

The University of the Arts
The College of Art and Design
The Graduate Program in Art Education

AN EXPLORATION OF STRATEGIES IN THE CONTEXT OF ART CENSORSHIP
PRACTICES IN A SECONDARY CLASSROOM

by
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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

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ABSTRACT

Censorship is problematic for public school teachers. There is no answer across the board regarding what is appropriate and what is not for the secondary level. This thesis examines ways in which art educators can address controversial material without taking it entirely out of a school curriculum. A scant amount of research has shared significant insight for teaching about controversial topics. Secondary art teachers can benefit from the application of instructional methods that effectively address controversial imagery found in art. Qualitative research was used to collect historical data and philosophical inquiry. An electronic survey was presented to nine art educators in order to generate a deeper knowledge about current teacher perspectives regarding decision-making for art censorship. Through research and data analysis, this thesis answers the inquiry question: “What instructional techniques, strategies, or methods can be effective in addressing controversial imagery in the secondary art classroom?”

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Overview

Artists create powerful messages regarding various political and social issues through their artwork, which often sparks controversy (Carlson, 2012). Due to these controversies, individuals in society often censor specific material and label it as being inappropriate, offensive, obscene, or disturbing. This censorship is usually based on prejudices and biases of society. Censorship in art education has specifically received a great deal of exposure, criticism, and comments for years. Many conflicting claims have been made about the effects of art censorship, particularly in the high school classroom (NCAC, 2014). While it is important to create a comfortable and appropriate learning environment for students, it is also important for students to learn how to react to controversial issues. In an article titled, “Barbara Kruger: Your Body is a Battleground,” Katherine Calak (2013) stated:

Art is not truly art unless it stands for something, gives a point of view or relays a message in some way. There is no possible way to create a visual piece that does not involve communication. A piece of artwork sends some sort of message for the viewers to process, even if only for a split second. When thinking of political or social views, one can often bring to mind an artist or a work of art that attempts to convey the message as well. (p. 155)

One major reason for creating controversial art is to bring societal awareness to serious issues. In the past 15 years, a great amount of research has been conducted in the area of censorship. However, little has been done to explain to educators how to deal with this

issue. Problems can arise because students, teachers, and parents have differing opinions on the matter. According to Lee Emery's article (2002) in the *International Journal of Art and Design Education*:

'Disgusting' art presents the art teacher with complex ethical and aesthetic concerns. If art teachers include contentious works for study, they run the risk of upsetting parents, principals and the community. However, if art teachers deliberately avoid controversial art works, teaching programs fail to reflect the real-life issues that are the substance of much contemporary art today. Finding a satisfactory resolution between these two aspects involves critical sensitivity. (p. 35)

How do you teach about controversy in the classroom so that it is not offensive to administrators, parents, and students? This thesis will examine: (1) the definition of censorship; (2) the effects of censorship, specifically in the secondary art classroom; (3) the benefits of learning about controversial artists; (4) common practices used by teachers when addressing controversial imagery in the art classroom.

What is Censorship?

To fully understand censorship, one must first establish a working definition. According to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), censorship is defined as the suppression of words, images, or ideas that are "offensive." Censorship occurs whenever a person succeeds in imposing his or her personal, political, or moral values on others (ACLU, 2013). Censorship is attained through the restriction of information, images, or ideas in the public (ACLU, 2013). This process can involve the official determination of

resources or forms of communication including textbooks, literature, music, fine art, film, television, news, and Internet websites.

Censorship is a practice used by government officials, organizations, news broadcasters, artists, writers, and school administrators. Reasons for censoring material may vary depending on the audience (ACLU, 2013). Censorship is commonly executed per choice of the higher authorities and usually involves perspectives of several persons in charge. For example, the government can control the exploitation of information to the public through the practice of censorship. Art galleries and museums may also censor inappropriate artworks from the public. Furthermore, teachers practice censorship by suppressing inappropriate resources in a school classroom (Reichman, 2001).

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) (2011) defines two types of censorship in schools: direct and indirect. Direct censorship occurs when administrators restrict certain material from being exposed in the classroom. This method can include blocking the use of websites on library computers or denying certain textbook material (FCC, 2011). Direct censorship reflects decisions made by *all* school board members, principals, educators, and even parents. Only the teacher in the classroom uses indirect censorship. The teacher may suppress any material that he or she feels could spark controversy (FCC, 2011). One may also associate indirect censorship with self-censorship. Andrew Hayes, Glynn, Shanahan and Uldall (2003), in the article “Individual Differences in Willingness to Self-censor” defined self-censorship as the withholding of one’s true opinion from an audience perceived to disagree with that opinion. While the teacher in the classroom has the choice to censor the lessons he/she teaches, the student also may choose to censor his or her art ideas.

The Oxford dictionary (2013) defines self-censorship as the exercising of control over what one says and does, especially to avoid castigation. Teachers, as well as students, often use self-censorship during the artistic process. This internal avoidance can occur out of fear or self-consciousness. The decision to self-censor is often made based upon generalizations and negative judgments that surround controversial art. In the art classroom teachers often limit the exposure of artworks, subject matters, or situations they deem as inappropriate, offensive, obscene, disturbing, or controversial (NCAC, 2013). The limitation may include references of discrimination, nudity, racism, or political issues. As an example, educators often avoid showing artwork like Goya's *Chronos Devouring One of His Children* because of the obscenity and graphics displayed. Censorship allows an educator to restrict students from analyzing and discussing, creating, and interpreting artwork perceiving as inappropriate. This ultimately affects the educational experience (NCAC).

Effects of Art Censorship

According to the First Amendment of the United States (1776), individuals in society are guaranteed the right to free expression, which includes freedom of assembly, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, and freedom of speech. There is a discrepancy between one's first amendment right and the limitation of that right through censorship. After analyzing censorship in the classroom, and juxtaposing it with the First Amendment rights of a citizen, one can conclude that this practice conflicts with the Constitution's First Amendment. Censoring material is essentially done to avoid controversy, but this practice can ultimately affect a student's freedom of self-expression, granted to him/her

through the First Amendment.

Censorship can often influence the way art curricula are developed. “The art educator should impress upon students the vital importance of freedom of expression as a basic premise in the free democratic society and urge students to guard against any efforts to limit or curtail that freedom” (Poling & Guyas, p. 40). Art censorship often influences the art that students can or cannot create, which could then impact the learning experience of the student. All of this results from the overarching use of censorship in society. The term “society” in this case is being used because the decisions made by individuals most often go hand-in-hand with judgments or opinions gathered from society. Let’s take a look at how it is being used in the art world, and then dig deeper into the art education classroom.

In the field of art, artists and museum curators control the use of censorship by deciding whether to suppress or expose works of art to the public (NAEA, 2013). In education, school board members, administrators, teachers, and parents examine school-related material in order to censor explicit or offensive information. Controversial imagery in art is rarely used in schools’ curricula today because of censorship. As the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) (2013) states:

Provocative art and in-your-face entertainment put our commitment to free speech to the test. Why should we oppose censorship when scenes of murder and mayhem dominate the TV screen, when some art can be seen as a direct insult to religious beliefs, and when much sexually explicit material can be seen as degrading to women? Why not let the majority's morality and taste dictate what others can look at or listen to? (ACLU)

This thesis examines four different artists who have sparked controversy with their art: Francisco de Goya, Barbara Kruger, Damien Hirst, and Faith Ringgold. All have significant records for creating uproars about the work that they chose to create. All four artists are very talented individuals with different backgrounds. Like all artists, they create art to express meanings. Goya, Kruger, Hirst, and Ringgold are names that are rarely brought up in the classroom. The work of these artists is usually intended to raise awareness, to respond to controversies, and to spread concerns about popular social issues. Censoring such material can demonstrate a disregard for the importance behind the piece(s). The decision to censor is normally based on biases and beliefs of society (NCTE, 2014). The work of Goya, Kruger, Ringgold, and Hirst are examined further in this thesis in order to distinguish beneficial learning from their work.

With all these concerns in mind, it is apparent that censorship in schools can be complicated. This is because of the many variables involved that can impact the way students learn. Censorship is often debated on regarding its effectiveness and its influence on an individual's educational experiences. Some argue that censorship, most specifically in an art classroom, ensures a safe, confrontation-free and discrimination-free zone. Others argue, however, that because of censorship students not only become naive when analyzing, evaluating, and responding to powerful images, but they also become constricted in their own artistic freedom (NAEA, 2013). Art censorship may lead to negative effects in the classroom. These effects include a restriction in a students' artistic freedom and a limited education. Solutions to the debate of the practice of art censorship must be created in order to establish significant instructional methods towards teaching controversial imagery in secondary art. The destruction of freedom of expression is one

of the most important issues to address (NAEA, 2013). Other issues include the lack of educational resources as well as the controversial reactions toward different forms of censorship. These negative outcomes due to censorship ultimately affect one's educational experience.

Statement of the Problem

Given that censorship has become increasingly problematic for public school teachers, secondary art teachers in particular may benefit from the application of instructional methods that effectively address controversial imagery found in art.

Research Question

What instructional techniques, strategies, or methods can be effective in addressing controversial imagery in the secondary art classroom?

Significance of the Study

Art censorship is a debatable topic, yet very little research has been done to explore how educators address controversial imagery or terms in the art classroom. The intent of this study was to learn about art censorship being used at the secondary level.

The aim of this study was to research (1) the effects that can result from the practice of censoring art in a high school classroom, and also (2) to explore strategies used by secondary school art teachers in the context of censorship.

A survey with nine current art educators is included in the research methodology to see if these teachers included controversial art in their lessons, and if so, how these teachers introduced particular artists to the class. Francisco de Goya, Barbara Kruger, Damien Hirst and Faith Ringgold are four commonly known artists who have been found in the controversial spotlight for some of their art works. These artist's names were included in the survey to see if any of the nine art educators have taught about these particularly controversial artists.

Definition of Terms

1. Censorship- Refers to the declaration or determination of art, books, periodicals, plays, film, television, news reports, art, and other communication for the purpose of altering or suppressing material thought to be objectionable or offensive.
2. Controversy- A disagreement with a public or private group or organization; when dealing with sides of opposing viewpoints.
3. Direct censorship (Pertaining to public school)- Official suppression of resources, including textbooks, music and film, literature, websites, or computer programs, by school administrators.
4. First Amendment- Amendment of the (1776) Constitution of the United States guaranteeing the right of free expression; includes freedom of assembly and freedom of the press and freedom of religion and freedom of speech.
5. Indirect censorship (Pertaining to public school)- Unofficial suppression of lesson material or terms by the classroom educator.

6. Obscene art- Expressive material that portrays what is considered offensive, disgusting, mutilated, and/or repulsive in sexual content through imagery in the secondary school art classroom.
7. Self-censorship- The process of individually avoiding saying or doing something that might spark confrontations or offensive.
8. Suppress- To put an end to something by force, in order to limit the opportunity for people to know about or see it.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review examines the relevance of censorship in society as a whole, and then narrows the focus to censorship in art education. Opinions on the effectiveness of censorship are often put forth in debate. A contradiction is seen between the first amendment rights for citizens and the ability to censor. This literature review uncovers some of these conflicts. In many ways, censorship affects the way educators develop school curricula, which affects the extent of material that can be learned in the classroom. Censorship also affects artists' explorations because of conflicts regarding what is appropriate and what is not. These two issues intertwine when looking into the art classroom. Art educators often censor certain artists or works of art because of opinions, viewpoints and controversies sparked from society. "Cutting edge art is most often judged as bad art or inappropriate art, when in fact, there are important messages and meanings being shared by the artist" (Emery, 2001 p.33). Censorship in many cases puts a limitation on students' ability to learn about controversial art.

Defining Censorship

There is a plethora of literature that defines the concept of censorship in general education. The *American English in Oxford Dictionary* and the American Library Association (ALA) give similar definitions for censorship. The Oxford dictionary gives a definition in the perspective of the censor, while the ALA defines it as the term censorship. In the *American English in Oxford Dictionary* (2013) the term censor is defined as, "an official who examines material that is about to be released, such as books,

movies, news, and art, and suppresses any parts that are considered obscene, politically unacceptable, or a threat to security.” The ALA (2013) defines censorship as the suppression of ideas and information that certain persons—individuals, groups or government officials—find objectionable or dangerous. According to the viewpoints of the ALA (2013):

Censors try to use the power of the state to impose their view of what is truthful and appropriate, or offensive and objectionable, on everyone else. Censors pressure public institutions, like libraries, to suppress and remove from public access information they judge inappropriate or dangerous, so that no one else has the chance to read or view the material and make up their own minds about it. The censor wants to prejudge materials for everyone. (ALA)

The Oxford dictionary and the ALA give two perspectives of censorship from different viewpoints. This gives credibility to the definition of censorship as a whole.

