

ARTREACH: FOSTERING EMPATHY AND REFLECTING IDENTITY
THROUGH SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECTS

By

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A CAPSTONE PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULLFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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Abstract

The focus of this research was how service-learning projects might be used as vehicles to promote empathy and reflect the developing identity of adolescents. Action research methods were used to explore art with purpose, and correlate compassion for self, community, and peers. The study documented what happened when the Burke County High School after-school art club, known as *ARTreach*, developed a new mission with a central focus of service learning and civic participation. Art club members collaborated with one another and with community partners to create works that benefit students and enriched community participation. For this research I observed and documented ways in which students demonstrated empathy, compassion, community collaboration and self-identity while developing and implementing community projects. The goal of the study was to provide insights on how to increase compassion and empathic behaviors in teens through social and civic action realized through art-making. The

study resulted in a series of site specific artworks, a newly formed mission for the after school club, and a club website devoted to project work and study findings.

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Introduction

High school students are frequently searching for a sense of self and identity. They are looking for a place to belong and exploring ways to translate their skills into assets. As a high school art teacher I often face a dilemma in connecting students to experiences that inform their search for self, promote meaningful art making, connect to the community, and foster a greater sense of empathy. In the context of art education practices it is important to ask, how can art making experiences promote the process of inquiry as one digs, mines, and searches for opportunities to inform participants on ways to connect to self, community, and peers?

Victor Lowenfeld (1957) applied his insights on process and self-inquiry to plot out goals and methods in art education and emphasize the use of art for personal development. Both Lowenfeld (1957) and Eisner (1972) suggested the process of inquiry is more important than the product. It is this sense of purpose and call to work that I hoped my students would embrace amidst the study and in doing so they would discover more about themselves and the people that make up a community. As a research study I observed the after-school art club, *ARTreach*. The participants of this group assisted in answering the research question, how might a service-learning art project influence and foster empathy in participants?

Through the creation of site-specific community art works, such as murals, students answered the problem question. The goal of this study was to document ways service-learning art projects influence participants. Research questions provided the guiding momentum for inquiry and resulting data collection. I assumed that students would not independently look for meaningful ways to be engaged with their community. However, given the proper platform, teen participation would increase and these experiences could be applied to their search for belonging

and self-identification. This study was confined to the after-school art club at my school and to the select community projects. Results and conclusions are therefore limited to short term results and do not consider the longevity of impact on participants.

Statement of the Problem

I believe students in high school need to be provided art experiences that enable them to explore identity, promote civic engagement, and nurture empathy as a means to develop compassionate behaviors. This is validated by scholars like Eisner (1972) and Dewey (1934) and personified in the writings of Campana (2011). Empathy and awareness of others supports the focus on collaboration. Campana argues that empathy and awareness are important prerequisites for elevation of introspective reflection. Compassion and understanding of others becomes both a motivator and guide as one participates in engaging and meaningful experiences. Those experiences can then aid in the understanding of empathy and assist in answering the problem question. The question is how might a service-learning art project influence and foster empathy in participants?

Art educators and students could benefit from this study's findings as a means to understand and connect enduring ideas into meaningful art. Student artwork can often be superficial and shallow because the enduring ideas are too far removed from a students' personal life (Walker, 2009). This study will help link experiences directly to a students' life and raise awareness for issues they find important.

Purpose and Goals of the Study

The purpose of my research is to examine how students can use civic engagement as a catalyst to develop a deeper understanding of identity while fostering compassion and empathy. As a means to develop and explore a pedagogy that promotes art with social purpose I organized

an after-school art club with a mission to serve others through art-making. The group called, *ARTreach* was the focus of the research study and assisted in answering my main research question. The study took the form of action research over two months at a rural, Title I high school located in eastern Georgia. Over 25 ninth through twelfth grade students of varying ethnic, racial, and economic backgrounds were studied for this project. *ARTreach* engagement during the study included a variety of service-learning projects - a mural, labyrinth, and children's hospital collaboration. The correlation to compassion, empathy, and identity was explored when analyzing data.

Research Questions

The following questions and sub-questions guided my study:

1. How might a service-learning art project influence and foster empathy in participants?
2. What is the teacher's role in creating meaningful experiences in art?

Rationale

The rationale for this study was to identify service-learning project objectives and strategies that may nurture empathy in participants and also assist in helping participants understand individual identity. Through the process of making art collectively students gained a deeper appreciation for their peers. Group creativity involved unusual degrees of collaboration, co-operation, negotiation, and compromise, expressed both verbally and non-verbally through tacit understanding and intuition (Hickman, 2000). The outcome of my study resulted in civic works created collaboratively by the art club. The product of my study is this scholarly capstone paper and an *ARTreach* website that showcases my students' work, and will help us leverage more projects in the future.

Assumptions

I assumed that my high school students were not independently looking for ways to be involved in their communities. I also assumed that their community and service opportunities have been few. I anticipated that they would be reluctant to changes in the art club for fear they would lose their connection to socialize and minimize their artistic presence in the school. I also believed that students are hesitant about working in collaborative groups and their views about community and peers were limited and narrow. I assumed that empathy, compassion, universal commonalities are themes students have had little exposure to and would benefit from projects that opened awareness to these topics. I also anticipated that the community would welcome and encourage participation. These experiences aimed to fill a void and I foresaw the community at large becoming active in the group work.

Limitations

This was a small concentrated study with focused results. It did not address generalizability or longevity of impact. The study was considering a varying demographic of rural middle class and poverty students. The students in this study were ages 14-18, and the art club's meeting time was once a week for 2-hours. Research observation was limited to this club structure and included off-site project work days for installation. This study did not consider other learned objectives or behaviors that typically result from these types of projects or activities. The teacher's role, empathic characteristics, identity understanding, and service project collaboration actions were the focus, though this topic may have provoked additional actions and reactions if placed in the classroom curriculum context. The scope of student empathy was only observed within the context of the club project work and did not consider if the application extended to student's personal artwork or interactions with others outside the project parameters.

Key terms

Purpose as clarified by Dewey (1934) in his writings stated human experiences drive purpose, “For only when an organism shares in the ordered relations of its environment does it secure the stability essential to living” (p.15). Rick Warren (2002) wrote about creator specific variables, and purpose through making, “If I handed you an invention you had never seen before, you wouldn’t know its purpose, and the invention itself wouldn’t be able to tell you either. Only the creator or the owner’s manual could reveal its purpose” (p.18). Michael Denton (1998) suggested man is to live with a purposeful goal and sited the cosmos being specially designed whole with life and mankind as its fundamental goal and purpose.

Sydney Walker (2001) defined *meaning-making* as the experience of making art and is differentiated from non-meaningful art-making by the direct intent to correlate feelings, moods, and emotions. Walker went on to state that students can and should explore and express meaning. In making art students establish a platform for expression and meaning. Experiences are akin to art and in his book, *Educating Artistic Vision*, Eisner (1985) stated, “...artistic development is not an automatic consequence of maturation but rather a process that is affected by the type of experiences children have” (p.105). Experiences aid in the development of the artistically conscious person.

Empathy has many different definitions, and many are layered with separate segments and can be transposed with other words like compassion, however, most definitions share characteristics with the *Encyclopedia of Social Psychology’s* (Hodges & Myers, 2007) reference.

Empathy.... the idea of one person's response to his or her perceptions of another person's current experience. Use of the word in English is relatively new; its origins are traced to

the German word *Einfühlung*, which translates literally as “feeling into” (as in projecting oneself into something else). (p. 297)

Kraft (1996) defined *service-learning* as an educational program created to provide experiences that foster student engagement through active participation in community organized service experiences that are coordinated in collaboration with the school. The roots of service-learning can be traced to Judeo-Christian religions (Kraft, 1994). Kraft (1996) also wrote that service-learning is different from volunteering. “Volunteering alone generally is differentiated from service-learning by having an emphasis on service without formal, structured learning component” (p. 136). Student participation in service-learning endeavors provides a structured framework and enhances the meaning-making experience. A successful service-learning, action research project results in the use of seven components: selecting a focus, clarifying theories, identifying research questions, collecting data, analyzing data, reporting results, and taking informed action (Sagor, 2000).

Literature Review

The literature reviewed is intended to support meaning-making through art-making and correlations drawn to compassion for self, community, and peers through art education and collaborative community service-learning projects. The inclusion of service projects is important for connecting a curriculum to meaning and meeting a need within a community (Buffington, 2007). Additionally the transformation process extends beyond the community and the product of the work to the participants (Russell & Hutzler, 2007). Students benefit from the actions of the experience and have a marker for reflecting on self (Dewey, 1934).

