

UNDERSTANDING HOW ADOLESCENT VISUAL CULTURE
CAN IMPROVE STUDENT ARTISTIC CREATIVITY

by

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ABSTRACT

Visual intelligence is comprised of images and information that is formed through experiences. This art-based study explores adolescent visual culture as a compelling force of student experience in the art classroom. To discover what comprised adolescent visual culture and how it could be incorporated into curriculum, this study describes how data was compiled through student surveys, formal and informal interviews, student narratives, and digital photographic archiving. The primary influence in adolescent visual culture was determined to be anime, cartoon and comic stimuli that students experienced through electronic devices and multiple media applications. An art-based study was conducted to create a figurative sculpture that used adolescent visual culture as a thematic concept and was recorded through journal entries and digital photo archiving. The final results of the study was applied to teaching strategies and concepts in a unit plan to use adolescent visual culture to engage students with subject matter that is relevant to their visual culture, and to increase their knowledge and appreciation of art.

Keywords: adolescent visual culture, cartoons, anime, comics, intrinsic motivation

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I would like to express my admiration for my fellow educators. My peers have set the standards to which I prevail, and my success is at a height with those that see me as an equal.

I would also like to dedicate my work to my daughters Taylor and Jacquelynn. I hope the example I provide for them is equal to the tasks that await their endeavors throughout life.

Table of Contents

| | Page |
|-------------------------------------------|------|
| ABSTRACT..... | ii |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS..... | iii |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS..... | iv |
| LIST OF TABLES..... | ix |
| LIST OF FIGURES..... | x |
| CHAPTER | |
| 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY..... | 1 |
| Background to the Study..... | 1 |
| Research Goals..... | 2 |
| Research Questions..... | 3 |
| Research Methods..... | 3 |
| Analysis of student visual literacy..... | 3 |
| Analysis of peer-reviewed literature..... | 4 |
| Personal artistic analysis..... | 4 |
| Conceptual Framework..... | 4 |
| Theoretical Framework..... | 5 |
| Significance of the Study..... | 6 |
| Limitations of the Study..... | 7 |
| Methodological constraints..... | 7 |
| Time constraints..... | 7 |
| Researcher’s artistic constraints..... | 7 |
| Definition of Terms..... | 8 |

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Summary of Chapter One..... | 9 |
| Plan of Chapters..... | 9 |
| 2. LITERATURE REVIEW..... | 10 |
| Introduction..... | 10 |
| Conceptual Framework..... | 10 |
| Review of the Literature..... | 12 |
| Supportive theoretical literature..... | 12 |
| Inconsistencies in visual culture theory that affect practice..... | 13 |
| Visual culture art-based practice..... | 14 |
| Conclusion..... | 15 |
| 3. METHODOLOGY..... | 17 |
| Design of the Study..... | 17 |
| Primary Research Methods of Data Collection..... | 18 |
| Participant observation..... | 18 |
| Identifying patterns..... | 18 |
| Interviewing..... | 19 |
| Informal method..... | 19 |
| Structured method..... | 19 |
| Questionnaires and surveys..... | 20 |
| Open-ended research project..... | 23 |
| Student narratives..... | 24 |
| Contemporary Tools for Data Collection..... | 25 |
| Digital photography..... | 25 |
| Art as Data..... | 26 |

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Artist journal..... | 26 |
| Art-based figure sculpture construction..... | 27 |
| Researcher’s digital photo archive..... | 27 |
| Data Analysis..... | 28 |
| Reading student data and organizing memos..... | 28 |
| Categorizing data for coding and thematic analysis..... | 28 |
| Connecting data analysis for curriculum development..... | 28 |
| Curriculum Development..... | 29 |
| Assessment of student work..... | 29 |
| Formative assessments..... | 29 |
| Summative assessment..... | 30 |
| Conclusion..... | 30 |
| 4. RESULTS OF THE STUDY..... | 31 |
| Introduction..... | 31 |
| Significance of the Study..... | 31 |
| How findings are consistent with other knowledge..... | 31 |
| Bias and Validity..... | 32 |
| Constraints of the research..... | 32 |
| Bias..... | 33 |
| Analysis of the Data..... | 34 |
| Student data that comprised adolescent visual culture..... | 34 |
| Researcher’s art-based data using adolescent visual culture..... | 35 |
| Student survey part one data..... | 35 |
| Analysis of data from student survey part one..... | 36 |

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Student survey part two data..... | 39 |
| Analysis of data from student survey part two..... | 41 |
| Data analysis of student surveys..... | 41 |
| Open-ended research paper assignment..... | 42 |
| Data from open-ended research paper assignment..... | 42 |
| Data analysis of open-ended research paper assignment..... | 42 |
| Researcher’s personal art journal data..... | 42 |
| Preliminary product data of researcher’s personal art..... | 44 |
| Experimenting with materials..... | 44 |
| Personal artwork final product data..... | 46 |
| Results..... | 47 |
| Data results from student survey..... | 47 |
| Data results from researcher’s final product..... | 47 |
| Conclusion..... | 49 |
| 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION..... | 50 |
| Introduction..... | 50 |
| Discussion..... | 50 |
| Personal impact of the study..... | 50 |
| Impact on practice..... | 51 |
| Recommendations..... | 52 |
| Conclusion to the Research..... | 53 |
| Advice to the field of art education..... | 53 |
| Advice to art teachers..... | 54 |
| REFERENCES..... | 55 |

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----|
| APPENDIX..... | 58 |
| Appendix A..... | 58 |
| A1 Art Criticism: A Way to Talk About Art..... | 58 |
| A2 Art Criticism: A Way to Talk About Art (cont.)..... | 59 |
| A3 Art Criticism: A Way to Talk About Art (cont.)..... | 60 |
| A4 Unit Plan..... | 61 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| 2.1 Conceptual Framework..... | 11 |
| 3.1 Data Collection Chart..... | 17 |
| 4.1 Student Survey Part One Data..... | 36 |
| 4.2 Student Survey Part Two Data..... | 40 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 3.1 Example of Student Project Critique Outline..... | 19 |
| 3.2 Example of Student Questionnaire Part One..... | 20 |
| 3.3 Example of Student Questionnaire Part Two..... | 21 |
| 3.4 Example of Student Questionnaire Part 2 (continued)..... | 22 |
| 3.5 Example of Open-ended Research Paper..... | 23 |
| 3.6 Example of Student Narrative..... | 24 |
| 3.7 Example of Student Project Data Collected Digitally..... | 25 |
| 3.8 Example of Researcher’s Artist Journal..... | 26 |
| 3.9 Examples of Researcher’s Digital Photo Archive..... | 27 |
| 4.1 Preliminary Sketches and Journal Entries..... | 43 |
| 4.2 Preliminary Product Digital Photo Data..... | 45 |
| 4.3 Art-based Research Final Product..... | 46 |

Chapter One: Introduction

Background to the Study

Adolescent visual culture is comprised of a vast amount of historical connections to the manufacture and distribution of commercial objects, including a plethora of previously recorded and ever changing archives of commercials, advertisements, and productions. In turn, art educators frequently discover the curriculum does not always embrace the imagery that comprises student culture and experience. It is therefore of great importance to connect student learning to student experiences, not only to keep students engaged in class, but also improve student visual literacy and artistic creativity.

Kay, (1998) writes “memory and thought act upon our perceptions to produce images in our minds” (p. 268). For as much as the popular adolescent culture of comics, cartoons, and anime influences student behavior; art educators must ask the question: how can comic books, graphic novels, anime, and cartoons influence adolescent visual literacy and artistic creativity? High school students are very interested in this type of popular culture. When students are left to find resources of their own for creative inspiration, students will use designs that are comprised mostly of the images from comic books, anime and cartoons.

The background of the art-based study included the personal experience of the researcher as a high school art teacher and artist. His career as an art teacher was the impetus to study adolescent visual culture as a focal point to create interesting and engaging lessons for his students. The researcher’s previous experience as an editorial cartoonist enabled him to see the extent of influence the cartoon image has on communicating ideas in a visual culture context. There was also a personal interest in how most cultures use dolls as a form of small figure to teach or amuse their children. Dolls perform an important role in child play and teaching cultural values and customs. In more recent Western culture, action figures based on invented television

and movie characters have been not only commercial successes, but also an influential force in popular adolescent culture.

Small figure sculptures are important to many aspects of culture, technology and business. According to Hucko and Simpson, (2001) Katsina dolls or “Katsina Tihu” as they are called in the Hopi language, embody the spirit essence of all things, people, plants and animals. Popular western adolescent culture often portrays anime, comic book, and cartoon characters with supernatural powers with extraordinary capacities to do good or evil, which make an interesting philosophical connection to Katsina Tihu. The research created an excellent opportunity to study and improve student artistic creativity in the classroom. The sculptural aspect of Katsina Tihu, combined with the influence of comics, anime and cartoons, provided a broad sculptural platform from which to create contemporary works of art.

Research Goals

The art-based research focused on examining how the researcher could combine small figure sculpture construction, using comics and anime from adolescent visual culture, to communicate artistic concepts and processes with contemporary themes. The research goals in the study were to assess the extent to which adolescent visual culture could affect artistic creativity, and influence the intrinsic motivation of students. Additional data assessed how adolescents could use analogical thinking and knowledge of popular culture to understand unknown phenomenon or domain. The evaluation of collected data helped to establish new teaching strategies, which will assist art educators to create engaging curriculum that is connected to adolescent visual culture, and improve adolescent visual literacy.

Research Questions

The research in this study explored the question; could combining adolescent visual culture and small figure sculpture construction affect the artistic creativity and intrinsic motivation of students? The researcher made a personal exploration to assess how small figures could be constructed from a variety of materials, which would connect to student knowledge and experience. Additional data was collected to discover new teaching strategies, which were used to create engaging curriculum that is connected to adolescent visual culture.

Research Methods

The research consisted of developing questionnaires to determine base lines for how much influence adolescent visual culture had on student creativity. Data collected from student assignments demonstrated where students obtained artistic references. Data was also collected from interviews with students, student academic records, and peer reviewed research in visual culture. Additional data was recorded and organized from the researcher's own personal studies and artistic analysis of his work in the construction of small figure sculptures.

Analysis of student visual literacy.

Students were given a questionnaire to answer while taking their final semester exam. In the development of research questions, a sampling approach was used to state generic questions about a broad population, and combine interview studies in a case group of students. The questionnaire combined written answer opinion questions, image recognition, and self-evaluation questions. Additional data was taken from records of student projects made throughout the school year. The data provided the researcher with the information needed to consider to what extent do adolescents use cartoon, anime and comic book characters as reference for creative inspiration in art making.

Analysis of peer-reviewed literature.

Data was collected, organized, and evaluated from peer-reviewed scholarly research on visual culture, teaching conceptual skills, analyzing mass media influence, pedagogy, and the visual culture of children and youth. The research in the study is a compilation of ideas that are derived from what is technically known about adolescent visual culture and how artistic creativity can be influenced.

Personal artistic analysis.

The exploratory processes of building small figure sculpture were examined by the researcher. The information was gathered in journal writing throughout the entire process of the figure sculpture construction. The conceptual idea of the piece was documented in sketches and journal writing. The design and preliminary maquettes were photographed and archived; as were the processes of construction of the figure sculpture from beginning to completion. A critique from a personal perspective, as well as comments from a peer group of artists contributed to final outcome analysis.

