the ASL sign for “Awaken” and her phrase was “My eyes are open.” From this, I gathered that she meant she was more aware of what was happening around her and in the world. Another youth used the sign for “Dumbfounded” and she included the question, “Why is acceptance so hard?” Tim’s ASL sign was “Anger” and he shared the phrase, “Feel Better.” The youths’ work during this workshop truly validated their knowledge and inquiries about justice and power.
Objective 2. Encourage students to be aware that the “isms” (e.g., racism, sexism) are continually being redefined in order to continue existing as society changes-analyze systems of oppression and critical questioning (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b)

At first, this particular objective may seem to have multiple dimensions that require three or four learned skills. However, this objective promotes one basic, yet vital skill; critical thinking. M. Neil Browne and James L. Litwin (1987) affirm,

Critical thinking is a process, not a body of knowledge like vocabulary that can be mastered. When teaching critical thinking is just an ancillary component of the curriculum, it is very doubtful that students will acquire the taste for lifelong refinement or even use of the process. The autonomy tolerance, humility, and creativity potentially stimulated by critical thinking skills and attitudes can be encouraged by the conscious, systematic attempts of sociology teachers. When these efforts are systematically directed toward critical thinking, the results are indeed remarkable. Not only do students become more skilled, but critical thinking becomes a habit which can be applied successfully in not only the academic world, but throughout many of life’s situations. (p.390)

Critical thinking is a fundamental instructional goal in areas of sociology (Browne & Litwin, 1987), especially in social justice. Lee Anne Bell (2007) suggests, “The goal of social justice education is to enable people to develop the critical analytical tools necessary to understand oppression and their own socialization within oppressive systems, and to develop a sense of agency and capacity to interrupt and change oppressive patterns and behaviors in themselves and in the institutions and communities
of which they are a part” (p.2). During the workshops, this process of critical thinking can be identified in numerous ways. A few art projects had writing components that allowed the youth to assert their intentions in addition to creating visual metaphors for their ideas. For example, the youth titled and wrote captions for their collage projects. The messages that the youth included with the works reveal their process of developing this sense of agency and an attempt to speak out against injustice. The youth who created the collage about violence against the homosexual population wrote, “STOP IT! STOP. We're all getting too old for needless violence against any sort of people. This is retarded.” A youth created a collage about the inhumane treatment of animals and this is what she asserted, “2 million animals are killed everyday? FOR WHAT? So we can eat steak and chicken? WHAT! STOP THE MADNESS!”

Critical thinking is not just another mundane classroom skill. Instead, it should be identified as “a complex process of attitudes, habits, values, and behavior that requires explicit attention and regular reinforcement” (Browne & Litwin, 1987, p.385). Efforts to engage students in critical thinking need to be systematic and intentional; otherwise, results are dubious (Browne & Litwin, 1987). In the workshops, I noticed how easy it was for the youth to lose focus and become mentally at ease in their artmaking. The result of this is the creation of artwork that lacks meaning. Therefore, I made an effort to facilitate a continuous critical dialogue to help them maintain focus. In addition, the writing component of the projects was an opportunity for the youth to directly reference the issue the artwork addressed. These excerpts helped me assess the youths’ knowledge of social justice and how they perceive their role as change agents.
According to Sleeter and Grant (2007a), “Many contemporary renderings of multicultural education examine difference without connecting it to a critical analysis of power relations” (p.184). Even liberal conceptions of multiculturalism support “‘white privilege by rendering institutional racism invisible,’ leading to the belief that injustices will disappear if people simply learn to get along” (Sleeter & Grant, 2007a, p.184). The multicultural and social reconstructionist approach utilized in this study assisted the youth in examining their own experiences for evidence of racism, classism, sexism, and realistic treatment of cultural pluralism in the society they live in (The ASCD Multicultural Education Commission, 1977). The Kaleidoscope art projects aided the youth in naming, questioning and actively challenging racism and other forms of injustice (Sleeter & Grant, 2007a). The topics of racial profiling, dishonoring diversity and power hierarchies were often the center of the workshop discussions.

Browne and Litwin (1987) write, “The idea of thinking requires the existence of a question to think about. Students are more likely to think when given an opportunity to do so and when encouraged to do so (Lowman 1984)” (p.385). Like writing and speaking, critical thinking is seen as a practical skill for achievement in any area. Specifically, in multicultural and social reconstructionist education, it is imperative that students be guided and supported in inquiries concerning social systems that can negatively affect them and every other American. Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris and Daniel, (2008) assert,

Students need critical skills to address social issues and to think through how some groups benefit or suffer by the colonial practices and decisions of others.
When it is possible to do so, it is important to move students conceptually and physically outside the classroom and link with real-world communities, issues and problems in order to practice these critical skills. (p.83)

This objective can be identified through students’ initiative to question and critique modern culture. During the political cartoon workshop, the youth identified how problematic the Immigration Law was for only specific groups of people. They noted how immigrants from Ireland appear to be “normal” Americans, so they would never be identified as illegal immigrants. I guided the youth into dialogue about how words are loaded; specifically, the word “appear” in the law is coded language to support discriminatory practices. This initiated autonomous critical thinking and critical questioning that addressed power structures.