Central to this topic is the focus on enduring ideas and the question: How might a service-learning art project influence and foster empathy in participants? This review will reflect

on authors who focus on; the purpose of art, the teacher's role, meaning-making application, service-learning examples, transformation and empathy, and conclusions and direction. The inclusion of literature in this review is to validate meaning-making art through service-learning engagement as a means to foster empathy, compassion, and community understanding in students. Highlighted authors that support these claims include: Richard Hickman, Sydney Walker, Elliot Eisner, and John Dewey. Throughout these authors' ideas, common threads include students finding their identity through experiences based on civic engagement, social reflections, and self-expression.

What is the Purpose of Art?

The purpose of art in the life of students has varied over time as noted by Mary Ann Stankiewicz (2001). The early 19th century and contemporary practice had different interpretations of the word *process*; one focused on ridged rules, the other looked at process as self-exploration through play and expression. Both however are steeped in intent and purpose with aims at art being essential in human development (Stankiewicz, 2001).

Anyone can learn to draw; this was a common theme in the early 19th century (Stankiewicz, 2001). Drawing was viewed as having practical value in every occupation and therefore should be taught in school. The first purpose of art education was practical, the conceptual stage of art development, drawing as a bridge to occupation (Stankiewicz, 2001). While this initial drive of practical art-making was the foundation, later themes of children as artists emerged (Eisner, 1972). Victor D'Amico, Viktor Lowenfeld, and Herbert Read's publications shared a common theme and mission, that art education is to facilitate the creative development of the child (Eisner, 1972). When referencing D'Amico, Eisner (1972) wrote, "He saw the child as an artist who was to be immersed in the process of creation, a process more

important than the product the child produced” (p. 56). Sometimes the process reveals the product but often the product is the process. Dana Gioia (2008) shared this mission, “The purpose of art education is not to produce more artists, though that is a byproduct. The purpose of arts education is to create complete human beings who are capable of leading successful and productive lives in a free society” (p. 20). In this spirit art education may be considered a scaffold for building a total person.

The Teacher’s Role

As in other constructivist models for education, the role of the teacher within the context of service learning is transformed from one who dictates information to one who is a fellow inquirer alongside students (Stewart & Walker, 2005). Creating engaging experiences allows students a platform to create meaning and reflect on self, community, and peers (Vieth, 1999). “As any teacher knows, adolescents are by nature selective in the ways they choose to reveal themselves. And yet, when the value of personal expression is understood and shared, a level of trust and confidentiality acknowledged.... student expressive confidence rises” (Vieth, 2005, p.45). Teacher and student rapport are essential in authentic student expression creations. Eisner (1972) also correlated the development of the student to the relationship and rapport built with the teacher, as he described a relationship of trust and warmth taking time to cultivate.

Meaning-Making Application

“Artmaking, especially when translated to pedagogical practice, can and should be an exploration of big ideas about self, others, nature and the universe as well as an exploration of forms and media” (Roberts, 2005, p. 45). Applying community service-learning projects into a curriculum could in turn lead to greater introspection and compassionate behaviors. (Buffington, 2007). Through the practices of these techniques and the application of community service-

learning projects one will make what Roberts (2005) described as “real” art. Students could use art experiences as the baseline for connection to self, peers, and community.

Students learn best when they are encouraged to generate their own set of questions, then allowed opportunities to reflect on the process (Walker, 2001). The reflection process is needed for growth and encourages higher-level thinking skills, the analysis and evaluation is essential for problem solving (Vieth, 1999). Students must be given opportunities to reflect on experiences in order for them to become meaningful (Walker, 2001). But students need to develop skills to access what they have already experienced. “When instructing students to reach into past experiences for artmaking, it is important to provide them with strategies for accessing this knowledge...ask: What was visually important? What smells, textures, and sounds were present? What emotions did you experience?” (Walker, 2001, p. 28). Reflection can take the form of individual and group discussion, face-to-face, online, reflective writing journals, or formal papers. (Taylor, 2005).

Service-Learning Examples

Richard Hickman (2000), Sydney Walker (2001), Teresa Roberts (2005), and others have validated that personal connections are essential in order for learning to occur. Furthermore multiple authors have documented that community service-learning benefits the classroom as a way to foster compassion and empathy (Hunt, 2006; Marché, 1998, West, 2014). “Many art educators already engage in a well-known service-learning project- Empty Bowls” (Buffinton, 2007, p.41). Through the Empty Bowls project students create ceramic vessels which are typically auctioned off and the proceeds benefit local charities that work with hunger-related issues (Buffinton, 2007). High school art teacher and community Empty Bowls organizer, Debbie Kattcoff, conveyed how students can develop compassion through application in her

newspaper interview. “The bowls serve as a reminder that there are people here in the community whose bowls are always empty, it’s so important for us, as teachers, to get students to understand the importance of helping out those in the community” (Highfield, 2014, 1B).

Community encompasses a broad range of meanings, it may refer to a collection of people like students, teachers, administrators, support staff, or it may extend to the local environment outside the building. (Marché, 1998). The after school organization, Beans and Rice, was the focus of one community service-learning project study (Taylor, 2005). The Virginia based students were asked to reflect on what is peace and then lead through a series of instructional lessons. Many of the lessons used art as exemplars to visualize peace; the students were given opportunities to reflect and respond to open ended prompts. The culmination of the study was an exhibit for the community.

‘Peace Boxes’ created from tissue paper and text sat on pedestals in the middle of the gallery and held secrets that the young students formulated for making every day a peaceful one. Text panels contained explanations as well as provocative questions concerning personal reflections of peace. (Taylor, 2005, p.584)

This community work demonstrates how introspective engagement can result in open-ended and reflective analysis, thus connecting the artist to universal themes and ideas.

Transformation and Empathy

Art making as an experience can produce transformative results like self-determination, personal growth, critical awareness, spiritual and emotional growth, compassion, empathy, and empowerment to affect situations (Hickman, 2000). “This is the most significant learning that takes place in students’ - the personally meaningful learning, which has the potential to transform their lives” (p. 145). Gioia (2008) stated that some truths about life can only be conveyed

through stories, song, or images. Symbolic visual representations and metaphors often evoke spiritual, universal connections. (Moon, 2007). Self-confidence is gained through connections to universal commonalities.

Labyrinths have been used as vehicles to create collaborative and meaningful art and correlate visual symbolism. This section serves as an introduction to labyrinths which will later be addressed in greater detail regarding a specific service-project the art club created. Labyrinths provide area to meditate, reflect, heal, think, pray, or retreat. (Johnson, 2001). The Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital in Wheaton, Illinois is one of many to begin using this walk as a true therapy resource (Patients walk, 2007).

An ancient symbol, the labyrinth is a tool for those who walk on it to inwardly focus while traversing the geometric pattern in circular pathways. With only one way in and one way out and no intersecting paths or dead ends, the geometric walk is a metaphor for the journey of one's life. (White & Stafford, 2008, p. 99)

Visual metaphoric representations assist participants in connecting to the world around them.

The terms labyrinth and maze are not synonymous, "While a maze is a puzzle with twists, turns and blind alleys, a labyrinth has only one path that leads circuitously to the center and out again" (Goldman, 2003, p. 32). Many think a labyrinth is a maze, a place you walk into and then have trouble finding your way out. However it is just the opposite. A labyrinth is a place you go to get found (Quinn, 2011). The labyrinth embodies transformation through purposeful, meaning-making art, through walking the path reflection and empathy could occur. Although walking the labyrinth is intended to facilitate individual introspection, it can also be a powerful experience of community. As one walks along the design, they will realize that

collectively we are all on the same path; some are at different points of the journey correlating compassion and empathy into understanding. (Schlumpf, 2000).

Eisner summarized the transformative process:

This is, perhaps, the largest lesson that the arts in education can teach, the lesson that life itself can be led as a work of art. In doing, the maker himself or herself is remade. The remaking, this re-creation is at the heart of the process of education. (Eisner, 1998, p.56)

The arts empower students in ways to identify their life's purpose and become transformed.

Art educator Debi West (2014) argues for embracing Eisner's ideals and integrated purposeful, meaning-making work into her general curriculum. West planned a charitable silent art auction; the students used the annual *Relay for Life* cancer fundraiser as an activator for civic engagement and as means to make works that were extensions of themselves. According to West every visual art student contributes to this fundraiser and students raised \$6,000 for the American Cancer Society. The works donated were the results of a structured lesson taught by West with a focus on identity and expressive mark-making. "This art process was new to me as a visual arts teacher. It was suddenly more about my students connecting with their mark making, discovering how to make the art elements and principles work for them" (West 2014, p. 2). West argued that curriculum should help students create meaning and the teacher should act as a guide in those experiences. West correlated the transformation and contribution process to the theories of Eisner and Dewey that I explore, ultimately concluding that the ability to know is based on the ability to construct meaning from experiences.