Conceptual Framework

The research in this study was partially influenced by the work of Fransecky and Debes, (1972) whose work was reviewed by Avgerinou and Ericson, (1997) and their investigation of visual literacy. Their belief was that a human being can develop by seeing and at the same time integrate other sensory experiences, and the development of these competencies is fundamental to normal human learning. The research study's conceptual framework explored the formal and informal knowledge found in data gathered from surveys, questionnaires, peer reviewed journals, and personal artistic studies. Trafi-Prats, (2009) conceived art as a visual event influenced by

conceptual ideas that are created from the art experience, but based on a repertoire of past images and experiences of the viewer. The conceptual framework of the study explored comics, anime, and cartoon influence on adolescent visual culture, evaluated student experience and repertoire of past images, in order to integrate different approaches, lines of investigation, and theories to make the data relevant.

The art-based research study included the investigation, documentation, and personal reflection on building small figure sculpture, using comic, anime or cartoon references to develop artistic concepts and processes with contemporary themes. Learning was discovered and the data was refined. Assessments were made of the extent comics, anime, and cartoons influenced adolescent analogical thinking, the extent adolescent visual culture had on artistic creativity, and revealed some of the differences in visual literacy among students. In conclusion, the data for the research was refined; learning was discovered and applied to developing and improving curriculum.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study was influenced in part by Steinberg, (2010) who examined the merchandising of Disney-like and anime characters and how they have instituted a “character driven network of images and things” (p. 210). Contemporary artists like Murakami Takashi and Nara Yoshitomo have worked within the new genre of designer toys, which blend art, graphic design, and toys to create original sculpture. These singular three-dimensional pieces resemble the mass generated media forms produced by Disney and anime, yet they come from a personal translation of that popular culture.

The prominent position of anime and Disney-like characters in adolescent popular culture provoked the study in the art-based research, which emphasized the importance of connecting

curriculum to student knowledge and experience. Marshall, (2008) wrote that our challenge as educators is to locate the works of art that make process visible, mine the strategies they use, and provide art-making exercises in which students practice these strategies. The research in the study is based on the premise that student experience should be the foundation that drives curriculum design.

Articles by Moniques Richard, Steven Carpenter and Pamela Taylor suggest how necessary it has become to recognize that the children we teach live in worlds transformed by the proliferation of digital media and electronic technologies of many kinds. In doing so, they present models of pedagogical practice which recognize the permutation of identities made possible by young people's immersion in popular culture and nurtured through encounters with contemporary art (Wilson and Thompson, 2007, p. 4).

Significance of the Study

Research was needed to establish the focal point of student creative interest for designing engaging curriculum. In response, there were several noteworthy theories that were significant to the study. Lai, (2009) recognized the power and problem of visual culture to influence self-concepts and gendered understandings. The influence of cartoons, anime and comics in adolescent visual culture was a central feature in themes of student artwork. Arnheim, (1984) pointed out that it was Victor Lowenfeld, who said, "the teacher should on no account force his particular forms of expression on the child," and that the artwork should be the respected product of the maker (p. 19). Consequently, it was imperative to investigate the extent of adolescent visual culture in affecting artistic creativity and incorporate themes into a curriculum design that promoted self-expression and positive self-image.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of the study varied and were generally limited to methodological constraints, time restrictions, and the researcher's constraints of working artistically in an adolescent visual culture context.

Methodological constraints.

Extensive research was not done on developing scientific based objective questionnaires. This factor made validating the data collected from student surveys subjective in its context and analysis. Student samples were small and data results were used to form educated opinion on a broad population. Limiting factors in student survey participation had to be considered as a constraint as well. Students often select answers in a survey or test randomly to finish as quickly as possible with the least amount of effort.

Time constraints.

Time constraints were a limiting factor in the research. Collection of data was compressed into several months, which limited access to student exemplars, and objectively constructing surveys for the sampling approach representing a broad population. Further time restrictions limited the data collection on scholarly research, artistic exemplars of contemporary figure sculpture, and the researcher's own development of the sculptural and creative processes.

Researcher's artistic constraints.

Age differentiation, cultural perspective, and experienced based knowledge put the researcher at a considerable disadvantage while trying to objectively put adolescent visual culture into artistic context. Extensive information had to be collected on anime, cartoon, and

comic book characters to familiarize the researcher with adolescent interests and influences. The researcher also made subjective and biased selections of characters to be used in his own art-based research, which may or may not have been representative of current adolescent interests.

Definition of Terms

Anime- A genre of Japanese or Japanese-style animated film or television entertainment, characterized by a distinctive visual style involving stylized action sequences and usually featuring characters with distinctive large, staring eyes, and typically having a science-fiction or fantasy theme, sometimes including violent or sexually explicit material; a film or television program of this genre.

Katsina Tihu- Small figure sculptures, which capture the visual culture of the Hopi people. The figures embody the spirit essence of all things, people, plants and animals. Katsina Tihu are important to the core of Hopi religious belief in the harmony of the universe and of all living things.

Maquette- A small preliminary sketch, or wax or clay model, from which a work (usually in sculpture) is elaborated.

Visual culture- Everyday cultural experiences and texts that are considered important objects for critical engagement and analysis, including television programs, computer games, internet sites, and advertisements.

Visual literacy- the comprehension of visual imagery; including such areas as facial expressions, body language, drawing, painting, sculpture, hand signs, street signs, international symbols, layout of the pictures and words in a textbook, the clarity of type fonts,

computer images, pupils producing still pictures, sequences, movies or video, user-friendly equipment design and critical analysis of television advertisements.

Summary

In conclusion, the background to the study was explained in terms of the influence adolescent visual culture has on student artistic creativity. The research within the study was outlined in the goals and questions that explored existing scholarly data. The limitations of the study explained time constraints and factors that made some analysis subjective. Chapter Two discusses the theoretical literature that supports how adolescent visual culture can improve student artistic creativity, inconsistencies in the theory of visual culture, and archetypes of visual culture art-based practice.

Plan of Chapters

Further chapters will address the review of literature and scholarly writing used in compiling data for the study in Chapter Two; Chapter Three will describe the research methods, data collection, and analysis of data; Chapter Four will explain the significance of the study, biases, validity, and data analysis; Chapter Five will discuss implications for further research and conclusions.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

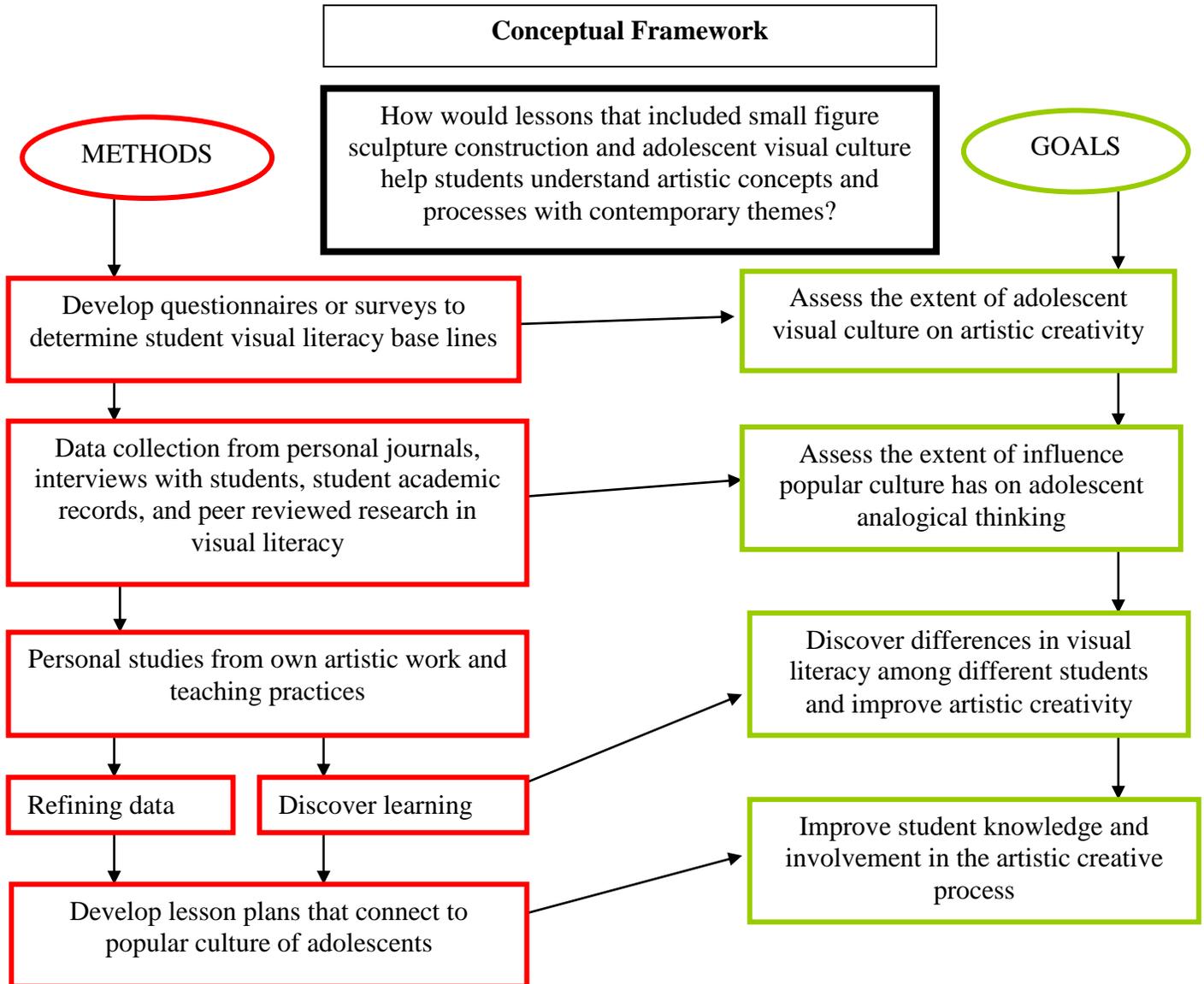
It only takes a moment to glance at a high school student's notebook or binder to discover how influential the imagery of cartoons, anime, or comics are to even the least artistic of students. The simplest of cartoon sketches to the most complex anime fantasy can sometimes be found penciled in the corner of a page of notes, elaborated on the back of a test, or found hidden on the inside of a textbook cover. What art educators won't find are sketches of work by Monet, Dali, or Picasso. It is apparent that popular adolescent culture; specifically, comics, cartoons, and anime, influence student behavior and are an important part of adolescent interests. Subsequently, art educators must ask the question; how can comic books, anime, and cartoons influence adolescent visual literacy and artistic creativity? This art-based study explored how adolescent visual culture could be used in constructing small figure sculpture to communicate artistic concepts and processes with contemporary themes, while influencing student intrinsic motivation

Conceptual Framework

From the viewpoint of an art-educator who taught at the secondary level for 10 years, the primary researcher in this study was intrigued by the subject matter his students chose for their art assignments. The students almost unanimously used images generated from examples of anime, comics and cartoons. The influence of this popular adolescent culture far outweighed any lectures, slide presentations, and art literature that exposed students to examples of master works of art in contemporary and other styles. From the primary researcher's experience as a published editorial cartoonist, he saw and understood the impact and influence of cartoons, comics, and anime could have visually (see Table 2.1).