Objective 3. Teach political action skills and a consciousness that affirms human worth (Sleeter & Grant, 2007b)

According to Sleeter and Grant (2007a), students need to understand how their ascribed characteristics (e.g., race, class, gender) and their culture impact oppression. Baptiste and Baptiste (1977) suggest that this introspection and self-analysis are a requisite that help students clarify their own racial and ethnic attitudes and values. In an interview with the director Glenn Zermeno (2011), he noted how the KYC youth are dealing with internalized homophobia, even though they actually identified themselves as homosexual. Therefore, it is even more important for the KYC youth to self-investigate in hopes that they “develop the power and skills to articulate both their own goals and a vision of social justice for all groups and to work constructively toward these ends”
(Sleeter & Grant, 2007a, p.186). Zermeno (2011) also asserted that the youth often see themselves in relation to stereotypes of homosexuals. In addition, the stereotypes, like most, are often negative. The collage project is an ideal example of how the curriculum guided the youth into a political inquiry about these misrepresentations that inadvertently influence them (Sleeter & Grant, 2007a, p.185). The simple task of flipping through magazines that were geared toward the gay population made them attentive to the stereotypes. This recognition incited their desire to assert how misguided the images were. This was a moment in which the youths’ personal self-worth was elevated. They then used the collages to actively counter those representations.

Other curriculum projects that attend to this objective include the political cartoon that addressed the Arizona Immigration Law. The youth identified immigrants, specifically Mexican immigrants, as targets of discrimination. There questioning of power in this project reveals their understanding of human worth and the need to take action for oppressed minority groups. In addition, the political cartoon ignited inquiries about personal discrimination. One youth used this project as an opportunity to explore personal issues. Her political cartoon was actually a poem titled, “They Judge Us.” This youth addressed how people discriminated against her based on her skin color, her hair, the color of her eyes, and even the clothes and shoes she wears. Instead of a traditional political cartoon, her work was more like a political poem that ultimately communicated how she was only concerned with the judgment of God. Her writing reclaimed her power as an individual and stood against those who impose judgment, as well as oppression. She actually reaffirmed her own human worth.
The bullying project is also an ideal model that exhibits the existence and success of this objective. The purpose of the bullying project was to politicize resistance against injustice, a goal that is integral in affirming human worth (Sleeter & Grant, 2007a). A multicultural and social reconstructionist approach “does not teach a certain stance on these issues so much as it encourages young people…to learn how to research the issues, to mobilize, to articulate a stand, to gain access to the media, to use the legal system, and to perform other activities” (Sleeter and Grant, 2007a, p. 221). The projects in the curriculum supported these actions.

**Objective 4. Create a democratic space in which collaboration thrives.**

Sleeter and Grant (2007a) recognize that “groups compete because people are by nature concerned mainly with their own welfare and that of their family, and secondarily about the welfare of others whom they see as being like themselves or believing as they believe” (p.188). Therefore, Sleeter and Grant (2007a) present coalescing as a central tenet of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach. Instead of disenfranchised groups “fighting over crumbs”, they should work with others (that are unlike themselves) in order to make considerable gains. To support this objective, the teacher should create a space that serves as an ideal model of a democratic society, wherein students learn how to care for one another. As a result, the students “feel safe and secure and encourage[d]… to be hopeful, joyful, kind, visionary and affirming” (Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris, Daniel, 2008, p. 83). I believe that the Kaleidoscope Youth Center actually assisted in attending to this objective. The youth identified this space as one that is secure and welcoming. My role in making sure this objective was met was creating a curriculum that had built-in...
opportunities for student decision making and student exercise of power (Sleeter & Grant, 2007a). Primarily, beginning with the first workshop, the youth made decisions about the curriculum and what they would do during the workshops. This collaborative interaction established the necessity of their participation during the research. This objective was also attended to by my formatting of the workshops. At the beginning of each weekly session, the youth and I had discussion time for approximately ten to fifteen minutes. This supported a democratic framework in which multiple voices were heard (Sleeter & Grant, 2007a)

Objective 5. Reveal how representations play a role in maintaining oppressive systems and identify how art can be used to counter oppression

Educational goals that include the exploration and creation of visual culture imagery and objects can initiate an understanding of justice and the complexities of social, political and economic relations (Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris & Daniel, 2008). The very first project demonstrated to the youth the power of something as simple as cartoons. The five pages of political cartoons that I presented to the youth ignited the discussion about relationships of power, specifically those with it and those without it. This component of the lesson provided engagement in which the youth had a chance to experience art with “complexity, ambiguity, contradiction, paradox and multiple perspectives” (Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris & Daniel, 2008, p.83). The artists of the political cartoons used satirical, abusive, racist, and discriminatory plots to communicate their personal beliefs on the injustice of the Arizona Immigration Law. Using these professional works as a platform, the youth created their own political cartoons. Their
cartoons did not have to specifically address the Arizona Immigration Law; however, they were instructed to create cartoons that attended to similar kinds of discriminatory acts.

An important aspect of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach in art education is its ability to encourage students to make art to express things about themselves, their surroundings, their social context and the things that are inflicted upon them (Freedman, 2000). KYC director, Zermano (2011) shared his support of this belief when he asserted, “Art creates opportunities for youth to articulate things they may not have the words for or the language for” (personal communication). He continues on to say that it is difficult to talk about emotional things, such as one’s sexual orientation and art allows a person to do so in a personal, as well as artistic way. I agree with Zermano’s (2011) suggestion that the mural project provided one of those opportunities in which the youth shared important and personal information using a visual, metaphoric language. In addition, the fact that the youth constructed the concept for the mural, which addressed gay equality, reveals their understanding that art has a place in working towards injustice and countering oppression.

