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Networking and Connecting Creative Minds: Understanding Social Media's Role in Today's Visual Arts Instruction

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NETWORKING AND CONNECTING CREATIVE MINDS:
UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL MEDIA'S ROLE IN
TODAY'S VISUAL ARTS INSTRUCTION

by

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A thesis submitted to the Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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NETWORKING AND CONNECTING CREATIVE MINDS:
UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL MEDIA'S ROLE IN
TODAY'S VISUAL ARTS INSTRUCTION.

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Western Michigan University, 2016

This study explores the use of social media in K-12 visual arts programs, focusing on why and how art educators choose to implement social media in their instructional practice. This study discusses benefits and disadvantages of social media as a pedagogical and creative tool in art education through analysis of the survey responses of 50 in-service teachers. Finally, specific social media platforms are recommended, with in-class examples provided for art teachers interested in using social media in their program.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2014, while sitting in a county-wide meeting for art educators, an administrator asked for a show of hands; “How many teachers in this room are using Pinterest for their classroom?” Only a small fraction of hands raised, quickly followed by discussion; “What is Pinterest?” or “I never thought to use it for class ideas.” Pinterest, the third most popular social networking site in the US (Beese, 2015) allows users to visually share and discover information. Why then, are VISUAL art teachers unaware of such a tool? Is being aware of and feeling comfortable using tools like this, part of being an art teacher in the 21st century?

As educational leaders, we should understand changes in the world-wide-web and how they reflect changes in the world around us. We should provide these new tools to our students so that they are prepared for new challenges (Solomon & Schrum, 2007). Art educators are responsible for addressing the needs of their students brought on by new technology, even more so now, in an age of “immersive digital culture.” Today’s generation of “digital kids” or “digital natives” think and process information fundamentally differently as a result of their complete immersion in and access to such digital wonders as computers, the Internet, Cell phones, MP3 players, CDs, video games, and digital cameras (Taylor and Carpenter, 2007).

The impetus to use interactive computer technologies throughout all levels of education and within the field of art education appears to be growing. With the release of the new National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS) for K–12 students in 2014, it is important to consider how these new standards and the previous 1994 standards relate to contemporary

practices of visual artists, our technology-infused world, and how we teach technology in preservice art education courses. As technologies change rapidly, we need to ensure art education policies, standards, practices, preparation of preservice art teachers, and the art classroom have a relationship to the world of students and practicing artists. Using current technologies for artmaking is one way to accomplish this (Patton & Buffington, 2016).

Teaching art through social media does not mean that the responsibility of what we have come to know as an art-teacher identity is dissolved (Castro, 2012). Nor does incorporating social media create additional burdens on the teacher. It simply means that there is a shift toward a technology-enriched visual arts curriculum.

Some art teachers are already using technology and social media in creative ways throughout their practice. This study analyzes the types of social media currently being used in art programs, as well as the impact of social media on student learning. It reviews the benefits and disadvantages social media can have specifically on an art program. It surveys and explores the experiences of in-service art teachers who do (and do not) implement social media in their instruction. The intention of this study is to understand what is currently happening with social media in actual art programs; it questions what has led teachers to choose social media and what are the real-life impacts on an instructional program.

Defining Social Media

Social media describes computer-mediated tools that essentially allow people to communicate in virtual communities or networks. Users are able to create, share or exchange information, ideas, discussions, ideas, pictures, and videos in these networks, with these networks dependent on mobile and web-based technologies.ⁱ

There are generally four common features that all social media services do share. First they are Web 2.0 internet-based applications, meaning social media was created at a time when the internet shifted from static web pages to dynamic or user-generated content. Second, this user-generated content sits at the heart of a social media network. Third, users create profiles for the site or app which are then maintained by the social media organization and fourth, user profiles are connected to other individuals or groups which develop online social networks.ⁱⁱ

These common features expand into many different types of online communication described as social media. They however, are connected by the underlining fact that they are as much about these processes of social constitution and connection as they are about the exchange of content. They are not just media for dissemination, but also a kind of creative networking (Burbules, 2016).

It is important to point out that social media and Web 2.0, though similar, are two different entities. The main concept of Web 2.0 was many-to-many content. Individuals could set up their own websites and blogs, post videos, and fill the Web with user-generated content. Web 2.0 was first and social media has grown out of Web 2.0 and the creation of the user-generated Web. You can refer to social media as a Web 2.0 innovation, but referring to Web 2.0 as social media is incorrect because it ignores all its less social aspects.ⁱⁱⁱ

Interesting enough, when it comes to social media people aren't doing anything with 21st century social media that they didn't do with media in the 20th or 19th centuries; people create, share, vet, organize, are entertained, and use social platforms to transact business, whether those platforms are built of digital switches or concrete pavement (Beattie, 2011.) The characteristics that are new are the nuanced qualities of these behaviors, such as their global reach and speed at which information is shared. Today's popular use of social media isn't itself a phenomenon, but it effect on how users are thinking and doing things is.

LITERATURE REVIEW (PART I):
BENEFITS AND DISADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN ART EDUCATION

Benefits of Social Media in Art Education

Today's technology has changed the way students learn. In North America most people under the age of 25 live in an environment of digital technology. That is, most of these people know a digitally mediated existence as standard (Taylor & Carpenter, 2007). Today's students crave access to tools that let them network with their peers or anyone or anything else they choose to interact with. And for them, it's second nature to multitask. They expect, want, and need tools that provide hyperlinks and instantaneous random access that allow them to connect everyone and everything else simultaneously for instant gratification (Juke, 2005).

Connecting with today's learners through social media can have positive outcomes. There are three key elements to learning in a digital age; connectivity, interactivity, and access to user-generated content (Jarmon, 2009). These elements give lead to five broader outcomes of:

- building learning communities
- collective or constructive knowledge
- meaningful engagement
- learning to navigate technology and media literacy
- connecting with communities beyond the classroom

Using technology can provide students with media literacy skills and help prepare them to think in a world full of technology. More specifically to the visual arts, social media offers the user

the ability to interact in environments that are graphically oriented and visually stimulating. In addition, the interactive qualities of Web 2.0 in many cases align with similar aspects of artistic production: the impulse to share images in a public forum, the ability to view and critique the work of others, and the possibility that work might be traded, donated or purchased as a result of these interactions (Sweeny, 2009).

Social Media Learning Communities

One of the greatest benefits of social media is its ability to create communities of people, and specific to education, learning communities centered on main themes and ideas. As the use of social media rapidly expands into the education sector and holds promise to better facilitate distance education, it is important to explore innovative ways to use social media to support learners and elicit group cohesion and sense of connection to a community (Seo, 2016).

Learning communities are curricular structures that link different disciplines around a common theme or question. They give greater coherence to the curriculum and provide students and faculty with a vital sense of shared inquiry (Gabelnick, 1990). Social media is a powerful tool that can allow students and teachers to learn together, both inside and outside the confines of the class room. They become co-participants in learning and content is approached and acted upon in different ways from various viewpoints.

It is not as if learning communities cannot happen without social media; rather, these roles are identified and are dynamically and continually being reshaped through the teaching and learning

of art through social media (Castro, 2012). Teachers and students can communicate and give feedback together using interactive forums; they can hold group discussions, learning from one another building their understanding. Online forums, galleries, and image sharing sites all give students chances to share ideas on specific themes.

Burbules (2016) explains that the time it takes to make something together, the complexity of working through differences, disagreements, and accidents to build something, is itself educational in addition to the content of what is made. This form of collaboration as a “self-educating community,” one in which distinct teacher and student roles are not necessarily present; in which everyone can be a teacher and everyone can a student.

He continues to describe that the creation of new understandings, a new artistic piece, a new way of putting ideas or resources together is the point and purpose, the occasion, and the facilitative medium that brings people together. The community is defined around the project and motivated to establish itself as a community through the project. These learning communities have been transforming students into content creators by empowering them to generate, customize, and share information freely within online networks of individuals and groups. They can project stronger, more coherent online presences and participate in the knowledge-building process more actively. This transformative shift opens up new opportunities to support collaborative learning in the online context as it allows for diverse means to encourage user interaction and effective ways to manage collective knowledge (Shrader, 2015).

Today’s learning communities now expand beyond a schools local reach. It’s amazing that with today’s technology that we now have far more opportunities to interpersonally interact with a

variety of people from a diversity of that grounds. We can converse with people from different socioeconomic statuses, from different cultural backgrounds, and from different parts of the world without even leaving our desk chairs. Millennials not only know how to use technology, social media, and digital media; they are new creators of knowledge within those processes and are active contributors to the co-construction of knowledge across the globe (Schrader, 2015).

It is this shift in internet use, where people are now participating in knowledge dissemination and creation that is changing the future of how students learn. (Schrader, 2015) explains that that learning through social media communities is the future direction of education. Education must include changing the classroom, educational processes and activities, and student and teacher roles. Social media allows even more opportunities to change minds and learning contexts. The classroom will not be as primary in our future as in the past—with learning occurring “on the go” via mobile technologies (Schrader, 2015).

With this transformation, the role of the teacher will change with this shift. Teachers become creators and coordinators of learning communities in which students are experts for one another as they construct knowledge through dynamic interpersonal and community interactions and reflective thinking (Schrader, 2015).

