Cultural Sensitivity in a Global World
Edited by
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Introduction

Teaching Cultural Sensitivity

This book is intended as a teacher’s resource for developing culturally sensitive art curricula for students in kindergarten through postsecondary grades. Throughout this book, culture will be used to describe a group of people who share a mutually constructed and maintained environment. The term will refer to any group whose members hold similar beliefs, histories, customs, mores, values, who communicate with one another in a common language or symbol system and who pass on shared knowledge to newcomers and future generations of the group. In this broad sense, cultures may be defined by commonalities of religion, nation, race, or socio-economic condition. Defining ‘culture’ in this general way implies no evaluative judgment of the political correctness, or social value of any particular group perspective or expression. It only affirms there are many diverse cultural groups distinguished by adherence to differing paradigms of life in the world.

However, the authors and editors of this handbook will go beyond generalities by advocating the teaching of dispositions of being culturally sensitivity, as well as, instructing the knowledge about cultural diversity. The essays, suggested strategies, model units or activities presented in this book focus attention on the way we address the human experience and how this can lead to openness to the world. Samples of possible culture content are provided, with emphasis on how these lessons encourage student understandings of diverse cultures. The goal is to cultivate, through education, people who act and think morally in interaction with others.

Organization of the Handbook

Following an introductory chapter by co-editor, Marjorie Manifold, the handbook is organized in three sections. Section One: Commonality, Contrasts and Interdependencies, edited by Enid Zimmerman; Knowing and Honoring Self and Others in Local and Global Communities, edited by Steve Willis; and Dialogic Interactions – Listening, Questioning, Expanding, and Engaging, edited by Marjorie Manifold.

Section One

In Section One, the terms Commonality and Contrast are clarified as they apply to similarities and differences people experience within and across diverse cultural groups. By focusing on commonalities, students can recognize attributes that provide a basis for harmonious and cohesive interaction among peoples. As an equitable introduction to developing culturally sensitive curricula, teachers may find it helpful to highlight commonalities by considering units of instruction such as those that address: tolerance, caring, lack of prejudice, and empathy; creative integrative arts experiences; human rights education; study of ritual, storytelling, and traditional arts; aesthetic perception; systems of power and social responsibility; and interdependence in a global world.

The term contrast emphasizes differences between beliefs and expressions, among groups of people and practices. Attending to contrasts as well as commonalities allows students to sort out and make meaning of complex concepts and ideas. Students can be guided to recognition that people understand or respond to similar experiences in different ways. Teachers of students of all ages should address issues of commonalities and contrast when they challenge their students to consider how artworks represent differing cultural interpretations of common experiences. Curricula based on themes of commonalities and contrasts require that students question why artworks need to be interpreted from within a cultural group that created them and also to take into account how similarities and differences with other cultures can help expand their own understandings about themselves and the world around them. Chapters in this section are:
• **Port of Entry: Puppetry! An Interdisciplinary Arts Experience**
  Melanie Davenport and Douglas Stevens describe their collaboration in teaching a puppetry art and music course for college level pre-service students through integrating language arts, social studies, intercultural and global education, technology. Focus is on creative expression that serves as a window into similarities and differences in beliefs, practices, and adaptive strategies of populations around the globe.

• **Using Artifacts to Promote Cultural and Global Awareness in Cyprus Primary Schools**
  Fontini Larkou sets forth a Cypriot primary school curriculum model developed for increasing students’ cultural awareness potential through artifact-based pedagogy that promotes commonalities and differences in cultural and global understandings. The model embeds common aims for human rights art education and aims to eliminate hostilities and misunderstandings and bring people around the world closer together.

• **Exploring Ritual Through Art**
  Angela M. La Porte explains ritual as directly connecting to secondary and postsecondary students’ lives through offering an interdisciplinary and global understanding in a shared world. In an example unit, students examine their own and others’ rituals to gain an appreciation for similarities and differences among cultures around the world.

• **Developing Global Perspectives Using Digital Media in Art Education: Learning and Teaching about Traditional Ghanaian Artforms**
  Laurie Eldridge’s focus is on indigenous, traditional arts of Ghana in a curriculum designed for elementary art students in which content, social context, and development of cultural identity is highlighted. This intercultural curriculum provided elementary students with tools to explore, know about, and interact with, and appreciate similarities and differences of others with their own customs and to see themselves as citizens of the world.