*Objective 6. Promote action (Bell & Griffin, 1997)*

The attainment of knowledge has always been a threat to oppression and deemed as a way to gain social power (Freire, 1970; Sleeter & Grant, 2007). Therefore, action in the classroom could include tasks such as knowledge-creation and knowledge-sharing. The curriculum that emerged from the study at KYC promotes actions like the production and distribution of knowledge (Grant & Sleeter, 2007); therefore each workshop directly
attended to this action objective. In addition, the art projects that the youth completed had a purpose much deeper than being gazed upon. For example, the anti-bullying T-shirts were to be worn by the youth. This project allowed the youth to assert their opposition of injustice to the world. The mural project was an effective action project in which the youth made a public visual message that communicated equality and fairness.

Sometimes, people believe that they cannot effect change because they are only one person. Understanding change in this way leaves people with a sense of helplessness. Even more so, as a youth, there is an even stronger sense of powerlessness (Zermeno, 2011). My goal for the art projects was to change this perspective of helplessness. I believe that it did foster a sense of agency in the youth. I believe that it showed them that something as little as an art project can be significant in fighting against injustice and oppression. During the interview with Zermeno (2011), he affirmed this assertion. He stated, “Connecting ideas of social justice to art… [is] another way of building up young people to have a voice and encouraging them to use their voice.” Overall, some of the artworks helped the youth identify themselves as proponents of change.

In addition, the action-oriented curriculum involved the students sharing their work in an exhibition. This visual display of their work communicated issues relevant to their community and the world at large. The process of publicizing their work assisted the youth in activating their knowledge and moving it beyond the workshop walls. This transfer of knowledge is considered action. The survey results confirm how the exhibition observers were moved to act on and think about specific issues after they viewed the youths’ artwork.
Gude (2007) asserts, “Art educators whose research involves contemporary art, critical theory, or youth empowerment do not consider modernist elements and principles to be uniquely foundational to quality art curriculum or to making or understanding art…” (p.7). When defining and teaching art by these technical things, the learners cannot see art’s ability to communicate ideas, share and create knowledge, address life issues, provide agency and effect change. These characteristics are overshadowed. Therefore, during the workshops, teaching artmaking principles was secondary to my teaching the youth how art could work in these ways. Situating the curriculum around this understanding of art not only promoted action, but facilitated action.

Summary of the Findings

Our goals are to have students envision their lives as valuable, to embrace integrity and to be advocates and activists for justice. This is possible only through an integrated curriculum that is academically demanding and conceptually connected to students’ lives. (Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris and Daniel, 2008, p.84)

This study has revealed how using a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach in art education can facilitate the three broad goals of social justice, increase personal awareness, expand knowledge and promote action. The components of this educational approach, such as critical questioning, democracy and cooperative learning, in addition to the processes of PAR, plan, act, observe and reflect, assisted in this study’s
success. I entered a community space, in which the participants had no desire to learn about art. Initially I considered this to be an obstacle; however, the results that emerged as the study continued swayed my cynicism. For example, the strong relationships that the youth had built in this non-art community space actually supported my work to create a democratic classroom. In addition, the youths’ intergroup bond helped with fostering critical questioning and cooperative learning. The youths’ group dynamics were similar to that of a family. The environment was non-hostile and a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach thrived in this space.

While at the outset of the research, the youth were not particularly interested in participating in the workshops, eventually there was a shift in this disinterest. When the youth began the workshops, they saw themselves as weak artists or not artists at all. It was clear that the youth held a definition of art that was rigid. They understood artists as those with heavy training, skill, and specific “Art” knowledge. As the youth attended the workshops more and more, their ideas about art and creativity evolved. This change was a result of my effort to demonstrate how art is used and created in diverse ways and for diverse purposes. There was a deep emphasis on how art worked as a dialogic tool to address important issues guided by the artist. I consistently reinforced how the value of art should not be placed upon the product, but instead the thought process behind it. Using art in this way during the workshops showed the youth the validity of this revised definition of art. The youth began to identify themselves as artists; and as suggested by Zermeno (2011), the youth became proud of their artistic work, especially the mural. As a consequence, Zermeno (2011) hopes to maintain an art program in KYC. He aims to
maintain of the youths’ sense of pride and understanding of themselves as artistic beings that can offer something to the world.

Sleeter and Grant (2007a) write, “Advocates of Multicultural Social Justice Education do not expect children to reconstruct the world” (p.201). However, using this approach in the art classroom actually allowed the youth to communicate issues to numerous people. The youth displayed their artwork and received feedback that confirmed how the artwork worked to increase personal awareness, expand knowledge and promote action. This act of knowledge sharing that the exhibition facilitated is central in reconstructionist work (Freire, 1970).

According to Freedman (2010),

Transformative learning involves experiencing a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings, and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and irreversibly alters our way of being in the world. Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self-locations; our relationships with other humans and with the natural world; our understanding of relations of power in interlocking structures of class, race, and gender; our body awarenesses, our visions of alternative approaches to living; and our sense of possibilities for social justice and peace and personal joy. (p.3)

Using a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach was a central aspect of the research, specifically its use of critical questioning and cooperative learning. Students learned how to work collectively and use their voice to affect change if change is what they wanted (Sleeter and Grant, 2007). In addition, the element of art in the workshops
played a communicative role in the youths’ exploration of their self and the world. Intermeshing these two modes of learning created a transformative experience for the youth and for me as well.

Vietze and Hildebrandt (2009) assert, “Members of the dominant groups are often unaware of, if not blind to the ways in which their actions, attitudes, and assumptions help set the norm for everyone to follow” (p.38). Unfortunately, even if unwanted, these “norms,” or biases, are unconscious within us all, even those who are oppressed. The oppressive ideas are internalized within those who are being oppressed. Zermeno (2011) believes that this is the case for youth at KYC; they experienced internalized homophobia. Fortunately, one of the art projects helped the youth identify these negative representations of the homosexual population. I saw this project as an intervention (Herr & Anderson, 2005) that worked to undo and rework (Zermeno, 2011) the inauthentic, negative self image that had been molded by stereotypes and inaccurate and exaggerated portrayals of the gay community. The artworks were the youths’ counternarratives (Ladson-Billings, 1999/2004b; Stuhr, Ballengee-Morris & Daniel, 2008) that worked against the hegemonic tools like media.