This section of the literature addresses the topic of art censorship in the art education setting. David Darts (2008), a professor of arts and education from New York University, as well as the Federal Communications Commission (2011) provide information about the background of censorship relating to schools. The Federal Communications Commission (2011) defined two types of censorship in schools: direct and indirect. Direct censorship occurs when administrators restrict certain material that can be exposed in the classroom, where indirect censorship is something that is performed by the teacher in the classroom regarding which material will be taught/learned for specific lessons. Darts (2008), shares examples dating back to 2004 where policies have been made towards restrictions in censorship on visual culture in his

article, “The Art of Culture War: (un)Popular Culture, Freedom of Expression, and Art Education”. Both of these resources give insight to what censorship is and how it is being used in the arts today. While the Federal Communications Commission (2011) provides significant information about censorship as a whole, Darts (2008) focuses specifically on high school art, explaining challenges that high school art educators go through to explain controversial material found in visual culture. Darts (2008) presents quantitative evidence from schools all over the nation that have struggled with censorship issues. These two resources were used to explore detail not only about what art censorship is, but also how it is being used in the classroom.

According to a number of scholarly articles, both art educators and students in the classroom are practicing a common method called “self-censorship.” Elena Rodina (2010), Hayes, Glynn & Shanahan (2013), and Anne Mosher (2013) give an overview of what self-censorship is and how they are practicing it in the classroom. In the article, “Willingness to Self-Censor: A Construct and Measurement Tool for Public Opinion Research,” Hayes, Glynn, and Shanahan (2013) define self-censorship as the “withholding of one’s true opinion from an audience perceived to disagree with that opinion.” Rodina describes in her thesis labeled, “How Publication Type, Experience, and Ownership Affect Self-Censorship Among Moscow Newspaper Journalists,” terminology to define self-censorship as, “self-limitation in the process of the creation of the text, when the author bases his decisions on certain taboos that are imposed by the government, society, the peculiarities of the readership or his personal aesthetic tastes or moral principles” (Rodina, 2010). This literature shares philosophical inquiries about “self-censorship”.

The following literature is used to explore the use of indirect and direct censorship.

- (1) The National Council of Teachers of English's (NCTE), Standing Committee Against Censorship article titled, "Guidelines for Dealing with Censorship of Non-print and Multimedia Materials" (2004), gives informative instruction on indirect and direct censorship and how both are used in schools.
- (2) This adds to the information from the Federal Commission (2011) and Darts (2008), which has built the foundation for the understanding of the three types of censorship practices found within school districts.

Censorship in the Art Classroom

Scholarly literature on the subject of art censorship suggests that there is a contradiction between freedom of expression and art censorship. The National Art Education Association (NAEA) states that freedom of expression is being affected when individuals censor. The NAEA organization strongly supports issues regarding rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution (1994). Cornell University Law School (2013) shares an overview of the First Amendment rights definition from the *Nolo's Plain-English Law Dictionary*, on its website: "The amendment to the U.S. Constitution that guarantees freedom of religion, freedom of expression (including speech, press, assembly, association, and belief), and freedom to petition the government for a redress of grievances." The NAEA Board of Directors asserts that freedom of expression includes both verbal and non-verbal, which includes the "language" of the various arts. The NAEA believes that censorship in the arts and art education takes away from these

abilities. “There are powerful means for making available ideas, feelings, social growth, the envisioning of new possibilities for humankind, solutions to problems, and the improvement of human life” (NAEA, 1994). To support or embrace censorship means all artists, including young students are voluntarily avoiding controversy, limiting their range of expression.

There is a vast amount of research that does not support the use of censorship in the art classroom. The work of Rachel Hallquist (2008) and Margaret Dee Merrion and John Urice (2000), consist of scholarly articles that bring the topic of censorship and controversial art into the schools and classrooms. These authors share strong evidence from actual conversations with students, teachers, parents and administrators about controversial material. Hallquist (2008) and Merrion and Urice (2000) reflect on experiences from both inside their high school art classroom and stories from other educators. They express the importance of utilizing personal experiences for inspiration through students’ artwork in the classroom and also emphasize the importance of presenting and discussing distressing issues through the creation of art. Hallquist’s (2008) research indicates that students become more engaged in their work, and put more meaning and personal experience into their creations, when expressing personal experiences. This literature overview shares evidence of some case studies surrounding issues of censorship in art. Merrion and Urice (2000) dig deeper into responsibilities of the teacher in the classroom, providing a short history of cases where constitutional rights became the focus. In their article, “Artistic Expression and Faculty: Rights, Reasons, and Responsibilities,” the authors explain the boundaries between free expression, artistic expression and standards of the community. The historical situations and contexts

relating to educational rights are vital to understanding limits for both teaching and producing controversial subject matter.

A large body of literature has presented cases of censorship issues, but little has been done to explain preventative strategies for dealing with them. Erin Tapley (2002), and the research done by the NAEA (2013), summarize recent cases where art censorship caused a negative outcome the secondary classroom. Tapley, an assistant professor of art education at the University of Wisconsin, provided quantitative research that gives a visual of research conducted with large groups of students. Tapley states, “My recent poll of K-12 art teachers in a mid-western school district of 5,000 students held that all of them had encountered at least one “censorship” moment” (p. 52). It is often argued that art censorship in the secondary classroom can cause many issues (Tapley, 2002). First and foremost, art censorship in the classroom affects freedom of expression (NAEA, 2013). Censorship allows teachers to avoid teaching about controversial topics. By limiting the educational resources for students, art censorship may often cause students to avoid creating art that reflects “inappropriate” material. It can also affect the way a student may respond to a controversial situation. According to Tapley (2002), “It is important as an educator not to just “silence” a student or completely self-censor yourself in fear of getting into sticky situations” (p. 52). Self-censorship may often happen because of the lack of discussion or exploration of controversial topics.

Censorship Affects Freedom of Expression

Academic freedom is generally understood to guarantee the teacher’s right to teach and to select classroom materials. It also guarantees, the librarian’s right to build an

appropriate collection of references and resources, according to established policies and procedures, without external interference (Reichman, 2001, p. 8). “But few would deny that this freedom has its limits, and that it means different things in different situation” (Reichman, p. 8). A significant amount of literature supports the argument that censorship affects freedom of expression. For example, “First Amendment: An Overview” (2010), the National Art Association (2012), and Reichman (2001) all reflect on artistic freedoms that can often be voided by censorship. This literature argues that free speech and expression are guaranteed by the Constitution. Freedom of expression includes both verbal expression—speech and writing—and non-verbal expression, which includes the “language” of the various arts (“First Amendment: An Overview,” 2010). The freedom to create and to experience works of art is essential to our democracy (NAEA, 2012). Art education classes are developed to challenge students’ creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving skills through the process of making art. Taking away a student’s artistic freedom in the art classroom defeats the purpose of self-expression and exploration (NAEA, 2012). “Most pressures for censorship come from parents who disapprove of language or ideas that differ from or affront their personal views and values. These demands can emerge from anywhere across the religious, ideological, and political spectrum” (The First Amendment in Schools, 2014). By setting boundaries around the creation of specific topics it affects one’s opportunity to depict controversial imagery that is often found in the mainstream (NAEA, 2012). Some of the world’s greatest historical accomplishments have been brought about through controversy. The greatest way to teach others or inform others about powerful events, topics, people, or movements is through visual representation, according to the NAEA

(2012). Censorship in schools withholds a student's ability to express realities through art. Reichman (2001) states, "Although censors almost invariably claim to be defending American values, educational censorship is harmful precisely because it undermines those very democratic values of tolerance and intellectual freedom that our educational system must seek to instill" (p. 4). Indirect censorship not only affects educational opportunities but also puts fear in the mind of high school students enrolled in art classes. "It is important to note that even when such efforts do not actually suppress particular types of expression, they cast a shadow of fear, which leads to voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy" (NCTE). High school students who are committed to their art classes may fear exploration of what could potentially result in controversy. This may influence a student to use a form of self-censorship. The avoidance can hold back feelings and emotions that are often displayed through art.

Cases where direct censorship, by school administrators, has affected the exposure of personal artwork created by students has occurred, resulting in student art being banned from school shows. Bruce Bowman (1999) and The Associated Press Wire Report (2008) discuss two cases in which censorship had negative affects on two individuals' freedom of expression. In Bowman's dissertation titled, *Art Teacher Censorship of Student Produced Art in Georgia's Public High Schools*, he explains a case about a student from Lakeside High School in Lakeside, Georgia. This individual was faced with censorship issues in her Senior Art Show. The student painted a portrait of a partially nude woman. The painting was a replica of a famous, Pablo Picasso painting. The lesson objective was to choose a painting by Picasso from the Cubism Movement and create a replica using similar painterly techniques. The student (L.N.), created a

beautiful painting, titled, *Partially Nude Figure in Cubist Style*. The principal from the high school quickly banned it from her “Senior Art Show,” to prevent possible conflictions. By doing so, the principal not only blocked L.N.’s talent from exposure to her peers and community, but also hindered her opportunity for further recognition or scholarships. The painting was labeled as inappropriate, even though Picasso’s original painting of the partially nude is exposed to the world outside the classroom doors. These situations happen all the time, leaving students feeling embarrassed and neglected. Furthermore, in 2008, there was another case reported to the First Amendment Center, regarding a lawsuit dispute between a high school student and his art teacher. The art teacher used indirect censorship on a Tomah High School student from Madison, Wisconsin. It was reported that the student had referenced the bible and cross in his work. Fearing controversy by allowing religious iconography to be displayed in a student’s work, the teacher told the student he could not reference his religious beliefs. The student disagreed with this decision, would not change his work. The student’s attorney, David Cortman, who represented with the Alliance Defense Fund stated, “We hear so much today about tolerance, but where is the tolerance for religious beliefs? The whole purpose of art is to reflect your own personal experience. To tell a student his religious beliefs can legally be censored sends the wrong message” (Associated Press Wire Report, 2008). This case is a great example of the effects of art censorship vs. one’s constitutional rights. According to the lawsuit (2008), the student, with initials A.P., suffered unequal treatment because of his religion even though the First Amendment protects student expression. The lawsuit states, “Students do not shed their constitutional rights at the schoolhouse gate” (Associated Press Wire Report). This contradiction of censorship and

liberty is a huge issue for art education, even today in 2013.

According to the National Art Education Association, “Freedom of expression in the arts must be preserved. The art educator should impress upon students the vital importance of freedom of expression as a basic premise in the free democratic society and urge students to guard against any efforts to limit or curtail that freedom” (cited in Poling & Guyas, p. 40). It is evident that the largest art education association in the United States strongly supports freedom of expression over censorship.

Self Censorship Causes Limited Exploration

Research conducted by Bowman (1999), Emery (2002), and Whelan (2013) maintains that students’ self-expression in the art classroom can be limited by the censoring of many topics that may be perceived as controversial. To place limitations on what students can express impacts the range of artwork they can produce. Bowman (1999), Emery (2002), and Whelan (2013) also provide data about the effects of limited exploration from self-censorship. According to Emery (2002), “Discussions stimulate students to share their views with peers and consider how people of different age groups, cultures, religions or political persuasion may respond to controversial art works” (p. 37). In the art classroom, one is usually encouraged to create art that sends a message or shares a meaning, but by blocking out certain topics, this limits student work. An art teacher is not only indirectly limiting the students’ range of work by not allowing certain ideas; it also internally forces the students to censor their own artwork because of biases and pre-made judgments.

Censorship Affects the Response to Controversial Imagery

According to research, censoring art in a classroom can affect the exposure and response towards confrontation. *Lifescrpt Magazine* (2007) and Emery (2002) argue that art is often made to express reactions, emotions or feelings towards certain situations, that is, it is used instrumentally to send a message to the public or to spread awareness.

Propaganda art is an example of art that is used instrumentally, to comprehend or respond to confrontational imagery in the classroom, which blocks them from learning about artists like Barbara Kruger and Guerilla Girls. On the outside of school doors, there is no hiding the visual culture and controversial imagery that a student will be confronted with.

In “Censorship in Schools and the Effects on Our Children,” an article published in *Lifescrpt Magazine* (2007), asserts that “while the attempt to keep children pure for as long as possible is admirable, it takes the form of leaving gaping holes in their education, if not academically, then about life.” Creating a narrow worldview upon high school graduation. Kruger and the Guerilla Girls created instrumental art to raise public awareness of gender-related issues including, civil rights between men and women.