Art educators are responsible for bringing their programs into the 21st century. As the use of social media rapidly expands into the education sector and holds promise to better facilitate distance education, it is important to explore innovative ways to use social media to support learners and elicit group cohesion and sense of connection to a community (Seo, 2016). Art educators can develop these social media learning communities around core artistic values and larger curriculum concepts.

Personal Learning Communities for Teachers.

Social media learning communities can also be used for teacher development. Such online communities present a source of professional learning for teachers that offer opportunities of peer support and guidance, as well as online personalized content and access to continuous and collaborative learning (Duncan-Howell, 2009). Using social networking can help educators by enabling people to tap into and share diverse, global perspectives on teaching strategies, educational issues, and technologies (Crane, 2012). These online communities encourage collaboration with each other ‘in unprecedented ways, transcending issues such as common planning time and knowledge about other content areas. For instance, in the past, teachers were not able to share their teaching experiences with peers from other districts or states unless they travelled to conferences. Today, by means of electronic communication technologies, especially the Web 2.0, teachers find their inspiration for lesson ideas from social media platforms, including Pinterest, Facebook and blogs (Wang, 2016.)

About 90 percent of professional development actually takes place in an informal setting, rather than in a formal one, (Conlon, 2004.) Teachers should draw on formal and informal learning networks, wherein they can share their ideas and collaboratively reflect on their practice. It is through these informal learning networks provide teachers with an opportunity to continuously share and update their practice and engage into collaborative informal professional learning (Rehm & Notten, 2016).

These networks, also referred to as *semi-formal learning communities*, are bottom-up initiatives that provide spaces wherein individuals are willing to invest their time to help colleagues they would normally not have the chance to meet and work with in person (e.g. from different school

districts). This offers greater flexibility than traditional teaching and learning scenarios (Rehm & Notten, 2016).

Collective Knowledge

Similar to learning communities, another benefit of social media is the concept of collective knowledge. These interactive processes of collective knowledge construction occur when a group of individuals creates new understanding by taking up each other's contributions and combining them into new insights. This may happen spontaneously in short-term groups, but also in communities that form themselves around intellectual or practical challenges and problems (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Such communities mostly act autonomously, organize their own structures and collaboration, and use technology in order to meet particular challenges and problems. In such situations, the community as a whole develops and constructs new knowledge while the community members also individually advance and refine their own knowledge. So individual learning and collaborative knowledge construction are interdependent and occur simultaneously (Kimmerle, Moskaliuk, Oeberst, & Cress, 2015).

In addition to individual learning activities that encourage students to seek, examine, analyze, and share their knowledge, students need interaction and collaboration with their peers to engage in their learning process. Interaction and collaboration with peers take an important place in student learning. According to social constructivist theory of learning, truth, or knowledge, is reached by the community through discussing and reaching a social consensus (Duffy & Cunningham, 1996).

Using blogs and networking forums students can benefit from each other's connections and understandings of a subject. From the perspective of educational psychology, it is interesting and relevant to examine in what ways and to what extent social media may contribute both to learning as an individual process and to collective knowledge construction on the Internet, in the classroom, or through any form of interplay between formal and informal situations. These interactive processes of collective knowledge construction occur when a group of individuals creates new understanding by taking up each other's contributions and combining them into new insights (Kimmerle, et al., 2015).

Not only is the construction of knowledge through social media a beneficial learning tool, but it is also models real-life artful thinking, in which a group of artists who, through social media, shared local interpretations through art, interaction, and influence from each other's local interpretations (Castro, 2012). The idea of collective knowledge to better understand the visual arts allows learners to give rise to broader themes and to use each other's ideas as points of departure and elaboration.

Social Tagging.

A side note to using collective knowledge is the modern concept of social tagging. Cress, Held, & Kimmerle (2013) describe social tagging as an activity in which users annotate digital resources with keywords, so-called "tags." In most applications, a user can choose individual tags for stored resources. So a tag reflects a user's individual association with a resource, and thus a tag represents the specific meaning or relevance to the respective user. On this individual level tags are metadata that help an individual user to arrange, classify, organize, and re-find her

or his own stored Web resources. Social tagging systems extend this individual level to a collective level.

Social tagging is both helpful and distracting for educators and students. Students can use tags to build their individual knowledge or collaborate with others to build broader group perspectives. The collective knowledge that results from these tags can lead to a rich learning environment full of information exchange. Students must be taught to use them with discretion and make judgment to determine accuracy of knowledge on the internet. Examples of social tagging that could be used for art education are bookmarking sites or online folder created by teachers for students to explore together, or collaborative blogs that students can tag concepts in and share with one another.

Constructivism.

Using social media platforms to build collective knowledge is a perfect venue for constructivist learning. Constructivism focuses on the importance of the individual knowledge, beliefs, and skills through the experience of learning. According to the Encyclopedia of the Sciences of Learning, the construction of understanding is a combination of prior knowledge and new information. Individuals can accept new ideas or fit them into their established views of the world. Constructivist learning is a theory about how people learn. It states that learning happens when learners construct meaning by interpreting information in the context of their own experiences. In other words, learners construct their own understandings of the world by reflecting on their experiences (Seel, 2012.)

Learning about art and constructivism go hand-and-hand, it is through constructivism that art students can learn through real-life meaningful experiences.

The constructivist approach to teaching and learning argues that the goal of teaching is students understanding and that students construct knowledge, not simply reproduce it through memorization, recall, or routinized application. Artmaking conceived as an exploration and expression of big ideas reflects a constructivist approach. The implications of this are that students not produce artworks from rote formulas or create products that have little meaning beyond the exploration of media or the development of technical skills, but, instead, that students make artworks to investigate and express ideas; and, based upon constructivist practices of authentic learning based upon the real world, that students model their artmaking on that of adult artists and thereby learn how adults artists make art. The goal, however, is not to develop students into professional artists but to structure classroom artmaking into a more meaningful activity, one based upon real-world authenticity (Walker, 2001, p.xiv).

Art criticism, history, and production can all be taught using a constructivist learning approach. However, adding social media tools to the experience, can take learning to another level, both in and outside of the classroom. For example, teaching in the discipline of aesthetics seems to be inherently constructivist in nature. Students' personal aesthetics represent their beliefs in relation to ideas such as beauty, artistic value, ethics, and morality in artworks. The incorporation of interactive hypermedia into the art classroom provides students with greater access to imagery, content and experiences that can form those beliefs. An "open" constructivist assignment could be given in which students define beauty. Using the internet students work individually or collaboratively to gather experiences that help them create a personal definition of beauty (Prater, 2001).

A real-life example of a constructivist approach to student art production and reflection using technology is the East Coast/West Coast Art Project. Johnson, Keiling, and Cooper (2013) explain that the project spanned 8 years and involved students from two different middle schools. It was a successful student-led and teacher-guided approach to learning visual arts concepts. The project encouraged students to construct their own meaning of certain issues from images in the "art world." Students used email, Power Point slide shows, wiki pages, video conferencing, and Voice Thread to communicate with one another and build ideas and knowledge from feedback.

A constructivist learning environment in an art classroom is also characterized by student choice. Students in the project chose teammates or worked individually to solve artistic problems, not set by the art teacher, but discovered in their research. They chose issues that have personal meaning. Issues such as: divorce, eating disorders, skin cancer, depression, bullying, nightmares, women's rights, sports, and other issues relevant to middle school students. They used prior knowledge to choose art media and processes to communicate their big ideas; they experimented with additional media to enhance their work; or they researched other processes with assistance from more knowledgeable peers or adults (Johnson, et al., 2013).

The East Coast/West Coast Art Project offers a positive frame work for art teachers who want to combine constructivist learning with technology. The success of the project relies on the fact that the work is student-centered, student-driven, and relevant.

Media Literacy

American youth live in a world saturated with popular media constructs that not only sway them into purchasing and consuming, but also influence how they experience and learn about the

world. Widely disseminated media constructs such as advertisements and TV commercials often serve as ideological sites that shape children's perceptions of reality as they formulate attitudes, beliefs, and values (Chung & Kirby, 2009). It is our responsibility as visual art teachers to teach students to use a critical eye as they experience different types of media. Without the knowledge and skills to recognize and evaluate Internet-based information, young students could misunderstand or, worse, be taken in by unscrupulous Web users (Egbert & Neville, 2015).

Today's curriculum acknowledges this need to include media literacy into everyday instruction. The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) not only recognize and respond to 21st-century conceptions of literacy; they also support an integrated model of teaching and learning that includes media literacy education. The CCSS acknowledge the unavoidable permeation of information and communication technologies in every aspect of our academic, personal, and professional lives (Moore & Redmond, 2015).

Defined broadly by the National Association for Media Literacy Education, media literacy is "a series of communication competencies, including the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information in a variety of forms, it empowers people to be both critical thinkers and creative producers of an increasingly wide range of messages using image, language, and sound." The CCSS provide an expansive definition of literacy that includes not only reading and writing, but also speaking, listening, use of language, and creation across mediums as central components of literacy in a digital age (Moore & Redmond, 2015).