Conclusions and Direction

The literature informed me that many educators have focused on community-driven service-learning projects in their attempts to develop empathy and compassion in their students.

This understanding has shaped my research from the literature. I learned that the goal of an inclusive art curriculum is not to just to develop artists but develop the human being. The literature informed me on ways to help facilitate the learning; through a variety of formal classroom lessons and afterschool instruction, students developed an intrinsic set of principles that guide their personal growth (Handren, 2006, p. C12).

The lesson that a person's life can be lead as a work of art fuels my drive and motivates my purpose (Eisner, 1998). The literature informed me that reflection is essential in students generating authentic meaning and I found a lapse in research coverage that did not focus on students' reflective voices. With the voices of Eisner and Dewey resonating in my mind, I worked to create a group that would experience the transformative power of art-making. The enrichment of the student artist as well-rounded human-beings are aims in the practices of developing character, civic responsibility, self-identity, and compassionate behaviors through the club service project experiences.

Research Site

As an active participant and researcher, I conducted projects that resulted in self-reflective analysis. The art classroom at Burke County High School, a Title I high school located in rural eastern Georgia, was the main area of instruction and location of study. The group met once a week for 2 hours and off-site projects ranged in duration and date. Many of the related projects were community service-learning endeavors and therefore were installed on site specific locations like; parking lots, care facilities', and children's hospitals. Appropriate IRB submission forms were documented and archived (see Appendix A).

Research Participants

I examined the high school art club, *ARTreach*. The club consisted of 25 students between the ages of 14 and 18 years old. These students came from a variety of ethnic, cultural, educational, and economic backgrounds and may or may not have experienced a formal art class before. The research was voluntary with UF Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (see Appendix A) to protect the participants¹. Students were offered an opportunity to volunteer to participate in the research. Participation or non-participation in this study did not have an effect on the student's desire to attend the art club (see Appendix B) and participate in club projects and activities.

The format for the service-learning projects was segmented into three project categories; the labyrinth, the bottle top mural, and the superhero capes.

The meditative labyrinth

The students collaborated with St. Michael's Episcopal Church on creating a meditative labyrinth (see Figure 1). The church is located adjacent to the community park, as a community outreach they provide the parking lot for town members to use to access the park. The labyrinth we created was 60 feet by 40 feet and was designed around the symbolism of the tree, corresponding with the Bible verse John 15:5, "I am the vine; you are the branches." The mural was painted directly onto the concrete and was open for people of all faiths to use as a means to facilitate introspection. A team of art club members conceptualized and proposed a design. In each corner of the labyrinth silhouetted images of a tree were represented symbolizing the seasons: winter, spring, summer, and fall. One visual correlation could be to the seasons of a

¹ Although research was conducted with actual students, pseudo-names will be used to protect student confidentiality.

person life but the interpretation is open for participants. Around the outer edge of walking path was a green vine with leaves. The students worked together to research the history of labyrinths, plan a design that would welcome people of all faiths and be opened-ended for reflection and interpretation, and work off site until the project was completed. The project took over 100 hours to complete with work days scheduled after school and on Saturdays. The *ARtreach* website <http://bchsartreach.weebly.com/>, provides detailed pictures, videos, and interviews about the labyrinth project. The entire timeline was documented from initial concept to the final dedication.

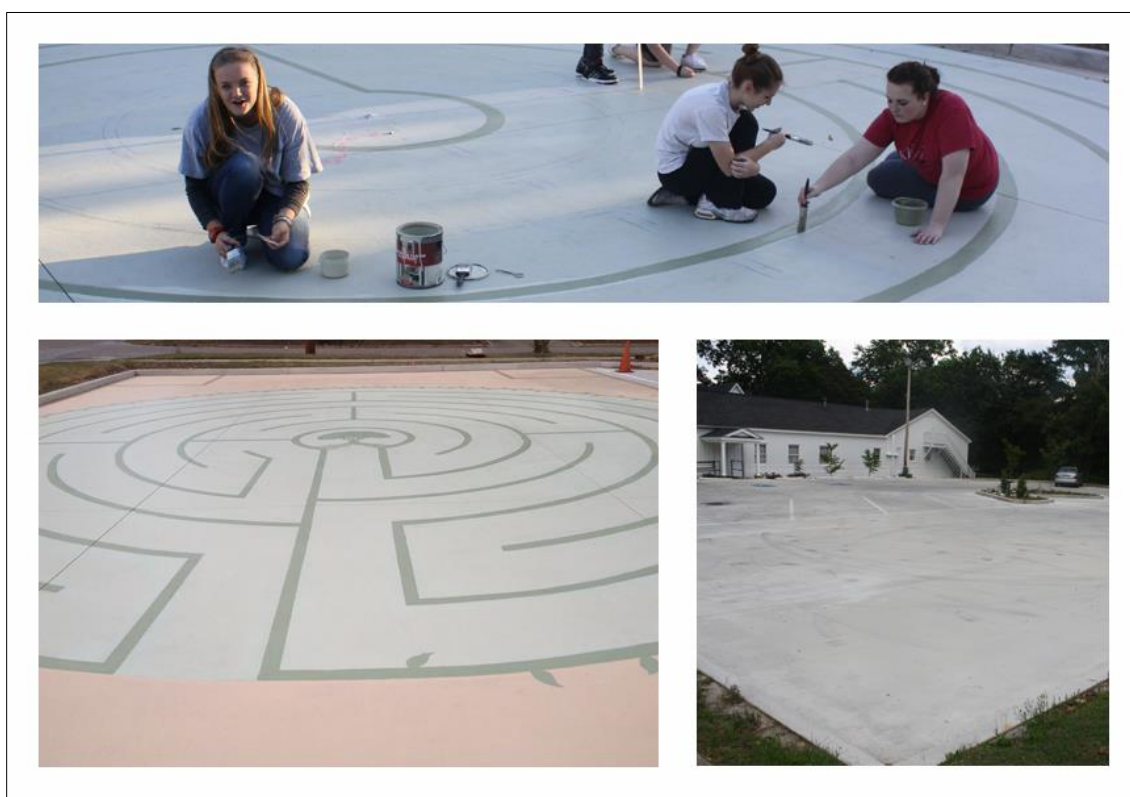


Figure 1. The labyrinth work at St. Michael's Episcopal Church with details of before and after.

The bottle top mural at the Center for New Beginnings

For the second project in this study, the art club collaborated with a local children's center called, The Center for New Beginnings (see Figure 2). This facility focuses on serving children with social, physical, mental, and behavioral special needs. The group arranged to create

a 16 foot by 4 foot bottle top mural showcasing an under-the-sea scene. In advance of the mural the students began to collect bottle tops from the community. Collection sites were arranged and at the end of the year-long drive the students amassed over 50,000 colored tops. After school meetings were devoted to designing, creating, cleaning, and gluing tops. The mural was assembled on two 8 foot by 4 foot plywood supports. The art club completed one of the two panels at the high school prior to collaborating with the special needs children. This served two purposes; it trained *Artreach* members in how to guide special needs students and to demonstrate to those children what the finished work would look like. Days were arranged to work with children on-site with the club members leading teams of children to complete the entire second panel. The club anticipated working over two days but the collaborative efforts moved quickly and the project finished in one work day session. Completed panels were hung in the center.



Figure 2. The bottle top mural for The Center for New Beginnings detailing before and after.

Children's hospital super hero cape art bags

The final service-learning project completed for this research involved the local Georgia Regents Children's Hospital (see Figure 3). The hospital arranged for *ARTreach* members to deliver pre-made art bags filled with a superhero cape, fabric markers, and a do-it-yourself hero mask. To create the art bags members met after school to design, create and fill each set. Inside each bag, personalized with the *ARTreach* logo, were a tie-dyed super hero cape, a box of fabric markers, and a blank super hero mask. The patients were encouraged to use the markers to design their own mask and fabric bag. The capes were created from youth-sized tee-shirts. Members had a tie-dyeing session and designed all the shirts. The cape was cut out from the shirt and excess fabric saved for a latter service project. The students ironed on superhero logos and filled the bags. Hospital rules limited who could deliver the bags and one day after school a select group of 18-year old club members delivered the bags to the children.