The research experience at KYC was personally transformative as it offered a more intimate perspective of another group’s oppression, as well as an opportunity for intense self-reflection. I consider myself a person who is empathetic to all oppressed groups, especially since I am a person who identifies with two groups which have been historically oppressed: African Americans and women. However, during this study, I realized how I believed in a hierarchy of oppression; and being Black meant I was higher
on the hierarchy than any other group. During this point of self-reflection, I wondered if
my identification with this historically oppressed group birthed a need to acquire power,
even if the power was only to claim the highest tier on the oppression hierarchy. I
questioned if I felt powerful because I could say I have the most to be upset about.

Upon entering the KYC space, I did see LGBTQ problems as legitimate, but I see
now that I was overly biased towards problems in the Black community. I know this is
ture because when I chose the site as a research location, I chose it for its racial diversity,
not because of the issues in the LGBTQ community. This was even asserted in the
Introduction Chapter of this text. I initially had no intentions to be dedicated to this
groups’ oppression. In some ways, I believe that my desire to dismiss this aspect of KYC
reveals my bias, belief of an oppression hierarchy, and the unconscious desire to maintain
a power status.

As my reflection is ongoing, I cannot assert that I have answered the internal
questions that this study initiated. However, I have concluded that my standpoint on
oppression now comes more from a position that desires to coalesce. While I may have
claimed this position before this study, now I truly believe it. During my work in the
KYC space, I realized that initially, my communicating a desire to unite may not have
been completely authentic, especially since I did have these unconscious desires to have
power. My self interrogation was transformative in that I identified self-deception and
how it affected my understandings and relationships with other oppressed groups.
Implications

Kaleidoscope Youth Center

The implications for KYC are significant. This study produced an art curriculum that could be continuously used at the center. Zermeno is interested in maintaining a social justice emphasis throughout all of the programs at KYC. Therefore, the theoretical framework of the art curriculum supports his objective.

After I finished gathering all of the research data at KYC, I requested to suspend the workshops for three months to spend time analyzing this research data and writing conclusions. However, I will return to KYC in April to continue instructing the Kaleidoscope He(ARTs) workshops. In PAR work, there is a commitment to the participants that does not end simply because the study concludes. The rapport that I built with the youth would be lost fairly quickly if I permanently left the space after I finished my research. Their trust in me would be lost; I would be seen as someone who used the center for what I needed with no regard to what the members needed or wanted. Since I was a volunteer at KYC for a complete year before my research began, I hope the youth recognize that my absence is temporary.

This research initiated a steady art program in the center that can continue for a very long time. However, eventually, I will move away from Columbus soon, which means I will have to leave the center. My hope is that a new or old volunteer will use this study’s curriculum rationale, objectives and curriculum map and continue the Kaleidoscope He(ARTS) workshops, or at least use the information as a framework to begin a new art program with social justice goals.
Art Education

One of the most significant implications I think this study has is its ability to show teachers, not just art educators, how multiculturalism is not about knowing all there is to know about a specific group of people. The information that I taught was not specific to any one group of people. It addressed human concerns that affect everyone. My actions and the decisions that I made is what made the curriculum multicultural and social reconstructionist. Democratic learning, critical questioning, cooperative learning, as well as an embrace of the PAR made sure no voice was left out of the learning experience. Multiple cultural perspectives were acknowledged and shared. This made me a multicultural teacher, not just a teacher who taught multiculturalism.

I entered a space to teach a group of youth with a culture I was completely unfamiliar with. Initially, I was overwhelmed; and, at times I felt inadequate as a teacher in this site. However, the components of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach and PAR generated opportunities for learning that did not rely on my knowing everything about a subject. This relieved a lot of anxiety. For example, I was not well versed in issues the homosexual population dealt with; however, I engaged in many discussions about these issues. I was successful at doing this because I identified the youth as experts. As PAR suggests, relinquishing power is often necessary in the classroom for true learning to occur (Freire, 1970; Stringer, 2007). In addition, the democratic learning environment, a tenet of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach, was the ideal venue to abandon that power. This study provides an example to teachers that multiculturalism is not as intimidating as it may seem because it does not
require them to be the voice of authority. However, it does require a shift in personal pedagogy and in the overall action of teaching. There is a need for more research that exemplifies the “do-ability” of multicultural and social reconstructionist education. In addition, the research where multicultural and social reconstructionist is practiced in community settings should have practical implications that can be used by public school teachers as well. I think that this study is accessible in this way.

To speak specifically to art educators, there are additional ways to be a multicultural teacher in the art classroom. This can be done by choosing classroom resources that represent many groups of people. For example, elementary art teachers can use children’s literature that shows varying races and groups of people. Even if the book’s content is not focused on teaching about a specific group, simply using visuals that display diverse groups of people communicates to students that all people are important and should be acknowledged on a daily basis, not just during holidays or months that highlight them. This effort also applies to the art and artworks that a teacher chooses to teach with. As art educators, we should recognize that the images we use in our teaching affect our students (Knight, 2006). The teacher’s decision about materials guides whether or not this affect is negative or positive.