Visually literacy expands beyond the simple act of understanding the media that students are coming in contact with. They should be able to critically interpret what they see on a deeper level and be able to create their own images as well;

A visually literate individual is both a critical consumer of visual media and a competent contributor to a body of shared knowledge and culture. Across disciplines, students engage with images and visual materials throughout the course of their education. Although expected to understand, use, and create images in academic work, students are not always prepared to do so. Scholarly work with images requires research, interpretation, analysis, and evaluation skills specific to visual materials. These abilities cannot be taken for granted and need to be taught, supported, and integrated into the curriculum. (Lundy & Stephens, 2014, p. 1058)

In a 21st Century curriculum the objectives often include the development of skills to interpret, translate, construct and apply images as well as image management and presentation. Students become better critical thinkers. They are encouraged to become active deconstructionists of visual grammar, and emerge from these courses with the ability to produce images that effectively communicate messages to audiences, messages that have “a soul” (Lundy and Stephens, 2014).

Using social media within an arts curriculum allows teachers to model media literacy as they instruct other topics. Critical media literacy art education teaches students to (a) appreciate the aesthetic qualities of media, (b) critically negotiate meanings and analyze media culture as products of social struggle, and (c) use media technologies as instruments of creative expression in social activism, (Kellner & Share, 2005). The importance of such pedagogy lies in its goals of preparing children and youth to function in a predominantly "mediated" society saturated with manufactured media constructs (Patton R. & Buffington M, 2016).

In 2010, the 21st Century Skills Map for the Arts was written in conjunction with many arts educators and endorsed by the NAEA. This document showed how the 21st Century skills of: critical thinking and problem solving; communication; collaboration; creativity; innovation; information literacy; media literacy; information, communication, and technology literacy;

flexibility and adaptability; initiative and self-direction; social and cross-cultural skills; productivity and accountability; and leadership and responsibility relate to the arts. By aligning twenty-first-century skills to the visual arts, the connections that many art educators articulate between the visual arts and the important skills of creativity, innovation, critical thinking, and problem solving were validated (Patton & Buffington, 2016)

Media literacy is not a National Core Art Standard required skill. However critical thinking and problem solving skills are and applying these skills to the visual world that students live in, seems both relevant and important.

According to the Center for Media Literacy, students should learn the following five key concepts about media to be media literate: (a) All media messages are constructed, (b) media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules, (c) different people experience the same media message differently, (d) media have embedded values and points of view, and (e) Most media messages are organized to gain profit and/or power. These concepts are so similar to the critical thinking and problem solving skills already being taught in today's art room, that teachers can embed instruction of media literacy into their everyday practice with little differentiation. The National Core Art Standards points out that standard-based arts educators encourage their students to apply critical thinking to the artifacts and processes that they find most compelling: the art work of themselves, their peers, and the artists in the wide world they are growing to understand. Precisely because of the emotional connections that students make to and through works of art, the application of critical thinking to understanding and evaluating those works leads to the development of those structures or elements of thought implicit in all reasoning: purpose, problem, or question-at-issue; assumptions; concepts; empirical grounding; reasoning leading to conclusions; implications and consequences;

objections from alternative viewpoints; and frame of reference. Critical thinking also builds contextual awareness as an indirect but fundamental aspect of artistic practice and appreciation. Through viewing, making and discussing art works, students come to realize that the arts do not exist in isolation, but are always situated within multiple dimensions, including time, space, culture and history. Teacher can use social media platforms to develop media literacy, while simultaneously using it for their instruction or classroom communication.

Navigating Technology

Being adept at using technology is in an important life skill that we all have to master to be successful, productive members of today's society. An astonishing number of youth engage in digital media experimentation and production on a regular basis, and the majority of this activity happens outside school settings (Darts, Castro, Sinner, & Grauer, 2010). They turn to digital platforms not only to retrieve information, but also to create and distribute media, as well as to give and receive feedback from other users. They seek and form their own initiatives for creative Web-based collaborations. In spite of their intimacy with the dynamics of the digital culture and technical skills they have, what they create may not always be informed by important considerations about the technical, political, and artistic dimensions of new media (Friere & McCarthy, 2014.)

While it is essential to foster cyber media literacy and a good understanding of the impact of technology and new media in social change, a well-rounded approach to new media art education can go beyond perception and analysis. Our digital culture is increasingly interactive, networked, and participatory, which means that the media are perceived but also appropriated, manipulated,

and exchanged. Therefore, we can no longer be limited to talk of curious ways of perceiving and understanding digital culture. We teachers need to foster critical ways of producing, collaborating and interacting as central strategies to exercise cyber media literacy, (Friere & McCarthy, 2014.)

By using social media in instruction, teachers are modeling and developing the technological abilities of their students. As teachers it is our responsibility to prepare students for success in the world we live in, including the online world. Using social media in instruction allows teachers to model the correct way to such tools. We have to recognize that students' use of technology is stronger and work from our own strength, which is pedagogy. This means that we harness the technology and use it to help students learn thinking and analytical skills. They may know the tools better, but we have to help them use them wisely (Solomon/ Schrum, 2007).

Not only are teachers modeling the use of technology to learn and communicate on a meaningful level, but they are also modeling how many contemporary artists create and share art. If we are to teach our students about contemporary art, it is beneficial to acknowledge and use the tools of 21st-century artists. Thus, if we are to engage students with contemporary art, then we need to address the contemporary technology tools that artists use (Buffington, 2010). Collaboration is also common between new media artists or with other experts, in order to execute creative projects requiring multiple technological and artistic skills. Teachers can include in their course content examples of contemporary new media artists who work in this fashion. (Friere & McCarthy, 2014).

Collaboration also occurs through communities that come together in social media platforms to produce new artifacts. In some cases, networked collaborators are experts who come together to

develop a common product; in other cases collaborators gather in the context of situations of learning. (Friere & McCarthy, 2014). By incorporating the use of social media collaboration to create and discuss works of art, teachers are building both technology skills and critical thinking and creativity as an artist.

Beyond collaboration, art teachers can be responsible for appropriation of artifacts (images, symbols, sounds, and texts), ideas, forms, or styles to create new work has become extremely common in digital culture and new media art. File-sharing networks offer unlimited and mostly unregulated access to all of the above and the cloning of these is within reach of two simple operations: copy and paste (Friere & McCarthy, 2014).

Lesson plans designed around practices of appropriation can encourage students to participate in other already established platforms. In all cases, teachers and students need to discuss the limits of appropriation, remix, and dissemination beyond the classroom. In this regard it is therefore necessary to have a good understanding of the concepts of copyright and intellectual property. Students should always know the source of their found media, to be able to articulate why they chose to use preexisting content and how they have repurposed it in a new work (Wilson McKay, 2010).

Along with practices of collaboration and appropriation, art teachers can introduce students to programming, the open source movements that question the limits of software as it is presented to them, particularly when they use digital technologies for creative purposes. Through strong and restrictive copyright laws, corporations maintain a monopoly over computer operative systems and software. Despite the high performance of this software, and however wide its array

of manipulation techniques and effects, it offers only a fraction of what can be achieved using computational tools for creative purposes (Friere & McCarthy, 2014).

Meaningful Engagement

Another benefit of social media in art education is its ability to create meaningful engagement.

Walker (2001) begins her book *Teaching Meaning in Artmaking* by quoting Abstract Expressionist, Mark Rothko, “There is no such thing as a good painting about nothing.” She continues to explain that meaning-making is as important to an art curriculum as developing principles and exploring media. It is through rich meaningful lessons that students can engage and develop understanding on their own. She explains that in order to generate and investigate their own questions, students need to see them as relevant to their own lives. In order for students to make meaning from their various encounters, they must be helped to integrate knowledge into their own life worlds.

Gude (2008) explains that it is the art educator’s responsibility to facilitate meaningful experiences throughout their lessons.

A core objective of quality art education must be that students increase their capacities to make meaning. Meaning-making is the ability to engage and entertain ideas and images; it is the ability to make use of images and ideas to re-imagine one’s own life experiences. It is the ability to investigate and represent one’s own experiences. Contemporary art education must become a sophisticated hybrid practice that uses style (in its visual and verbal manifestations) to interest (and even to enchant) students in order to enhance students' abilities to engage, to analyze, to apprehend, to make, and to enjoy. (p.101)

Gude (2008) continues to explain that the main objective of art education is to teach students to create meaning in their work and understanding.

It is our role as art educators to introduce our students to the techniques of empowered experiencing and empowered making that make deeply engaged experiences possible (Gude, 2007). We can teach how the culture is shaped and how to shape the culture by providing our students with the tools of contemporary aesthetic investigation. Through such signifying practices we make meaning of our lives and we make meaningful lives - with style, with purpose, and with pleasure. (p. 101)

Teachers can use social media to develop meaning in student artwork by giving students real-life experiences and authentic audiences. It can also be used to develop skills students need to create meaningful experiences, such as; developing big ideas, making personal connections, building a knowledge base, and problem solving. Meeting students where they are is an important aspect in any curriculum. Using social media can be beneficial in improving student engagement with active, learner centered pedagogy, authentic learning, and interactive learning communities is current trend in all levels of education (Cakir, 2013).