Students can learn about important social concerns through their art. In “Censorship in Contemporary Art Education,” Lee Emery (2002) states:

Given that cutting edge art must shock if it is to change artistic sensibility it would seem that the study of contemporary art must present students and teachers with many ethical dilemmas. The violent, sexually explicit, disgusting and psychologically disturbing, nature of many contemporary arts works make them potentially offensive, disturbing, provocative and confusing to young impressionable minds. While wishing to be open-minded and to teach inclusive

curricula, art teachers are also aware of their accountability in the community and their responsibility for the well being of their students (p. 33).

Addressing Controversial Imagery

There is little literature that describes how to teach about controversial artwork to students in the United States. However, Darts (2008) does address this topic. Moreover, he presents strategies for teaching controversial material and focuses on creating and implementing lessons that does so appropriately. Darts (2008) makes informative suggestions and feedback about instructional methods that avoid censorship. He reveals information about events and meetings that have been focused with the NAEA. Darts (2008) shares significant feedback for addressing controversial art in school. Darts' potential implications for teaching and learning art through various issues of censorship become important in the search for effective teaching methods for high school educators.

In the past 10 years, as shown in the works of Tapley (2002), Rhodes (2006), and Stanhope (2011) significant cases dealing with the lack of freedom of expression and limits placed on instructional methods have appeared due to censorship. Tapley, Rhodes, and Stanhope have similar viewpoints on art and censorship. This literature describes instructional strategies that have been used in the past. Tapley claimed, "to deny complex issues in art would be like ignoring history" (p. 49). This quote is very strong and shows how much history is being hidden from student learning. Tapley and Rhodes share similar stories about events that occurred in their art classrooms. Tapley's (2002) article reflects her art class' photography unit, which focused on two different artists of the past, Andres Serrano and Robert Mapplethorpe. Her reflection on the importance of historical

knowledge and events that have changed the way art is today becomes evident in the perspectives against censorship. Tapley agrees that censorship causes a constraint on free speech. However, Rhodes (2006) argues that censorship reflects society's lack of confidence in itself. He gives an example about a situation where artwork from an MFA exhibition at Brooklyn College was banned due to sexual content. It is indicated that even at the highest level of education in the arts, arguments on censorship occur. Rhodes (2006) defends that freedom of speech and expression is too often taken away.

There is very little literature on instructional strategies regarding controversial material. The following research provides evidence of a successful lesson done without art censorship. The Braithwaite Fine Arts Gallery (2013) published a K-12 lesson plan that was manipulated and accommodated for each grade level. The lesson is titled, "Intent of Goya's *Los Caprichos*." The educator shared significant insight on how this controversial artist was used in the art classroom. The lesson displays several of Francisco de Goya's work, which successfully gives variance for the students. The lesson addresses social issues that stand as important meanings and awareness efforts found in Goya's art. The lesson is very relevant to this research and gives physical evidence of strategies that have been used to address the controversial work.

Beneficial Learning from Confrontational Artists

The scholarly literature is filled with topics relating to instructional methods that have been used in the past 15 years. Poling and Guyas (2008), Calak (2013), and Doorfman (2002) share their own insight on issues and strategies that they've used in the classroom, when incorporating controversial images into art lessons. Poling and Guyas

discuss methods of handling nudity in the art classroom, using examples from several artists. It is, “crucial for educators to perform two things prior to implementing curriculum that includes nudity: (1) an analysis of one’s personal motivation for including the material, and (2) articulation of the connections between materials studied and the objectives of the learning task” (p. 40). These strategies provide feedback to educators for addressing a very common topic involving controversy. Calak (2013) and Doorfman (2002) share more qualitative evidence and feedback regarding broad topics of censorship and what methods have been used in the past.

Conclusion

The literature review explored the following: the definition of censorship, specific controversial art works in history, conflicts that can occur, as well as information about what censorship strategies have been used in the art classroom. All of these resources are used to answer the research question, “What instructional techniques, strategies, or methods can be effective in addressing controversial imagery in the secondary art classroom?”

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

A. Research Question

What instructional techniques, strategies, or methods can be effective in addressing controversial imagery in the secondary art classroom?

B. Research Design

1. Research Perspective

The perspective of this research focuses on qualitative data. The research data used in this study were mixed.

2. Research Type

The data was collected through qualitative inquiry. This included historical data, philosophical inquiry, and electronic surveys. Professional literature was reviewed extensively to learn what effects censorship has played in the field of art education, as well as what methods have been used for dealing with censorship in the secondary art classroom.

Since the practice of censorship has been an ongoing debate and has brought on many issues, historical references and evaluations from past situations were researched. Philosophical inquiry provided this researcher with methods that many professional educators have used. This generated deeper knowledge about teachers' perspectives regarding decisions about art censorship.

Through qualitative research, this researcher explored issues about the topic of

art censorship; gained insight from professionals, and also provided feedback for future implications for art education.

3. Research Methods

Investigative Techniques

This researcher conducted an electronic survey with nine current art educators in order to generate an understanding of multiple perspectives. The responses to all the surveys were documented via email. The purpose of the survey was to examine personal experiences from current teachers dealing with art censorship. The educators explained what genres of material they deemed as appropriate or inappropriate in the classroom. If the teachers experienced any issues with censorship, they explained practices that were successful or unsuccessful. The nine art teachers were also asked to reflect on their art curriculum, regarding any regulations that they may have. The survey questions and responses are reported below.

C. The Participants

B.F. is a high school art teacher with a Bachelor of Fine Art. She has been teaching for 30 years for K-12 art.

C.P. is a middle school art teacher. She has her Bachelor of Fine Art. She has been teaching for 25 years.

A.S. is a high school photography teacher with a Bachelor of Fine Art, concentrating on 3D Fine Arts and a Minor in Art History and Photography. She also has her Master's of Art.

J.R. is a middle school art teacher with a Bachelor of Fine Art, and has been teaching for 5 years. She also has a Master's of Art.

M.G. is a high school art teacher, with a Bachelor of Science in Art Education. She has been teaching for seven years.

S.D. is a middle school art teacher, with a Bachelor of Science in Art Education, as well as her Master's of Art in Educational Media. She has been teaching art for 11 years.

N.C. is a high school art teacher. She has a Bachelor of Science in Art Education, and has been teaching for 3 years.

H.H is a K-12 art teacher, with a Bachelor of Fine Arts. She has been teaching for 10 years.

C.D. is a high school art teacher, with a Bachelor of Fine Art. She has been teaching for 28 years.

D. Survey Questions

Question 1.

“Do you think that a certain degree of art censorship exists in high school curriculum? If so, how would you describe it?”

The answer to the first question is used initially to generate the commonalities based on the nine perspectives about art censorship at the secondary level. This information was recorded to figure out the guidelines that each individual uses for censoring material. This researcher gained insight on certain degrees in which art censorship exists in school.

Question 2.

“Do you have any specific cases where art censorship became an issue involving yourself, administrators, students, or parents? Describe.”

The answers to the second question provide specific reasons why censorship was used in each individual case. The answers to the survey questions provided realistic examples where art censorship was approached in the classroom. Each survey participant explained her own situation and gave insight on what was being censored and who was censoring.

Question 3.

“What do you view as appropriate or inappropriate genres in art for a high school classroom?”

The answers to the third question gave this researcher an idea of what specific things the nine teachers viewed as appropriate or inappropriate in regards to material that could be exposed to the class.

Question 4.

“Have you incorporated the work of Francisco de Goya in your lessons? Barbara Kruger? Damien Hirst? Faith Ringgold?”

The answers to the fourth question focused on four artists who have been intertwined with controversial topics because of particular artworks. The answer

to this question showed how common (or uncommon) it was that these artists were introduced in the classroom.

Question 5.

“What strategies or methods do you use when dealing with art censorship?”

The answer to the final question in the interview relates directly to the research question. The results from this question gave insight to developing strategies or methods that art educators could use when addressing controversial material to a class.

D. Limitations

The proposed study follows a qualitative research approach involving several electronic surveys as a primary method. It involves a preliminary descriptive examination of the perceptions and experiences of art censorship in the public school system. It was limited to nine art educators because of the time constraints involved in surveying and data analysis.

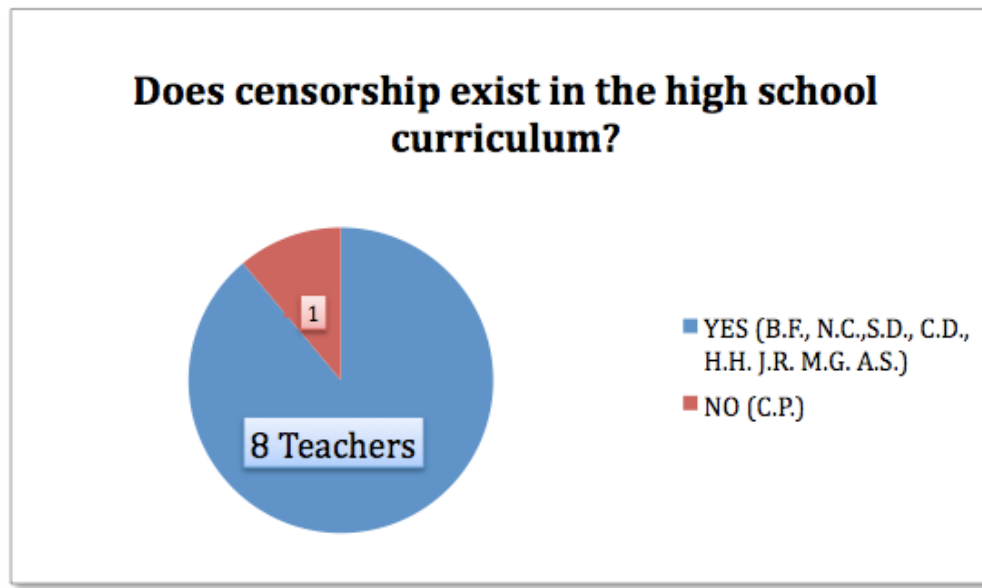
CHAPTER 4

REPORTING OF THE SURVEY RESULTS

This chapter reports the results of the electronic survey. All of these resources are used to explore the context of art censorship in order to answer the inquiry question, “What instructional techniques, strategies, or methods can be effective in addressing controversial imagery in the secondary art classroom?”

The information that was gathered from the surveys with B.F., C.P., A.S., J.R., M.G., S.D., N.C., H.H, and C.D. was analyzed to understand the role of art censorship and the extent to which it is (is not) being used in their schools. The collective research strongly supports the argument overall that censorship can bring conflicts into many situations involving both the student and the teacher. The survey was given to nine current art educators, in order to gather informative teaching strategies that have been successful when discussing or sharing controversial material.

Censorship exists in the high school curriculum



(Figure 1, Survey Question 1: Results)

“ I think school policy dictates some censorship but I also think that students censor themselves as well” (B.F.). The first question gave this researcher an idea of whether or not the teachers believe that art censorship exists in the high school curriculum in general. The answers that followed were more specific regarding topics of inappropriateness, specific art censorship cases, controversial artists, and preventative strategies for censorship. *Figure 1* visually depicts the results to the first question. Eight out of the nine teachers answered, “Yes.” Some of the similarities that were extracted from the surveys related to the idea that censorship does exist and often involves administrators, parents, teachers and students. M.G. said that censorship can be used both ways, meaning, “Teachers are censored in what they show students, and students are censored in what they depict or write about in their artwork” These decisions are often made individually by one’s own judgments (M.G.).

A.S. related her reasoning for censoring some of her lesson materials to art history. She stated, “Yes, art censorship does exist in the high school curriculum. As teachers, we try to incorporate as much art history as we can. There's always a fine line between what people (parents, community, others) view as art and what they consider to be art. It makes it hard to study some areas of art history” (A.S.). A lot of art history has nudity and religious references. Some of the masters spent their career studying the human body, and often painting nude figures. Religious references were very common in a lot of ancient art, especially during the Renaissance period. A.S. is using self-censorship by choosing not to share certain material when teaching about art history.

S.D. answered that art censorship exists in schools because of age appropriateness, by stating, “Yes—it has to exist because a lot of artworks contain images that parents, students, and/or administration would find unsuitable for persons under the age of 18.”