This study has implication for teachers who work with youth who identify as LGBTQ. The research revealed many issues that this specific population dealt with on a daily basis. For example, some of the youth used the art projects to address things like safe sex, violence against gays, gay equality, and bullying. If these issues are prominent in the life of LGBTQ youth, and these youth are in our school classrooms every day,
teachers must know and understand how to combat these issues. It is a teacher’s responsibility to make students feel safe and comfortable in the classroom. It is critical that teachers are able to identify when bullying is happening or when youth are experiencing violence against them based on their sexual orientation. The youths’ decisions to address these issues in the workshops were a call out to let people know that these are problems they deal with and they may need help to combat them.

**Future Research Initiatives**

This study answered a very specific question that pertained to how a curriculum approach in art education produced social justice goals. The research has also initiated other inquiries that could be the foundation for future research. Primarily, this study was my first experience with PAR. I found the methodology quite liberating and open; which worked well in this specific research setting. Unfortunately, I was introduced to this methodology late in my experience as a researcher and as a teacher. When designing curriculum and classroom activities with a PAR framework, “there is a clear shift from thinking in dichotomies to thinking in dialectical terms” (Hanrahan, 1998, p.77). I see how PAR could be helpful for novice art educators, even prospective teachers in the undergraduate classroom. Curriculum that emerges in classrooms where teachers use PAR is better connected to the students’ lives (Phillips & Carr, 2006). I would like to see how introducing PAR in art teacher certification programs would transform the art education curriculum and the outcomes of students’ artwork.
Another point of inquiry that this study instigated is the investigation of art programs within non-art focused community centers. KYC was the first community space that I worked in that was not an art specific center. It was interesting to examine the differences between these working experiences. Research in this area could include questions such as: How well do art programs thrive in non-art specific centers? What aspects of the general community center’s environment support artmaking? How does the general community center’s needs differ from the needs of a community art center? Do these two differing spaces yield varying artmaking results? This evaluation could offer community center administrators insight about how to create sustainable art programs that community members appreciate and support. The individual who was the KYC director before Zermeno did cite art programs as the least popular programs that dissolved regularly and fairly quickly. This was why she was so excited about my research and fully supported my desire to create a weekly art program. She hoped my framework for implementation would produce a longer running program. I think research in this area would be beneficial.

Additionally, this study instigated issues around working with a transient population of students. Because KYC is a drop-in center, there was never consistency in workshop attendance. This factor affected various components of the research. Specifically, I was not able to assess pre-workshop knowledge and then compare it to post-workshop knowledge because the youth did not consistently attend the workshops. For example, the youth who attended the first workshop only attended one or two of the dozen following workshops. In addition, because of this, the curriculum agenda was
heavily revised. I was not able to successfully engage the youth in individualized projects that spanned over multiple weeks. If a participant began a project, there was a significant chance the participant would not return the following week to continue and finish their work. The mural was the only lengthy, ongoing project that was successfully executed. This is because it was a group endeavor and did not rely on one person to be present to finish it. Fortunately, I was able to effectively complete the research and obtain acceptable data for analysis. I accomplished this by changing the workshop format to involve activities that stood alone and could be completed in one hour. Also, I used participants’ work that was left behind as a way to teach and introduce social justice to the new participants. The abandoned work stood as examples of how art could be used to communicated and make commentary on world issues. In addition, I maintained consistency to the workshops by always discussing social justice at the onset of each session, regardless of whether or not the participants were new or returning. This practice made certain that social justice was the platform for each workshop. Revisiting the concept each week also provided elaborative rehearsal, which is often needed for deep processing of knowledge and long-lasting memories (Leonard, 2002). While I was able to adjust my research activities, I believe the experience introduced the need for further research that attends to how a transient population affects pedagogy in the classroom. This particular research experience brought forth future questions of inquiry such as: How can I develop curriculum that is appropriate for a transient population? How does this factor impact my teaching and learning practices? As a teacher, these questions are essential to consider, especially if working in school or community where youth are often
in trouble, getting suspended, have family issues, have jobs, or have additional life crises that cause their class attendance to be sporadic or short-lived.

Lastly, future research could include a longitudinal study that examined the effects of using a multicultural and social reconstructionist curriculum in the art classroom. Actually, I would like to continue to check in with the youth who participated in the Kaleidoscope He(ARTS) workshops to see if and how they have continued to be attentive to social justice issues. This long-term research would help me understand how a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach produced results that were sustainable and/or initiated an ongoing, life-long advocacy of social justice.
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http://faculty.valenciacc.edu/development2/curriculumSecure/critical/V10N7.HTM


http://www.tolerance.org/activity/democratic-classrooms


Wong, W., Blandford, A. (2002). *Analysing ambulance dispatcher decision making:*


Appendix A: IRB Approval
Dear Dr. Ballengee-Morris,

The Behavioral and Social Sciences IRB APPROVED BY EXPEDITED REVIEW the above referenced research. The Board was able to provide expedited approval under 45 CFR 46.110(b)(1) because the research meets the applicability criteria and one or more categories of research eligible for expedited review, as indicated below.

Date of IRB Approval: July 13, 2010
Date of IRB Approval Expiration: June 10, 2011

Expedited Review Category: 7

In addition; the protocol has been approved for the inclusion of children and is granted a waiver of documentation of parental permission.

If applicable, informed consent (and HIPAA research authorization) must be obtained from subjects or their legally authorized representatives and documented prior to research involvement. The IRB-approved consent form and process must be used. Changes in the research (e.g., recruitment procedures, advertisements, enrollment numbers, etc.) or informed consent process must be approved by the IRB before they are implemented (except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects).