The use of big ideas provides a conceptual focus-one that extends beyond the study of a particular media, technique, design –problem, or subject matter-for artists and for artmaking instruction. And these ideas take on even more significance when connected to other components of artmaking process-such as personal connections, problem solving, knowledge base, and aesthetic choices (Walker, 2001). Artists work from big ideas, but motivate and sustain their interest and make their ideas worth pursuing, the find personal connections to them. Student artists also need personal connections to big ideas (Walker, 2001).

Teachers can use social media platforms to both share big ideas and construct them with their students. Imagine using a website or blog as a place to store essential questions and knowledge that support a big idea. Students could add to the site, comment, and interact. One platform could house student artwork and writing combined with teacher posted information and links to outside supporting sources, all working together to convey a bigger meaningful idea.

Relevance is a word often used in educational circles. What students study must be relevant to their lives-otherwise they will not become engaged (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2007.) One way to make visual arts learning relevant is to connect what is being learned to its artistic contexts throughout history and contemporary practice. Students need to see how what they learn in school connects to what people do outside of school (Hetland, et al., 2007.) Artist are individuals who work in various communities and modeling such communities within various group settings such as; student-teacher, peers in a class, or student artists in a community, can lead to not just better engagement, but a more meaningful experience for the student artist. Social media platforms can be used to develop such communities, whether it's connecting students who are working on a group project or connecting a student to a historic artist through museum sites.

Knowledge figures prominently in the depth and quality of exploration and expression in artmaking; the results of student artmaking around a big idea informed only by surface knowledge are likely to be disappointing (Walker, 2001). By asking students to dive deeper and understand more, teachers are giving them the tools to create meaning in their own work and education. When teachers encourage students to stretch and explore, they do not tell students exactly what to do. Instead, through a level of challenge in the task teachers set for students and through response teachers make as students work on those tasks, they urge students to

experiment, to discover what happens, to play around, and try out alternatives (Hetland, et al., 2007). Such independent development of knowledge gives ownership and meaning to a students work.

Using social media to stretch and explore can be a powerful tool to create meaning. It can connect students to videos, demonstrations, conversations with peers, and allow for teacher guidance and feedback. Exploration does not have to end in classroom, by teaching students to stretch and explore, teachers are giving their students life-long-learning techniques, especially if it is modeled in a real-life setting such as a social media platform.

Connecting To Broader Communities Online

There are two main reasons that using social media to connect to broader communities can be beneficial in art education; (1) it allows a real-life platform for students and teachers to share, validate and collaborate their artwork and learning and (2) it is can promote programs, through community understanding and involvement.

Differentiation of a Student's Audience

Students need to see the connection of school subject areas to the real world, but also that these subject areas are connected with one another. They need to see that in the world outside of school, people move through problems and construct knowledge through a wide range on interrelated content areas-not one at a time (Stewart & Walker, 2005).

Empowering a social media tool to connect students with larger communities can be beneficial to a student's learning and development as an artist. The National Core Art Standards state that the arts provide means for individuals to collaborate and connect with others in an inclusive environment as they create, prepare, and share artwork that bring communities together.

Additionally, an artistically literate person must have the capacity to transfer arts knowledge and understandings into a variety of settings, both in and outside of school. Using social media to connect students with broader communities can help meet these goals. Students can interact with professional artists, museums, other students, and people in their local community and beyond.

Exhibiting student artwork is an important part of a complete artistic experience. It provides opportunities for other people- teachers, classmates, lower and upper-class students, school staff, and other members of the public - to see, appreciate, and praise student artists. Using the world-wide-web as a medium for exhibiting student art is a rich and contemporary approach to the traditional gallery format. Web-based student art galleries greatly extend artworks' visibility to a worldwide scope, maximizing the constraints of any physical space. In addition, this contemporary gallery format also creates venues for critique and discussion that would not be possible otherwise (Burton, 2010).

Promoting Art Programs

Social media is built for self-promotion and self-promotion is what a successful art program requires to function. Central findings of the *Gaining the Arts Advantage* study yielded a list of factors that are potential indicators of successful, districtwide arts education programs, as well as very brief, individual portrayals of particular school districts. Above all, the report emphasized

the importance of the support of the broader community surrounding the district schools, asserting that having “permeable” school boundaries seems to be essential for successful arts education. The following factors are also described as important for establishing comprehensive arts education: a supportive school board, supportive administrators (principal, superintendent), consistency in school leaders over time, an arts coordinator who takes leadership roles in district policy, artist teachers dedicated to professional development, strong parent–school relations, foundational elementary arts programs, opportunities for students to participate in specialized programs yielding high levels of achievement, school personnel who are aware of state and federal policy and can take advantage of opportunities from outside sources (particularly for funding), a sense of comprehensive vision for arts education, and a dedication to continuous improvement (Miksza, 2012).

The responsibility of gaining support and understanding from broader communities falls on the arts teachers themselves. It is their responsibility to inform a broader constituency and to deepen the understanding of decision makers about why art education is essential. *In Transforming Education Through the Arts Challenge: Final Project Report* National, the National Art Education Consortium, realizes that art educators need to become their own champions, articulating the importance of visual literacy and the added significance of art education to a creative economy.

The National Core Arts Standards: *A Conceptual Framework for Arts Learning* continues to point out that social media, in any form, is a tool teachers can use to advocate for their program, whether it is displaying student work with an online gallery, connecting with parents through a classroom website, or interacting with fellow teachers and administrators in social networking sites. Because many art educators have difficulty articulating the essential learning that takes place in their classrooms to stakeholders outside the art education community the use of social media is a relevant and useful solution for arts advocacy.

A natural fit for art education is the use of an online student or class gallery. A web-based art gallery readily advocates the arts and a school's art program because it can be seen and appreciated immediately. An attractive art gallery effectively brings a school's art program and its students' achievements to the attention of other teachers, school administrators, and parents (Burton, 2010).

Teachers Connecting to Broader Audiences

While promoting their own art program, teachers are creating an online presence that leads as an example to other art teachers and member of the art community. The idea of connecting to broader audiences is not only beneficial to students and art programs, but also to the teacher themselves. Art teachers who make significant efforts to present student work online also provide additional resources for other art teachers (Patton & Buffington, 2016). Teachers can gain anything from project ideas, to classroom management ideas, to overall demeanors of other teachers' art rooms across their school-district, the country, or even world-wide.

Disadvantages of Social Media in Art Education

Social media continues to be a topic in which researchers remain hopeful that technology can make a significant shift in how people learn and engage with education. In reality, we know from research *outside* of education that the use of social media by young people is complex, convoluted and often contradictory (Selwyn & Stirling, 2015).

Online social media is a relatively new tool in education and not all aspects of teaching with social media are positive. As more and more teachers and university faculty use social media in their professional activities, in their classrooms, and in their interactions with students outside the classroom, it is essential that they realize the affordances, the potentialities, and the limitations these media represent (Burbules, 2016). This paper will review three categories of disadvantages an art teacher could encounter when using social media for instruction; commercial priorities, teacher constraints, and safety concerns.

Commercial Priorities

Most social media platforms are commercial in nature and not created with instructional purposes in mind. Instructors need to be aware of this influence and make needed considerations and adjustments. Interaction, in these models (and in the technologies used to support them), unfolds in ways that support much more nuanced expressions of agreement, consent, or difference than what is possible using designations such as ‘like’, or even ‘dislike’ or ‘unfriend’. Such selectivity and discretion are rendered structurally impossible in convivial, commercially contoured environments like Facebook or Twitter. These services, by design, clearly serve interests and priorities other than (and in many cases opposed to) those of learning. If anything, they represent a new way of selling viewers to advertisers, rather than a ‘2.0’ version of social or connective learning or education. Knowledge is not exclusively embodied in ever-growing networks of connection and affiliation and it does not just occur through building and traversing these proliferating nodes and links. Education is clearly a social process but it is probably much

closer to an ongoing discussion or debate than an extended celebration with an ever-expanding network of friends (Friesen & Lowe, 2012).

As teachers use these sights for instructional practices they should remember many private companies now use social media to create a public “brand” and to promote their products (Burbules, 2016). The subtle aspects of these sights can persuade users, through style and tone, the persona and voice of the “author” can impact how audiences perceive information.

Similarly, the commercial aspect of a site can be controlled by the users. Students can create content or interact with the intention of it being popular or gain attention. This self-promotional or branding motive, here as in any other context, can drive choices that sacrifice quality and substance for sensation. A knowingly outrageous or provocative posting is, in certain contexts, more likely to be picked up by others, reposted to other networks, and commented upon. More careful, nuanced postings, on the other hand, may have more substance but a smaller constituency (Burbules, 2016).

Teachers, as in the classroom, are ultimately held accountable for the quality of student work and discussions that take place on social media platforms as it pertains to their class. They are also responsible for protecting students from commercial properties that can influence them and interfere with the rights of the student and their learning experience.