• **Becoming Empathetic Storytellers: A Curriculum for Developing Cultural Sensitivity.**
  Jonathan Silverman’s focus is on the importance of metaphorically stepping into another’s shoes, as a catalyst for practicing empathy, storytelling, and aesthetic sensibility. A curriculum is presented in which artistically representing stories of others is shown to enhance aesthetic perception, social responsibility, and global awareness by offering a literacy project that transcends cultural gaps and empowers students by giving them voice.

• **Looking, Creating, and Making it Public: Strategies for a Globalized Approach to Arts Education**
  Marit Dewhurst and Jen Song explain contemporary art practices from a global perspective emphasizing teaching skills for collaborating across socially-constructed identity barriers, analyze how systems of power influence daily lives, think creatively about the interdependent nature of the world, and contribute to creation of a more just and equal society. This global approach to art education moves beyond including artists from diverse backgrounds to one that prepares students to be thoughtful about commonalities and differences in visual arts practices within a complex and interdependent world.

• **Increasing Students’ Cultural and Global Sensitivities through Designing Cross-cultural Curriculum Units**
  Joanne E. Sowell explores how to present a culture as The Other without homogenizing all cultures and viewing them as the same. In planning a curriculum, commonalities among cultures are thought of as big themes that link cultures without having the same attributes and considering that they may
differ greatly through reasons they were made and differences and connections on themes the works represent.

- **The Story of Doris: Cultural Sensitivity in Action**
Pamela Stephens presents a case study of an at-risk Navajo student who successfully navigates complexities of a post-secondary art education program and in the process becomes a role model of cultural sensitivity for her peers through shared and diverse interests, encourages thoughtful listening, and venerates reciprocal compassion. Teachers and students should be willing to learn about traditions and beliefs of other cultures that are similar and different from their own and demonstrate tolerance, caring, empathy, and lack of prejudice.

- **Changing Perceptions about Stereotypes of Art Images Through Investigations of Views about Native American Art**
Jennifer Stoopes-Mokamba asserts that no one can truly know another’s culture. Using contemporary Native American art as an example when viewing what is perceived as someone else’s culture, personal perspectives can influence interpretations. Information about an artwork received directly from an artist can aid in understanding, rather than relying only on an outsider’s interpretation, and students then can view people from another culture as individuals living complex lives in communities both similar and different than their own.

**Section Two**
This second section, Knowing and Honoring Self and Others in Local and Global Communities is divided into chapters that present strategies, insights, and resources for developing understandings about self and a personal, cultural-community as a foundation for developing empathy for others beyond the local community. In this section, communities are revealed through circumstances that are unique and specific to their situations and are discussed by art educators working and teaching these groups of people. Narratives are focused on conversations about personal valuing within a community that develop a foundation that allows community members to perceive beyond localized limitations.

Empathy is brought to a conscious level through attention to thoughts and feelings of others that may enlighten and distinguish self-reinforcing traits. Rapport then is developed with the emotional lives of others’ whose questions and answers may be deep-seated in cultural needs. Through this process sustaining social relationships can begin to be constructed. This section unearths relationships of compassion towards others in the larger world that are posited as the beginning of respectful consideration as an act of conscious, intentional mindfulness to develop considerate persons who are aware of others and the environment. Chapters in this section are:

- **Culture Interlopers and Multiculturalism-Phobics: Theoretical Approaches to Art Teaching in a Global World**
Joni Boyd Acuff discusses her experiences at the Kaleidoscope Youth Center where she involves lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth in weekly art-making workshops centered on social justice topics. Her presentation of critical race theory and art education provided her with pedagogical tools to guide and engage this group of youth.

- **Living on a Bridge: The Effects of Cultural Policy on Art Education in Turkey**
Fatih Benzer and Olcay Kirşıoğlu provide cultural, political and education information that reflects on the educational policies of Anatolia, which is the culturally attributed name of Turkey serving as a cradle for many cultures from 10,000 BCE to the present era. In their examination, they present the cultural history of Turkey and diversity of cultural traditions which have flourished and intertwined, influencing and effecting Anatolian arts and crafts traditions’ unique characteristics.
• **Suburb as Site: Creating a global collaborative art environment in secondary art & photography**

Kathryn Coleman and Susan Coleman discuss *Suburb as Site* which was a program designed to engage secondary-level photography students in global spaces and community citizenship through cultural and structural frames. The project was taught as a multi-national collaboration between students in Liverpool in South-Western Sydney, Australia and students in Denver, Colorado, United States of America allowing students to discover and learn how images are socially valued and coded while the students honed their skills in literacy, language, culture and geography through online collaborations.