This approval is valid for one year from the date of IRB review when approval is granted or modifications are required. The approval will no longer be in effect on the date listed above as the IRB expiration date. A Continuing Review application must be approved within this interval to avoid expiration of IRB approval and cessation of all research activities. A final report must be provided to the IRB and all records relating to the research (including signed consent forms) must be retained and available for audit for at least 3 years after the research has ended.

It is the responsibility of all investigators and research staff to promptly report to the IRB any serious, unexpected and related adverse events and potential unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

This approval is issued under The Ohio State University’s OHRP Federalwide Assurance #00006378.
All forms and procedures can be found on the ORRP website – www.orrp.osu.edu. Please feel free to contact the IRB staff contact listed above with any questions or concerns.

Shari R. Speer, PhD, Chair Behavioral and Social Sciences Institutional Review Board
Appendix B: Interview Questions
Interview Questions: Charlie

Question 1: What does the term social justice mean to you?

Question 2: I have noted you saying some very mature things during our workshops. For example, you made some strong claims during the collage project, in which you made a work about people’s minds being corrupt regardless of their initial desires.

What can you say has guided you to have these ideals about life?

Question 3: Do you see yourself as a person that cares about social justice issues? If yes, give examples. If no, why not?

Question 4: While doing any of the art projects, which one did you enjoy the most? Why?

Question 5: You offered significant help in deciding what the mural would be about and look like. Why did you choose the ideas that you chose?

Question 6: Do you think the finished mural communicates the ideas you initially proposed?

Question 7: If you had to explain the mural to someone that had never seen it or never walked into KYC, how would you explain it?
Interview Questions: Glenn Zermeno

Question 1: Have you received any responses to or feedback on the mural from outsiders or new youth?

Question 2: Do you think the youth at KYC understand the concept of social justice?

Question 3: Do you believe teachers in schools need to have trainings on teaching youth who identify as LGBTQ? What implications would it have?

Question 4: Do you think art could be a means to explore social issues?

Question 5: What do you see as the implications of teaching social justice through art?
Appendix C: Art Exhibition Survey and Questionnaire
Art Exhibition Survey & Questionnaire

This survey/questionnaire is completely voluntary. The art exhibition that you viewed is one component of a research project concerning the use of a multicultural and social reconstructionist approach to art education and its impact on social justice. This survey simply offers data to the researcher concerning these topics. By completing and returning this survey, consent is implied.

Demographics

Gender: ___________________   Preferred Gender Pronoun (She/He): ______________
Age: ___________________ Race/Ethnicity: ___________________________________

Questions - For each statement, place a check mark ✔️ in the box that best fits your opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art (i.e. visual, creative writing, music, dance/movement) is an effective way to communicate personal and/or social issues.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use art to communicate personal and/or social issues.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The exhibition made me aware of my personal and social identity.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The exhibition made me conscious of how my identity affects how others treat me.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The exhibition made me question how I treat others that are different from myself.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The exhibition brought forth an issue/s that I rarely think about.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The artwork in the exhibition initiated communication between other viewers and me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The artwork in the exhibition initiated an internal dialogue.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further Questioning - Please answer the following questions.

1. Which artwork demanded your attention the most? Why?
_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

Did the issue that this artwork addressed influence your overall interest in the work?  Yes / No
If yes, how? ________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

If no, what aspect of the work caught your attention? __________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

2. Which artwork received the least amount of your attention? Why?
_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

Did the issue that the artwork addressed influence your disinterest in the work? Yes / No
If yes, how? ________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

If no, what aspect of the work turned you off? __________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

Please share any additional comments and/or suggestions about the exhibition and artworks that you have not already provided?
_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

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Appendix D: Verbal Script for First Workshop
I am exploring how to collaborate with you to create a meaningful art curriculum that supports your inquiries about social justice issues. I am not a fan of teachers who impose ideas upon students and create curriculum based on what they want to teach about. I want to know what the process of collaboration looks like and how beneficial it is to collaborate with youth in the curriculum building process. I will simply be noting how the collaboration process goes amongst this group—the process that we go through to establish a theme for the art workshops—and your ideas about social justice and art and combining the two to explore your place in the world. I am advocating a particular curriculum—called Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist Approach, originated in the education field, deal[s] more directly...with oppression and social structural inequality based on race, social class, gender, and disability....The approach prepares future citizens to reconstruct society so that it better serves the interests of all groups of people and especially those who are of color, poor, female, gay and/or disabled (Sleeter & Grant, 1994, pp. 209-210). This process will involve intense collaboration with you students. So, let’s collaborate.

So, ultimately this workshop is my dissertation research project for my PhD. I hope to use the ideas and projects that we do here to answer the questions I just asked.