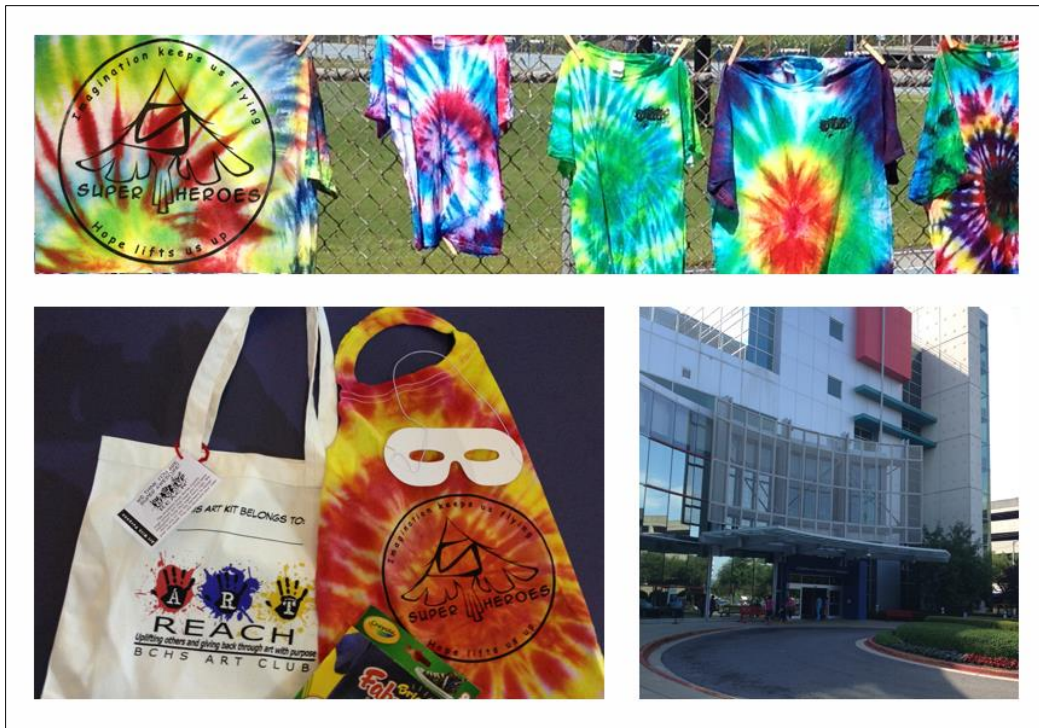


Figure 3. Children's Hospital art bags with contents of markers, mask, and superhero cape.

While reflections of the art club as a whole were essential, the application to the individual was important for data collection and personal reflections were necessary for data analysis. “Action research . . . is collaborative, though it is important to realize that action research of the group is achieved through the critically examined action of individual group members” (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988, p. 5).

Methodology

The focus of this research was how service-learning projects might be used as vehicles to promote empathy and reflect the developing identity of adolescents, through action research (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988) collaborative art experiences in the community were implemented. Action research is defined as a systematic inquiry that assists in gathering information and presenting findings that demonstrate how we teach, and how our students learn. (Mertler, 2009). Action research assists practitioners in refining our actions, in this case teaching. (Sagor, 2000). Action research strives to empower experiences for participants due in large part to the relevance of the research. “Relevance is guaranteed because the focus of each research project is determined by the researchers, who are also the primary consumers of the findings” (Sagor, 2000, p.15). This research practice correlated to my investigation of development of pedagogical methods to promote meaning-making and art with purpose. The approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) was required (see Appendix A) as the work involved human subjects.

Data Collection Procedures and Implementation

The inclusion of the after-school art club supported my examination of service-learning, as a means to building empathy in students and increasing their engagement with their communities. Through informal conversations, observations, personal journal entries,

photographed in-process work, and photographed project completion I was informed on ways to foster empathy in high school students through meaningful making art experiences (LeCompte, 2000). Using a variety of service-learning projects like murals and walking-path labyrinths, students responded in various forms of reflection prior, during and after project completion. I collected student reflections throughout the process, documented artwork created, and informally conversed with students who volunteered to participate in my research. Data was collected over the period of the project and lasted approximately 2 months.

Data Analysis Procedures

EMPATHY SYNTHESIS MATRIX

Research Questions

1. How might a service-learning art project influence and foster empathy in participants?
2. What is the teacher's role in creating meaningful service-learning experiences in art?

Commonality Themes

Growth, Sense of Purpose, Connection, Unity, Enjoyment

	Source #1 Claire	Source #2 Allison	Source #3 Regina	Source #4 Cady	Source #5 Karen	Source #6 Andrew	Fieldwork observations
Growth	I learned that there are times to be leaders and times to be servants. The best leaders are both at the same time. Before becoming involved with the projects, I was always a reserved person. I did not usually	These projects have helped me understand myself more in depth. By working on these projects I have been able to get a better grip on what I want my goals in life to be and what I'd like to accomplish for myself throughout the rest of high school and life.	I have thoroughly enjoyed the community projects due to the increased exposure to various people in the community as well as the opportunity to witness others growing to appreciate art for more than just	I have grown to see beyond the obvious and learned that we are all walking the same road-some are just at different points in the journey.	From these projects I have learned that I am capable of more work than I ever thought I could do. I have also learned that I am capable of compromise with others I don't especially like. I know I can put aside my differences for the greater good of each	The trip to the hospital helped remind me that I was lucky with my heart murmur, where it could have been worse. I never understood exactly how lucky I was until then.	Watched students emerged as leaders in proactive stances and self-imitative drive. The size of the groups grew from 5 initial members to over 25. Motivation, determination and pride exhibited. Evidenced in extended work sessions on Saturday, desire to see work completed

Figure 4. Empathy synthesis matrix outlining student responses into common theme categories.

After collecting data I defined a matrix structure to categorize the data based on similar groupings (see Figure 4). “Creating the structure is analogous to the strategies used to assemble puzzle pieces; the pieces are like units of analysis in the data. “Thinking of analysis as

assembling a jigsaw puzzle is helpful. Jigsaw puzzles cut up a whole picture into fragments” (LeCompte, 2000, p.147). Both are assembled using specific rules, except that in research, the rules set out how data are assembled to answer research questions” (LeCompte, 2000, p.148). I organized data in relation into categories of student behaviors such as compassion, empathy, and transformation. I analyzed the data and look for areas of frequency, repetition, or pattern. (LeCompte, 2000). I also applied a triangulation process that focused on using more than one method to collect data on a single topic in an attempt to assure validity (Maxwell, 2004), triangulating interview data, student reflections, and field observations across these three categories; conversation, observation, and products (see Figure 5). Finally, I created a visual synthesis matrix (Maxwell, 2004) to align data with the emergent themes of growth, a sense of purpose, connection, unity, and enjoyment.

The inclusion of narrative analysis as a method of data collection was beneficial. Students used reflection sheets and written commentary as a means to document their experience. The created matrix and triangulation format based on the culminating and collaborative student reflections assisted me in answering my research question: how might a service-learning art project influence and foster empathy in participants?

Data triangulation

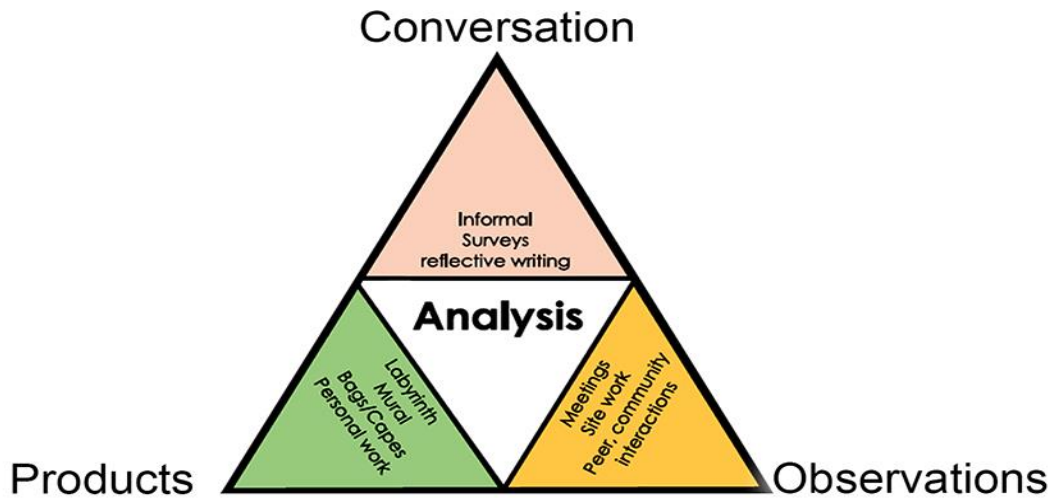


Figure 5. Triangulation Data Analysis.