The researcher saw a valuable opportunity to use the basic characteristics of the figural form of anime, comics and cartoons to teach students the concepts of small figure construction. The subject matter could easily be connected to student knowledge by using the images in the visual culture they were influenced by.

Table 2.1



Review of the Literature

The literature which composed this art-based study was compiled in three areas of significance; theoretical literature that supported the research, inconsistencies in visual culture theory and practice, and archetypes of visual culture art-based practice.

Supportive theoretical literature.

Arnheim and Wampole, (2009) wrote, “Something in the nature of progress seduces us to betray the values of the past” (p. 422). Although Arnheim was speaking of the new technology of the time in 1937, his words still are true today. Each generation embraces the technology of the time, and adolescents today are no less willing to betray the visual culture of the past for the images of cartoons, anime, and comics of today. The artwork and visual images that influenced the youth of past generations are clearly not embraced by the youth of today. Others acknowledge the importance of connecting art content to the art maker.

Regarding any text, piece of knowledge, artifact, interpretation, event, or product emerging from a visual cultural pedagogical or research setting, we might ask, who-what individual or collection of individuals-made this, in whose interest was it made, what values and assumptions underlie its appearance and its interpretation (Wilson and Thompson, 2007, p. 2).

Arnheim, (1969) argued in his pioneering study of visual intelligence, to learn to think in pictures is to learn how to use these ingredients effectively as elements of one’s overall message. By associating the theoretical idea of how progress informs the visual culture of the present, with questioning and valuing the appearance and interpretation of adolescent art; it is easy to understand why it is of great importance to connect student learning to student experience and knowledge. Not only can art educators keep students engaged in class, but also improve student visual literacy and artistic creativity.

The importance of understanding visual culture is expressed in work written by Duncum, (2010); “many of the most contentious issues in our society, such as class, race, gender, and sexual orientation, are fought over in terms of their visual representation” (p. 7). If you were to look around any classroom today, you would find a multitude of images that reflect adolescent visual culture in the clothing worn and the consumer products that students bring with them to class (Selig, 2009). It is easy to see how students display their interests and affiliations by their style of dress, as well as the imagery on their clothes. The imagery often reflects a stage of life that still has childhood interests and notions of what it is to be an adult.

Today’s adolescent students spend more time immersed in watching television, playing computer games, networking, searching for new trends and ideas than attending school (Averinou, 2009). The various media adolescents watch are immersed in the imagery of anime, comic, and cartoon characters. Educators understand why incorporating adolescent visual culture into the curriculum is important, and know there are challenges to designing curriculum that connects to student interests (Flint and Brozo, 2010). To achieve this goal, the art educator must provide the opportunity for students to express their knowledge and understanding of the world they know, not the perspective of the educator.

Inconsistencies in visual culture theory that affect practice.

The primary researcher in the study understood the justified criticisms of the pedagogy that visual culture is based on. Duncum, (2002) proposed that assignments that use visual culture should be “a design procedure such as a discovering, planning and doing....students maintain a freedom to explore while focused on questions related to the nature and function of visual culture in society and its impact on their lives” (p. 7). The problem in designing curriculum entirely around adolescent visual culture is there is no well defined term to express what adolescent

visual culture is. Duncum, (2009) pointed out the criticism of Freedman, (2008) and his argument that “visual culture curriculum based on student creative inquiry finds itself at odds with standards-based, teaching-to-the-test educational policies that now dominate” (p. 68). Yet, art educators like Duncum also point out; in the past, students have struggled “to understand postmodernism, younger students now struggle to understand modernism and find opposition to the incorporation of popular culture a complete puzzle” (p. 69). The idea of trying to teach students about art from the past and linking it contextually to student interests today is not reasonable. To reiterate, it remains the primary task of the art educator to create curriculum with content that considers the relationship between imagery and the student viewer.

Visual culture art-based practice.

There are many contemporary artists like Takashi Murakami who have taken the anime image, considered to be low-art and propelled the imagery to the status of high art. Murakami accomplished this by creating large sculpture in the anime character form, marketing it to art collectors and museums, thus commenting on the sub-culture of anime and its prestigious place in the visual culture of today. Steinberg, (2010) commented on the visual culture of Disney-like image merchandising from television or film spin-offs, comics, or video games. The commercially produced images are ubiquitous within the adolescent visual culture of today. The phenomenon first emerged in East Asia in 1997–8 in Hong Kong, with the work of Eric So and Michael Lau, and in Tokyo with the work of Hikaru Iwanaga. The sculptural figures create a critique of the ever-present character merchandising culture, which also dominates adolescent visual culture today.

Conversely, studies of Hopi culture by Mabury, (2007) illuminate that there are traditional artists that incorporate visual culture in a figural form and context that passes down a rich tradition of imagery. Katsina Tibu are Hopi and Zuni sculptural figures that reflect the

respect their culture has for others and the earth. Katsina dolls are part of every Hopi child's upbringing and introduction into the visual culture of the Hopi spiritual, physical, and societal realms. The sculptural figures symbolically represent the complexity and variability of the Hopi and Zuni cosmologies. In contrast to the designer toys that are a critique of the consumer culture, Hopi and Zuni figure sculptures pass on a rich traditional visual culture.

The researcher explored the imagery that could represent the values and interests of his own world in the form of small sculptural figures. His prior knowledge, experience, and new understanding of adolescent visual culture in the context of today's high school art student, contributed to the imagery he chose to use in the art-based research of his own artwork. The researcher's own family heritage of Cherokee/Osage and Finnish cultures is part of a rich handicraft history that have influenced and inspired him throughout his life.

The art-based research in this study combined the genre of designer toys, with the traditional sculptural form that incorporates visual culture in a context understood by students today. Incorporated in the study are pedagogical collaborative strategies between the student and teacher. Tavin, (2010) explained the work of Brent Wilson, (2005) whose study described three primary sites of visual culture experiences for children and their art teachers. The primary sites are made up of visual culture experiences outside the classroom, the classroom activities and influences, and the child's self-initiated visual culture. Wilson created a classroom environment where the images and ideas are proposed by both students and teachers. The teacher and the student co-construct knowledge and identities by questioning the way they see the world and its visual culture.

Conclusion

The literature review of this study has pointed out that visual culture pedagogy is emerging as a paradigm in art education. Controversies still exist in what defines visual culture

and how the pedagogical platform should be constructed. How art educators teach visual culture must be considered in the rapidly expanding technological and consumer oriented world of today; imagery, symbolism, and visual culture does not remain static. The seduction of new ideas and technologies create new and exciting visual cultures for students to explore, question, and validate. Consequently, art educators must strive to influence a student's life-long inquiry of the world, through an engaging curriculum that connects to student understanding.

The researcher's own art work in this art-based study has provided an in-depth analysis of how adolescent visual culture could be used in the construction of small figure sculpture, artistic concepts and processes. It was also concluded that the researcher's own interest in the process of figure sculpture construction was enhanced, by connecting his own life interests to the theme of the work he had created in a new visual form. Further discussion of the methodology of data collection and analysis of the study is examined in Chapter Three.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Design of the Study

The primary method of data collection in this study combined an auto-ethnographic and hermeneutic perspective. The researcher collected data on student work and the art-based study of his own experience as art maker, which connected the study to the visual culture of adolescents. Data collection was designed to be able to determine the conditions that made it possible to interpret the student art work produced in a spatial arts class. The following will describe the methods that were used, the sources of data, how the data collection was gathered, the time frame for the plan of collection, and where the data collection took place. (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Data Collection Chart

| Category | Sources | Time frame | Location |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Student data collection | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) Participant observation 2.) Identifying patterns 3.) Interviewing; informal, structured 4.) Questionnaires 5.) Open-ended research project 6.) Student narratives 7.) Digital photography | August 18, 2010 through June 14, 2011 | Prospect High School, Saratoga, CA. 3D Design Classroom |
| Primary researcher art making process data | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) Journal writing 2.) Collection of images from adolescent culture 3.) Figure sculpture construction | June 14, 2011 through July 24, 2011 | Primary researcher's studio in Campbell, Ca. |
| Curriculum application research data | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) Collection of peer reviewed data on adolescent visual culture 2.) Curriculum design | June 14, 2011 through August 10, 2011 | Boston University Library Resources accessed from the primary researcher's home office |

Primary Research Methods of Data Collection

The following describes the methods that were used to collect initial data for the study. The data collection was designed to analyze the feasibility of the study, draw preliminary inferences, and develop a comprehensive plan of action.

Participant observation.

Participant observations were conducted throughout the school year 2010-2011, of approximately 170 students in the primary researcher's 3D Design Classroom. Grade levels were 9th through 12th, and ages of students were between 14 and 18 years. The demographics of the student class population were approximately 33% White (non-Hispanic), 33% Hispanic, 32% Asian, 1% African-American, and 1% Polynesian. The primary researcher's involvement in determining the day-to-day operations of the classroom provided him with multiple opportunities to observe through seeing, hearing and assessing the behaviors of the students. The yearlong observations were designed to determine why it was important to understand how adolescent visual culture could influence student artistic creativity.

Identifying patterns.

The researcher designed observational tasks to look for a reoccurring pattern throughout the school year. Student sketch books were collected and teacher observations were conducted. Notes were compiled from teacher lesson plans and photos of student projects; detailing how students accomplished the assignments they were given. Other patterns were observed after reading the research material students were asked to gather for assignments. The data identified how understanding adolescent visual culture can improve student artistic creativity.

Interviewing.

Informal and structured interviews were conducted with students throughout the school year. As many as 14 student assignments were given and interviews were conducted as a systematic part of the researcher's day-to-day operations of the classroom.

Informal method.

Casual questions were asked of the students during the year to determine how they acquired their ideas for the assignments. The interviews were conducted as the researcher moved around the classroom from student to student, checking for student understanding of the assignment. The informal interview was only used to begin a basic inquiry into what motivated student creativity, and was not used to substantiate any data.

Structured method.

A structured interview was conducted in the form of student critiques. Individual students were asked to display their artwork in front of the class and provide information about their work. A standard outline was provided ahead of time (see Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1 Example of Student Project Critique Outline

1. Describe the subject matter in detail.
2. What kinds of forms compose the project, organic, geometric, etc. explain and show details?
3. Describe the textures in your project.
4. What color combinations have you created-analogous, complimentary, and other?
5. Describe the space your project occupies-more positive or negative space, explain where the areas are.
6. Explain how you got your idea for the design, what influenced the design?
7. Describe the balance used in your project symmetrical/asymmetrical?
8. What is the meaning / what is going on in your project?
9. What did you like best about your project/ what would you do differently to make it better?
10. Be sure to ask your audience if they have any questions.

Students wrote answers to the critique questions and analyzed their work by using a handout for talking about art (see Appendix A1-3).

Questionnaires and surveys.

Questionnaires were used to determine the distribution of student attitudes and beliefs about contemporary and historical artwork verses images of anime, comics and cartoons. The data provided by the questionnaire described and measured through self-report by the student, the extent of influence anime, cartoons and comics had on student visual culture. The questionnaires were given to students to answer during a final exam, to optimize the seriousness of answering the questions. The first part of the questionnaire asked questions about where the student acquired the ideas for his artwork (see Figure 3.2). The second part of the survey used images of well known master works of art and images of cartoons. The student was asked if he recognized the image, then was asked to rate the image on a scale of 1 to 5 on how much he liked the image (see Figures 3.3-3.4).