Specific Art Censorship Cases

“Do you have any specific cases where art censorship became an issue involving yourself, administrators, students, or parents?” Eight out of the nine art educators shared a specific story about a case in which art censorship caused conflict. A.S. shared a story about a situation where she had to get her principal’s permission to showcase a student’s figure drawings in their annual art show. This specific situation generated conflicts with parents. A.S. said that since there was permission beforehand, the issue was easily resolved (A.S.). In her case, censorship still managed to spark arguments, even after precautions were measured beforehand.

After researching and surveying, this researcher distinguished that nudity is one of the major topics that fall under censorship reasons. B.F. shared a specific situation relating to nudity. In her case several years ago, B.F. had to censor an honors art student’s work. This particular piece of art reflected an image of two nude figures. Her school was holding their annual community-wide art celebration. The artwork containing the nude figures was removed from display. B.F. and the principal of the school had to make a decision about art censorship. B.F. and her supervisor discussed the situation and felt that it was inappropriate to display nudity in the community event. C.D. shared a similar situation. C.D. stated, “Yes, just about every year at our annual art show we need to

readdress a point of view.” C.D. has been teaching for 28 years now and still deals with art censorship concerns.

When asked, C.P. shared a story about artwork regarding a highly controversial subject matter. “There was once a situation where art censorship came close to blocking the exposure of artwork displaying information about abortion” (C.P.). In this case, the principal tried to censor the material by taking the artwork off the school walls, but was then confronted by the student’s parents who fought for it to be displayed. The principal listened to the parents and allowed the controversial art to remain on the wall. In this particular situation the parents played a large role on the final decision.

H.H. had a unique art censorship case regarding a student and parent. Decisions were made to censor material for just the individual in this instance, but not for the whole class. H.H. explained her art censorship case:

A few years ago, I had a situation where a parent was unhappy with a lesson that I was teaching on body modification. We looked at cultural ideals and how society creates an ideal for how bodies should be shaped and adorned. The lesson included everything from tattoo art to body binding, neck-stretching and piercing. While I was not pushing students to go out and get a bunch of tattoos, one parent felt that the subject was not appropriate for her son. She complained to an administrator and I had to provide an alternate assignment for her child. I was not told to change my lesson, but if I were in a different school or had a different administrator I could see that being an issue and possibly being asked to change my plan (H.H.).

This unique situation is interesting because although this parent argued that the lesson was inappropriate, he/she didn't feel the need to include the entire class. Likewise, the school administration didn't see it necessary to completely remove the lesson. Here, art censorship is only affecting one student in the classroom.

List of Inappropriate Imagery

In order to generate preventative strategies for dealing with art censorship, this researcher asked the participants what genres they felt were inappropriate for a school environment. The list in *figure 2*, illustrates the responses from the survey. The question was, "What do you view as appropriate or inappropriate art for a high school classroom?"

| Inappropriate Material |
|----------------------------|
| Drugs |
| Devil Worship |
| Religion |
| Weapons |
| Sexually Explicit Material |
| Military |
| Hunting |
| Blood, guts, gore |
| Discrimination |
| Violence |
| Nudity |

(Figure 2, Survey Question 2: Results)

It's important for art educators to understand topics that can spark controversy in the classroom. This list above can be used as a resource tool for better awareness of school appropriateness. What do you view as appropriate or inappropriate art for a high school classroom?

"No drug references, no devil worship, or nudity." B.F. strongly argued. A.S. stated, "There's always a fine line between what people (parents, community, others) view as art and what they consider to be art. It makes it hard to study some areas of art history." Art history is one of the basic disciplines in art. By censoring certain artworks or events, important historical events may not be studied in the classroom.

C.D. made agreements on levels of appropriateness by sharing her perspective, "No blood, guts, or gore to the human form, no drugs, no weapons. Nudity (with full frontal exception), spirituality, monsters, demons, angels, Frankensteins are allowed" (C.D.). C.D. expressed the importance of asking for permission for everything. C.D. is using direct censorship by asking opinions for higher authority. C.D. argues that teachers are forced to clearly define what is acceptable to the class, administration, and community before the lesson can even begin.

"Pieces that are best for high school classes are ones that have been censored in a way that nudity is not a major part" (N.C.). One of the biggest challenges for censorship is nudity; its an obvious concern, but still very relevant in art history. Poling and Guyas (2008) argue, "The nude body is an enduring and universal subject in the art world, yet it conjures feelings of conflict and taboo in the context of the art room" (p. 39). Poling and Guyas (2008) explain that because the nude body can invoke taboos, forms of art

censorship are served to avoid controversy in the classroom. Centuries ago, some of the masters of art learned so much about drawing, through the observation of the human form. One of Michelangelo's most famous artworks, *David* (1500-1504), displayed an entire nude figure. Poling and Guyas (2008) state, "Its existence has been marked by controversy over visible genitalia" (p. 39). The authors explain that fig leaves were the traditional resource to serve as censoring gestures shielding viewers from anticipated embarrassment (2008). N.C. continues to states that, "A number of parents and students are religious and some are not mature enough to really appreciate the beauty or the meaning behind certain works of art." Nudity and religion are two topics that are often controversial for school material. Cases involving censorship of artworks dealing with nudity are numerous (Poling & Guyas, 2008).

According to the survey results, the only art educator who stated that art censorship does not exist in her high school was C.P. This participant related her answer directly to her school. "We do try to prep kids in regards to drugs, sex and politics" (C.P.). Contrary to the other participants, C.P. differs, arguing that her school is very liberal and does not deal much with art censorship. C.P. expressed the importance of allowing students to make their own statements in art.

According to literature, looking from the standpoint of the art teacher, one can get a great idea of where teachers draw the line when thinking about student artwork (Bowman, 1999). Bowman (1999) surveyed teachers, asking the question, "What types of reasons do you prohibit student produced artwork and why?" Figure 3 visually represents the results of the survey question. The figure below is a chart of qualitative and quantitative evidence showing a percentage and ratings of censored materials, broken into

category. The figure shows the results from experience by public art teachers in Georgia. A total of 106 surveys were sent out around the state to members of the GAEA Executive Board. This illustrates an interesting viewpoint of topics that become relevant in the art room.

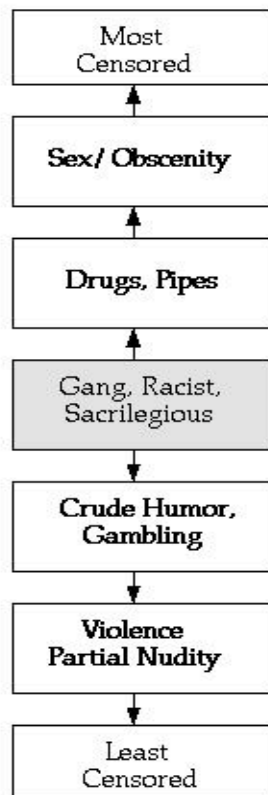
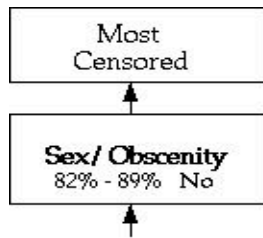


Table 3
Range of images Censored
Under Any Circumstance

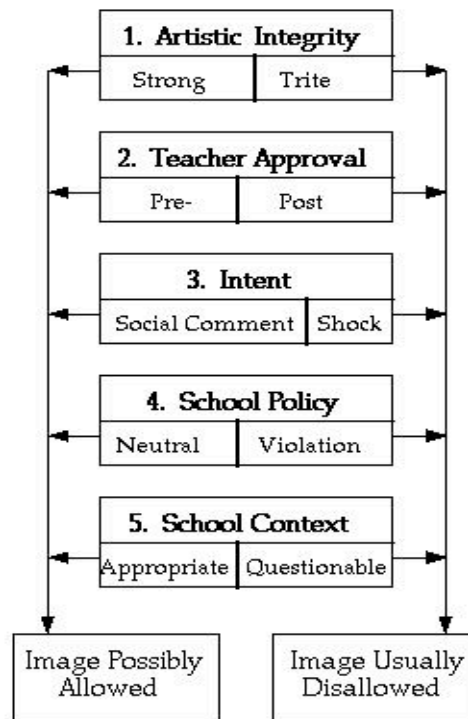


Table 4
Reasons Given for
Censorship Decisions

| | | |
|--------------|-------------------|------------|
| | | |
| 36 Seldom | 17 No Response | 5 Often |

Table 5
Amount teachers reported censoring student work/ 58 teachers

(Figure 3, Bowman (1999), Survey Results)

When administrators protect students from confrontation due to censored material, how will their exposure to propaganda, stereotyping or controversies found in visual culture mainstream affect their thinking and lives when they are bombarded by such as outside of school? While censoring art in a classroom can provide students with a curriculum that limits controversy, discrimination and explicit images, censorship also has negative effects leading towards those mentioned: students' artistic freedom, limited education, and also controversial reactions outside the classroom.

The quote below gives an interesting perspective of the feelings that administrators and teachers deal with as they develop their school curricula. Whelan (2000) remarks:

Librarians fear confrontation, risk to their jobs, or loss of respect. Whelan reports on a survey of 655 librarians, conducted by the *School Library Journal*. Results showed that 70 percent of respondents were "terrified of how parents will respond" to a controversial book; 29 percent feared "backlash from administrators . . . [and/or] the community;" and 25 percent feared negative student reactions. Of those surveyed, almost half had already faced at least one book challenge, and their fear of another challenge influenced their selections. Reasons for censoring included "objectionable language," "violence," "racism," "homosexual themes," "religion," and "sexual content," the last being the number one reason for self-censorship (p. 28).

The research revealed in Whelan's thesis (2013) research implies: fear underlies most self-censoring of book selections. Very similar to librarians, art teachers also deal with risk. They not only have to ensure an appropriate learning experience for the student, but

they deal with biases, judgments, and opinions from authorities, which are often formed by opinions of public morals. Therefore, in order to ensure a suitable and valuable curriculum for students, teachers pay close attention to censorship. “Censoring attitudes can arise from feelings of race or gender discrimination, discrimination against gay community, fear or taboos of controversial issues, and assumed moral or Christian authority” (Whelan, 2013).

Beneficial Learning through Controversial Art

Art historian Marsha Russell (2000), in her article, “Using Art in Teaching World History”, maintains:

Art appeals to students of all learning styles, particularly those who are more comfortable with visual stimuli than with auditory learning. It is the great equalizer in teaching classes of widely disparate reading levels, since the piece of art is a 'text' to which all students have access. Since an art image is concrete, it is an ideal starting point for discussion, providing details that students of all abilities can recognize and giving them a springboard for relating the past to their own lives. The concreteness of the art image provides a bridge to more abstract historical issues and trends—an invaluable aid to your inductive learners. (Using Art in Teaching World History)

According to Ellington (2013), limiting art censorship in the classroom by using preventative teaching strategies can build a stronger educational experience for the student. Ellington states, “Teaching controversial subject matter can be made into teachable moments that will expand the teachers’ and students’ knowledge, perspectives,

and skill sets” (Ellington, p. iv). Some controversial work is created to reflect concerns or raise awareness for particular societal issues. By introducing this work, students can use visual elements to learn about realistic historical or current societal problems. For instance, a lot of Goya’s work depicts visual representations of the history of Spain and war. By discussing, analyzing, and interpreting Goya’s work, a student has the potential to learn about particular events through visualizations of history. The fourth question, “Have you incorporated the work of Francisco de Goya in your lessons? Barbara Kruger? Damien Hirst? Faith Ringgold?” generated ideas about the participants’ perceptions for incorporating the work of these controversial artists in lessons.

After analyzing the results to the survey, it is evident that the following artists: Francisco de Goya, Barbara Kruger, Damien Hirst, and Faith Ringgold seem to be avoided. Although these artists have succeeded in creating great art, their work is often criticized or censored in art education because of its controversial spotlight. By avoiding teaching about such artists’ work teachers are limiting the range of artists, styles, concepts, and movements in art history that are important. “Exposure towards explicit materials entails mature responses, but in order to respond to such materials, one must know how to analyze it” (NCTE). This researcher supports that imagery including nudity, violence, discrimination, and social issues could potentially evoke a negative vibe in the classroom, but the ability to understand the meanings set forth by controversial artists can be important. Many of these controversial works relate directly to the real world.

Understanding the messages that artists are trying to send through their creations would entail an analytical response from students. This would enable a student to make his or her own judgments based on reactions to the subject matter. Censoring

controversial art, limits students' ability to understand artists' reasons for making controversial art. Eliminating such discussions and analyses from the classroom may affect student ability to critically respond to controversial issues. By enabling discussion on topics of controversy, enables students to develop their own opinions and ideas relating to societal issues and concerns.