Teacher Constraints

Teachers have many constraints working against them when using social media for instruction, as it is not yet a common practice today's curriculum. According to research reviewed by Manca

and Ranieri (2016), there are several challenges that face teachers who have had experience using social media. There is the unfamiliarity with tools, information overload, and distraction. There are other obstacles such as declared and implicit institutional policies, teachers' and students' pedagogies, and several cultural issues. There are problems between communication between students and teachers and their appropriate professional behaviors; pedagogical and technological challenges related to incorporating social networking practices into teaching and academic practices; and exploitation of social networking for teachers' professional training and development. The authors also identified a number of implications for policy and practices, such as questioning students' and teachers' vision of school or of academia and their didactic agreements.

Manca and Ranieri (2016) continue to point out that tensions among teachers are especially related to issues like the reshaping the traditional roles of teacher and student, the closed boundaries of school classes or lecture halls as opposed to the openness of social media, individual and collaborative learning and their implications for assessment and learning styles.

The technology itself can provide constraints as well. The contexts and consequences of interactions among technologies, discourses, and social relations are not merely symbolic or ideational: they rely upon, and influence, structured conditions of time, speed, space (including virtual spaces), and the evolving nature of activities as actual human doings. In short, technological spaces have architecture, and this affects how people live and work in them (Burbules, 2016). Additionally, the features that prevent teachers from using technology in their teaching, including the cost of the technology, the lack of good training to use the technology, the time necessary to learn to use the technology, and the frequency of malfunctioning technology, (Buffington, 2008).

Safety Concerns

Many of the constraints teachers feel are due to safety concerns of the students. Social media platforms can be very open and dangerous places, even within a controlled group. The use of social media and Web 2.0 technologies is increasing quickly in today's classroom, it is with this increase of technology use raises many questions about the amount of personal information that K-12 schools collect about their constituents and about the security measures schools take to protect this information (Solove, 2004.)

Teachers and administrators are challenged by these safety concerns and the need to incorporate technology into today's curriculum. There is a struggle for balance between access and student protection.

Even though many teachers and administrators see potential benefit in incorporating social networking sites into classroom instruction, administrators have to balance their enthusiasm with the potential safety and liability issues that might arise. With litigation always a concern in today's educational environment, some principals and school districts choose to steer clear of anything that presents risks to student safety, or that may prove damaging to teacher reputations and livelihood. Balancing student safety against the need to prepare students to use current technology results in an inconsistent message from educators as to the importance of technology infusion in school settings. (Howard, 2103, p.41)

Social media sites must always be used with a thoughtful manner and watchful eye. It is the teacher's responsibility to control activity on such sites.

It is arguably the responsibility of every educator to do all that is possible to protect kids from the potential dangers of cyberspace communities. At the very least, we are obligated to ensure that laws enacted for this purpose are supported by our policy decisions at the district and school levels. The requirements of CIPA appear to be very difficult, if not impossible, to uphold if an open social network system such as Facebook is permitted unfiltered entrée into the classroom. The lack of control over the structure and privacy of the platform presents daunting challenges to educators' efforts to control the content to which their students are exposed (Howard, 2013, p.46).

Teachers need to prepare themselves and their students for the dangers of these tools, in order to prevent negative outcomes before it is too late. The increasing popularity of social media has given rise to serious concerns about students' posting of information that exposes them to invasions of privacy and safety threats, such as online bullying and attention from sexual predators (Borja, 2006). With the increased presence of cyberspace, educators are pressured to prepare students to live and behave within the boundaries and laws of both the physical and digital worlds (Ribble & Bailey, 2007).

Many schools tend to block social networking sites for these very reasons, but unfortunately when schools block new world-wide-web tools such as blogging, photo-sharing, and social-networking sites, which provide a broad array of publishing and communication tools they are stopping students from learning the safety skills needed to use the Internet. Schools should teach responsible use of those tools, rather than just blocking the use of them by students (Borja, 2006).

The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) by the Federal Communications Commission was enacted by Congress in 2000 to address concerns about children's access to obscene or harmful

content over the internet. Schools subject to CIPA have two additional certification requirements: 1) their Internet safety policies must include monitoring the online activities of minors; and 2) as required by the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act, they must provide for educating minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and cyberbullying awareness and response.

A common solution to this safety dilemma is to use a controlled social networking site that is intended for instructional use, such as Google Classroom. These private social-networking sites, with their emphasis on online safety and development of internet skills, offer a good middle ground for schools that are concerned about harmful uses of social-networking sites yet want their students to learn how to use the world-wide-web in more sophisticated ways (Borja, 2006).

Protecting Student Work.

Once student work is posted online, it is important to acknowledge that even on secured sites it is now public property. Student work can quickly be copied and shared. The mechanisms for publication and dissemination are built into the applications themselves; the potential audience is created by the already-existing network of users of that application, ready and expecting new content, and they are in turn able to promote it and share it to their own networks. These networks, and networks of networks, are also global; one's posting can reach countless people with whom one could never have direct contact. And it can all happen in a matter of minutes. For many, this is a heavy, empowering experience. Teachers are responsible for developing safe environments for students to work in; preferably ones that limit access to other students work (Burbules, 2016).

Creating Safe Platforms for Students.

It is the responsibility of the instructor to setup and manage a social media platform as if it is an extension of their classroom. These teachers need to be informed and experienced in the platform before using it with their students. Finding teachers who understand the value of student-centered learning, whereby students are using real-world technology in authentic ways, is probably the best strategy you can implement to be sure that your students effectively use technology in a safe way (Dixon, 2012). There are many ways teachers can protect students and themselves from the dangers posed by social media;

- Use education-centered sites, such as Google Classroom, Edmodo, Blackboard, or Kidblogs.
- Make sure you and your students understand your school or district's guidelines for social media. If there are none, consider developing some.
- Filter and control student input. Use settings to block copy and paste capabilities for student work. Manage student interactions as if they were sitting in a classroom.
- Build a network of community-based partners that can help assist you in times of difficulty, such as the districts administration, the local sheriff 's department, or internet safety nonprofits. Examples of Internet safety nonprofits include; i-SAFE, a nonprofit

organization that focuses on teaching students to be safe, responsible, and productive in their use of the Internet, Childnet International, a nonprofit organization that produces videos teaching students how to stay safe online, and Web Wise Kids, a national nonprofit organization that helps promote a culture of safety, respect, and responsibility by providing resources to equip students to navigate the Internet safely (Dixon, 2012)

- Teach parents to be partners, to be on the same page, and to better understand how today's technology affects students: their safety, their social development, their peer relationships, their homework, their future work life, and their current schooling (Dixon, 2012).

Understanding Student Identity.

Protecting student identities online is complex and important. There are cautions to consider when asking youth to create an online identity for educational reasons. Teachers are responsible for protecting students from outside communities as well as the inner student-to-student community.

According to The Collins Cobuild English Dictionary for Advanced Learners (2003) identity is “*who you are; the identity of a person or place is the characteristics they have that distinguishes them from others.*” Without identity, people have no way of explaining who they are and how they differ from others (Kim, Zeng, and Gupta, 2011). A person also exhibits different identities in different situations, say at school versus online. Unlike in the physical world, where ones identity corresponds to their physical self, an online identity is the key to how people are able to communicate and interact with others electronically (Kim, et al, 2011). A student's online identity can differ greatly from their identity in the classroom. As an example, students who are

shy individuals in class may become more outspoken, or the opposite students who draw a lot of attention in class may not interact at all online.

There are many different digital means in which a student can portray themselves online, imagery plays a large role in identification as well as the creation of avatars. Imagine using Minecraft for instructional purposes. Each student would need to create an avatar to participate, or using Prezi to collaboratively build a presentation, each member would need an image icon. An avatar can portray individuating properties back to their owners and outwards to the community. (Kim, et al., 2011).

A very important notion regarding identity of students online is that an identity is developed through social interactions. These interactions help to reflect about oneself based on what others perceive. For example, one may think of oneself as a very good person but the feedback he or she receives from others may tell about his or her weaknesses such as being arrogant or proud. Furthermore, through social interactions, one may adopt the attitudes of the other person. It is a common observation that people tend to adopt the attitudes and behaviors of celebrities such as actors, politicians, and social reformers (Kim, et al., 2011). When applying this to a learning environment, it is important to emphasize the need for teacher mediation and monitoring of student interactions.

Teachers can protect identities, both students and their own by taking needed precautions. Teachers should ask students to not to post inappropriate material online, from pictures, to bullying comments, to online arguments. Everyone should set their profiles to the highest level of privacy available, and change passwords on a regular basis. Schools should be sure that a firewall is installed on all classroom computers, and educate your students on online safety.

In addition to protecting student identity from outside communities, it is important to moderate student behaviors and personification inside of a closed group. Student's online personality should be appropriate and focused on their educational goals. The rapid turnaround and instant gratification of some social media create a powerful incentive to elevate the sensational over the serious — perhaps harmless in many contexts, but very dangerous for education. Social media often lending it to short limited postings, such as Twitter, which limits postings to 140 characters require brief, concentrated expressions that ignore nuance, context, or qualification. Responses to other people's postings are often sarcastic, hyper judgmental or just plain rude. It is in this way, many users adopt social media as a mechanism for publicity and self-promotion: the number of friends, followers, or subscribers they garner creates a wider audience for their ideas (Burbules, 2016).