Figure 3.2 Example of Student Questionnaire Part 1

1. What images did you use for making your 3D assignments?
2. How did you discover the images you used, where did the images come from?
3. Did you choose an example from a comic book, anime, or cartoon to make an art project? If yes, what was that example and why did you choose it?
4. Do famous works of art like the ones you can see in the museum interest you, would you use any of them as examples to make your art? Why or why not?
5. What do you consider to be museum art or famous master works of art? Give examples.
6. How much experience have you had looking at famous works of art? Explain your experience.
7. Explain what you might make if asked to create a small figure sculpture as an assignment?
8. What are some of the visual images, signs, or artistic designs you see at home, watching TV, or during the day?
9. What is your definition of art?
10. Can anyone make art? Explain.
11. Do you like art? Explain why or why not.
12. Would you take another art class? Explain why or why not.

Figure 3.3 Example of Student Questionnaire Part Two

Part Two: Indicate yes or no to which of these images you have seen before. Circle the number that indicates how much you like the image. 1 if you like the image the most, 5 if you don't like the image at all.



Yes No 1 2 3 4 5



Yes No 1 2 3 4 5



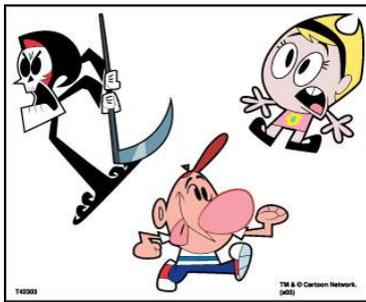
Yes No 1 2 3 4 5



Yes No 1 2 3 4 5



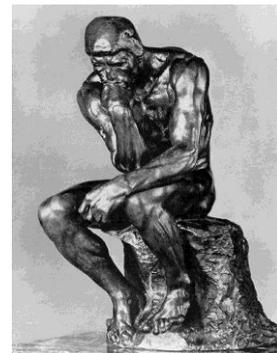
Yes No 1 2 3 4 5



Yes No 1 2 3 4 5



Yes No 1 2 3 4 5



Yes No 1 2 3 4 5

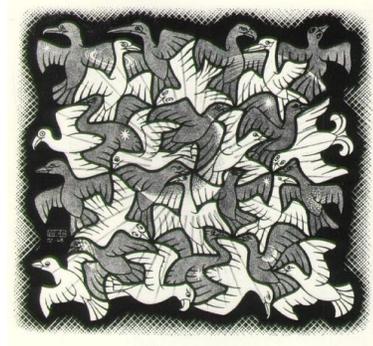
Figure 3.4 Example of Student Survey Part 2 (continued)



Yes No 1 2 3 4 5



Yes No 1 2 3 4 5



Yes No 1 2 3 4 5



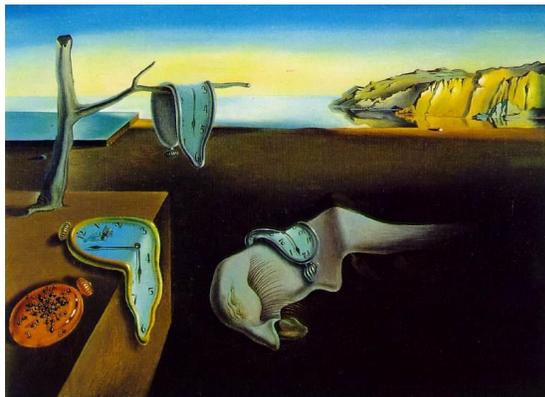
Yes No 1 2 3 4 5



Yes No 1 2 3 4 5



Yes No 1 2 3 4 5



Yes No 1 2 3 4 5

Open-ended research project.

Students were asked to research a visual artist of their choice. The artist's work had to be converted into a 3D design on a ceramic box for a final assignment. Graffiti, pictorial, and any spatial artists were acceptable. Students came up with many questions for acceptable artists; the choice was left up to them. Students were required to gather information on the artist, write the report in their own words, and create examples out of clay of the artist's work on 4 sides of a ceramic box they were to make. A comprehensive collection of data was acquired; the data reported on the selection of artists chosen, and why they were chosen (see Figure 3.5).

Figure 3.5 Open-ended Research Paper

Step 1: Research

Research an artist of your choice. The artist should have examples of work that you can create in 3D and install on a ceramic box.

Step 2: Title Page

- a. The first page of the research paper is a "Title Page" and should include a picture of the artist's work and name at the top.
- b. Below the title write "3D Design Final Project and Research Paper."
- c. The title page must have a picture of the artist's work you selected.
- d. Your "Name, Period, and the Date" should be written at the bottom of the Title Page.

Step 3: Table of Contents

The second page must be a "Table of Contents" Describe what is contained in your research paper. For example:

- Page 1-4..... Examples of the artist's work
- Page 5-6.....written research (two pages, double space, 12 pt. font)
- Page 7..... Bibliography

Examples of the artwork

You should have at least 4 examples of the artwork you have chosen. Each picture must have the information where you obtained the image and a description of the image.

Step 4: How to write the research paper

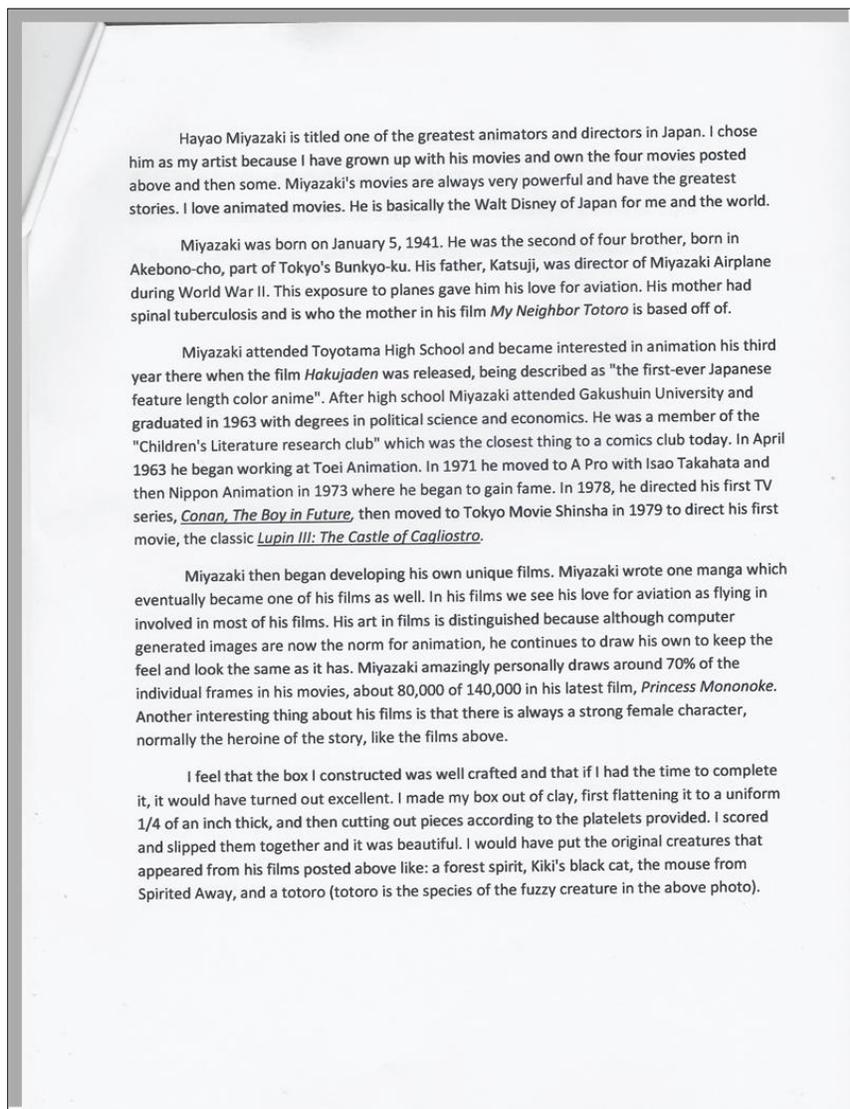
- a. The first part of your paper must contain the "The introductory paragraph." Describe why you were interested in the artist you selected.
- b. The second part of your paper must contain at least three paragraphs explaining the details about the artist you have selected.
- c. The third part of your research paper must contain an evaluation of the project you created, explain how you made your final project, why you chose the examples of the artist's work for your research paper. Include what improvements you could have made to make the project better.

Bibliography- use APA formatting

Student narratives.

Writing samples and student narratives of their art making process were gathered from research papers the students provided for their final project. Students were asked to research any artist of their choice and then build a ceramic box, create a design on the box with examples of the artist's work. The students were able to write about their work, why they selected the artist, and how they evaluated their own artwork; they revealed a great amount of data in their student narratives (see Figure 3.6).

Figure 3.6 Example of Student Narrative



Contemporary Tools for Data Collection

The contemporary tools used to collect data for this art-based study were based on digital technology, and supported by the contemporary ideas of art-based research by Sullivan, G.

(2010). *Art practice as research: Inquiry in visual arts*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Digital photography.

Student projects were photographed during critique and presentation periods to preserve data for later analysis. The students' work was analyzed and identified as to the recurring themes in adolescent visual culture (see Figure 3.7).

Figure 3.7 Example of Student Project Data Collected Digitally



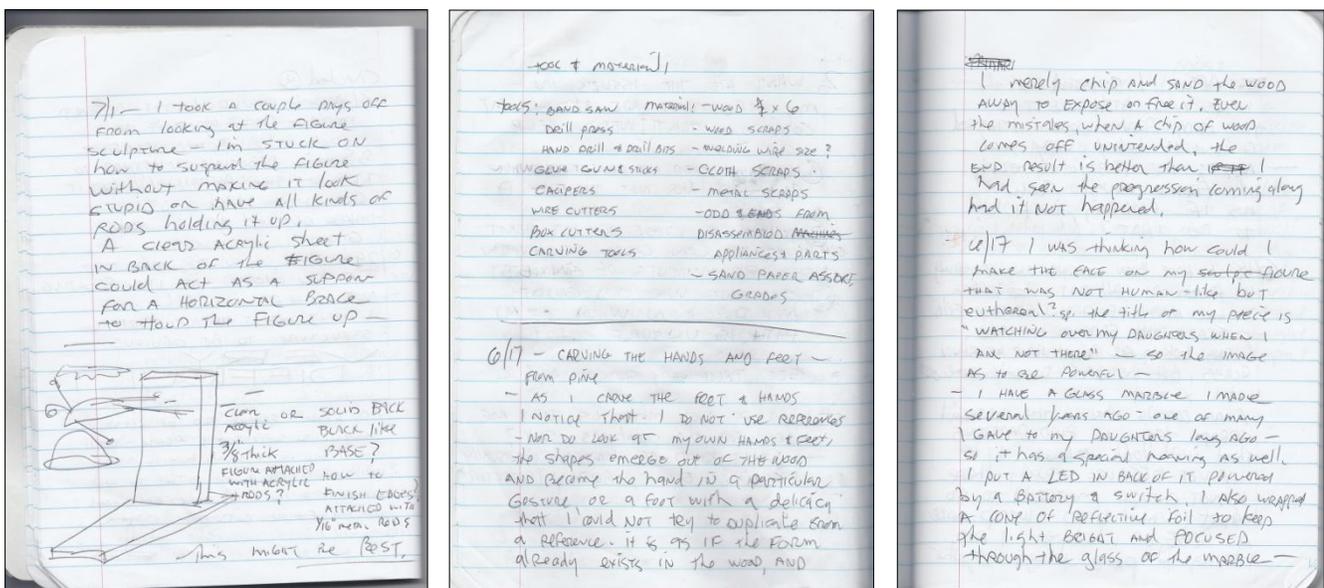
Art as Data

The primary researcher in this study provided an in-depth account of the artistic processes and development of sculptural figure construction using adolescent visual culture. The researcher provided personal data by journal writing, constructing personal artwork in a thematic representation found in adolescent visual culture, and the collection of peer reviewed data on adolescent visual culture.