Sign consent/assent forms

I would like to ask all who are here if they are comfortable with me using your ideas, words and artwork in my dissertation project. No names will be associated with the information. No identifiable information will be used at any time in my writing. If you want to participate and are over 18, please sign the consent form. If you are 17 or under, just state yes, you would like to participate. This is completely voluntary and you may decide not to be in the research at any point in time. You can still participate in the workshops, even if you do not want me to use anything that you offer to the discussions and art projects.
Appendix E: Tentative Monthly Calendar
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday-Friday</td>
<td>Recruitment Week</td>
<td>Go to center from 3-8pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2-6, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Introduction to Study/</td>
<td>Discuss Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 9, 2010</td>
<td>Building Curriculum</td>
<td>Sign consent/assent forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30-5:30pm</td>
<td>Photovoice Intro</td>
<td>Discuss social justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ask guiding questions for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>social reconstruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>curriculum building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction to Photovoice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>⊳ Discussion of cameras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>⊳ Ethics and power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>⊳ Ways of seeing photographs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Give out Cameras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Photovoice Project</td>
<td>Take cameras up/ Talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 16, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td>about the experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Themes that arose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>⊳ View Photovoice. Org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Photovoice Project</td>
<td>Critique and Analyze Photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 23, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td>⊳ Use SHOWED chart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Selecting, Contextualizing and Codifying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Write Captions for images/Frame images/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Photovoice Project</td>
<td>Begin collaborative photo work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 30, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Photovoice Project</td>
<td>Continue collaborative photo project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 6, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td>⊳ Reflections/ How will our</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>findings influence the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>printmaking project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Printmaking Project</td>
<td>Make image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 13, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td>Apply emulsion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Printmaking Project</td>
<td>Wash emulsion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 20, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td>Make prints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Printmaking Project</td>
<td>Collaborative project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 27, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Labor Day</td>
<td>Center Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 4, 2010</td>
<td>Mural/ Painting Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 11, 2010</td>
<td>Mural/ Painting Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 18, 2010</td>
<td>Mural/ Painting Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Mural/ Painting Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 25, 2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, November 1, 2010</td>
<td>Mural/ Painting Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, November 8, 2010</td>
<td>Mural/ Painting Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition Date TBD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
Appendix F: New Calendar
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Additional Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday August 23, 2010</td>
<td>Illegal Immigrants taking jobs/Immigration</td>
<td>Political Cartoons/Collage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday August 30, 2010</td>
<td>Illegal Immigrants taking jobs/Immigration</td>
<td>Political Cartoons/Collage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday September 6, 2010</td>
<td>Gay and Equality</td>
<td>Mural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Labor Day Holiday Center Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday September 13, 2010</td>
<td>Gay and Equality</td>
<td>Mural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday September 20, 2010</td>
<td>California Re Legalizing Gay Marriage</td>
<td>Advertisements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sick</td>
<td>Cut out Prints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Justin Sutters visiting artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday September 27, 2010</td>
<td>California Re Legalizing Gay Marriage</td>
<td>Advertisements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Day</td>
<td>Cut out Prints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Justin Sutters visiting artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday October 4, 2010</td>
<td>Gay and Equality</td>
<td>Mural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday October 11, 2010</td>
<td>Gay and Equality</td>
<td>Mural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday October 18, 2010</td>
<td>Gay and Equality</td>
<td>Mural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday October 25, 2010</td>
<td>Gay and Equality</td>
<td>Mural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday November 1, 2010</td>
<td>Gay and Equality</td>
<td>Mural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday November 8, 2010</td>
<td>Suicide of Gay Teens</td>
<td>Silk Screening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Propaganda Shirts and Photographs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday November 15, 2010</td>
<td>Suicide of Gay Teens</td>
<td>Silk Screening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Propaganda Shirts and Photographs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday November 22, 2010</td>
<td>Bus Passes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday November 29, 2010</td>
<td>Bus Passes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix G: Excerpts from Senate Bill 1070
State of Arizona “Immigration Law”
“For any lawful contact made by a law enforcement official or agency of this state or a county, city, town or other political subdivision of this state where reasonable suspicion exists that the person is an alien who is unlawfully present in the United States. A reasonable attempt shall be made, when practicable, to determine the immigration status of the person. The person’s immigration status shall be verified with the federal government pursuant to 8 United States Code Section 1373 (c)” (para. 3).

“If an Alien who is unlawfully present in the United States is convicted of a violation of state or local law. On discharge from imprisonment or assessment of any fine that is imposed, the alien shall be transferred immediately to the custody of the United State Immigration and customs enforcement or the United States customs and border protection” (para.4).

“A law enforcement officer, without a warrant, may arrest a person if the officer has probable cause to believe that the person has committed any public offense that makes the person removable from the United States” (para.6).

Appendix H: Text from Students Political Cartoons
Text: “Look Burrito, You’re Mexican, this is an all American restaurant.”
“I’m not a burrito, I’m a breakfast wrap. Don’t judge on looks alone.”
Discrimination is bad, don’t make assumptions, it makes an ass out of u and me.

Text: MR.STUDTASTIC
They Judge Us…
They judge us 4 our skin, our hair
They clothes we wear
The shoes on our feet
The food we eat
The color of our eyes
Which gives us vision to see
That there is someone always judging me
Do not look at me as a statistic
But look at me as I
No one can judge me but my one & only God
Appendix I: Gender Symbols
Bisexual
(2 male, 1 female)

Bisexual
(2 female, 1 male)
Appendix J: Mural Voting Flyers
YOUR VOICE MATTERS!!

Those that participate in Kaleidoscope He (ARTS) are in the process of planning a mural on the center’s site, but we need your input! Below are three options for a location. Mark your vote to let us know where you think a mural would work best at Kaleidoscope! Also, inform us of a topic or subject that you think the mural should communicate! This is YOUR center, so be a part of what happens here!

___ Entrance wall, the back wall you see when you first enter the center (the pool table area).
___ The library
___ The community area on the second floor (where check-ins are done)