Survey Results to the question:

“Have you incorporated the work of Francisco de Goya in your lessons? Barbara Kruger?

Damien Hirst? Faith Ringgold?

| Name: | Francisco de Goya | Barbara Kruger | Damien Hirst | Faith Ringgold |
|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| B.F. | | | | |
| A.S. | X | | | X |
| J.R. | | | | |
| C.P. | | | | X |
| M.G. | X | | | |
| S.D. | X | | | |
| N.C. | | X | | |
| C.D. | X | | | |
| H.H. | | | | |

(Figure 4, Survey Question 3: Results)

It is indicated that Goya is the most commonly used artist in the classroom, compared to the four artists above. According to the survey results, none of the nine participants ever used Hirst. This could be because Goya is a classic artist who was involved in many historical changes in art, whereas Hirst is a contemporary artist who is

still growing in the art world. *Figure 4* shows that four out of the nine art teachers (B.F., J.R., C.P., N.C., H.H.) answered, “No,” to incorporating Goya into their art lessons. Only one (N.C.) has used Kruger’s work. No participants have taught about Damien Hirst. However, two participants (A.S. and C.P.) answered that they have used Ringgold for several lessons. Goya, Kruger, Hirst, Ringgold all have instances where their work intertwined with topics of controversy. The participants surveyed have supported that certain artworks created by these artists are censored because of their controversial reputations.

The participants (B.F., C.P., A.S., J.R., M.G., S.D., N.C., H.H. and C.D.) in this case are using forms of self-censorship. Although Goya, Kruger, Hirst and Ringgold have created art that is sometimes perceived as inappropriate, they are often trying to raise public awareness for real life issues. “Art teaches history for us not only by supplying the historical details, but also by reflecting the attitudes and human intellectual and emotional responses of people to the events of their times” (Russell). Goya’s work often displays visual representations of historic issues that occurred in Spain. Furthermore, Kruger’s work reflects societal concerns relating to woman’s rights. Hirst expresses meanings of life and death in some of his most controversial work. While, Ringgold shares significant messages regarding topics of equal rights. All of these artists have created art that can teach students lessons in the context of history.

Francisco de Goya

After analyzing the results of the survey, it is interesting to juxtapose what is being avoided through censorship (by the participants) and what is being used in the

classroom. The first artist to analyze further in this case is Francisco de Goya (1740-1828).

Goya was a Spanish painter of the late eighteenth century. According to Court (2007):

Through Goya's role as Painter-to-the-King, he was exposed to a world where politics and one's personal life were intertwined, whether he wanted them too or not. Goya sparked controversy around the world with some of his satirical illustrations that represented human weakness, especially in his series called 'black paintings.' (Court, 2007)

The work of Goya shares significant historical and mythological references that can be found in literature.

By examining the results of the survey, it is indicated that Goya is not a common name used in the classroom. Only four of the nine art teachers surveyed have incorporated Goya's work into their lessons. How can exposure to this controversial work benefit student learning experiences?

In her response to the fourth question, "Have you incorporated the work of Francisco de Goya in your lessons? A.S. argued that students should be exposed to Goya's work. Further, she stated, "I have incorporated some of Francisco de Goya's controversial work for high school students before. They need to be exposed to all types of art" (A.S.). The image presented in *Figure 5* is one of Goya's most famous paintings from the "black paintings" series, titled, *Chronos Devouring One of His Children*, 1820-1822. According to the text, *Art Across Time*, "Goya's compelling images reflect his remarkable psychological insights, and many also display his support for the causes of

intellectual and political freedom” (Adams, p. 734). Along with A.S., S.D. also claimed that Goya has been used in her lesson; however, she doesn’t use his art that may be deemed as controversial. This participant answered:

Yes—I just make sure to show images that are appropriate (Goya’s *Group on a Balcony*, for example). Then I tell the students about his other work that is more expressive and violent without shedding too much detail of the visual portrayals. I think his style in particular is a better thing to focus on for that age group (dramatic lighting and subject matter being prompted by the French invasion of Spain—this could then start a discussion of the impacts of war from both sides and tie in a lesson about history, as well as a writing prompt) (S.D.).

S.D.’s preventative strategy in using discussion, history, and writing in an art lesson could be very beneficial to students; however she is using a form of self-censorship by choosing to limit the availability of exposure of Goya’s violent works. Self-censorship has been a common approach found throughout the research.

One could use S.D.’s approach for discussing Goya’s works about the impacts of war during the French Invasion, in order to compare two relatively different paintings representative of the same event in history. Goya’s *Group on a Balcony* and Goya’s *Chronos Devouring One of His Children* would be interesting to compare. Both of these works of art are representational of Goya’s feelings about the French invasion of Spain. This strategy could expand a student’s analytical skills and start a powerful discussion on comparing and contrasting ways to illustrate societal events. Discussion about controversy would be beneficial as an introduction, in order to make students aware of the material that is being presented, before they are exposed to it. Students should be

encouraged to make judgments and state their own opinions about situations, whether they are controversial or not.

Chronos Devouring One of His Children represents a satirical illustration referencing Greek mythology. Because of the aggressive nature of the image and the graphic details, many individuals are quick to judge this piece of work. Adams (2007) states, “According to Greek mythology, Chronos devoured his children to thwart the prophecy that they would overthrow him. But the children were gods and therefore immortal. They survived to fulfill their destiny and became the twelve Olympians” (p. 736). When analyzing Goya’s painting, the children appear far from immortal. Goya manipulates the myth by transforming the Titan into a cannibal. This image is psychologically compelling. Adams continues to describe Goya’s themes, quoting, “Goya confronts humanity with an example of its “blackest,” most primitive forms of behavior—infanticide and cannibalism”(p. 737). Looking at the piece, one may recognize aggression and violence. Many could mistakenly interpret the painting as inappropriate. This is especially common for *Chronos Devouring One of His Children* because of the violent approach of having a bloody figure directly in the center of the composition. Many individuals make assumptions without fully knowing the intention. Essentially, Goya took a commonly known Greek myth that is found in literature to juxtapose the events that were happening at the time in Spain’s history, to recreate his own meaning and interpretation (Adams, 2007).

In school, students are often exposed to details about war in world history. Students may learn through visual images that were documented in the past or through detailed literature that explains particular events. By learning through visual art, students have the

opportunity to not only understand historical events, but also visualize how others represented history through their artistic process. By using Goya's *Chronos Devouring One of His Children* and *Group on a Balcony* to compare and contrast the visual elements, students could benefit by looking at representations of history from two different perspectives, thus allowing students to recognize that there is no concrete way to represent history in art. Figure 5 below, illustrates *Chronos Devouring One of His Children* (1819-1823) and *Group on a Balcony* (1810).



(Figure 5: *Chronos Devouring One of His Children*, 1821-23 (left), *Group on a Balcony*, 1810 (right) by Francisco de Goya)

In the article, titled, “The Mystery of Goya’s Saturn/Chronos,” Jay Scott Morgan (2014) tried to distinguish the reason for Goya’s aggressive approach. According to Morgan (2014), Goya was mixing elements from Greek mythology with his personal reflections on the war in Spain. He asks many questions related to this premise.

Is this Goya's sardonic commentary on Spain's recent war with France--presenting a crippled Time, forced to overfeed on the numberless dead? On the dead of all wars? Did the early nineteenth century supply Saturn/Chronos with such quantities of corpses, that Time himself is brought to his knees, his wild eyes bulging, as if he were unable to stomach another bite? Or is the figure a symbol of war itself, the culminating portrait of the horrors he chronicled in his series of etchings, *The Disasters of War*, in 1810-1820?

In using examples of Goya’s artwork in the classroom, students can learn a great lesson on the history of Spain and also the history of Greek mythology (Adams, 2007).

Comparing the two figures above (*Chronos Devouring One of His Children* and *Group on a Balcony*) in the art classroom, the art teacher can use these artworks as examples to teach students two contrasting ways to illustrate the same topic of war. There are many artists who often create art that reflects important events. Although they may depict the same events, each individual has his/her own unique way of expressing it. Many artists use colors to represent emotion. Both of these paintings in *figure 4* are filled with dark and warm colors. Visually, these works of art allow students to recognize how Goya uses certain colors to express his own emotions at the time. Not only is the piece dark and emotional, there are a lot of visual elements and principles that are very successful in this piece. A lesson on high and low contrast, values and shadows, chiaroscuro, proportion,

and composition would be beneficial. Goya's painting gives teachers an opportunity to teach about the aesthetics, history, critique, and production all at once.

Barbara Kruger

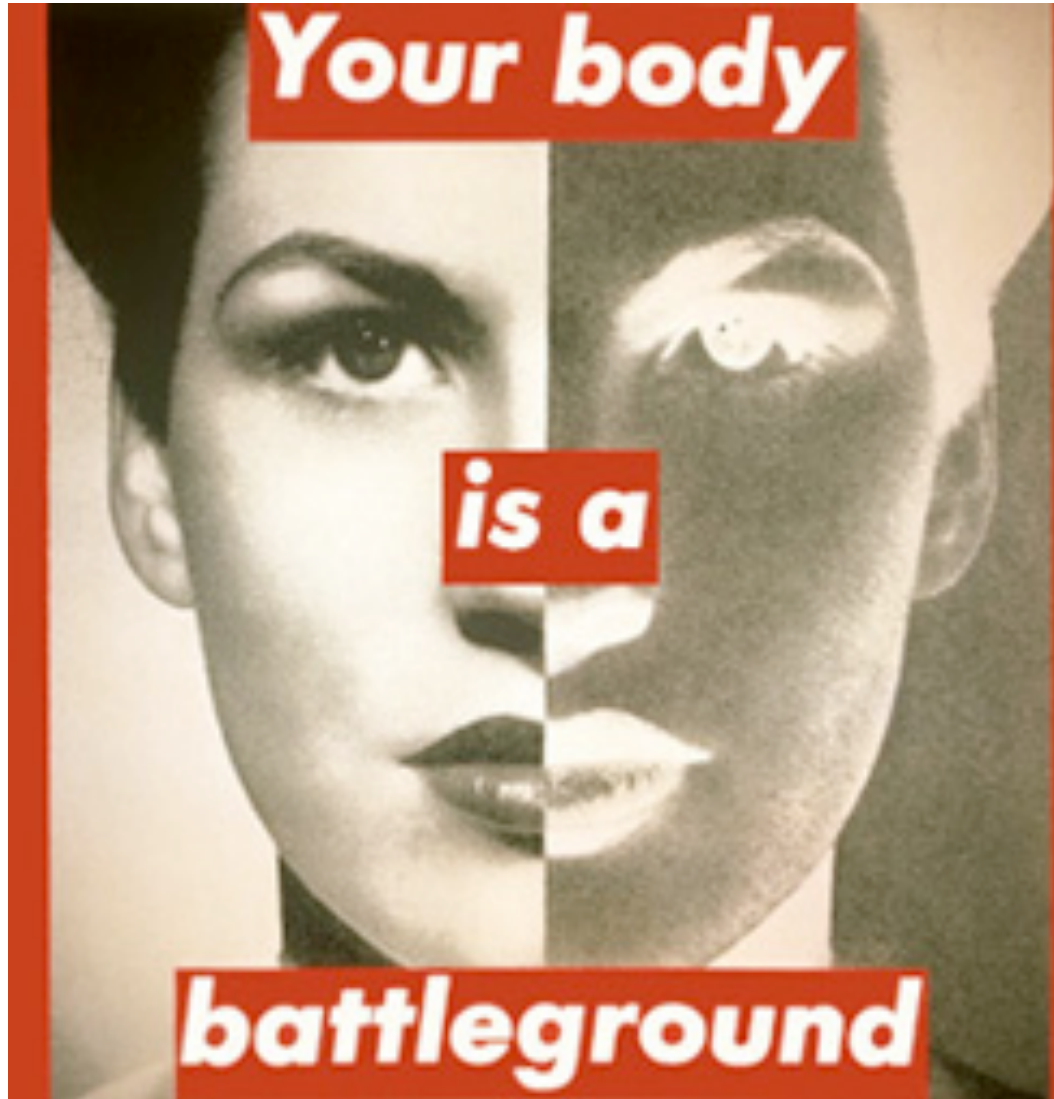
The second artist that the fourth survey question focused on was Barbara Kruger. Kruger is an internationally renowned American conceptual artist. Much of her work involves the combination of photographs and text. The text is usually very aggressive, which often places her work in the category of controversial. Kruger explores theories of feminism, consumerism, and desire through her work. Her work appears in public settings like magazines, billboards, posters, bus stations, and etc. Calak (2013) describes Kruger's work in detail:

Kruger uses photomontage as well as other forms of media to question the viewer with ideas of feminism and the ways in which society treats and often mistreats women. Generally, Kruger's work is united in that most of it stands for the same set of morals and values. In particular, her piece, *Untitled (Your body is a battleground)*, portrays notions of power, patriarchy, stereotyping, and consumption. (p. 158)

Only one participant out of the nine surveyed confirmed that she has used Kruger's work as a resource in her classroom. (N.C.) She stated that she uses Kruger for her photography class. How can students benefit in the classroom from Kruger's artwork?