Artist journal.

The primary researcher kept a written journal of his thoughts as his art-based study of small figure sculpture construction progressed. The journal was organized into sections; ideas, sketches, preliminary product, and final product (see Figure 3.8). The researcher's data collection also included reviewing current images of anime, cartoons, and comic art.

Figure 3.8 Example of Researcher's Artist Journal



Art-based figure sculpture construction.

The primary researcher designed and built a small figure sculpture to be used in an art-based research study and later as a teacher model for a student assignment. The sculpture was designed within the theme used in anime, cartoons and comics. It was modeled after the idea that if a super-hero could be designed who could solve a particular issue in the researcher's personal life; what would it look like? The data will be used to develop a similar format in designing a student lesson plan for figure sculpture construction.

Researcher's digital photo archive.

The primary researcher kept a digital photo archive of the processes involved in his figure sculpture construction. Each step of construction was photographed; including, experimenting with materials, preliminary product, and final product. Mistakes and re-construction of the figure sculpture were not edited out and also were used for analysis (see Figure 3.9).

Figure 3.9 Examples of Researcher's Digital Photo Archive



a. Carving the wooden feet and hands



b. Soldering the diode, wires, and switch



c. Attaching the clothes, adding details

Data Analysis

The researcher analyzed data in this art-based study by using several qualitative methods; reading the student data and organizing memos, categorizing data for coding and thematic analysis, and concluding by connecting strategies in analysis for curriculum development.

Reading student data and organizing memos.

The researcher's notes from participant observations were used to compile memos that identify patterns of student behaviors. Additional data was analyzed from informal and structured interviews to support inferred patterns of student behaviors. The memos were used to develop tentative ideas about adolescent visual culture content in the classroom.

Categorizing data for coding and thematic analysis.

Data collected from student questionnaires, research projects, and the researcher's study on his art making process were "fractured" into categories, which allowed analysis and comparisons between the student behavior and the researcher's art making process. The purpose of categorizing the data and developing theoretical concepts was to understand how adolescent visual culture can improve student artistic creativity.

Connecting data analysis for curriculum development.

The research in this art-based study collected data to be used for developing curriculum. Please note that the unit plan and lesson plans that were developed have not been implemented to the classroom setting. The final analysis of data combined the primary researcher's data with peer reviewed scholarly studies on curriculum development. The analysis of data provided

conceptual theories of how to construct a platform with which to teach a curriculum of artistic principles that are based on adolescent visual culture.

Curriculum Development

Data from this study was used to develop a unit plan (see Appendix A4) that included adolescent visual culture in constructing small figural sculpture. Unit concepts and methodologies demonstrated how adolescent visual culture can contribute to improving student intrinsic motivation. Lesson plans were designed to do the following: develop student perceptual skills and visual arts vocabulary; apply artistic processes and skills, using a variety of media to communicate meaning and intent in original works of art; analyze the role and development of the visual arts in past and present cultures throughout the world, noting human diversity as it relates to the visual arts and artists; analyze, assess, and derive meaning from works of art, including their own, according to the elements of art, the principles of design, and aesthetic qualities; and apply what students have learned in the visual arts across subject areas. Lesson plans will develop competencies and creative skills in problem solving, communication, and management of time and resources that contribute to lifelong learning and career skills. Students will also learn about careers in and related to the visual arts.

Assessment of Student Work

Formative assessments.

The first assessment defined what the student learned and was thinking about by reviewing his sketchbook/journal. The second assessment looked at the student's sculptural figure design and compared it to the final project. The assessment defined how the student was

able to make changes by creatively solving problems not foreseen in the initial design and in the actual construction of the project.

Summative assessment.

Students assessed their completed project and learning results by completing a rubric. The final project was displayed in a public exhibition.

Conclusion

The design of the study enabled the researcher to collect data that interpreted the student art work produced in a spatial arts class. The primary data collection methods involved participant observations, interviews, results from open-ended assignments, questionnaires, and contemporary methods of data collection. The primary researcher's own art work was archived for analysis. It was demonstrated how data collection was designed and utilized to provide an understanding of how adolescent visual culture can improve student artistic creativity. An analysis of the data will be discussed in Chapter Four.

Chapter Four: Results of the Study

Introduction

This chapter will present data as it was gathered in written and visual form to test the theory if using adolescent visual culture in student art assignments can improve student artistic creativity. The data was first gathered to demonstrate what types of images most comprise adolescent visual culture. Second, the primary researcher gathered personal data from journaling and digital photo archiving his learning process of incorporating adolescent visual culture into small figurative sculpture of his own design. The data gathering and results left open the opportunity to discover outcomes that had not been anticipated.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study was to demonstrate what comprises the visual culture of adolescents in a 3D art class in order to improve intrinsic motivation and artistic development with appropriate curriculum. The following data is presented in visual and written forms. A two part student survey was given to approximately one-hundred and twenty 3D Design art students during a final semester exam June, 2011. The timing of the survey optimized students completing the survey. Students were also given an assignment to research an artist of their choice and to use examples of the artist's work for a ceramic box assignment.

How findings are consistent with other knowledge.

Flint and Brozo, (2010) point out in their study of adolescent visual culture and content in the classroom that adolescents spend more time watching and living in an image rich world than they do in the school classroom. The research data gathered from this researcher's study of how adolescent visual culture can be used to improve student artistic creativity confirms the importance visual culture has on adolescent interests and specifies the types of images that comprise adolescent visual culture. In the primary researcher's student survey, 95% of the

students reported that they only see anime, cartoon, or comic content during their experiences. 91% of the students used anime, cartoon, or comic artwork for assignments, and 93% reported they acquired those images and ideas from the internet. Although this confirms the statement made by Flint and Brozo, (2010), it also indicates there may be a connection to repeated exposure to anime, cartoon and comic images and the profound interest in those types of images specifically stated in this study.

As pointed out by Avgerinou and Ericson, (1997) students learn and remember through imagery; it is an essential part of how our senses operate. For that fact, it is important that art educators remember that a very high proportion of sensory learning is visual. Data collected from student surveys in this research study provided information that highly suggests students have learned through repeated exposure to anime, cartoon, and comic imagery that these images are an accepted form of visual communication.

Bias and Validity

Constraints of the research.

The student surveys conducted by the researcher within his 3D Design classes may contain data that had been skewed towards what the student thought the teacher wanted to hear. Although the student surveys were completed during the year end final examination, to provide a more serious environment to complete the surveys, a portion of the data could have been affected by students who only wanted to finish the exam and survey as quick as possible by making random remarks to questions. Generally, students who completed the exam and survey completed it in an average amount of time that was consistent with all the classes that took the survey.

The researcher's data that was collected from journaling his experience of making a figurative sculpture representative of anime, cartoon or comic influence was genuine and

forthright; yet the researcher's interest in adolescent visual culture could not be considered genuine due to his age and artistic experience. Having noted the differences in adolescent and the researcher's artistic preferences, the researcher still found challenging and interesting aspects to creating a figurative sculpture from an original anime thematic character.

Bias.

The researcher provided all the students included in this study the opportunity to experience and draw contemporary and historical works of art from a variety of cultures. Students were required to do five minute sketches from a variety of visuals when they first arrived to class. Short commentary was done on the images while students were completing their timed sketches. Anime, cartoon and comics characters were included in the sketch assignments as well. Sketchbooks were collected regularly as a class assignment and graded. It was important for the researcher to give students in this data sample a broad range of images to experience. Sketching the contemporary and historical works were generally more difficult, but the assignment forced students to look closer at the works than if they were introduced in just a lecture. The sketching exercises gave students at least some examples of historical and contemporary artwork.

The students in this study were taking the researcher's 3D Design class for the first time. The 3D Design instruction for these students required drawing skill as well as sculpting skill development in its curriculum and afforded a great opportunity to learn what students wanted to draw and then sculpt for their assignments. There was a rich collection of data from the survey, student assignments, class notes, and formal and informal discussions with students. The data provided a practical and in-depth look at what interested students in designing their assignments. Anime, comic and cartoon character references dominated student artistic creativity. Student

proclivity towards anime, cartoon and comic images was examined and may be the result of adolescent stage of maturity that still retains some child-like behavior and interests.

The researcher was able to connect anime, cartoons and comics in adolescent visual culture throughout student demographics. Data demonstrated almost all students were heavily influenced by a common visual culture of images from anime, cartoons, and comics. These results influenced the researcher in this study to develop a figurative sculpture lesson that was based on anime, cartoon, or comic characteristics and imagery. The researcher's premise for this study was to conclude that intrinsic motivation could inspire students to design personal sculptures that had meaning and conceptual importance to the maker, rather than creating and making an assignment to just get a grade. The goal of art educators should be to design lessons that students want to complete for their own enjoyment while learning.

Analysis of the Data

Student data that comprised adolescent visual culture.

It was determined through student surveys, student assignments, informal and structured interviews with students that anime, cartoon and comic art is a major influence in adolescent visual culture; 91% of 3D Design students used anime, cartoon, or comic designs for assignments. The visual importance of anime, cartoons, and comic to adolescent visual culture is proportional to the exposure individuals get from these types of images. When students were given the choice of referencing any type of artwork for an assignment 66% chose an anime, comic or cartoon artist, 28% of students chose a contemporary or historical artist, 3% chose other types of references. The data shows a strong interest and influence of anime, cartoon and comic imagery on adolescent art students.

Researcher's art-based data using adolescent visual culture.

The researcher's data from his art-based study revealed that adolescent visual culture can be incorporated into a lesson plan that can instruct students in figurative sculpture. The researcher discovered and applied practical applications that could be used to assist student skill development using new materials, while using the influential visual form of anime to create a sculptural form for a student assignment.

The researcher's data from his journal revealed that taking time to use trial and error methods to work with new materials along with re-evaluating process and planning made the sculpture building process less stressful, and produced a final product that achieved the intended results designed in the primary sketch. The knowledge gained from combining the data results gathered from students and the art-based research of the author demonstrates anime, cartoon, and comic art can effectively be used to intrinsically motivate students to create figurative sculpture.

Student survey part one data.

Data collected in Part One of the student survey was gathered and categorized by personal responses to specific questions. The following chart provides the questions that were used in the data collection and the number of students that responded similarly to those questions (see Table 4.1). Please note that not all questions were used for data in Table 4.1. The questions left out applied to other data results noted further in this study.