The author, who is addressing students at the university level, says that the university must value academic freedom and free speech; and at the same time it must foster a “safe space,” especially for the young people who come to the university to study and learn to become responsible adults in society. It seems as with younger students, whose maturity is further undeveloped, great lengths from teachers should be taken to guide appropriate self-representation and interactions, (Burbules, 2016).

Summary

This chapter discusses the negative and positive aspects of social media in an art education program. There are in-depth examples and descriptions of how social media can build learning communities, develop collective or constructive knowledge. It discusses how social media can

engage students in a meaningful way, teach students how to navigate technology, develop media literacy skills, and connecting the art program with communities beyond the classroom. There are also negative aspects to teaching with social media, including commercial properties, teacher constraints and safety concerns for students. Though there are dangers in using the internet as part of an instructional program, the benefits do outweigh the cons, plus there are many safety precautions that can be put in place, making an online environment an extension of a teacher's classroom.

LITERATURE REVIEW (PART II):
TYPES OF SOCIAL MEDIA USEFUL IN ART EDUCATION

Social media is defined as a form of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content.^{iv} There will always be an ever-changing landscape of social media platforms. This study explores a variety of popular sites that in-service art teachers are using today. They can be divided into the following categories; social networking, blogs and websites, image sharing, audio sharing, interactive worlds, and online student galleries and portfolios.

As the different types of social media are addressed it is important to consider how their different platforms can be more or less desirable, based on the goals of the teacher. The distinctive forms and affordances of a particular social medium influence who chooses to participate (and who does not), what kinds of things get shared, and to an extent the shape and tone of these processes of curation, evaluation, and commentary (Burbules, 2016).

Social Networking

Social Network Sites (SNS) can be described as web-based operations that allow people to design a public or semi-public profile within a closed system, make a list of other users in this system, and share information with these people using the same social network system (Boyd, D. & Ellison, 2007). SNS are used for people to interact and connect with one another. The most common SNS are Facebook and twitter.

There is a large segment of its U.S. following that are school-aged children who devote time to Facebook and other SNSs on a daily basis. Facebook is the most popular of all the social media platforms included in the survey, with seventy-one percent of all teens saying they use Facebook (Lenham, 2015). Further, forty-two percent of 11- to 14-year-olds spend better than an hour per day on these sites, while fifty-three percent of 15- to 18-year-olds spend an average of 48 minutes per day engaged in online social networking (Rideout, Foehr, & Roberts, 2010).

As most students, at least by secondary school, either have a Facebook account or are aware of what the platform is about. Using SNS seems to be an ideal tool to meet students on their level. Research that suggests that such platforms can facilitate the shared construction of knowledge and peer interactions that support learning adds to the perception that SNSs, such as Facebook, could be a catalyst for classroom engagement and collaboration (Howard, 2013).

While there are a plethora of these types of sites, Facebook's size and longevity single the platform out and make it a particularly appealing tool for educators given the extremely high use and penetration rates, especially amongst students (Leaver & Kent, 2014).

Facebook has many pedagogical affordances; such as the possibility of mixing different information and learning resources, to hybridize different expertise, and to widen the context of learning (Manca & Ranieri, 2016). It is also important to remember that Facebook is not created for educational purposes, has a large commercial influence, and limits protection of students.

Using SNS for educational practices is a new and debated practice. The conversational, collaborative and communal qualities of these sites are felt to 'mirror much of what we know to be good models of learning, in that they are collaborative and encourage active participatory role for users. SNSs may also benefit learners by allowing them to enter new networks of

collaborative learning, often based around interests and affinities not catered for in their immediate educational environment (Selwyn, 2009).

The informal and unstructured learning that can take place on SNS is perceived as a positive aspect. It has been suggested that social networking offers the opportunity to re-engage individuals with learning and education, promoting a 'critical thinking in learners' about their learning, which is one of 'the traditional objectives' of education (Selwyn, 2009).

On the negative side, concerns that have been raised include the heightened disengagement, alienation and disconnection of learners from education and to the detrimental effect that social networking tools may have on 'traditional' skills and literacies (Brabazon, 2007). Critics say that SNS dilute the educational experience, and despite the popular positioning of social networking as exciting educational tools, some critics think they may distract learners from their studies (Selwyn, 2008).

Ways to Use Social Networking Sites in Art Education

There are a variety of ways to use Facebook for both formal and informal learning situations between students and teachers or students with one another. A private group can be created in which students may be asked to share resources, annotate material online, critique or review related material, or simply comment on material raised during a unit (Leaver & Kent 2014).

Twitter, another popular SNS, allows users to post, hashtag, comment, and share ideas. It provides a forum in which students can discuss issues with each other in a way that ensures everyone's comments are heard. The hashtag function of Twitter enables collaborations among

classrooms across the United States and throughout the world (Journell, Ayers, Cheryl, & Beeson, 2014.) twitter however, has limited privacy settings and may not be suitable for young students. Instead teachers could consider using it for professional development and connecting with other teachers and the larger art community.

Google+ and Google Classroom

Google + and Google classroom are not SNS in the same sense as Facebook and twitter. They are larger in capability and offer SNS alongside other technologies. Google + is a social networking site that integrates multiple tools for online collaboration into one product. Google + is free and unifies the power of multiple social media tools within one site. Education blogger Marina Salsbury of Edudemic illustrates that Google +'s ability to organize users into circles allows for clean organization and distribution of information. "Google +'s Sparks feature allows users to mark articles, blogs, and other information relevant to topics of interest, and label each group of websites according to their topics. Share each group of topics with people in particular circles, and Google + becomes a project and research-sharing tool useful to any classroom" (Dixon, 2012).

Google Classroom is similar to Google + in that it allows teachers to use many of the same tools, however Google Classroom is designed specifically for educational settings and a controlled, private account.

Classroom is a free web-based platform that integrates your G Suite for Education account with all your G Suite services, including Google Docs, Gmail, and Google Calendar. Classroom saves time and paper, and makes it easy to create classes, distribute assignments, communicate, and stay organized. ^v

Google Classroom describes itself as having easy setup, less time and paperwork, better organization for teachers, enhanced communication, the ability to work with apps teachers and students own, and is affordable and secure. In regard to social media, Google Classroom allows teachers and students to access information anytime, anywhere. It allows for real-time feedback of student work and can be used to create and manage class discussions. It can easily share content such as links, videos, and images from websites to the classroom with one click, as well as push content to students' screens. It can also help communication with parents.

LinkedIn for Art Teachers

LinkedIn is a social media website focused on professional networking. It is similar to Facebook in that users create their own profile and connect to people they know. Where it differs is that Facebook connects you to your friends and family, whereas LinkedIn is for staying in touch with and growing your professional network. Think of LinkedIn as an ever-changing online résumé. By hosting links to former and current colleagues, multimedia presentations, recommendations, and job opportunities, LinkedIn is an amazing job search tool. But it is not just about finding a new job. LinkedIn is the perfect tool for engaging a professional community of like-minded leaders, educators, and community advocates. The ease of building and accessing this professional network makes LinkedIn a school leader's most dynamic social media tool (Dixon, 2012).

Web 2.0: Blogs, Websites and Wikis

Blogs

Blogs and websites are similar to social networking sites, except they are created and maintained by one individual instead of a network of users. A blog allows users to easily generate a webpage that contains user's entries and comments of other blog users to these entries. Entries usually include text based writings, associated images, videos, or links to videos that blog owner would like to publish (Cakir, 2013). With all these features, in addition to becoming an easy-to-use publication tool, blogs actually facilitate an information exchange platform and a collaboration network among users to support teaching and learning process (Cakir, 2013). The term blog has morphed to include many aspects of social media—but in general, refers to an online diary in which the author's entries are presented in reverse chronological order. Blogs are often filled with opinions and tangents that provide unique insights into a particular topic. (Brunsell & Horejsi, 2010).

Blogging with your students can provide many opportunities to increase student interactions and create more dynamic assignments. Additionally, blogging can give reticent students and English language learners (ELLs) a safe space to participate confidently. (Brunsell & Horejsi, 2010).

Blogs are now interactive with the availability to add comments sections to posts, where teachers and students can give feedback. A blog is a simple and safe social media platform as well as a useful classroom management tool.

The versatility and convenience of uploading, managing and sharing various types of data have brought huge popularity to blogs. One area of blog use that is useful for learners but quite

overlooked in the education sector is the use of blogs as a tool for personal information management (Yeo & Lee, 2014).