Kruger's propaganda work could be beneficial to student learning. For example, the artwork in *figure 6, Untitled (Your Body is a Battleground)* stands for feminism and women's rights, which is an important topic often learned about in history classes.

Kruger's main goal in all her work is to spread the word about real issues happening in the society we live in. By recognizing this, students can understand that these controversial topics are often the subject of societal issues. When carefully addressed, Kruger's work could have the potential to teach students about public art outside of the classroom, while bringing them into the real world.



(Figure 6: *Untitled (Your Body is a Battleground)* by Barbara Kruger (1989))

The intention of Kruger's *Untitled (Your Body is a Battleground)* was to support the women's rights march on Washington and abortion-rights movement. Similar to Goya, Kruger is incorporating historical and also social issues that were occurring in that moment in time (1989). The face of a woman model takes on the center focus in the photograph. "The text plays off of the ideas that the female body causes disputes over control between men and women. The red framing of the image and the bold text give feelings of advertising and commodity" (Calak, p. 156). *Untitled (Your Body is a Battleground)* is simple. Calak (2013) states in her article that according to Peter Schjeldhal and Kate Linker, authors of *Love for Sale* (1996):

Barbara Kruger is one of the most highly successful, yet controversial, artists working today. Her art blends the pragmatic world of advertising and graphic design, a highly developed aesthetic sense and a razor sharp political viewpoint that touches on such themes as patriarchy and our consumer culture. (p. 156)

Kruger's work *Untitled (Your Body is a Battleground)* does not display gory images of blood, nudity, or weapons, yet it shares such a strong meaning, and it could spark a great conversation about a controversial topic of feminism, often learned about in education.

Damien Hirst

Damien Hirst's artwork sparks controversy in a different way compared to Goya and Kruger. While the work of Goya and Kruger reflect societal issues, Hirst sparks controversy with the materials that he uses to create art, rather than the visual elements that he is displaying. He often incorporates lifeless animals in his work, which is perceived by many as cruel. Hirst reflects on his ideas about art in general and his own

artwork through his statement, “Art’s about life and it can’t really be about anything else ... there isn’t anything else” Again, “I’ve got an obsession with death ... But I think it’s like a celebration of life rather than something morbid” (Damien Hirst, 2012). As shown in *figure 7*, none of the participants indicated that they’ve used Damien Hirst in their lessons before. What is so controversial about his art?

Hirst is known for challenging the ideas of existence. A lot of his themes represent opposites like life and death, love and hate, desire and fear, and reason and faith. This particular artwork in *figure 7* is an installation that has been intertwined with controversy. People argue that Hirst’s piece, *Doorways to the Kingdom of Heaven*, is dehumanizing and inappropriate (Brooks, 2012).



Figure 7: *Doorways to the Kingdom of Heaven* by Damien Hirst (2007)



Figure 8: *Doorways of the Kingdom of Heaven (Close-up)* by Damien Hirst (2007)

Zero participants confirmed that they have incorporated Hirst into art lessons. How can this particular piece be addressed in the classroom? When viewing Hirst's work, one may recognize that the panels resemble gothic arches and are reminiscent of medieval stained glass windows on churches. The vivid colors are lively, expressing a feeling of happiness and excitement. Although each individual butterfly is lifeless, there is no sign of it when one looks at the image as a whole. A lesson on irony perhaps could lead to a beneficial conversation. Why is it that Hirst uses lifeless animals to symbolize meanings of life and death?

Faith Ringgold

“I used some of Faith Ringgold's work even when I was teaching elementary school!” (A.S.). The fourth and final artist of focus is Faith Ringgold. This African-American artist is an internationally renowned artist from New Jersey. She is a painter, art activist, feminist, and educator. Ringgold uses art to voice her opinions about racial and gender inequality. Two out of the nine art teachers surveyed, (A.S. and C.P.) stated that they’ve incorporated Ringgold’s work in their lessons.

Ringgold is known for her story quilts, which reflect important historical events in African American history. *Flag Story Quilt*, created in 1985, tells her story (Figure 9). While she is not concerned with whether or not the audience makes the interpretation, she is only concerned about voicing her own opinion through a story that she chooses. For instance, Ringgold stated on PBS (2013) during an interview:

I'm not presumptuous enough to feel that people are going to feel what I have in mind, so I tell a story, you know, let them read something, that doesn't change, that as I have said it, you know, so that's the way I feel about the viewer, the viewer has a mind of their own and eyes of their own and they're going to see it their way, I just hope they look.



Figure 9: *Flag Story Quilt* by Faith Ringgold (1985)

Ringgold has several artworks that have been the focus of controversy. Some of her work, including *The Flag is Bleeding*, depicts blood, weapons, and discrimination. In response to her exhibition titled “American People, Black Light,” Ringgold stated this in an interview: “I didn’t want people to be able to look, and look away, because a lot of people do that with art. I want them to look and see. I want to grab their eyes and hold them, because this is America” (Anderson, 2013). Ringgold depicted images of very important issues regarding equal rights. Because of the nature of Ringgold’s historical references about equal rights, students could absolutely benefit from viewing and analyzing her work. Some of the issues presented in her work is no different from what is presented on the news or written in history books.

Strategies to Addressing Censorship

The results to the final question of the survey generated a deeper knowledge about current perspectives regarding decision-making for art censorship. Only one individual out of the nine teachers claimed to not use any form of censorship in the classroom. The suggested preventative strategies were helpful in findings answers for the research question, “Are there instructional techniques, strategies, or methods that can be effective in addressing controversial imagery in the secondary art classroom?”

The last survey question was, “What strategies or methods do you use when dealing with art censorship?” Several of the teachers who were surveyed have used strategies and found them to be successful when teaching about potentially controversial material, although, some of these strategies are no different from normal routines any educator uses in the classroom. These preventative strategies can be used to minimize censorship, but they do not remove censorship all together.

The five suggested strategies are as stated:

| TEACHING STRATEGY: | SUGGESTED BY: |
|---------------------|---------------|
| RESEARCH AHEAD | (N.C.) |
| DEFINE EXPECTATIONS | (H.H.) |
| SHOW WORK FIRST | (A.S.) |
| OPEN DISCUSSION | (A.S.) |
| CROP IMAGERY | (M.G. & S.D.) |

(Figure 10: *Survey Question 5: Results*)

These strategies are simple, yet effective methods for minimizing art censorship. Unfortunately, no strategies were found that completely removed censorship. However, by using these suggested strategies, art educators can prevent having to avoid controversial topics all together. However, they can be used in any order. There may never be one solution to prevent issues of censorship in the classroom, but incorporating these five strategies in a lesson could lead to a more effective teaching experience. Let's look further into these suggestions.

Research Ahead

The "Research Ahead" strategy can be beneficial for lesson planning. Some teachers may fall into everyday routines and lose focus on specific details. For example, N.C. assigned a particular video for her photography class to analyze. She made the mistake of skimming over the video instead of scanning carefully through the whole video. Some of the material that was shown at the very end of the video was inappropriate for the school setting. N.C. was faced with a censorship case where her lack of research resulted in a negative circumstance. The case was eventually resolved between N.C., the principal, parent, and student. While learning through an unfortunate experience, N.C. expressed the importance of researching all materials that are presented to the class ahead of time. N.C. stated, "The biggest strategy I would say is to review everything that you will share with any student or parent. Do your research ahead of time and make sure the things you are sharing are relevant, and are ones that you know will

not cause a problem.” By researching the material ahead of time, whether it is a video or an image, may prevent controversial circumstances from happening in the classroom.

Define Expectations

“I start off the assignment by reminding students that subject material should be appropriate for school and if their parent would not like the image or if it would not be safe to show a younger sibling, then they should save that idea for another time or place” (H.H.). This is a preventative strategy that can be shared with the students in the classroom. H.H. supported her argument by stating:

I may agree with a student’s point of view and it would lead the class to a conversation about censorship, which I think would benefit all students. I think a lot of arguments could be avoided if teachers would validate the student’s feelings and then gently suggest that they think of something else. I have not had a case where the student became disruptive or belligerent over a censorship issue.

Show Work First

The third strategy that was pulled from the survey was, Show Work First. “I try to show images that make students ask questions and that tell stories” (A.S.). The educator in this case would have to warn his or her students ahead of time, so that the students have a clear warning and are not shocked or surprised. With proper instruction, students could take a few minutes to develop their own ideas and meanings while interpreting a controversial piece of art. Showing the work first eliminates the teacher sharing any biases about the art. Having a few minutes of reflection about a controversial piece can

expand a student's cognitive and reasoning skills. After interpreting the work, the teacher could then share the information about the piece. Students could then engage in discussion in order to reflect on multiple perspectives.

Open Discussion

A.S. has found that discussions are very important when the art lesson involves material that may be considered controversial. By starting with a discussion, this strategy slowly introduces the material and gives the teacher a chance to explain it. A.S. answered that she “clearly defines what is acceptable by herself, the administration, and community before the lesson response begins”.

Crop Imagery

Two of the participants (M.G. and S.D.) stated that they use a cropping method when they are teaching about a potentially controversial art. M.G. stated that she “will strategically censor or crop explicit artwork IF it is necessary to use in the first place, or leave it out altogether. You can often find a way around it that does not jeopardize your job!” While this approach allows the teacher to talk about the controversial work, the teachers in this case are still using a form of self-censorship. Although it is minimizing censorship in a way that they are not eliminating in some cases, they are still using a form of internalized censorship by cropping the material.

S.D. states:

If it's an artwork I feel must be shown (this is very rare), I usually crop an artwork and just show part of it—the part that is not offensive—for example, the top half

of Picasso's "Girl Before Mirror." I have yet to encounter an artist that I want to share with students whose work is ALL in need of censorship. If that is the case, it is most likely not an artist appropriate for that age level and I would seek another artist instead.

Avoiding Controversy

J.R. stated in the survey that she avoids anything that might be considered controversial (J.R.). It is indicated in the research that this is common for many educators. By avoiding controversy, one is most often self-censoring. For example, J.R. admitted, "I try to stay away from anything that may be offensive or make students uncomfortable, basically to avoid getting in trouble with administrators and/or parents. I try to use my best judgment to find images that are age-appropriate." Not only is J.R. avoiding censorship to prevent negative emotional reactions from her students, but avoiding it so she can save her job. During censorship cases, it is indicated that art teachers often self-censor out of fear. In this case, educators don't stand behind their decisions; but rather the censorship stems from fear (Smith, 2004).

While removing extremely graphic images from the curriculum may be appropriate for certain age levels, it is hard to distinguish what is too graphic, offensive, controversial, or inappropriate and what is not. According to Commager (2000), a historian and educator:

The fact is that censorship always defeats its own purpose, for it creates, in the end, the kind of society that is incapable of exercising real discretion...In the long run it will create a generation incapable of appreciating the difference between independence of thought and subservience (Commager, 2000).

C.P. originally stated that there were little situations where censorship occurs in her classroom. Moreover, she states, “I don’t believe in this day and age art should be censored. Kids are exposed to so much and really always want to be in the know. They also know their rights.” Therefore, C.P. understands that children want to know everything. C.P. chooses to expose her students to lessons about all types of art and artists.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

What instructional techniques, strategies, or methods can be effective in addressing controversial imagery in the secondary art classroom? This research has resulted in supporting the effectiveness of the following instructional techniques, strategies, and methods in addressing controversial imagery in the secondary classroom. The following strategies were:

1. Research ahead- Researching the material ahead of time, whether it is a video or an image, may prevent controversial circumstances from happening in the classroom. “The biggest strategy I would say is to review everything that you will share with any student or parent. Do your research ahead of time and make sure the things you are sharing are relevant, and are ones that you know will not cause a problem” (N.C.).
2. Define expectations- The educator should clearly define what the objectives of the lesson are, and explain what the controversial material is first. “I start off the assignment by reminding students that subject material should be appropriate for school and if their parent would not like the image or if it would not be safe to show a younger sibling, then they should save that idea for another time or place” (H.H.).
3. Show work first- The educator in this case would have to warn his or her students ahead of time, so that the students have a clear warning and are not shocked or surprised. “I try to show images that make students ask questions and that tell stories” (A.S.).