Table 4.1 Student Survey Part One Data

| Question | Response category | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| 1. What images did you use for making your 3D assignments? | Anime, cartoons, comics | Historical or contemporary artist | Original student artwork | No response |
| | 110 | 6 | 2 | 2 |
| 2. How did you discover the images you used, where did the images come from? | Internet | Television, video games | Original student artwork | No response |
| | 112 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| 4. Do famous works of art like the ones you can see in the museum interest you, would you use any of them as examples to make your art? Why or why not? | Yes | No | | No response |
| | 4 | 110 | | 6 |
| 6. How much experience have you had looking at famous works of art? Explain your experience. | none | A lot of experience | Some | No response |
| | 82 | 2 | 34 | 2 |
| 8. What are some of the visual images, signs, or artistic designs you see at home, watching TV, or during the day? | Anime, cartoons, comics | Historical or contemporary artwork | Commercial design | No response |
| | 113 | 1 | 4 | 2 |
| 10. Can anyone make art? Explain | Yes | No | | No response |
| | 117 | 1 | | 2 |
| 11. Do you like art? Explain why or why not. | Yes | No | | No response |
| | 117 | 1 | | 2 |
| 12. Would you take another art class? Explain why or why not. | Yes | No | | No response |
| | 117 | 1 | | 2 |

Analysis of data from student survey part one.

The following questions and corresponding student personal responses to questions were compiled in similar categories; comments were evaluated and selected according to relative content. Student names were number coded for privacy.

- Question #1. (91%) of students reported they used anime, cartoons or comics for project design. The following are examples of student responses.
 - a. #24 “I got anime images.”

- b. #25 “I used images from my own mind & imagination.”
 - c. #26 “ I got a lot of ideas for shapes from cartoons and movies like Totaro.”
- Question#2. (93%) of students reported they got their design information from the internet.
- Question #3. (91%) of students responded why they would use examples of anime, cartoons or comics for a project. Most reported similarly.
 - a. #34 “I would choose to use a cartoon to make an art project because it’s simple. I would use Perry the Platypus because he’s adorable and cartoons are better.”
 - b. #35 “I would choose a cartoon example as cartoons have the widest variety of art styles, which are unique unto each other.”
- Question #4. (96%) of students reported they are not interested in museum artwork or famous works of art.
 - a. #67 “I wouldn’t use any of them as example to make my art because I don’t like the objects in the museum.”
 - b. #35 “While some museum art may appear interesting, I would rather use my own creativeness and ingenuity to work with.”
 - c. #28 “Yes, they are intriguing and I would tweak them to express myself.”
- Question #5. Examples of student explanations of what they considered to be museum art.
 - a. #76 “something beautiful or interesting with meaning.”
 - b. #77 “when I think of museum art I think of painters like Picasso.”
 - c. #84 “Goldengate Bridge. 1969 stingray.”

- Question #6. (69%) of students reported they had no experience with famous works of art that might be found in a museum. Examples of student responses.
 - a. #56 “not very much, only going to see it once.”
 - b. #57 “I have almost no experience, painting, pictures other than art projects in school.”
 - c. #58 “none, nothing at all.”
- Question #7. When asked what would make an interesting image for a small figure sculpture, student responses were varied and did not present a common response.
 - a. #10 “a melting ice cream cone.”
 - b. #11 “an image of Messi cause that’s my favorite soccer player in the world.”
 - c. #12 “people, buildings, cups & pots, nature, things that are normally huge.”
- Question #8. When asked what images they see most (95%) of students reported only seeing anime, cartoon or comic images during their experiences.
 - a. #96 “graffiti tagging.”
 - b. #97 “video characters because I play video games all the time when I’m not in school
 - c. #98 “I see cartoons on commercials and I draw anime mostly.”
- Question #9. Examples of student responses to what their definition of art is.
 - a. #102 “really everything is art, we just don’t think of everyday things in that way.”
 - b. #103 “Art would be something people of all ages can enjoy. It can be music, drawings, or movies.”
 - c. #104 “something that was created using imagination.”
- Question #10. Examples of student responses to “can anyone make art?”
 - a. #7 “Yes, anyone can make art whatever you draw or anything is considered art.”

- b. #8 “No, it has to come from the heart.”
 - c. #9 “well yes, unique stuff, its art to you.”
- Question #11. (97%) of students reported they like art. Most explained they enjoyed it because they can express themselves.
 - a. #20 “Yes, it brightens the world.”
 - b. #21 “Yes, it’s been around me ever since I can remember, I’ve always canvas painted.
 - c. #22 “Yes, because it relieves me from stress.”
 - d. #58 “No, it’s a waste of my time.”
- Question #12. (97%) of students reported they would take an art class again.
 - a. #22 “Yes, because it relieves me of academic work.”
 - b. #58 “No I wouldn’t because it would make me think that I’m just wasting time, cuz I don’t like it.”
 - c. #47 “Yes I would like to but I don’t think I’ll be able to next year or the year after.”

Student survey part two data.

Data collected in Part Two of the student survey was gathered and categorized by personal responses to images. Students were asked to respond in two ways. First, they were asked if they recognized the image and answer yes or no. Second, they were asked to rate the image on a scale of one to five; one if they liked the image, five if they did not. (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Student Survey Part Two Data

| | Percentage of students familiar with image | Percentage of students that liked the image |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
|  | 14% | 20% |
|  | 15% | 12% |
|  | 92% | 85% |
|  | 96% | 82% |
|  | 27% | 22% |
|  | 92% | 95% |
|  | 18% | 12% |
|  | 27% | 15% |
|  | 4% | 4% |
|  | 98% | 99% |
|  | 81% | 91% |
|  | 19% | 32% |

Analysis of data from student survey part two.

- 93% of the students reported they were familiar with the six anime, comic or cartoon images.
- 25% of the students reported they were familiar with the artwork of contemporary and historical artwork done by professional artists.
- Data was analyzed and calculated about student likeability of images. Ratings of 1-3 were determined to be likeable; ratings 4, 5 were determined to be not liked.
- 96% of the students reported that they liked the six anime, cartoon, or comic images.
- 19% of the students reported that they liked the nine contemporary and historical artwork images.

Data analysis of student surveys.

Student survey part one revealed that 95% of the 3D design art students reported only seeing anime, cartoon or comic images during their experiences. In part two of the student survey 96% of the students reported they liked the anime, cartoon or comic images, while only 19% reported they liked contemporary or historical artwork images. Data shows that students were more familiar with anime, cartoon and comic images; even though they had been exposed to contemporary and historical artwork through daily sketching assignments in class. The results seem to imply that because students are exposed more to anime, cartoon and comic images the attraction they have for these images is greater. Data may also indicate that anime, cartoon, and comic images have a greater retention value and attraction to students; a factor that could be associated from repeated exposure to anime types of images. The experience most students have had with art that is represented in museums was almost negligible.

Open-ended research paper assignment.

Students were given an open-ended research paper assignment. They were asked to research an artist of their choice and write a paper using an outline handout as a guide. The artwork of the artist they chose was to be reproduced on a ceramic box assignment (refer to Figure 3.5).

Data from open-ended research paper assignment.

- 71 out of 120 students researched anime, comic, or cartoon artists
- 30 students researched contemporary or historical artists
- 3 students researched graffiti artists
- 3 students researched industrial designers
- 13 did not do the assignment

Data analysis of open-ended research paper assignment.

Results from data indicate that students when given the choice of researching an artist for an assignment 66% chose an anime, comic or cartoon artist. Data results revealed 28% of students chose a contemporary or historical artist. Results indicate that anime, cartoon or comic artwork have a significant appeal to adolescents. An appropriate question could have been asked the 28% of the students who chose a contemporary or historical artist; did they select an artist based on what the teacher might like, so they might get a better grade. There was a significant student preference for anime, cartoon, or comic artwork.

Researcher's personal art journal data.

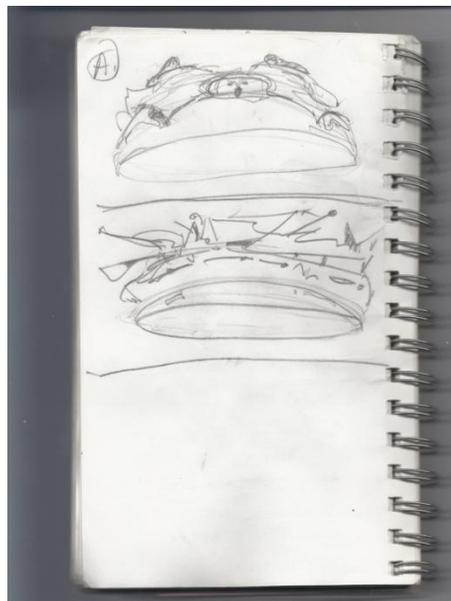
Ideas for the researcher's sculpture were sketched and recorded in an art journal. Thoughts were written down as the ideas and a variety of materials were experimented with. Failures as well as successes were recorded along with timed procedures to control experiments

on materials. Journal entries were recorded in visual and written form. The premise for creating the sculpture was based on developing a theme on an original design of an anime, cartoon, or comic character that could perform a personal task that was beyond the abilities of the artist. A preliminary sketch of the first idea was completed, and subsequent sketches of inferior designs were put aside. The primary idea and sketch was the dominant motivation for the sculpture. The title of the sculpture was also the motivation for the design. The title was considered first before the design (see Figure 4.1).

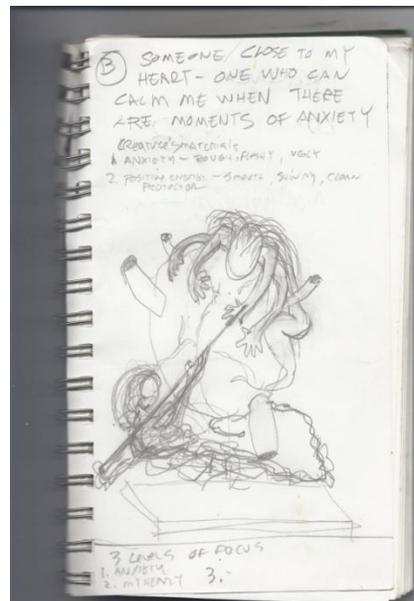
Figure 4.1 Preliminary Sketches and Journal Entries



a. initial sketch idea



b. Elaboration of initial sketch idea



c. Second idea sketch

Preliminary product data of researcher's personal art.

The data from the preliminary product was gathered in visual and written formats. The preliminary product played an important part in determining the researcher's final product.

Experimenting with materials.

The preliminary product took many forms at the beginning. A battery powered bright white diode and switch was wired into the framework of the figure behind a glass marble made by the researcher; this was the illuminated face of the figure.

Data from experimenting with different materials was gathered and entered into the researcher's journal and digital archive. The most significant results from data revealed that using different materials in a trial and error method provided the necessary experience for developing skills. Different materials necessitated different skills to manipulate them, and different materials created different visual outcomes. Several materials that were used to form the clothing around the figure did not conform to the original sketch and were abandoned. Constructing the curved dome from acrylic sheet was problematic in that the melting temperature for the acrylic had to be experimented with, a form for the shape of the dome had to be created, and attaching the dome to the figure without it being noticeable had to be employed. Again trial and error played an important part, but taking time to look at the problems and the various ways it could be accomplished was important as well. Having a variety of materials on hand was very important.

Creating the clothing for the figure was another new skill the researcher had to develop. Instead of sewing the material together the researcher discover that hot gluing the seams of the patterns inside-out, and then turning the finished seam work right side out worked very well. Several attempts had to be made to get the right size correct. Additional decorations were hot glued onto the clothing after it was arranged properly on the figure. (see Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2 Preliminary Product Digital Photo Data



a. Attaching wires to diode and switch



b. Attaching carved wooden hands and feet to framework



c. Experimenting with materials to create finished figure



d. Experimenting with materials to create finished figure



e. Making the clothing for the figure



f. Clothing applied to the figure

Personal artwork final product data.