Buffington (2008) gives one successful example of how a blog was used in an art education setting;

Chazanow, an art teacher in Brooklyn, New York, used a blog with his seventh-grade students to interact regularly with the Whitney Museum of American Art's educational Web site. Through this blog, the students communicated with each other, museum personnel, and their teacher in ways that relate to the works of art featured on the Whitney site. For instance, one series of blog posts was related to the students' "adopting" a work of art from the Whitney's online collection. The students wrote poetry about their work of art and explained why they chose to adopt the particular work. Additionally, they responded to open-ended prompts that encouraged them to think about where they would place their adopted work of art if they could take it home with them. (Buffington, 2008, p.308)

In discussing the results of the blogging with Chazanow, he indicated that students learned a great deal by using the technology. Not only did they learn how to use a blog, but they also learned writing skills. He mentioned that early on, they were unfamiliar with how to craft their blog contributions in a voice and style that would be read by a larger, more public audience. Furthermore, he added that while many of them are nimble with texting and instant messaging, they are not nearly as comfortable with other forms of technology. Related to their art-making in the class, students used the blog to record their thoughts and to look at the work of practicing artists. Thus, it functioned as a motivational piece for the students as well as a publishing platform for their ideas. (Buffington, 2008, p.308)

Before starting a classroom blog, it is important to first determine its purpose. Think about including connections between course content and current events, providing discussion prompts and expectations for students' comments, or creating online assignments. Decide whether you

will do all of the posting yourself or if your students will share the responsibility (Brunsell & Horejsi, 2010).

Art teachers can create blogs for their class to follow or students can create blogs centered on their own learning. Personal information management is relevant to today's children, as they too search the Internet to gather useful information for various tasks. For that information to be used in a meaningful way, children should be able to organize and reproduce it with effective tools to suit their needs. Although managing information has always been possible with conventional filing systems such as folders in USBs, systematic filing is what USBs can offer at most. On the other hand, if blogs are used for managing data, the learner personalizes one's learning space, which opens the possibility for self-directed learning, a critical element for academic achievement. Blogs used as such can bring self-autonomy that motivates learners to be more proactive in their studies, engage in challenging tasks and become more confident (Baggetun & Wasson, 2006).

Micro-Blogging

Microblogging is a form of blogging in which the length of each post is limited to a certain number of characters. Usually this is set at 140, but in some cases it is 160, the same as text messages (Terry Freedman, 2011). Microblogging has a potential to encourage participation, engagement, reflective thinking, collaborative learning, and to expand learning content in different formal and informal learning settings (Manca & Ranieri, 2016).

According to Freedman (2011) there are many uses of microblogging in education. Teachers could ask students to tweet comments displayed on a screen at the front of the room, and then

use it to form the basis for reflection and discussion. Teachers can share with parents and broader audiences what is happening in a classroom. Teachers can create lessons that expect students to interact by posting in reaction to teachers Twitter feed. Edmodo can be used to post assignments or share information. Closed micro-blogging groups can be created for privacy and special projects.

Websites

A teacher created website can function in many different ways. It can be used to communicate to broader audiences, showcase student work, or it can be a place for teachers to organize information and store useful links, tools, assignments, etc. Unlike a blog, a website tends to be stagnant and one-sided and therefore less likely to be an example of social media. However, a class websites ability to house multiple social media platforms and combine them with other aspects of a classroom makes it a powerful tool.

Unfortunately, the National standards do not provide explicit recommendations on which specific elements to include on teacher websites. Some schools and districts have created their own independent website guidelines and integrated school portals. Some teachers have designed their websites according to personal preference (Roman & Ottenbriet-Leftwich, 2016).

Current school-to-home communications typically include personal e-mails (sixty-four percent), printed newsletters and flyers (fifty-two percent), school portals (fifty-one percent), and automated phone messages (forty-six percent). The teacher's website is still not listed as one of the

most prevalent ways parents obtain information about their students. In fact, two-thirds of elementary parents still indicate that face-to-face meetings are the predominant method of communication (Roman & Ottenbriet-Leftwich, 2016).

A large-scale national survey of elementary teachers and parents was conducted to gauge their perceptions of essential features of teacher websites. Of the 38 website features presented to survey respondents, the majority of teachers and parents both agreed that 19 features were essential for teacher websites, including contact information, course details, and resources for parents, and password protected pages. Essential features desired only by elementary teachers included the following: links to institution/school, classroom rules, curriculum/standards, supply list, visitor statistics, and guestbook (Roman & Ottenbriet-Leftwich, 2016).

In relation to social media, such use of a class website seems outdated. Yes, it is a good tool for communication, but by simply including interactive tools into the site, it could become a very powerful tool. Many successful websites are paired with blogs, SNS accounts, and image sharing accounts, as well as the ability to contact the website creator directly.

Wikis

Another Web 2.0 tool that art teachers can use for instruction is Wiki pages, a world-wide-web page in which any user can edit the content. The concept of a wiki is fundamentally different from traditional world-wide-web sites and represents a significant paradigm shift in who creates knowledge, how the knowledge is created, who has access to knowledge, and who can change knowledge (Buffington, 2008).

In an art classroom, there are many potential uses of a wiki. Students could work in teams to create wiki pages about specific works of art. Because wiki allows for simple collaboration and quick updates, students could add to, edit, change, or remove the ideas of other students. Making a wiki page about an interpretation of a specific work of art could be a way to engage students with a technology of Web 2.0 and develop their abilities to understand and interpret works of art (Buffington, 2008).

Image and Video Sharing

Image and video sharing sites and applications allow users to post and view images and videos online, most common are Flickr, YouTube, and Instagram. Flickr (and other image/video sharing sites) combine the visual characteristics of the slide show with elements of the social web -- the ability to post comments, tag images, respond with personal images and embed images with useful information. Individual contributors develop a visual identity through their postings, which can then be copied, altered and made part of another personal visual culture, creating a network of shared identities that could be compared with the process of influence and identification that art instruction facilitates (Sweeny, 2009).

The use of online videos and imagery has many direct connections to the visual arts and the core values of the curriculum. In simple consideration it is clear that the medium of video art shares many properties with film, television, music videos, and video games, among other forms. Beyond the properties described above, these media share many methods and strategies of recording, editing, representing, and replaying, and - today - all are most frequently experienced in their digital form. Through an examination of and engagement with these commonalities,

studying video art can enable understandings of how mass media structure and convey audiovisual information and frame identity and experience (Spont, 2010).

Further considerations lead to broader ideas and concepts, as the field of art education tends to focus on predominantly visual aspects of art and the world to the possible detriment of multisensory understanding, we can work from existing, visually based scholarship from our field to broach new conversations about images, too - for instance, about the relationships between images, sound, and language, to which I return in a moment (Spont, 2010).

There are a variety of ways a photo and video sharing sites can be used in an art program.

Teachers can share images/videos that already exist online to enhance a lesson and connect with resources beyond the classroom. Teachers can create their own instructional images/videos and share them with audiences through social media sites. Students can create images/videos to show learning and teachers can use video chat resources to connect with other communities.

Buffinton (2008) gives an example of how, Flickr, a common photo sharing site was used for art education;

Harris, an art history professor at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York, uses flickr with her students in an interesting manner. Through flickr, students have extended discussions of images that are posted to a class account. The students and the professor can easily make annotations directly on the image they are discussing and can easily compare and contrast the images. Because the discussion happens through flickr, it is preserved for future reference. This idea could easily be translated to art classrooms at a variety of levels and could be used to engage students and teachers in extended discussions of works of art. (Buffinton, 2008, p.309)

Instagram

First launched in 2010, Instagram has become a mainstay for adolescent social media users. More than half (fifty-two percent) of all teens report using Instagram to share photos and video with friends, with girls substantially more likely to use it than boys (sixty-one percent to forty-four percent) (Lenhart, 2015). Its creators describe the online service “as a community of more than 500 million who capture and share the world's moments on the service.”^{vi} The free app is used with limited features with a focus on simplicity and thoughtful design. Instagram currently shares more than 95 million photos every day, and the typical American teen who uses Instagram has 150 followers in their network and their use of Instagram is not just confined to teens (Lenhart, 2015).

Instagram does allow creators to set their profiles to private or public and give the creator the ability to approve who follows their profile. It also manages content and inappropriate use. It is important to point out that Instagram is not intended to be used by students younger than 13. It does not knowingly collect or solicit any information from anyone under the age of 13 or knowingly allow such persons to register for the service.^{vii}

Instagram's popularity and simplicity can make it a great social media tool for today's art teachers, especially with Middle school and High school aged students. It is an effective tool for teachers to share information to their students, local communities, and beyond. Teachers can post in-class work, display student artwork, and post relevant images and videos. It is a useful tool to quickly promote an art program and interact with parents and community members.

Other possibilities involve asking students to use their Instagram accounts to post media relevant to a class lesson or idea. Students can use hashtags (a form of social tagging) to collect media

under a common idea or theme. The hashtag could be specific to its creators and collect limited post or broad to include a broader spectrum of posts, leading students to explore further, for example if a teacher uses #pablocassio, the results are 148,007 public posts.

Instagram can be used as way to engage 21st century learners. Students can create work for teachers to post with a specific hashtag and instantly transport their work into the real-world. Teachers can also use it to encourage students to discover new art mediums or specific artists. Students or classes could interact with real-life artists using Instagram comment section.

You Tube

YouTube is the world's most popular video sharing site, and it can also be a school's most powerful social media platform (Dixon, 2012). YouTube streams more than 4 billion videos daily (Oreskovic, 2012). With 1 billion users visiting every month, more than 100 hours of video are uploaded to the site every minute.^{vii} Originally the site was used to post videos of interest, mostly amateur and some professional. Overtime, it gained more commercial and professional involvement, and eventually morphed into a more social site in which users can interact through comments and sharing. Art teachers can show students videos, create their own instructional videos, or have the students be creators themselves.