4. Open discussion- Starting with a discussion, slowly introduces the material and gives the teacher a chance to explain it before a conflict can start. “Clearly define what is acceptable by yourself, the administration, and community before the lesson response begins” (A.S.).
5. Crop imagery- “I will strategically censor or crop explicit artwork IF it is necessary to use in the first place, or leave it out altogether” (M.G.) While this approach allows the teacher to talk about the controversial work, the teachers in this case are still using a form of self-censorship.

However, these strategies are only minimizing art censorship in the classroom, they do not fully eliminate art censorship. After analyzing the results, it is indicated that self-censorship is still relevant in the process of using the strategies provided. The provided strategies: Researching ahead, defining expectations, showing work first, discussion and cropping imagery require some forms of self-censorship in some cases. For instance, research ahead, still allows the teacher to self-censor some controversial material from being addressed. Defining expectations can certainly warn students about controversial work that may be shown, but how does that fully ensure that no conflicts will occur with students who don't want to be exposed to it? Showing work first in order for students to develop their own opinions and discussions can be effective when talking about controversial material, but that doesn't fully insure that every student will engage in the discussion. There is not enough research that provides effective strategies for addressing controversial material without any censorship involved. This is a big issue because without effective instructional strategies, teachers and students will continue to run the risk of getting involved with art censorship issues.

The practice of censorship is not only an issue that can affect a student's learning experience, but it can also affect an educator's instructional methods. Teachers use tools and resources to enhance their daily lesson plans, in order to create the best learning experience for their students. Most resources, especially in today's world with our society surrounded by technology, give opportunities for enhanced learning. A lot of this learning can be from visual media. The NCTE Committee notes (2004), the Internet can be an educational tool for expert opinion: worldwide access to museums, libraries, schools and other cultures; and exposure to new knowledge, resources and learning opportunities that students might not otherwise have access to. Students can research the Internet in and out of school and be exposed to non-censored material. This poses challenges for classroom instruction. Where does one draw the line for censorship? If students can access information in their homes, then why not educate them on real life situations, rather than withholding valuable knowledge? When one puts censorship into practice in the art room, it eliminates significant information and topics that have helped shape the art world.

It is evident through the research conducted that art censorship puts a burden on the learning experience of the students. This includes the limitation of educational resources and self-exploration. In order for the educational experience to be successful, however, the art teacher needs to understand the effects of censoring art to be able to address controversial imagery to the class. It is important to find possible ways of addressing controversy so that it can prevent any conflicts with administrators, parents, and more importantly, the student. After analyzing the results from the nine art educators, and also the looking at the results from the literature, finding ways to significantly create

effective instructional strategies is hard to answer. The participants provided strategies that can easily be used to limit the amount of censorship, but none of the results provided strategies that can effectively prevent censorship. For instance, both M.G. and S.D. answered that they use a cropping method for controversial imagery. This method minimizes censoring the material as a whole; however cropping imagery still uses a form of self-censorship.

“Sometimes in an effort to protect students, educators try to shelter them from ideas, language, and sexuality by censoring the art to which they are exposed. These efforts are sometimes misguided” (Morgan, 2002, p. 4). Efforts to avoid controversy in school lessons can unfortunately create negative affects. The destruction of freedom of expression is one of the most important issues to address. Other effects include the lack of educational resources and controversial reactions towards confrontation from direct and indirect censorship. These negative outcomes due to censorship ultimately affect one’s educational experience as well as exposure toward situations outside of the classroom. Art educators can introduce potentially controversial material to open the students’ minds, to get them thinking about situations happening in the world, in reality. A big responsibility will be put on administrators, school board members, teachers, and parents. When introducing uncensored material, the lessons will have to be guided and controlled. “Responsible educational decisions are based on the perception of student maturity, aptitude, and background, operating in a context of diverse community strengths, needs, standards, and interests (Lankford, 1990, p. 26). Responsibilities will include communication between administrators, teachers, and parents. The importance of knowing every student in the classroom, including interests, background, and learning

style is a huge responsibility. Exposing students to uncensored images in an art classroom could take extra work and awareness of potential issues, but could certainly become a very important lesson.

Discussions about diversity and controversy is a preventative strategy that could spark very informative lessons for all types of high school students, however, censorship doesn't fully allow students to do so. The ability to ask questions and comprehend is needed for bold topics. By raising questions, students can learn through experience. In the art room, exploring visual content that expresses confrontation can be intriguing for a high school student. Many influential artists including Goya, Kruger, Hirst and Ringgold, created controversial art to break tradition and recognize social injustices. Artists like these individuals create such artworks to allow people to understand and raise awareness of horrible issues that take place in the world. By introducing such artists and speaking about issues of race, gender, sexuality, religion, or ethnicity, while looking at visual representations, can help students connect with the world and understand how to confront issues.

The purpose of school is to prepare students for the real world, for real life situations. Because of censorship, students may be unprepared for controversies that can happen. By limiting their being exposed to confrontation can negatively alter their future. While censoring art in a classroom can provide students with a curriculum that limits controversy, discrimination, and explicit images, censorship has negative effects that unfortunately override the positive. Students' artistic freedom, limited educational resources, and controversial reactions outside the classroom may be just the beginning, as visual culture continues to dominate our lives.

After thoroughly examining the data from the electronic surveys with the art education participants and analyzing the results from the literature, the author of this thesis argues for the need for proper instructional strategies for art educators to use when addressing controversial material. The research supports that art censorship can cause negative reactions in school.

We all respond to controversial art works in different ways and art teachers are aware that within any one class students at differing levels of maturity and from different cultural and religious backgrounds will be offended by different things. Knowing this makes curriculum selection even more difficult because in trying to be 'politically correct' in relation to every issue (including age, religion, class, gender, culture etc.) the art teacher is left without any clear guidelines as to the way to proceed. Someone, it seems, is bound to become offended, no matter what is selected or study in the art curriculum (Emery, 2002, p. 36).

Given that censorship has become increasingly problematic for public school teachers, secondary art teachers can benefit from application of instructional methods that address controversial imagery found in art. The survey results to the fifth question provided feedback for preventative instructional strategies that have been successfully used by (B.F., C.P., A.S., J.R., M.G., H.H., S.D., C.D., N.C.) in the past, and are still being used in the present. This offered significant insight for present and future art educators; however, more research needs to be done. After analyzing the results from the literature and the surveys, answers to effective strategies are still gloomy.

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

The study demonstrates how art education can benefit from preventative strategies for teaching about controversial material. The strategies suggested by each of the nine art teachers surveyed reveal how future educators can benefit from these techniques. There is a great need for continuous, substantive research in finding more solutions for effective instructional strategies. By continuously developing preventative teaching strategies, the major effects from art censorship will begin to diminish. By doing so, school curricula could then expand school resources. With the proper procedures, controversial material could be addressed, which will allow students to form opinions, ideas, and solutions. By generating discussions, students participate and learn through their own experiences in the classroom.

By preventing direct censorship, indirect censorship, and self-censorship as much as possible in the classroom, availability for resources will become available. Implications to improve art education are limitless.

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APPENDICES**APPENDIX (A)****(Copy of email template that was sent out for the electronic surveys)**

Date:

Dear (participant's name),

I am in my last semester of graduate studies, and I have decided to conduct a study on the context of art censorship in the secondary art classroom. In order to answer the research question posted below, I am conducting an electronic survey with high school teachers, in addition to examining the literature and research conducted in this area. I would really appreciate your help!

The purpose of the interview:

To get direct and honest responses from art teachers with regard to the concept of censorship in class. Information provided will be used for the sole purpose of furthering my research in this topic.

My research question:

“Are there instructional techniques, strategies, or methods that be effective in addressing controversial imagery in the secondary art classroom?”

Attached is a copy of five electronic survey questions. If you can find time, kindly email a completed copy of this document to mohanlon@uarts.edu as soon as possible. You may contact me at [610-592-4370](tel:610-592-4370) if you have any questions.

Thank you so much in advance for your cooperation and support!

Sincerely,

Michelle O'Hanlon
MA Art Education (Anticipated 2014)
The University of the Arts

APPENDIX (B)**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

(Sample of blank template given to participant)

(Kindly email a completed copy of this document to mohanlon@uarts.edu on or before **Monday, December 9, 2013**. Kindly contact the researcher at [610-592-4370](tel:610-592-4370) if you have any questions. Your honest and detailed answers are very much appreciated. Thank you for participating in this survey!)

Name: _____

Degree: _____

School: _____

City & State: _____

Grade: _____

Class: _____

Question 1.

Do you think that certain degree of art censorship exists in high school curriculum?

If so, how would you describe it?

Question 2.

Do you have any specific cases where art censorship became an issue involving yourself, administrators, students, or parents?

Question 3.

What do you view as appropriate or inappropriate art for a high school classroom?

Question 4.

Have you incorporated the work of Francisco de Goya in your lessons? Barbara Kruger?

Damien Hirst? Faith Ringgold?

Question 5.

What strategies or methods do you use when dealing with art censorship?

APPENDIX (C)**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

(Kindly email a completed copy of this document to mohanlon@uarts.edu on or before **Monday, December 9, 2013**. Kindly contact the researcher at 610-592-4370 if you have any questions. Your honest and detailed answers are very much appreciated. Thank you for participating in this survey!)

Name: B.F

Degree: Bachelor of Fine Arts

Grade: 9th and 12th grade

Class: Studio Art

Question 1.

Do you think that certain degree of art censorship exists in high school curriculum?

If so, how would you describe it?

It's fairly basic- No drug references, no devil worship, no nudity.

Question 2.

Do you have any specific cases where art censorship became an issue involving yourself, administrators, students, or parents?

Yes. I had an honors art student draw two nude figures for one of her projects. She was taking figure-drawing lessons at a local college on the weekends. There was a situation where she wanted to display her artwork, along with her other work in our yearly celebration of the arts. Unfortunately, after discussion with the student and my principal, the painting was removed from the show.

Question 3.

What do you view as appropriate or inappropriate art for a high school classroom?

I'm in agreement with no drugs, no devil worship, and I recognize that with nudity we have to be careful.

Question 4.

Have you incorporated the work of Francisco de Goya in your lessons? Barbara Kruger? Damien Hirst? Faith Ringgold?

No.

Question 5.

What strategies or methods do you use when dealing with art censorship?

I realize we need to be careful. We are dealing with students who are under the age of 18.

APPENDIX (D)**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

(Kindly email a completed copy of this document to mohanlon@uarts.edu on or before **Monday, December 9 2013**. Kindly contact the researcher at [610-592-4370](tel:610-592-4370) if you have any questions. Your honest and detailed answers are very much appreciated. Thank you for participating in this survey!)

Name: C.P

Degree: Bachelor of Fine Arts

Grade: 7th and 8th grade

Class: Art

Question 1.

Do you think that certain degree of art censorship exists in high school curriculum?

If so, how would you describe it?

Not at my school, but in Middle school we do try to prep kids regards to drugs, sex and politics. Not really sure of district position.

Question 2.

Do you have any specific cases where art censorship became an issue involving yourself, administrators, students, or parents?

Once we had a student create a lesson based on abortion... our old principal asked us to take it down but the student's parents wanted it displayed and it was.

Question 3.

What do you view as appropriate or inappropriate art for a high school classroom?

My school is very Liberal. We really let kids make their own statements in art.

Question 4.

Have you incorporated the work of Francisco de Goya in your lessons? Barbara Kruger?

Damien Hirst? Faith Ringgold?

No, they are units of study. We teach about Ringgold in 8th grade.

Question 5.

What strategies or methods do you use when dealing with art censorship?

I don't believe in this day and age art should be censored. Kids are exposed to so much and really always want to be in the know. They also know their rights

APPENDIX (E)**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

(Kindly email a completed copy of this document to mohanlon@uarts.edu on or before **Monday, December 9, 2013**. Kindly contact the researcher at 610-592-4370 if you have any questions. Your honest and detailed answers are very much appreciated. Thank you for participating in this survey!)

Name: A.S.

Degree: Bachelor of Fine Arts, Minor in Art

History and Photography, Master of Art

Grade: 9th – 12th

Class: Photography

Question 1.

Do you think that certain degree of art censorship exists in high school curriculum?

If so, how would you describe it?