The primary researcher's artwork and final product were based on an anime thematic character that was designed by the researcher. The character was based on a personal task to design an anime, cartoon, or comic character that would have the power to help the artist with a personal concern or problem. The title of the sculpture is "Someone to Watch Over My Daughter's When I am Not There" (see Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3 Art-based Research Final Product Data



a. Final product top view



b. Final product top view



c. Final product front side view



d. Final product front side view

Results

Data results from student survey.

The results from the data confirm that adolescent visual culture is greatly influenced by and comprised of anime, cartoon and comic images. 91% of students chose to use anime, cartoon, or comic examples to create personal art. The greater the exposure, the more significant the visual stimuli are that can produce artistic creativity in adolescent art students. 95% of students reported they only see anime, cartoon, or comic images during their experiences. The results of student assignments that allowed students to choose the imagery they use demonstrate that students prefer the images that anime, cartoon, and comic images incur on adolescent visual culture.

Further results from student responses to surveys indicate that students have little experience with and little knowledge of what constitutes museum or historical artwork . This data implies a connection to the exposure of visual stimuli and interest of the same. Students' minimal exposure to historical and contemporary works of art may be the cause of student lack of interest in museum art. The results of the data from student surveys conclude that adolescent visual culture is greatly comprised of anime, cartoon, and comic images. Students have a very high interest in viewing such images and creating art from examples of the same.

Data results from researcher's final product.

The preliminary sketch was the cornerstone of building the figurative sculpture. The figure had to resemble a character that could easily be recognized as a type of anime. Although the design and concept of the character was original, it had to exhibit a power or special talent, which was considered an acknowledged trait in anime characters. The research data collected from student questionnaires and project critiques clearly established the importance of incorporating anime, cartoon, or comic characteristics within an art curriculum. The researcher in

this study was able to develop an art-based study of his artwork to establish the necessary understanding of how students would proceed with a figurative sculpture project.

The researcher determined from recording thoughts and methods used to create the sculptural figure that using a trial and error method was the optimal way to develop skill with using unknown materials. The process of finding the materials that were best suited to the initial sketch and idea was often frustrating. It was only when the researcher stepped back from the project, and looked at the process that did not work; he was able to look in another direction for a new way to proceed. Journal notes revealed that with every frustrating failure, there came a new and successful approach to solving the problem.

Wiring the glass marble for the face so it would light up proved to be an easier task than had been anticipated. The bright white diodes, switch hardware, and batteries all had to have the same voltage and amperage to work sufficiently. Information printed on the packages of electronics provided adequate help to determine the proper values needed for the system.

In the initial design sketch there was going to be a blue sky background. It proved through experimenting with a number of materials, the blue sky background would not satisfactorily present the figure as it was envisioned. It was determined after changing the design of the pedestal to support the figure; a neutral background of black would create a better representation of an omnipotent being hovering.

The dome was created to resemble a type of force or power of influence that could protect the intended persons the character was created to do. The dome was made by melting a round 1/8" sheet of clear acrylic over a ceramic bowl, which was placed on top of a hot plate. The acrylic sheet and bowl were also covered with a stainless steel pot to retain the heat around the objects. It was found through experimentation that without the steel pot too much heat was being lost around the bowl and the acrylic did not melt. Subsequently after placing the pot over

the objects, the heat had to be turned down sufficiently to not bubble the acrylic surface. Also, the entire heating process had to be timed to remove the acrylic sheet and bowl when it was properly formed. When the objects were left under the stainless steel pot too long, the extended heat created bubbles in the surface of the acrylic.

Bronze metal overflow scraps from previous centrifugal metal casting projects were used for the effect on the edges of the dome. Epoxy glue worked well to attach the metal to the edge of the dome. The dome was attached to the body of the figure by using a bicycle spoke and spoke nut. A hole was drilled through the acrylic dome and body of the figure, the spoke was then pushed through the hole in the figure and bent under the clothing to hold the spoke. The spoke nut held the dome in place from underneath after it was threaded onto the end on the spoke coming out of the figure.

The figure was attached to a black 6" x 12" x 3/4" thick acrylic pedestal by using two black painted 1/16" welding rods fixed into the figure. Holes were drilled into the pedestal and figure to accommodate the welding rods. The effect of using a black background with black welding rods helped to make the figure support transparent. The figure was meant to look like it is floating through a mysterious power of its own.

Conclusion

Chapter Four has demonstrated data collection results from visuals as well as narratives, which indicate that adolescent visual culture is comprised of anime, cartoon, and comic images. With student interest high in these types of images, it stands to reason that a curriculum that includes anime, cartoon and comic themes will intrinsically motivate students. Chapter Five will discuss and provide a unit of study that will teach figurative sculpture construction using anime, cartoon, or comic themes, while informing art educators about adolescent visual culture.

Chapter Five: Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter discusses the personal impact of this art-based study to understand how adolescent visual culture can be used to improve student artistic creativity. It will state how the study has changed the primary researcher's teaching theoretically and philosophically. The chapter also briefly discusses the unit plan that was developed and meant to improve student understanding and knowledge within the context of art. This chapter also discusses changes that could be made to the study, how the study might be shared with others, and concludes with a brief summary of the research.

Discussion

This art-based study was designed to understand how adolescent visual culture can be used to improve student artistic creativity. Through a comprehensive look at adolescent visual culture and the researcher's art-based study of using anime as a thematic focus for building figurative sculpture, this has changed the primary researcher's teaching in several ways.

Personal impact of the study.

This study has shown the extent of influence anime, cartoons, and comics have on adolescent visual culture and its use as a central feature in themes of student artwork. Students revealed in data collected in this study that when given the choice, 91% of students selected anime, cartoon, and comic images to use for reference on art assignments. This was confirmed by collaborating data that revealed 96% of students reporting they were not interested in historical or contemporary artwork. After the researcher assessed the content of adolescent visual culture and the extent of visual literacy among his students, he saw a valuable opportunity to use the basic characteristics of the figural form of anime, comics and cartoons to improve student artistic creativity.

The literature and general accepted knowledge that were pointed out in this study explained that students acquire a visual intelligence comprised of images and information that is formed through their experiences. Data revealed how important it is for students to use the elements of anime, cartoons, and comics as part of their overall message in artistic creativity. This study emphasizes the importance of combining the adolescent visual culture experiences outside the classroom, the classroom activities and influences, and the child's self-initiated visual culture. The connection of these three elements has a propensity to improve student artistic creativity if ideas are proposed by both students and the teacher. Most importantly, a practical concept has been set in motion; this study has recognized that the teacher and the student are able to co-construct knowledge and identities by questioning the way they see the world and its visual culture.

Impact on practice.

The significance of this study demonstrates that educators cannot afford to ignore that sensory learning is mostly visual, particularly in the art classroom. More than ever adolescents today are spending a large amount of leisure and constructive time immersed in visual stimuli from all types of media. The ubiquitous image of the anime, cartoon, and comic character can be found virtually everywhere in commercials, consumer goods, and openly imbedded in everyday activities associated with today's adolescent. The impact of this study on the researcher's practice has advanced his understanding of adolescent visual culture, and contributed greatly to his ability to design curriculum that will improve student self-expression, increase student motivation, and reach students that have not previously been reached in traditional ways. He has gained valuable knowledge that will assist him in integrating adolescent visual culture into lesson planning; resulting in improving student self-image, relationships to others in the classroom, while advancing self-reliance, independence, and confidence in the art making

process. Subsequently, a unit plan was designed with adolescent visual culture as a focus (see Appendix A4).

Recommendations

This study made a significant step towards recognizing the content of adolescent visual culture. Further research into how adolescents access, distribute and convey meaning through anime type of imagery could be beneficial by providing a more in-depth look into how adolescents communicate visually. Data from an additional inquiry into this subject could answer more specifically how visual culture can improve student artistic creativity. Supplementary and comprehensive student surveys could extract data from other subjects students take during the school year and discover other ways adolescent visual culture is used in a variety of classes.

This research provoked additional questions which could lead to further significant studies in related topics. For example, the data presented here revealed that students that do not appreciate historical or contemporary artwork also lack the experience of viewing such work, and have little or no experience visiting a museum that engages students in historical or contemporary art. Additional research and long term analysis of increasing student exposure to museums in early childhood might prove beneficial in creating student appreciation and understanding of historical and contemporary examinations of art.

Data collected in this study revealed student experience with anime, cartoon, and comic imagery was much greater than other forms of art. Sketching assignments outlined in this study provided students with some experience with art images other than anime, cartoons, and comics. Additional research on the possible benefits of sketching assignments that include historical and contemporary works of art could show increased student awareness and knowledge of the same. Supplemental research questions could ask if sketching increases knowledge and interest, do

students gain more knowledge from sketching than from lectures and taking notes, and what kind of knowledge is gained from sketching assignments.

This study highly recommends that educators take account of the great interest adolescents have of anime, cartoon, and comic images. The research conducted in this study and the literature reviewed therein substantiates that curriculum which embraces adolescent visual culture can be beneficial in increasing intrinsic motivation, student participation, and artistic creativity. Students want to learn, introducing new skills to students by using the visual culture that most interests them is not only practical, but beneficial to building a successful collaborative learning environment.

Conclusion to the Research

Advice to the field of art education.

The primary researcher began his inquiry in this art-based study of adolescent visual culture when he first saw his students' assignments following a typical pattern of imagery. It was apparent to him that student enthusiasm for assignments that replicated historical and contemporary work was less than inspiring and energetic. When students were able create art from the imagery that was consistent with adolescent visual culture, it was almost unanimously those of anime, cartoons, and comics. A question soon developed that needed to be answered; could adolescent visual culture be incorporated into curriculum to improve student artistic creativity without losing the fundamentals that guide artistic development. It was found through this art-based study that new and interesting concepts for art design can be found in the new and emerging visual culture of the youth in our classroom. Comprehensive and engaging art curriculum must connect to student knowledge and understanding; visual culture is not static,

and youth bring a constant change to what imagery is current and acknowledged as relevant in the classroom environment. The field of art education must embrace the dynamic visual culture of our youth, and future art students to come.

Advice to art teachers.

While students bring an accumulated knowledge of their own visual culture to the art classroom, art educators can't expect their students to have the same interests in assignments as they do. The role of the teacher has changed. Today, the art teacher is a facilitator who helps students plan and investigate what they want to explore and produce. After all, students should be making art for themselves, not for the teacher. Wilson and Thompson, (2007) explain how important it is to open a classroom to the visual culture students' value the most. When teachers are receptive to the interests, images and objects students are involved with in their everyday life, teachers can learn too. Begin by looking at what adolescents are engaged in visually in your classroom. Undoubtedly, the images that comprise adolescent visual culture today will be different next year. As an art educator, it is important to create a learning atmosphere that engages the student from their perspective so the student can discover the processes of art making while experiencing and constructing new worlds of their own. Keep open the possibilities for change and innovation by embracing what is new and exciting in the minds of our students.

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Appendix A

A1 Art Criticism: A Way to Talk About Art

Step 1: The Facts-Describe what you see in the artwork; describe the elements

A. Subject matter

List subject matter in detail.

recognizable objects or forms

no recognizable subject matter

human forms

things from nature

landscape

still life objects

other/like?