Findings

The purpose of my research project was to observe what happens when an after school art club works within a newly created mission that is focused on service-learning, collaboration and art with purpose. The central idea behind the project was to encourage compassionate, positive, and empathetic behaviors that would assist in altering self-centered development and place greater emphasis on service over self and translate into a deeper awareness and connection of personal identity. Through the variety of community service-learning projects completed, students were given opportunities to cultivate empathic characteristics like; tolerance, patience, sincerity, kindness, understanding, and love as they set forward to assist in answering the key research question how might a service-learning project influence and foster empathy in participants?

What I discovered was a series of common themes emerged from the research data, including: unity, growth, sense of purpose, connection, and enjoyment. I have described how those findings demonstrate empathy amongst participants and how those themes directly

influenced individuals in the following sections. Subsequently I will discuss the role of the teacher in presenting service-learning collaborations as a model for the art education community addressing the derived answer to my second research question, what is the teacher's role in creating meaningful service-learning art experiences?

Unity

My first theme finding is unity and based on the growth that united the group members and extend to the community. The art club had many new members and the newly formed community service mission focus reinvigorated the group's participants and collaborations. When I first took over the High School art club in the fall of 2012 the group attendance averaged 5 members. At the time the group met twice a month and only did school related works like; parade floats, football pride banners, prom decorations, and a limited number craft-based fundraisers. In the spring of 2013 the members and I discussed creating a new mission for the art club which resulted in the *ARTreach* group whose mission became "Uplifting others and giving back to the community through service-learning art."

Initially I did not foresee the need for group bonding. However, collectively members' noted the need to become more unified with each other before looking outward into the community. The labyrinth was our first project and provided the most on-site work hours. As a means to develop a clear concept for the church and to develop group unity members were divided into sub groups to conduct research. Groups were asked to research the history and context of labyrinths, the symbolism of imagery, and the mathematic principles used to make a labyrinth, particularly regarding scaling a drawing to actual site. Many students logged over 40 hours each and working on the project became the perfect forum for group bonding. Many of the work days were on Saturdays and often were 10 hours' in duration (see Figure 6). These long

days allowed members time to interact, and cooperate often resulting in successful collaborations. The church provided a hot lunch on Saturday work sessions and many students used this as an opportunity to deepen their relationship bond with members. The social elements during snacks, meals, and non-work sessions were instrumental in building unity within the group. This relationship and rapport building was essential in the development of a strong, unified group that ultimately found significant meaning from peers and community interaction.



Figure 6. Students engaged in labyrinth work and bonding through socializing.

Informal interviews and student reflections were one of the resources used to conclude this finding as noted in these statements from club members;

The projects allowed me to grow closer to the art club group members. The projects, especially the labyrinth, required a lot of dedication, which meant I was able to see the members of our club a great deal more than I normally would. Thanks to the projects I have developed meaningful relationships with every member of the club. The time spent with my fellow art club members was great for bonding. I never would have realized what wonderful people they were if it were not for these projects. (Claire, personal communication, June 1, 2014)

Another student reported,

I believe the community projects have brought the members of the art club closer together. Students that did not know one another before have become the best of friends while working on projects for the community. The projects have also opened the eyes of the club members to the world outside of themselves and how their talents can be used for good. (Karen, personal communication, May 30, 2014)

As the depth of our work extended beyond the school related projects of prom and parades the group grew in size and averaged over 25 members who regularly attended the weekly meetings and off-site work collaborations. Interpersonal relations played a role all projects completed, as noted in a discussion with a club member about the special needs center mural. Rachael shared how initially she was focused on the children having special needs and hoped the group would be able to relate in conversation and collaborations while on site. After working on the project she realized the commonalties they shared.

No longer were we thinking about special needs but instead we focused on how common we were. Our conversations paralleled each other's as we learned about family, school, and personal interest. We got lost in the making of the artwork and forgot about the centers function-as a resource for special needs.(personal communication, May 8, 2014)

A Sense of Purpose

Providing meaningful experiences to students as an outlet to foster and cultivate a better understanding of self in relationship to peers, and the community was a focus of this research project. Many participants expressed a deeper understanding of compassion as expressed in project exemplars, interviews, and reflections. For example, after working on projects students were able to act on compassion without being prompted and furthermore recognized these acts empathy.

During the second semester a new student, Richard, arrived. He had been transferred from multiple foster homes and was dealing with many personal issues. His clothes, all-black, and gothic in style placed him into a stereo-typical mold and made it difficult for others to initiate conversation with him. For one student the labyrinth project helped create a platform to open dialog with Richard, and see beyond what others assumed about him. Jenny shared, “because of the experience of the labyrinth I learned to have a more open perspective on people and not be so centered on myself. The labyrinth allowed me to see that we are all on the same path but some are at different points in the journey” (Jenny, personal communication, May 9, 2014).

I realized how significant this empathic relationship was for this new student as he expressed how isolated and distraught he initially felt. At the end of the year he expressed to me the wiliness of several members of the art club and their outward expressions of compassion gave him a sense of acceptance. “When I moved here, I didn’t really have anything at all but you guys gave me what I needed to get by; love, friendship, and an equal eye. You didn’t put me down, in fact you all helped me up, you just didn’t know it” (Richard, personal communication, May 23, 2014). During the month of May the husband of the custodian on our hall passed away after battling a long illness. The fine arts hall collected money for her and Richard came to me and personally donated \$25 to the cause. He said he knows what it means to need something like appreciation. “She needs this money more than I do right now, if only to know we appreciate her and love her.” This was Richard’s continued effort to pay it forward for the acts of compassion many members of the art club showed to him. I believe the experience of the labyrinth gave those students a baseline for engaging in meaningful and compassionate action as they learned and applied universal commonalities to real-life applications.

Meaning was expressed consistently in the concept of giving to others. “The most meaningful part has been giving back. I really enjoy helping others and all of this has been great. I don’t care about awards or the recognition, I just love giving back” (Cady, personal communication, June 1, 2014). “I think the Children’s Hospital influenced me the most (see Figure 7). The fact that giving them capes brought such joy to their day changed my perspective on how a little act of kindness can go a long way” (Karen, personal communication, May 30, 2014). Students also expressed that these meaningful experiences and projects helped them correlate meaning into their own work. One student named Mark said that the works helped him become better in touch with emotional expression and presented ways for him to connect these themes to himself. Others noted that the works expanded their focus beyond self and helped them realize that we each share commonalities.

Every person requires the same basic needs, such as companionship, acceptance, and acknowledgement. By working with the children on the bottle top murals, I was able to see how happy they were to have someone spend the time to help them create something. It really showed how much of an impact that art can have on others
(Claire, personal communication, June 1, 2014)

Andrew expressed, “The tie-dyed hero bag sets and bottle top mural projects taught me that working with children is a great experience and that a child's smile makes it all worth it”

(Andrew, personal communication, June 1, 2014).



Figure 7. Students delivering art bags to patients at the Children's Hospital of Georgia.

Often it was an emotional change set forth from the art-making experiences. Students learned that service-learning extends beyond the making of a visual product and resonates with participants, peers, and community. This again validates the scholarly notes of Lowenfeld (1957) and Eisner (1972) on process inquiry being important. Art and art-making is a vehicle for creative and mental growth as Eisner noted about Lowenfeld's thesis and ideas on human development that art is but a means for developing a seeing, thinking, and creative human being; these service-learning projects assisted in developing the process for understanding an applying meaning. As for transformation, the change is more emotional and less physical. Paul McCartney and John Lennon best summarized this transformation in their song *I'm looking through you*, “You don't look different, but you have changed” (Lennon & McCartney, 1965, track 3).

During one site project, Andrew found a deep connection to empathy and compassion for others who are sick. Andrew has a heart defect in the form of a heart murmur and spent many pre-adolescent days in the children's hospital getting scans and checked for abnormalities. Andrew attended the super hero cape bag distribution and realized for the first time how fortunate he was. His regard for the children in the unit was not sympathy but empathy, as he was once in that bed getting tested, as retold by Andrew, "The trip to the hospital helped remind me that I was lucky with my heart murmur, where it could have been worse. I never understood exactly how lucky I was until then" (Andrew, personal communication, June 6, 2014). Andrew later went on to share that he was touched by how happy the children were to see us and how that little bag of art materials and a cape helped them forget for just a moment how sick they were.