• **It's About Them, It's About Us: Using ChinaVine as an Educational Tool**

Kristin Congdon and Doug Blandy discuss the educational structures (Summers, 2012) that are no longer reflect the ways in which people learn by suggesting that learning should: 1) process information as opposed to imparting it; 2) work more collaboratively; 3) utilize technology so that it can continuously change and question knowledge content; 4) engage students as active learners as opposed to (the usual) passive learning processes; and 5) encourage global experiences. ChinaVine attempts to address all five of Summer’s suggestions with an emphasis on the global learning.

• **Art, Community and Context: Educational Perspectives**

Glen Coutts and Timo Jokela reports on two community art projects, one in Finland and the other in Scotland which focus on community-based arts practice in which artists and community groups work together to make art, a form of art education that takes place at the intersection of art, education and social work. Their title encapsulates the essence of their discussion and by discussing community art, they invite readers to consider the interdependence of art, community and context.

• **Using an Art Center's Online Curriculum to Teach Elementary Students about Cultural Identity**

Mary Erickson, Laurie Eldridge and Marissa Vidrio discuss the rich cultural diversity of The Valley of the Sun which boasts several major art museums, especially the Tempe Center for the Arts’ (TCA). They explain the culturally sensitive features of the educational programs at the TCA and identify underlying principles useful to art teachers which include: developing a place-based, welcoming mission; providing a broad inquiry scaffold to structure directed, guided, and independent inquiry; articulate broad, cross-cultural themes in life that lead to broad themes in art; and, team with art teachers who are sensitive to the cultures served by their schools.

• **Youth Culture from Teenager’s Drawings.**

Estefania Sanz Lobo, Pablo Romero González, Atsushi Sumi, Li-Hsun Peng, and Hyeri Ahn discuss childrens’ drawings from four countries (Spain, Japan, Taiwan, and Korea) search these for codes and themes of global mixed with local cultures. These findings suggest that art education can play an important role in the interaction between local and global cultures, setting a scenario in which cultural heritage can be known and appreciated, encouraging a critical distance from a culture of globalization and consumption, and recognizing the expression of ideas and agency of young people as cultural creators.

• **All Dressed Up: A Cultural and Personal Exploration of Clothing**

Jocelyn Lorena Salaz reveals ideas her students in rural New Mexico have about identity by using every day and recycled materials to create collage clothing for paper dolls for her students who are predominately Hispanic and Native Americans where there is a need for authentic alternative, aesthetic sensibilities for students of these cultural backgrounds. This need arises because of the tendency in the dominant society, and in art education, to measure the authenticity and value of
Hispanic and Native American art and artists against the past or teach about their traditions through mere copying of traditional forms in curriculum.

- **Glimpses of Guanajuato: Encounters & Expressions of Borders in Art Education**
  Courtney Lee Weida explores issues of cultural representations and sensitivities for her students and teachers in their own classrooms and other teaching spaces where they must reflect thoughtfully upon their own lives and locales in relationships to their students. She discusses her experiences as a female with uncertain Caucasian heritage, indicating she is less at ease investigating several cultural traditions and issues as she looks for connections between multicultural art history college courses in Latin American art and her younger, predominantly Latino students.

**Section Three**

The third section, Dialogic Interactions – Listening, Questioning, Expanding, and Engaging, includes chapters that address ways students might be guided towards mindful interactions with one another. One is mindful or considerate of Others when one ‘listens’ to the voice of others as expressed in words or acts and representations, and enters into dialogic communication with others about things that matter in their world.

Listening to others and questioning our assumptions may permit students to understand that ‘how we see others’ may not be ‘how they see themselves.’ We must be willing to ‘listen’ to the stories others tell us about their lives and experience. In the end, communication should lead to changed perspectives and students choosing to act in ways that benefit all. The units and lessons described in the chapter provide models of how student-artists and art makers might expand thinking about Otherness and engage with one another in ways that challenge student assumptions about Other cultural groups. Chapters in this section are:

**Art Education with Migrant Hispanic Populations in Multi-age Elementary Classrooms: Instructional Strategies Learned from Practice**
Jeffrey Boome provides a reflective narrative of his experiences teaching children of parents whose work requires them to move with the seasons. Faculty of a school located along the migratory route of these families developed strategies that were sensitive to needs of a migrant student population. Broome describes his growing awareness of the way visual images were understood and used by these students and began employing local aesthetics and imagery in his art education courses.