Potential topic or subject for the mural
Appendix K: Preliminary Sketch of Students’ Mural Idea
Mural Idea (DRAFT)
Appendix L: Black Power Fist with Gender Symbols
Appendix M: Black Power Fist
Black Power Fist
Appendix N: Kaleidoscope Youth Center Monthly Calendar
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>12:00p-5:00p</td>
<td>Closed—New Years Day!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3:00p-4:30p</td>
<td>Cyber Center Open</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4:30p-5:30p</td>
<td>Kaleidoscope He(ARTS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6:00p-6:30p</td>
<td>Checkin' Your Assets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6:30p-7:00p</td>
<td>Cyber Center Open</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7:00p-8:00p</td>
<td>Arts &amp; Crafts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3:00p-4:30p</td>
<td>Cyber Center Open</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>5:30p-6:00p</td>
<td>Pancake Paul</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>6:00p-6:30p</td>
<td>Checkin' Your Assets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>6:30p-7:00p</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>7:00p-8:00p</td>
<td>closed due to bad weather</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
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- **January 2011**
- **Sunday**: 12:00p-5:00p Closed—New Years Day!
- **Monday**: 3:00p-4:30p Cyber Center Open, 4:30p-5:30p Common Ground, 6:00p-6:30p Checkin' Your Assets, 6:30p-7:00p Cyber Center Open, 7:00p-8:00p Arts & Crafts
- **Tuesday**: 3:00p-4:30p Cyber Center Open, 4:30p-5:30p Kaleidoscope He(ARTS), 6:00p-6:30p Checkin' Your Assets, 6:30p-7:00p Cyber Center Open, 7:00p-8:00p Yoga U
- **Wednesday**: 3:00p-4:30p Cyber Center Open, 4:30p-5:30p Queer & Healthy, 6:00p-6:30p Checkin' Your Assets, 6:30p-7:00p Cyber Center Open, 7:00p-8:00p ART EVERY WEEK
- **Thursday**: 3:00p-4:30p Cyber Center Open, 4:30p-5:30p Gender Group, 6:00p-6:30p Checkin' Your Assets, 6:30p-7:00p Cyber Center Open, 7:00p-8:00p YOGA U
- **Friday**: 3:00p-4:30p Cyber Center Open, 4:30p-5:30p Gender Group, 6:00p-6:30p Checkin' Your Assets, 6:30p-7:00p Cyber Center Open, 7:00p-8:00p YOGA U
- **Saturday**: 12:00p-2:30p TBA, 2:30p-3:30p TBA, 12:00p-5:00p Drop-In

**Activity Details**
- **Sunday**:
  - **12:00p-5:00p**: Closed—New Years Day!
- **Monday**:
  - **3:00p-4:30p**: Cyber Center Open
  - **4:30p-5:30p**: Kaleidoscope He(ARTS)
  - **6:00p-6:30p**: Checkin' Your Assets
  - **6:30p-7:00p**: Cyber Center Open
  - **7:00p-8:00p**: Arts & Crafts
- **Tuesday**:
  - **3:00p-4:30p**: Cyber Center Open
  - **4:30p-5:30p**: Kaleidoscope He(ARTS)
  - **6:00p-6:30p**: Checkin' Your Assets
  - **6:30p-7:00p**: Cyber Center Open
  - **7:00p-8:00p**: Yoga U
  - **7:00p-8:00p**: Community Discussion
- **Wednesday**:
  - **3:00p-4:30p**: Cyber Center Open
  - **4:30p-5:30p**: Queer & Healthy
  - **6:00p-6:30p**: Checkin' Your Assets
  - **6:30p-7:00p**: Cyber Center Open
  - **7:00p-8:00p**: ART EVERY WEEK
- **Thursday**:
  - **3:00p-4:30p**: Cyber Center Open
  - **4:30p-5:30p**: Gender Group
  - **6:00p-6:30p**: Checkin' Your Assets
  - **6:30p-7:00p**: Cyber Center Open
  - **7:00p-8:00p**: YOGA U
  - **7:00p-8:00p**: Wii Tournament
- **Friday**:
  - **3:00p-4:30p**: Cyber Center Open
  - **4:30p-5:30p**: Gender Group
  - **6:00p-6:30p**: Checkin' Your Assets
  - **6:30p-7:00p**: Cyber Center Open
  - **7:00p-8:00p**: YOGA U
  - **7:00p-8:00p**: Wii Tournament
- **Saturday**:
  - **12:00p-2:30p**: TBA
  - **2:30p-3:30p**: TBA
  - **12:00p-5:00p**: Drop-In

**Activities**
- **Cyber Center Open**: 12:00p-5:00p
- **Game Night**: 3:00p-4:30p, 6:00p-6:30p, 7:00p-8:00p
- **Common Ground**: 3:00p-4:30p, 6:00p-6:30p
- **Checkin' Your Assets**: 3:00p-4:30p, 6:00p-6:30p
- **Queer & Healthy**: 3:00p-4:30p, 6:00p-6:30p
- **Checkin' Your Assets**: 7:00p-8:00p
- **Yoga U**: 3:00p-4:30p, 6:30p-7:00p
- **ART EVERY WEEK**: 3:00p-4:30p, 6:00p-6:30p
- **YOGA U**: 3:00p-4:30p, 6:00p-6:30p
- **Wii Tournament**: 3:00p-4:30p, 6:00p-6:30p
- **Club KYC**: 3:00p-4:30p, 6:00p-6:30p
- **MOVIE NITE!**: 3:00p-4:30p, 6:00p-6:30p
- **Youth Advisory Board Meeting**: 3:00p-4:30p, 6:00p-6:30p
- **Drop-In**: 12:00p-5:00p
- **Closed**: 12:00p-5:00p

**Additional Notes**
- **Closed due to bad weather**: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday
- **Center is Closed**: 3:00p-4:30p
- **Closed**: 4:30p-5:30p, 6:00p-6:30p, 7:00p-8:00p, 9:00p-10:00p
- **Pizza Served**: 7:00p-9:00p, 7:30p-7:30p, 7:30p-7:30p
- **Martin Luther King Day**: 3:00p-4:30p
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<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
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Appendix O: Participant Demographic Table
This table of participants is not representative of all of the youth who participated in the workshops. The below table is to provide demographics for the individuals mentioned in the data presentation and the data analysis sections of this document.

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