Connection

The projects on the surface were designed to connect to the art to the community through a series of visual products; the deeper application was the connection that was made to people, peers, and community members. Members who initially were reclusive and shy shared their voice and realized they had leadership potential from the realized connection to the project work. "I learned that I can be really open with some people if I try and talk with them" (Cady, personal communication, June 1, 2014).

I learned that there are times to be leaders and times to be servants. The best leaders are both at the same time. Before becoming involved with the projects, I was always a reserved person. I did not usually involve myself in group events. I never thought that I'd have much to offer. These projects have shown me that everyone can offer something.

The first step, I learned, is to simply apply yourself and connect. I also learned that I can be a good leader. My calm composure makes people more willing to listen to me as well

as trust me. Throughout the projects, I was forced to fall back upon my leadership skills.

(Claire, personal communication, June 1, 2014)

The students have seen the community members using the walking labyrinth and heard from them regarding their gratefulness in receiving the path.

The labyrinth and bottle cap murals have been great experiences to me because the people at the Episcopal Church and Center for New Beginnings were so kind and caring and they were so happy when they saw what we all created for them. (Claire, personal communication, June 1, 2014)

Many members have expressed an interest in continuing to work with the Center and the church beyond the *ARTreach* collaborations.

The work that we did with the special needs children really validated my future career choices. I had always hoped to work with children but now I know I want my focus to be with special needs children. It was a life altering experience (see Figure 11). (Rachael, personal communication, May 8, 2014)



Figure 8. Art club member work individually with children from The Center for New Beginnings.

Growth

Art as an extension beyond function came to the forefront in this finding on growth. I observed how students used the projects as a springboard to discuss and demonstrate leadership, activism, and unity. Art club member Regina says of the experience in relationship to her personal growth,

I have thoroughly enjoyed the community projects due to the increased exposure to various people in the community as well as the opportunity to witness others growing to appreciate art for more than just aesthetics. I personally felt inspired by the way that the projects, labyrinth, murals, and the capes, created a relationship between art and service to others, and showed that while there is an aesthetic function of art, it also functions as a source of unity in communities. I also grew from this experience that often, I am far too self- consumed, and I have made an effort to be more servant hearted and minded.(Regina, personal communication, June 1, 2014)

Many students have emerged as leaders and showing great initiative. During work site sessions many students delegated responsibilities to fellow group members to expedite work and progress. The process of site work presented students with opportunities' to demonstrate leadership and develop a strong work ethic. Students took pride in their product and often worked through poor weather conditions like rain or cold (see Figure 9). The application of these experiences to Allison's life was summarized in her statement;

These projects have helped me understand myself more in depth. By working on these projects I have been able to get a better grip on what I want my goals in life to be and what I'd like to accomplish for myself throughout the rest of high school and life. These projects have taught me how to understand myself better and grow into a more compassionate person. (Allison, personal communication, June 1, 2014)



Figure 9. Art club member working on the labyrinth despite the rain.

A student's dedication to project completion and developing a strong work ethic was demonstrated and observed throughout the projects. Karen summarized her thoughts on work ethic and compromise in this statement,

From these projects I have learned that I am capable of more work than I ever thought I could do. I have also learned that I am capable of compromise with others I don't especially like. I know I can put aside my differences for the greater good of each project. After each project I found pride and confidence in myself. (Karen, personal communication, May 30, 2014)

Enjoyment

There was overwhelming consensus from the group that these projects were enjoyable. Most students found joy in cooperating and collaborating in group service-learning projects. The projects evoked a range of emotions throughout the year; however the focus on joy, enjoyment, and happiness is prevalent. The joy has come in the form of doing good for others and in collaborating with other peers and community members. Regina stated,

Participating in the creation of both the labyrinth and the bottle top mural, has expanded my perspective and allowed me to see the joy that comes with serving others. There are few feelings better than the sense of accomplishment and oneness with community that is gained through creating a lasting and purposeful piece, such as the labyrinth, for one's community. (Regina, personal communication, June 1, 2014)

Cady also stated, "Giving back to the community was really fun and felt good" (Cady, personal communication, June 1, 2014). Allison best summarizes the experiences for most participants, "Overall the most meaningful part of this work is the happiness that is created by these projects (see Figure 10)" (Allison, personal communication, June 1, 2014).



Figure 10. Art club members found enjoyment in tie-dying t-shirts.

The teacher as guide

As the initial spark of empathy in action through service-learning projects I set out on this research project with a desire to learn what the role of the teacher would be in providing meaningful experiences. During this project I was not only the facilitator but also a participant and actively helped make and create the products. As the guide, I attempted to lay the groundwork so the students would be provided a sound foundation to explore and create. There was a lot of behind the scenes work done in an attempt to make operations seem spontaneous; this I felt was my responsibility, as I wanted the students to focus on the peer and community interaction. I found that the teacher needs to articulate ideas in a manner that engages students. Therefore an important factor for articulating the mission adoption and project overview was in my visual organization. I used my prior graphic design skills to create a visually stimulating graphics and slide shows, highlighting examples of service-learning projects. The use of graphics and visuals added to the student buy-in and gave the art club needed momentum.

This preliminary work included arranging work sites, correlating dates, times, and most importantly arranging funding to conduct the study. Our initial project with the Episcopal Church was the seed for multiple projects. Upon meeting with the church, we discussed how we were realigning our mission and they noted they were looking to create a labyrinth. Our partnership resulted in the conceptualization, design, and implementation of the painted labyrinth. In exchange for our volunteer services the church offered to pay for all materials for the project and donate \$1,000 to our club. This seed money assisted greatly in creating other projects and also helped us purchase student designed T-shirts to sell as a fundraiser in an attempt to generate new art club funds. As a fellow inquirer, I followed the principals outlined by Stewart and Walker,

(2005) keeping much of my focus on inquiry, digging, questioning, and process discovery. As a result I found some conclusions I did not necessarily seek out. In particular was the finding on unity through group bonding. They needed rapport and bonding sessions prior to being asked to connect to community, the group within needed reinforcement. This was an oversight on my part but I discovered it as I witnessed the onsite work being done and watched as members products were refined as the groups relationships were strengthened. A substantial finding that can be correlated to other community service-learning group work. Internal bonding is necessary for meaningful group experiences.

From this project I have learned practices that connect the teacher to that of guide. I watched as scenarios unfolded and knew that failure was imminent. I did not intervene and allowed the situation to unfold anticipating a cooperative group effort would emerge, and often times it did as members collaborated on solutions. I found myself modeling the strategies expressed by Vieth (1999) in presenting meaningful, engaging experiences that could be used as a platform for genuine student expression. I also found that developing an ongoing dialog and rapport with students essential in collecting authentic findings. The trust and warmth established between me and students allowed students to openly and honestly express their feelings.

Summary Across all Findings

Looking back over the Capstone project I have realized what an influential and powerful topic I chose to embed into the art club. I observed empathetic behaviors in action through collaborations with peers and community members. I documented enormous growth through leadership, and collaborations as students came to understand their own identity in relationship to overarching ideas. Students have helped define empathy through their actions and modeled behavior. While not all members exhibited transformed behaviors or characteristics an

overwhelming number demonstrated a stronger sense of compassion and empathy for self, peers, and community.

Discussion and Conclusion

Growth was observed in the amount of new members attending weekly meetings. The initial art club averaged 5 members and grew to over 25. Original members shared that they were initially attracted to the former art club as a means to socialize with their friends, however the inconsistency in direction waned the intensity in work and members eventually stopped attending. The new surge is associated with a two-fold conclusion; first the art club acts as portal for friends to gather and socialize, secondly the relationships garnered infused with service-learning work created momentum and direction in the group adding to an increase in participant inquiries and memberships attained. Members felt like they were making a real difference in the work being done. A club without purpose or direction would likely limit the club's growth and parallel the results of the former club founded on superficial art projects and socializing. The *ARTreach* club's results are a balance of relationships and purposeful service for others. What I found interesting is throughout the year, the art club itself grew with each project. "Throughout the year, members would bring their friends to help with each project and as a result the friends would become members. It became easier to get projects done faster and more efficiently" (Karen, personal communication, May 30, 2014).

One goal of this project was to have students look beyond themselves and develop compassion and empathy for peers and community while reflecting on their own personal identity. As Eisner (1994) reminds us, "When we define the curriculum, we are also defining the opportunities the young will have to experience different forms of consciousness" (p. 44). In constructing this service-learning group curriculum I have established a platform for students to construct

meaning based on experiences and in turn focus process-inquiry, experiences, and meaning making in developing a well-round human being.