**Dak-Paper Dolls: Opening the Door to Local/Global Integration**
Jeong Im Huh and Yong-Sock Chang describe how the use of dok doll making, a traditional Korean artform, helped socially-marginalized Korean elementary students become aware and appreciative of their national identity and culture, and recognize the importance of using of natural resources in their creations. An inquiry-based approach to learning, which is atypical of Korean pedagogy, encouraged the students to appreciate the uniqueness of a local tradition, and by mastering basic skills of dok doll making, they discovered an expressive form they might contribute to a larger artworld.

“**Envisioning my future self”: Exploring identity construction to promote cultural sensitivity**
For Martha Christopoulos the bi-cultural backgrounds of her students, along with their examinations of the life experiences of adolescents as depicted in television shows, which were created half a world away, present opportunities for the students to consider themselves in relation to local and global society. Children drew images of what careers they hoped or expected they might pursue before and after watching telenovelas. Discussions led the teacher and students to recognize differences and similarities between local cultural experiences and ideals and those portrayed by
TV shows from other cultures. As a result the students gained an awareness and appreciation of differing life choices available to people living in diverse societies.

**Enhancing Global Consciousness and Cultural Sensitivities: Digital Arts-Pedagogy in a Pre-service Teacher Education Context.**
Debra Donnelly & Kathryn Grushka’s describe a model of pedagogy that requires undergraduate students in a teacher education program to seek out images that are available online, “put themselves into the shoes” of someone whose life experiences are radically different from their own and collaborate on creating digital images in response to this exchange. By appropriating and re-mixing global iconic imagery, fine art imagery, images from life, and marketing messages in the media, rather than simply presenting the world of Others illustratively, the students came to a deepened understanding of how images work to construct meanings.

**Marginalized Roma Children: Art-Integration and Engagement with Learning**
In working with immigrant Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian children to Canada, Kathleen Frances Hall, found that the supportive environment of the art room permitted these students, who for a variety of reasons (such as poverty, discrimination, and issues of language or absenteeism) were underperforming academically, to flourish. Through a curriculum that drew from the cultural heritage of Roma arts, both Roma and non-Roma students learned about these rich artistic traditions. Art education thus served as a means to develop self-esteem among the Roma students, while also bridging cultures, erasing stereotypes, and dispelling discrimination towards students from these backgrounds.

**On the Practice of Artistic Measurement of Social Mobility and Marginalization**
Anna Kende and Anikó Illés explored how severe poverty and social discriminated against the Rom people of Hungary affect they way Rom children envision themselves and their lives in the futures. A group of Rom children were invited to draw pictures of the houses the live in at the present, where they might live in the future, and a house of their dreams. The results demonstrated the children’s dreams for the security of a middle-class life, but little understanding of how they might realistically achieve these dreams. The authors suggest that, with guidance, art making may present ways students can re-envision and plan solutions to entrenched conditions.

**Constructed Territories: Identity Mapping**
Jeanne Nemeth explains how her pre-service teacher students use ‘mapping’ strategies to explore identity, global culture, personal geographies, exploration, and memories. She uses contemporary artists from many global settings as examples of the various aesthetic forms such maps might take and directions they might lead.

**Past, Present and Future: Constructing Mythic Identities Through an ACT-E Curriculum Approach in Art Education**
Lori Santos also addresses issues of how identities are constructed. In her chapter she refers to the work of Hopi artist Michael Kabotie, whose work explores the multiple global and hybrid domains that make up the identity of ‘Indian’ in contemporary society. His art making becomes a platform for addressing complex issues of identity and a site for awareness of personal and cultural stories that define self. Such awareness includes exploring one’s past, acknowledging one’s present, and positioning one’s future

**Iranian Children's Depiction of Symbols and Motifs in their Drawings in Reference to their Living Environment**
Ava Serjouie looked at the drawings and listened to explanations of artwork by children from circumstances of migration within Iran and immigration from Iran to Germany. Particularly
interesting were findings that those children who were cut off from close interactions with extended members of their families tended to create artworks based on things, themes of popular culture, and messages conveyed through media. Children who lived in tight-knit communities, whether or not members of that community were enduring persecution or political suppression, were more likely to visually represent emotional interactions with family members or friends than to reference things or themes from popular culture in their artwork. Serjouie’s chapter has implication for how we see and understand children’s ways of negotiating the meanings of cultural messages and value those messages in local and global contexts.