Yes, art censorship does exist in the high school curriculum. As teachers, we try to incorporate as much art history as we can. There's always a fine line between what people (parents, community, others) view as art and what they consider to be art. It makes it hard to study some areas of art history.

Question 2.

Do you have any specific cases where art censorship became an issue involving yourself, administrators, students, or parents?

I have had special permission for my students to showcase figure paintings and drawings at our annual art show before. Getting the principal to back up what your intentions are really helps if there is a parent issue.

Question 3.

What do you view as appropriate or inappropriate art for a high school classroom?

I think that students should be exposed to all types of art, regardless of having nudes present or not. I think that in America, so many people are uptight about that type of art, but in Europe it's a way of life. Our culture needs some help in this category.

Question 4.

Have you incorporated the work of Francisco de Goya in your lessons? Barbara Kruger? Damien Hirst? Faith Ringgold?

Yes. I used some of Faith Ringgold's work even when I was teaching elementary school! I have incorporated some of Francisco de Goya's controversial work for high school students before. They need to be exposed to all types of art!

Question 5.

What strategies or methods do you use when dealing with art censorship?

I try to show images that make students ask questions and that tell stories. I do have to say that I have avoided some of Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs because of their graphic nature. Also, H.R. Giger, besides the Alien series, is borderline pornographic. It's hard to justify that. I have found that it's hard to deal with censorship sometimes in my lessons. I know that some of the English teachers deal with it in writing as well.

APPENDIX (F)**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

(Kindly email a completed copy of this document to mohanlon@uarts.edu on or before **Monday, December 9, 2013**. Kindly contact the researcher at 610-592-4370 if you have any questions. Your honest and detailed answers are very much appreciated. Thank you for participating in this survey!)

Name: J.R.

Degree: Bachelor of Fine Arts, Master of Art

Grade: 5th - 8th grade

Class: Art

Question 1.

Do you think that certain degree of art censorship exists in high school curriculum?

If so, how would you describe it?

Yes, I believe the teachers in my district (myself included) use their own judgments to censor what we are showing our students.

Question 2.

Do you have any specific cases where art censorship became an issue involving yourself, administrators, students, or parents?

There has not been any issue involving a student, administrators, or parents specifically regarding visual art. I had an issue with a parent regarding the music being played in my art room.

Question 3.

What do you view as appropriate or inappropriate art for a high school classroom?

Inappropriate: nudity, sexual innuendos, negative images involving religion, race, or gender, or graphically violent.

Question 4.

Have you incorporated the work of Francisco de Goya in your lessons? Barbara Kruger? Damien Hirst? Faith Ringgold?

No I have not.

Question 5.

What strategies or methods do you use when dealing with art censorship?

I try to stay away from anything that may be offensive or make students uncomfortable basically to avoid getting in trouble with administrators and/or parents. I try to use my best judgment to find images that are age-appropriate.

APPENDIX (G)**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

(Kindly email a completed copy of this document to mohanlon@uarts.edu on or before **Monday, February 10, 2014**. Kindly contact the researcher at [610-592-4370](tel:610-592-4370) if you have any questions. Your honest and detailed answers are very much appreciated. Thank you for participating in this survey!)

Name: M.G.

Degree: Bachelor of Science in Art Education

Grade: 9th and 12th grade

Class: Art

Question 1.

Do you think that certain degree of art censorship exists in high school curriculum?

Absolutely! Censorship goes both ways- Teachers are censored in what they show students and students are censored in what they depict or write about in their artwork. In our school, art which shows weapons, sexually explicit content, or otherwise violent subject matter is avoided. This extends so far as to censor the showing of Michelangelo's "David" or even military or hunting weapons. Heavily liberal subject matter should also be avoided.

Question 2.

Do you have any specific cases where art censorship became an issue involving yourself, administrators, students, or parents?

Many of my students hunt or are interested in the armed forces, so they have included guns and knives in their artwork. Upon receiving artwork, which was not school-appropriate, I have asked students to refrain from further subject matter. No issue has required administrative intervention.

Question 3.

What do you view as appropriate or inappropriate art for a high school classroom?

Personally I avoid MOST topics and subject matter frowned on by my school, as stated above, in question #1. I do tread the waters of controversial issues for a social issues project but that's about it. Honestly, save the nudity for college art classes where students elect to take the course as adults, not minors, and pay for it. It is just too risky for public education, especially in more conservative districts and schools.

Question 4.

Have you incorporated the work of Francisco de Goya in your lessons? Barbara Kruger? Damien Hirst? Faith Ringgold?

Only Goya, and only appropriate imagery.

Question 5.

What strategies or methods do you use when dealing with art censorship?

I will strategically censor or crop explicit artwork IF it is necessary to use in the first place, or leave it out altogether. You can often find a way around it that does not jeopardize your job!

APPENDIX (H)**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

(Kindly email a completed copy of this document to mohanlon@uarts.edu on or before **Monday, February 10, 2014**. Kindly contact the researcher at 610-592-4370 if you have any questions. Your honest and detailed answers are very much appreciated. Thank you for participating in this survey!)

Name: S.D.

Degree: Bachelor of Science in Art Education,

Master of Art in Educational Media

Grade: 6th and 8th grade

Class: Art

Question 1.

Do you think that certain degree of art censorship exists in high school curriculum?

Yes—it has to exist because a lot of artworks contain images that parents, students, and/or administration would find unsuitable for persons under the age of 18.

Question 2.

Do you have any specific cases where art censorship became an issue involving yourself, administrators, students, or parents?

I had one issue in my third year of teaching when I had loaded a daily art widget to my announcements that would update each day automatically. This worked great until one day, the daily art was “Satan’s Sister”—and if I remember correctly was a painting of a devil pin-up girl. Luckily I had a good relationship with the parent who reported it and it was laughed about and removed with no further repercussions. Lesson learned, I only use programs that I can control.

Question 3.

What do you view as appropriate or inappropriate art for a high school classroom?

Anything with nudity, extreme violence and/or messages that slander/promote any sort of controversial topic (racism, human sexuality, etc) Depending on the religious topic—I will show some art that has a religious context with a disclaimer to students that this is meant to share with them a part of history since so much art was created b/c of religion but that it in no way is depicting my personal views of the subject.

Question 4.

Have you incorporated the work of Francisco de Goya in your lessons? Barbara Kruger? Damien Hirst? Faith Ringgold?

Yes—I just make sure to show images that are appropriate (Goya’s “Group on a Balcony” for example). Then I tell the students about his other work that is more expressive and violent without shedding too much detail of the visual portrayals. I think his style in particular is a better thing to focus on for that age group (dramatic lighting and subject matter being prompted by the French invasion of Spain—this could then start a discussion of the impacts of war from both sides and tie in a lesson about history as well as a writing prompt).

Question 5.

What strategies or methods do you use when dealing with art censorship?

If it’s an artwork I feel must be shown (this is very rare), I usually crop an artwork and just show part of it—the part that is not offensive—for example, the top half of Picasso’s “Girl Before Mirror”. I have yet to encounter an artist that I want to share with students whose work is ALL in need of censorship. If that is the case, it is most likely not

an artist appropriate for that age level and I would seek another artist instead—there are so many after-all.

APPENDIX (I)**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

(Kindly email a completed copy of this document to mohanlon@uarts.edu on or before **Monday, February 10, 2014**. Kindly contact the researcher at 610-592-4370 if you have any questions. Your honest and detailed answers are very much appreciated. Thank you for participating in this survey!)

Name: N.C.

Degree: Bachelor of Science in Art Education

Grade: 8th and 12th grade

Class: Photography

Question 1.

Do you think that certain degree of art censorship exists in high school curriculum?

Yes, I believe there is always going to be a certain censorship in schools. A number of parents and students are religious and some are not mature enough to really appreciate the beauty or the meaning behind certain works of art.

Question 2.

Do you have any specific cases where art censorship became an issue involving yourself, administrators, students, or parents?

We had given a few kids a help video on one our photography lessons, and the person who originally shared it did not realize that further in the video that Nudity was involved. The parent of a child who the video was sent to was not pleased to say the least. It turned into a lesson for us teachers to review every second of a video or site that we share with our students.

Question 3.

What do you view as appropriate or inappropriate art for a high school classroom?

I believe the pieces that are best for high school classes are ones that have been

censored in a way that nudity is not a major part. Most students are not mature enough at that age to really get why the people do that kind of art. Most parents still don't understand that about the art either so it is best to at least leave that out of the presentations.

Question 4.

Have you incorporated the work of Francisco de Goya in your lessons? Barbara Kruger? Damien Hirst? Faith Ringgold?

I have used the work of Barbara Kruger in my lessons but I teach photography so the others are not relevant to the lessons we teach.

Question 5.

What strategies or methods do you use when dealing with art censorship?

The biggest strategy I would say is to review everything that you will share with any student or parent. Do your research ahead of time and make sure the things you are sharing are relevant and ones that you know will not cause a problem.

APPENDIX (J)**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

(Kindly email a completed copy of this document to mohanlon@uarts.edu on or before **Monday, February 10, 2014**. Kindly contact the researcher at 610-592-4370 if you have any questions. Your honest and detailed answers are very much appreciated. Thank you for participating in this survey!)

Name: H.H.

Degree: Bachelor of Fine Arts

Grade: K-12

Class: Art

Question 1.

Do you think that certain degree of art censorship exists in high school curriculum?

Yes. I think school policy dictates some censorship but I also think that students censor himself or herself as well.

Question 2.

Do you have any specific cases where art censorship became an issue involving yourself, administrators, students, or parents?

A few years ago, I had a situation where a parent was unhappy with a lesson that I was teaching on body modification. We looked at cultural ideals and how society creates an ideal for how bodies should be shaped and adorned. The lesson included everything from tattoo art to body binding, neck-stretching and piercing. While I was not pushing students to go out and get a bunch of tattoos, one parent felt that the subject was not appropriate for her son. She complained to an administrator and I had to provide an alternate assignment for her child. I was not told to change my lesson but if I were in a different school or had a different administrator I could see that being an issue and possibly being asked to change my plan.

At the elementary level, I had a student chose to draw a gun as the subject for a painting. I emailed the student and told him that I thought it was a really interesting subject to draw but that I would like them to select a different object for this project that would be more appropriate for school. The student complied and redid the assignment without an argument. In that case I was the one doing the censoring.

Question 3.

What do you view as appropriate or inappropriate art for a high school classroom?

I feel there are some subjects or content that might be risky for high school students but if they can justify how they are using an image to get across a message I might let it go. I would allow content after much discussion with the student and also remind the student that school officials would be the final censor. I would most likely not allow nudity or particularly gruesome imagery – I would challenge the student to find another way to portray their message. Of course they can create whatever they like on their own time outside of school.

Question 4.

Have you incorporated the work of Francisco de Goya in your lessons? Barbara Kruger?

Damien Hirst?

I have not studied or had students study any of these artists in particular.

Question 5.

What strategies or methods do you use when dealing with art censorship?

I start off the assignment by reminding students that subject material should be appropriate for school and if their parent would not like the image or if it would not be

safe to show a younger sibling, then they should save that idea for another time or place.

I may agree with a student's point of view and it would lead the class to a conversation about censorship, which I think would benefit all students. I think a lot of arguments could be avoided if teachers would validate the student's feelings and then gently suggest that they think of something else. I have not had a case where the student became disruptive or belligerent over a censorship issue.

APPENDIX (K)**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

(Kindly email a completed copy of this document to mohanlon@uarts.edu on or before **Monday, February 10, 2014**. Kindly contact the researcher at [610-592-4370](tel:610-592-4370) if you have any questions. Your honest and detailed answers are very much appreciated. Thank you for participating in this survey!)

Name: C.D.

Degree: Bachelor of Fine Arts

Grade: 9-12

Class: Art 1, Art 2, and Advanced Art

Question 1.

Do you think that certain degree of art censorship exists in high school curriculum?

Yes

Question 2.

Do you have any specific cases where art censorship became an issue involving yourself, administrators, students, or parents?

Yes, just about every year at our annual art show, we need to readdress a point of view.

Question 3.

What do you view as appropriate or inappropriate art for a high school classroom?

No blood, guts, or gore to the human form, no drugs no weapons. Nudity (with full frontal exception), spirituality, monsters, demons, angels, Frankensteins are allowed.

Question 4.

Have you incorporated the work of Francisco de Goya in your lessons? Barbara Kruger?

Damien Hirst?

De Goya has shown up in some of the artist's recreates my students have done in the past.

Question 5.

What strategies or methods do you use when dealing with art censorship?

Clearly define what is acceptable by myself, the administration, or the community before the lesson response begins.