Discussion and Interpretation of Findings

The results concluded that when given the platform and opportunity teenagers are not as complacent as society might deem, in fact leadership, empathy, and meaningful insights were recorded as a result of this purpose driven service-work. Students discovered that art extends beyond aesthetic or functional application and can lead to greater introspection in relationship to self, peers, or community.

While I observed multiple student transformations during this project work, one stood out for demonstrating personal growth and maturation. Claire was especially influenced over the year from the club's work and found enjoyment in meeting new people, working toward a purpose, and finishing a product. Claire transferred to our school district a couple years ago and made attempts to embed herself within established friend groups that had been together since early primary school days, a difficult task given the long rapport they had built over time. I watched over the year as Claire developed deep relationships with club members and watched her demonstrate considerable leadership growth. Claire was a reserved, shy, and remarkably introverted student who limited her participation in after school activities mostly due to her inability to really connect to her peers. The club work gave Claire the platform to be a vocal participant and through this work Claire grew as an individual and as an artist. "I absolutely loved doing the community projects! They were fun and gave our group a purpose. Instead of simply doing projects for ourselves, we began to reach out to others" (Claire, personal communication, June 1, 2014).

I soon witnessed Claire's personal artwork being affected by the focus on universal themes and attributed this to all the service-learning work being done. Claire was never overly conscious of her time as an act of service until we began these projects. Claire shared how this work had her rethink service in this statement,

These caused me to pause and reflect on time for a bit, especially the labyrinth. When Mr. Dodson first explained the labyrinth to us, I was overwhelmed by how large it was supposed to be. I thought that I would never have enough time to work on it. Yet as we began working on it, I found myself not worrying about time because it was just so much fun. I began to look forward to all the long work sessions. I felt accomplished and proud of what we were doing. The projects helped me to come out of my shell. I am still reserved but now I know that I also need to involve myself and let myself have some fun once in a while. (Claire, personal communication, June 1, 2014)

Claire has emerged as a leader and is respected by her peers, club members, community, and faculty. She is also a strong candidate for a leadership position next year in the art club. Claire is also now involved in several other school organizations. Without the experience of this club and the activities conducted I suspect that Claire may have remained isolated, never really realizing her personal strength and the strong compassionate connection she has for others.

This project worked to educate all involved about compassion, empathy and service-learning including faculty, staff, students, and community members. My club members have exhibited an increase in empathic behaviors during our meetings. Working on site as noted during the initial conceptualizing and implementation of the labyrinth worked to build rapport and develop relationship within the group. Overall, these service-learning projects were found to be positively influential, enjoyable, and meaningful to the majority of participants.

A strong sense of accomplishment was recorded during the study as members worked long hours and used their time and talents in service to create a common product collaboratively made. Members often remarked they were pleased they “made a mark” that could visually stand the test of time. Eventually they stated they could come back and say, “I did that, I helped make a difference, I left my mark.” The marks being left are more than the physical stokes from paint but the marks left on people and the community. This is where the impact of time will be tested as members and participants will recall the feelings of compassion and empathy fostered from the service-learning experiences and projects.

Significance, Implications, and Recommendations

Often in the classroom I witness selfish personality characteristics that hinder the growth of individuals. These characteristics limit their ability to see commonalities among others. As an educator I want to teach students to think beyond themselves. In doing so, I try to do my part to improve our societal culture outlook (Walker, 2001). After six years teaching I have witnessed that many students display a sense of entitlement. This is one example of why this study was needed. I developed a program of study, *ARTreach*, that promotes individual introspection, fosters empathy through service-learning projects, and redirects self-centered behaviors. This study is relevant to art educators and students looking to engage in meaningful art experiences that correlate compassion, civic involvement, leadership initiative, and identity reflection. This is also a great resource for educators looking to connect students to their communities.

The modeled behaviors mirror the thoughts of Eisner (1998) and Gioia (2009) on art education being a framework to creating a complete, well-round, compassionate, person of the world. In connection to the art education community and understating how to create a collaborative group that is steeped in relationship development and community involvement, one

could use the findings from this study as a basis. The founding group needs time to develop relationships and strategies and exercises designed to build trust and rapport could be beneficial.

In educating students about art I am working toward my life's work, helping others grow into being all they can be. Hopefully my work with them I can instill an intrinsic value in the artwork they conceive, create, and make. While the study conducted here is not faith-based, it does strive to serve a higher calling; doing good for others through talents and time and developing a greater sense of empathy for fellow man.

This study, the projects, capstone paper, and the *ARTreach* website were a result of the research conducted. The findings will benefit any art education instructor that wants to foster and develop compassion, empathy, and self-identity reflection through art service-learning experiences. The materials and research collected throughout this study are available on the website in addition interested parties can find process photographs, completed projects exemplars, and a supply list. The website can serve as inspiration for educators looking to participate in service-learning projects. This website also serves as valuable marketing tool for the art club as community members can request projects and donations can be accepted. The website can be located at this address <http://bchsartreach.weebly.com/> (see Figure 11).



Figure 11. ARTreach website.

Conclusion and Forward Considerations

Through this project I have learned how to infuse meaningful experiences into an after-school art club designed to foster empathy amongst participants. My future *ARTreach* members will continue to develop projects that meet the club's mission outline in an attempt to sustain the successes realized during this research project. This research project has overall influenced my teaching as I am more aware of how influential meaningful experiences and relationships are in developing complete human beings. I will continue to encourage and foster an environment where students are free to develop and demonstrate compassion for self, and community. In addition I foresee more collaborative in course projects that stem beyond the after school club. The art club looks to continue working with service-learning projects and has a new project slated to begin this upcoming school year. The club aims to take the scrap material from the tie-dyed t-shirts and create stuffed animals for the Ronald McDonald house. The animals will be given to children who are staying long term at the local children's hospital or given to siblings

staying at the Ronald McDonald house. I look to submit these research findings to art education periodicals in addition I hope to present this research at the state and national art education conference. I am hopeful to continue advancing this service-learning research. In the process of reading about different types of research methods, I discovered participatory action research (PAR) and thought it to be a perfect match for the future of this study. PAR includes the participants in every stage of the process. As a participant they are involved in creating the research questions, selecting the site, selecting the research method, assisting in data collection, and analyzing the data. Their involvement is instrumental and often part of social change.

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Appendix A
IRB Protocol Submission Form

UFIRB 02 – Social & Behavioral Research

Protocol Submission Form

This form must be typed. Send this form and the supporting documents to IRB02, PO Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611. Should you have questions about completing this form, call 352-392-0433.

Title of Protocol:	ARTreach: Uplifting others and giving back through art with purpose		
Principal Investigator:	W. Stan Dodson	UFID #: [REDACTED]	
Degree / Title:	Master of Art in Art Education	Mailing Address: [REDACTED]	Email:sdodson13@ufl.edu
Department:	School of Art and Art History		Telephone #:706-373-1300
Co-Investigator(s):		UFID#: [REDACTED]	Email: mtilland@ufl.edu
Supervisor (If PI is student):	Michelle Tillander	UFID#: [REDACTED]	
Degree / Title:	PhD	Mailing Address: College of Fine Arts 101 FAA PO Box 115800	Email : mtilland@ufl.edu
Department:	School of Art and Art History	Gainesville FL 32611-5800	Telephone #: [REDACTED]
Date of Proposed Research:	Spring 2014		
Source of Funding (A copy of the grant proposal must be submitted with this protocol if funding is involved):			

Scientific Purpose of the Study: To develop and explore pedagogy that promotes art with social purpose through an after-school group called ARTreach. This will support the Principle Investigator's examination such projects as a means of building empathy in students and increasing their engagement with their communities.

Describe the Research Methodology in Non-Technical Language: *(Explain what will be done with or to the research participant.)*

Action Research methods will be used for this study. While advising the high school after school art club, ARTreach. I will observe ways in which students develop empathy, compassion, community collaboration and self-identity. During a variety of service learning projects aimed at giving back to others and using artistic talents to better serve community, school and self I will collect student reflections, document artwork created, and converse with students who volunteer to participate in my research. I will have informal conversations with the students as the projects evolve and I will keep journal notes about these conversations.

Describe Potential Benefits: The benefit of this research to art education is to demonstrate art with purpose and possible correlations to compassion for self, community, and peers. I hope to provide insights and examples of how to increase compassion and empathic behaviors through social and civic action realized through artmaking. I hope students will feel compelled to continue their civic participation and community service oriented project after the conclusion of the study.