B. Lines

What kind of lines do you see?

fuzzy straight

thick thin

jagged curved

heavy graceful

choppy smooth

vertical horizontal

diagonal sketchy

other/like?

C. Shapes

What kind of shapes do you see?

big medium

geometric shapes

circles

triangles

free shapes

(uneven) curved

soft-edged

wild

humanlike

D. Textures

What kinds of surfaces do you see?

Rough smooth

Shiny dull

Hard very 3dimensional

soft thick

scratchy or implied

other /like?

E. Colors

What kind of colors do you see?

bright compliments

soft cool

warm strong

opposites dull

neutrals other/like?

F. Space

What kind of space is used?

deep spaces

shallow spaces

flat spaces

a lot or little foreground

-other/like?

G. Forms

What kind of forms do you see?

big recognizable

varied simple

free angular soft

curved geometric

hard medium

complex small

nonrecognizable animal-like

varied hard-edged

even angular

squares polygons

other /like?

H. Value

How does the artist use

value/contrast?

Where are the lights located?

Where are the darks located?

Are the lights and darks

dramatic or subtle?

A2 Art Criticism: A Way to Talk About Art (cont.)

Step 2: The Design; analyzing the principles of design. How are things put together?

A. Balance

What kind of balance is used?

Symmetrical
assymmetrical
somewhat symmetrical

B. Repetition

Are elements and subject matter repeated?
Is there a rhythm created?

C. Variation

What is different or varied?
Where and how are things varied?
Is there contrast?
What things are contrasted?

D. Movement

Does the eye move throughout the work?
Do lines cross the work?
Do shapes or forms cross the work?
Is there overlapping?

E. Proportion

Are objects in proportion?
Is proportion important?

F. Emphasis

What is emphasized?
Is there a center of interest?

G. Unity

What unifies the painting?
color
repetition
composition

Step 3: Meaning; what is the purpose or meaning of the art work?

Go back and re-read how you described the facts (Step 1) and how those facts are put together (Step 2). These are the clues to the meaning and purpose of the painting. Try to figure out why the artist chose to create and arrange the different aspects of the picture the way he or she did. (Why light or dark colors? Why more background than foreground? Why are the forms distorted? Why is there repetition of a certain motif?)

The following questions will also help.

1. Does the name of the artwork tell you about its meaning or purpose?
2. Does the artist seem to be primarily concerned with imitating nature?
3. Does the artist seem to be mostly interested in expressing a feeling, emotion, or idea?
4. Does the primary concern of the artist seem to be in creating interesting lines, shapes, forms, textures, etc. (a formal picture)?
5. Use the following list of words to help you begin to describe what you think is the meaning of the work of art. The list is small; you will most likely need to come up with other or additional words. Also, there may other answers.

| | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|-------------------------|---------------|------------|
| love | daily life | man vs nature | adolescence | awakening |
| beauty | anger | regeneration life cycle | triumph | poverty |
| courage | horror/fear | loneliness | man vs self | technology |
| hope | despair | sadness | political | spiritual |
| peace | excitement | inner conflict | commentary | movement |
| God | adventure | racial conflict | war | music |
| strength | death | personal | persecution | compassion |
| happiness | old age | mystery | inner turmoil | childhood |
| | | dignity | unity | |

A3 Art Criticism: A Way to Talk About Art (cont.)

Step 4: Judgement: Answer these questions

1. What is the purpose or meaning of the work of art?
2. The work of art is an excellent, good, medium, or bad example of which of the following:

Renaissance
Romanticism
Impressionism
Post-impressionism
Art Nouveau
Expressionism
Cubism
Futurism (art)
Surrealism
Abstract Expressionism
Op Art
Contemporary art
Postmodern art

Modernism
New realism
Performance art
Graffiti
Post-minimalism
Installation art
Neo-expressionism
imitationalism
emotionalism
formalism
comics
anime
cartoons

3. Technically, does the artist seem to use the materials with skill? (The technical properties of a work of art have to do with use of the medium, tools, and equipment as seen or evident in a work of art.)
4. I like the work of art because:

I don't like the work of art because:

A4 Unit Plan

UNIT PLAN: 3D Design

NAME: Mark Fisher

THEME: Adolescent Visual Culture

UNIT RATIONALE:

Art educators are faced with a multitude of challenges that can affect how a constructive classroom environment is created; discipline, content, and connecting to student knowledge and interests all play an important role in creating an art curriculum that is both engaging and educational. One aspect of curriculum development that educators cannot afford to ignore is that sensory learning is mostly visual (Avgerinou, Ericson, 1997), particularly in the art classroom. More than ever adolescents today are spending a large amount of leisure and constructive time immersed in visual stimuli from electronic devices and media of all types. The ubiquitous image of the anime, cartoon, and comic character can be found virtually everywhere in commercials, consumer goods, and openly imbedded in everyday activities. These types of images have produced a strong and obvious adolescent visual culture, which has emerged within the art classroom student population and cannot be ignored.

Conventional art education has changed and art curriculum development must create an intrinsic desire from students to create original works of art, otherwise art making in the classroom can only be considered copying what the teacher has prescribed as “art.” Including adolescent visual culture into curriculum will improve student self-expression, increase student motivation, and reach students that have not previously been reached in traditional ways. Incorporating adolescent visual culture can improve student self-image, relationships to others in

the classroom, improve self-reliance, independence, and confidence in the art making process (Avgerinou, Ericson, 1997).

References:

Avgerinou, M.D. & Ericson, J. (1997). A review of the concept of visual literacy. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 28, 280-91.

DESCRIPTIVE TITLE: Adolescent Visual Culture Can Improve Student Artistic Creativity

By using the subject of adolescent visual culture, specifically imagery from anime, cartoon and comics, this unit will provide the student with the necessary skills to question ideas that may be considered out of context in their world. The student will explore the different materials, tools, and processes used by artists to build small figurative sculptures. By the end of the unit the student will develop thinking skills; observation, drawing conclusions, inferences, arguing in evidence, elaboration, and revision. The student will also develop new skills for using materials that they previously have not used.

GOALS: Students should:

Know:

- The methods of planning, developing and revising ideas to create personal works of art.
- How to construct and interpret the meaning of artwork in historical, social and cultural context.

Understand:

- Figurative sculpture as a historically social and cultural vehicle for artistic expression.
- Art allows us to see the historical context of the subject matter if we learn how to look and ask the questions that are not always obvious.
- Simple and mundane can be influential and inspiring, while at the same time document life as it was and is.

Be able to:

Artistic Perception: 1.3, 1.5

- 1.3 Research and analyze the work of an artist and write about the artist's distinctive style and its contribution to the meaning of the work.
- 1.5 Analyze the material used by a given artist and describe how its use influences the meaning of the work.

Creative Expression: 2.1, 2.6

- 2.1 Solve a visual arts problem that involves the effective use of the elements of art and the principles of design.
- 2.6 Create a three-dimensional work of art that addresses a social issue.

Historical and Cultural Context: 3.1, 3.3

- 3.1 Identify and describe trends in the visual arts and discuss how the issues of time, place, and cultural influence are reflected in selected works of art.
- 3.3 Identify and describe trends in the visual arts and discuss how the issues of time, place, and cultural influence are reflected in selected works of art.

Aesthetic Valuing: 4.1, 4.3

- 4.1 Articulate how personal beliefs, cultural traditions, and current social, economic, and political contexts influence the interpretation of the meaning or message in a work of art.
- 4.3 Formulate and support a position regarding the aesthetic value of a specific work of art and change or defend that position after considering the views of others.

Connections, Relationships, Applications: 5.2, 5.4

- 5.4 Demonstrate an understanding of the various skills of an artist, art critic, art historian, art collector, art gallery owner, and philosopher of art (aesthetician).
- 5.2 Create a work of art that communicates a cross-cultural or universal theme taken from literature or history.

California Department of Education Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards:

Artistic Perception: 1.3, 1.5; Creative Expression: 2.1, 2.6; Historical and Cultural Context: 3.1, 3.3; Aesthetic Valuing: 4.1, 4.3; Connections, Relationships, Applications: 5.2, 5.4

INSTRUCTIONAL CONCEPTS:

Delaney, (1998) states, that combining object-centered, society-centered, and child-centered instruction into art instruction, it will provide the best opportunity for students to learn cultural diversity, art from other cultures, and to think critically about their own world. Wong, (2007) sites Piaget, (1952) and his theory of being able “to interact with the world intentionally, abstractly, and from an objective distance” (p.19). Much has been said about this ability to “step back” from one’s self. Wong believes that students are predisposed to be intrinsically motivated and that “effective teaching should support intentional, thoughtful, problem-driven, student-centered activity” (p.196). When teaching is effective, the motivation for learning will be intrinsic, and student outcomes will be more successful.

Simpson, (1998) explains that it is the job of a teacher to be aware of all learning types, and to include variety of ways of presenting lesson material to create a coherent concept within a thematic unit of instruction. By using thematic instruction, students will be able to link concrete concepts, build understanding of subject matter, and the teacher will be able to tap into student experiences.

References:

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LESSONS:

1. Each student will be provided an outline for observing and talking about art (see Appendix A5-7). The outline will include vocabulary words to use when describing, analyzing, and judging artwork. A power point presentation with the images of Katsina Tihu, small figure sculptures, anime, cartoons, and comics will be presented to the class, and students will participate in class discussion of the images and comment on their social meaning within adolescent visual culture and the larger community. The teacher will lead discussions to describe trends in the visual arts and discuss how the issues of time, place, and cultural influence are reflected in selected works of art.
2. Each student will develop and design an original figurative sculptural character through researching anime, cartoon, or comic artwork. The developmental theme of the character will be that it must have an extra-ordinary power or ability to perform a personal task for the student who is creating it. The task should be a one that cannot be easily done by the student and has implications to improve the student's well-being.

3. Pre-planning ideas and sketches will be critiqued and re-evaluated through group discussion and student-teacher collaboration. The teacher will provide a teacher model of a completed sculpture for an exemplar. The teacher will provide demonstrations on using materials, tools, safety in the studio, creating armatures, and presenting the finished product in a professional manner.
4. Students will experiment with materials to produce a finished product that exemplifies their preliminary sketch. After the completion of the final product students will critique each other's work by using the handout for observing and talking about art. They will compare their own personal art work with those of the historical and current examples first shown in the opening discussion. They will speak to the historical and cultural differences intoned in each personal work as they compare them to the examples.

MATERIALS:

Slides of Katsina Tihu, small figurative sculptures, anime, cartoon, and comic artwork

Handout: Art Criticism; A Way to Talk about Art

Diary, notebooks, sketchbooks

Assortment of textile materials, cloth, yarn, discarded clothing, stuffing, braiding

Hot glue guns, glue sticks

Scissors, box cutters

Wood scraps; assorted sizes

Wire; assorted sizes

Paint; acrylic, assorted spray can colors

Electric drill; assorted bits

Band saw

Safety glasses

Assorted hand tools; hammers, screw drivers, chisels

Carving tools

ASSESSMENT:

- Sketchbook project design evaluation-student designs will be evaluated in teacher/student formal interviews
- Formative assessments-students will submit projects to the class for critiques, discussions will be led by the teacher to solve problems, answer questions, demonstrate successful projects, and offer encouragement.
- Summative assessment- students will design a rubric for self-evaluation of the completed assignment. Teacher will collect notes, diaries, thumbnail sketches, projects, rubrics for evaluations on assignment completion, and student performance.