Describe Potential Risks: *(If risk of physical, psychological or economic harm may be involved, describe the steps taken to protect participant.)*

Students who volunteer to participate will remain anonymous in any data that I collect. There are no risks associated in participating in this research.

Describe How Participant(s) Will Be Recruited: Participants are already members of the after school art club. I will ask them if they are interested in volunteering to participate in the research.

Maximum Number of Participants (to be approached with consent)	35	Age Range of Participants:	14-19	Amount of Compensation/course credit:	No Compensation
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Describe the Informed Consent Process. Students will be asked to volunteer to participate in the research. Students from the Burke County High School art club will be asked if they would like to volunteer to participate in this study. Participants who volunteer will then be asked to sign the consent/assent forms.

(SIGNATURE SECTION)

Principal Investigator(s) Signature:	Stan Dodson	Date:
Co-Investigator(s) Signature(s):		Date:
Supervisor's Signature (if PI is a student):	Michelle Tillander	Date:
Department Chair Signature:		Date:

Appendix B
Assent for Students

ARTreach: Uplifting Others and Giving Back Through Art with Purpose

Purpose of the research study:

The purpose of this study is to examine art with purpose and the correlation to compassion for self, community, and you peers through art education and collaborative community service projects.

What you will be asked to do in the study:

The Burke County High School after-school art club, known as ARTreach, will develop a new mission with service and civic participation as a central focus. Art club members will collaborate with one another and with community partners to create works that specifically benefits students and enrich community participation. Students will reflect on the projects as they develop, helping to improve and develop the group's mission and curriculum to its fullest potential. This program of study will involve group work, discussions, and art-making. Activities will not be different from what you normally experience during the club's meeting.

Time required:

After-school club meetings, two-hours, once a week, for two months.

Participation, Risks and Rewards:

Participation in this study is voluntary. There are no risks with participation. There is also no penalty for not participating. The rewards for participating in this research include being part of a study that informs the discipline of art education in regard to service learning.

Right to withdraw from the study:

You have the right to withdraw from the study at anytime without consequence.

Agreement:

I have read the procedure described above. I understand that as a student in art club, my participation in this study is *not* required. I voluntarily agree to participate in the project and I understand that the project is to be completed during the art club meetings.

Participant name: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C**Informed Consent for participants 18-19 years old***ARTreach: Uplifting Others and Giving Back Through Art with Purpose***Purpose of the research study:**

The purpose of this study is to examine art with purpose and the correlation to compassion for self, community, and you peers through art education and collaborative community service projects.

What you will be asked to do in the study:

The Burke County High School after-school art club, known as ARTreach, will develop a new mission with service and civic participation as a central focus. Art club members will collaborate with one another and with community partners to create works that specifically benefits students and enrich community participation. Students will reflect on the projects as they develop, helping to improve and develop the group's mission and curriculum to its fullest potential. This program of study will involve group work, discussions, and art-making. Activities will not be different from what you normally experience during the club's meeting.

Time required:

After-school club meetings, two-hours, once a week, for two months.

Participation, Risks and Rewards:

Participation in this study is voluntary. There are no risks with participation. There is also no penalty for not participating. The rewards for participating in this research include being part of a study that informs the discipline of art education in regard to service learning. Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law.

Right to withdraw from the study:

You have the right to withdraw from the study at anytime without consequence.

Agreement:

I have read the procedure described above, I voluntarily give my consent,
 _____ (print name), to participate in Stan Dodson's study
 incorporating art with purpose into the after school art club projects.

 Participant signature

 date

Appendix D

Parent Consent Form

April 2014

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am a graduate student with the Department of Fine Arts at the University of Florida. As part of my coursework I am conducting research on how making art with purpose can contribute to student development of compassion for self, community, and peers. The purpose of this study is to develop and explore how creating such art can be transformative for a school, student, and community.

The Burke County High School art club, known as ARTreach, will be the focus this research study. The art club will develop a mission statement with service, and civic participation as a central focus. Students will work on group work, discussions, and art-making in collaboration with various community partners. Throughout the process, students will be given opportunities to provide voluntary feedback about the projects. These site-specific works will involve creating meaning-making art through compassionate-based, service-learning projects.

Informal, conversational questions will be asked to participants during meetings and project work time. The identity of students will be protected through the use of pseudonyms in all reports and your child's identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. Participation in this study is voluntary and will not impact their participation in the afterschool art club. This research is for educational purposes only and will be shared through professional presentations and publication. There are no risks expected with this study, nor is any compensation being offered. However, I hope to see your child benefit from this program with a continued vision for civic engagement, community collaboration, and empathic understanding. You and your child have the right to withdraw consent, without consequence at any time.

If you have any questions about this research protocol, please contact me at 706-373-1300 or my facility supervisor, Dr. Jodi Kushins at 352-392-9977 or jkushins@ufl.edu. Questions or concerns about your child's rights as a research participant may be directed to the IRB02 Office, Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250; phone (352) 392-0433.

Thank you,

Stan Dodson

I have read the procedure described above, I voluntarily give my consent for my child,

_____ (print name), to participate in Stan Dodson's study incorporating art with purpose into the after school art club projects.

Parent signature

Date

Appendix E
Administrative Approval Form

Burke County High School 1057 Burke Veterans Parkway
Waynesboro, GA 30830
Phone: (706) 554-6691 - Fax: (706) 554-8070
Mr. Sam Adkins, Principal

April 13, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

Stan Dodson has permission to conduct research with students at Burke County High School. I understand this research is being collected as part of a graduate student project and thesis.

Mr. Dodson's research emphasis is to develop and explore pedagogy that promotes art with social purpose through an after-school group known as *ARTreach*. Data collected will support the examination of such projects as a means to build empathy in students and increase engagement with their communities.

I understand Mr. Dodson will facilitate a variety of service learning projects and collect student reflections from volunteers agreeing to participate. Mr. Dodson will ask student volunteers to sign the consent/assent forms detailing the research emphasis and expectations.

There are no potential physical risks or physical discomfort that will take place during this research. The written information provided by student reflections will remain with the principle researcher, but findings will be available to the public through the University of Florida. Students who volunteer to participate will remain anonymous in any data that is collected.

Students can choose whether or not to be in this study. If they choose to volunteer to be in the study, they may withdraw at any point without consequence of any kind. Students who choose not to participate in the research study will not be excluded from any art club projects or activities.

Questions or concerns about this research can be answered by contacting Stan Dodson, principle researcher 706-373-1300 or email sdodson@burke.k12.ga.us

Regards,
Sam Adkins
Principal
Burke County High School

List of Figures with Figure Captions

Figure 1. The labyrinth work at St. Michael's Episcopal Church with details of before and after

Figure 2. The bottle top mural for The Center for New Beginnings detailing before and after

Figure 3. Children's Hospital art bags with contents of markers, mask, and superhero cape

Figure 4. Empathy synthesis matrix outlining student responses into common theme categories

Figure 5. Triangulation Data Analysis

Figure 6. Students engaged in labyrinth work and bonding through socializing

Figure 7. Students delivering art bags to patients at the Children's Hospital of Georgia

Figure 8. Art club member work individually with children from The Center for New Beginnings

Figure 9. Art club member working on the labyrinth despite the rain

Figure 10. Art club members found enjoyment in tye-dying t-shirts

Figure 11. *ARTreach* website

Author Biography

Stan Dodson has been an art educator since 2008, originally Mr. Dodson started out as a print graphic artist and illustrator for the newspaper, *The Augusta Chronicle*. After more than a decade in graphic design he pursued a career as an artist/educator and currently teaches high school art in Burke County Georgia. Mr. Dodson grew up in coastal Beaufort, SC where and graduated from Battery Creek High School and attended the prestigious *South Carolina Governors School for the Arts* program. He graduated from *Ringling College of Art and Design* with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in illustration (2000) and plans to graduate from the University of Florida with a Masters of Art in Art Education in the summer of 2014. In 2010 Mr. Dodson received the Morris Museum of Art Outstanding Teacher in Art Award. In 2011, he was named his school teacher of the year and subsequently in 2012 was named the county teacher of year. He is actively involved in the *Georgia Art Education Association* and is currently the District 6 co-president. Mr. Dodson plans to continue teaching high school art and recently launched the schools inaugural AP studio art courses. Mr. Dodson lives in Augusta, Georgia with his wife, son and daughter and enjoys painting and creating meaningful art experiences. Mr. Dodson strives to share Eliot Eisner's vision of art as a vehicle through which we view the world, create meaning, and develop our minds. For more information about Mr. Dodson's work, curriculum, and classroom, visit www.standodson.weebly.com.