Student Created Videos

Today, YouTube is much more than a place to go and see viral videos, it's also not the only popular video sharing site used by students. Other examples are Vimeo, Snapchat, and

Instagram. Although many students have fun simply watching videos, many also choose to make their own. In so doing, they develop new media literacies that kids and scholars believe will help them communicate and participate more fully in an increasingly networked world. New digital communication media invite us to reconsider the skills, knowledge sets, and tools those future generations need to master to be able to participate fully as networked citizens and self-actualized individuals (Lange, 2016).

Capitalizing on this popularity of video creation and sharing tool is of great benefit to art educators. Yes, student created videos develop technology and communication skills, but are also great examples of creativity, reflections of student knowledge, and experience in video editing as an artistic medium. The work also can be used as an informal evaluation.

Posting student created videos in social media is empowering and gives real-life authenticity to their learning. When young people express themselves through video and socialize with family and friends, they are building on a long tradition of media sharing in the United States. Having an online presence and sharing one's message through media are key aspects of being a socially connected young person (Lange, 2016).

Teacher Made Instructional Videos

Teachers can also create and post videos. When instructional videos are available online, students do not need to wait for instruction from the teacher. Instead, they may engage in self-directed learning. As a result, often more time is spent on task, and formerly disengaged students become actively involved in their learning (Ellis, 2011). "The combination of pictures, music,

narration, video clips, interesting overlays and transitions will hold even the most disinterested student's attention" (Lucking, Al-Hazza, & Christmann, 2011).

Instructional videos can save instructional time. Videos may be short and to the point. Concise instructional videos consume much less time than reading text. Instructional videos created through multimedia accommodate the learning preference of today's students who have been exposed to multimedia extensively through both academic and personal uses. Video resources available through the internet can easily be shared with students through internet links. Websites like YouTube can even be interactive when viewers leave comments on the website. These messages assist instructors in preparing for questions and comments that may emerge in the classroom (Pai, 2014).

Video Conferencing

A video conference is a set of interactive telecommunication technologies that allows two or more locations to interact via two-way video and audio transmissions simultaneously (Crane, 2012). Skype, FaceTime, GoToMeeting are all examples of the many conference tools available today. The number of schools using Skype increases daily. Educators teach students at the early primary level to collaborate with each other while learning how to communicate and appreciate differences in appearance, culture, traditions, language, dialects, and countries. Students work on cooperative projects, show-and-tell, chat informally about their school, build communication skills among language learners, and report the news, to name some activities. Classes interview guest experts or visitors. Via Skype, students at home with extended illness connect with their

class, others go on virtual field trips, and some participate in competitions (spelling bees, etc.). The learning opportunities are endless (Crane, 2012).

Art teachers can video conference actual artists, museums, and galleries, bringing the real world into the classroom. Students can join a class instruction through video conferencing if they are away and teachers can also conference with students from home. A conference could be recorded and posted for students to refer back to or to respond to.

Audio Sharing

Audio sharing consists of any recorded and shared audio resource. Audio sharing can range from listening to a story on a CD to playing music that correlates with a work of art. Think of Abstract Expressionist Wassily Kandinsky's painting to music or the connection between art and music during the Harlem renaissance. As far as social media is concerned, podcasts and digital story telling are two types of audio sharing that have grown in popularity with museums, educators, and the general public alike.

Podcasts

A podcast is a digital audio file made available on the Internet for downloading to a computer or portable media player, typically available as a series, new installments of which can be received by subscribers automatically.^{ix} Podcast can also include video and imagery in combination with the recorded audio.

Podcasts are a versatile teaching tool, with a variety of directions teachers can use them in. For instance, teachers can have students subscribe to and access podcasts created by others, teachers can create their own podcasts for use by their students, and teachers can have students create their own podcasts (Sprague & Pixley, 2008).

Teachers can also use podcasts to conduct their own research for instruction. Finding and listening to podcasts about artists can be a form of portable research for teachers. Teachers who have MP3 players can download podcasts and prepare for teaching while doing other things. Also, teachers can use podcasts with their students as a means of introducing an artist to the students. Instead of having a teacher tell students about the artist, playing an interview with an artist via podcast can be a meaningful way to introduce a unit and focus students' attention (Buffington, 2010).

Podcasts can be useful to teachers and students at a variety of levels. In terms of using existing podcasts in classrooms, teachers can look to the podcasts available on museum websites. Numerous museums now feature interviews with artists in podcast form. Additionally, some museum websites include podcasts created by children discussing works of art (Buffington 2010).

There are many positive reasons why teachers in all areas of education are using podcasts as part of their instructional practice. Morgan (2015) explains that listening to podcasts can help students learn new content and promotes language development. It can also help teachers differentiate their instruction and make learning enjoyable and engaging. When students create podcasts and publish them, it helps them develop ownership and pride in their work. Morgan

(2015) even points out that a well-designed podcast can increase academic achievement, and promote critical thinking skills and enhanced listening and writing skills.

Buffington (2010) paraphrases Williams (2007) to better reason for the approval of podcasts in art education. He notes that because students can control the speed of the content and have the option to listen to it whenever and wherever they choose. Williams believes that the use of podcasts, especially video podcasts, can help students with different learning styles. He writes that students can develop many important skills relating to planning a project, reading, writing, listening, and speaking by learning to make podcasts.

After her experience of both creating and using podcasts with her graduate students Buffington (2010) has suggestions for creating podcasts that could be used to help understand works of art. First she suggests considering the format. Museum podcasts take a variety of formats including recordings of lectures, formal gallery tours, in-depth investigations of a few works of art, artist interviews, professional actors simulating artists, non-museum personnel interpreting art, and children interpreting art.

She continues to explain that the tone of the recording can impact the level of interest the audience has. Is the tone formal or casual? Is the recording focusing on content or how it is delivered? Buffington also draws focus for the need to control the length of the podcast, the sound quality and the technical process that goes into it.

Interactive Worlds

There are many different types of interactive worlds for both teachers and students to explore and learn from. These online worlds are extremely social in nature and are already part of many students' everyday lives. As art educators, we cannot ignore the impact that digital technologies have on contemporary art and society. Gaming and virtual spaces provide new opportunities to engage with our students in 21st-century paradigms. Digital consumption is a part of our students' lives and art educators have the capability to teach them to be critical consumers and producers of digital culture (Overby & Jones, 2105).

Virtual Worlds

Virtual worlds are interactive online environments or online 3D multi-user virtual worlds (3D VWs.) These networked virtual worlds provide 3D virtual spaces where a user, called an avatar (a visual representation of a human being), can easily show his/her presence while meeting and conversing with other users/avatars in remote locations synchronously or asynchronously. Combining the features of online gaming (desktop virtual reality) and social networking (social media), these popular 3D VW environments are characterized by hyperreal visual imagery, unique immersive power, intensive interaction, and user-created content (Lu, 2013).

Finding teachers who are using virtual worlds is rare. Evidence argues that social learning provides educational benefits, K-12 teachers are wary of using it in their schools because of the technical difficulties and risks of exposing children to inappropriate content or behavior from other avatars (Inman, Wright, & Hartman, 2010).

Despite these concerns, in recent years, there has been a growing interest in the use of 3D VW environments such as virtual worlds in online education. Compared to the traditional two-

dimensional web environments, a 3D VW environment adds a spatial dimension in which the users are visually represented as avatars that are able to move around in this environment (Petракou, 2010). An interactive world can give online students a more personal learning experience, in which they can interact, collaborate, and have informal conversations that would naturally take place in a classroom.

Compared to the one-dimensional, text-driven digital learning spaces, students like using such learning environments better because of the ability to move freely around the 3D VW space, to socialize with avatars, and to experience virtual field trips and simulation situated in the learning content and context (Lu, 2013).

Though the needs of public school students are different, virtual worlds can engage students in a world that many of them already know. For American teens, making friends isn't just confined to the school yard, playing field or neighborhood – many are making new friends online. Fully fifty-seven percent of teens ages 13 to 17 have made a new friend online, with twenty-nine percent of teens indicating that they have made more than five new friends in online venues. Most of these friendships stay in the digital space; only twenty percent of all teens have met an online friend in person (Lenhart, 2015). Meeting students where they are at, now means that teachers should consider online platforms that their students are already a part of.

Alongside virtual worlds is online video gaming. Video games can be used as influential learning tools for all types of learning, and thanks to their creative and problem-solving mentalities, are a perfect fit for art education. With their immense popularity, video games influence how today's students learn. Game-based learning that is collaborative in nature fits Vygotsky's 1978

constructivist learning model where the social environment in which students learn is influential to their success. Gee (2005) argues that game based learning is interactive and provides a safe environment for risk taking. He states, "digital games are, at their heart, problem solving spaces that use continual learning and provide pathways to mastery through entertainment and pleasure" Gee argues deep learning occurs when gamers adopt the identity of a well-designed character that must solve particular problems attuned to that character's identity, such as a soldier or city planner (Overby & Jones, 2015).

Gaming as a learning tool fits within the art education paradigm because of the aesthetic choices players make during gameplay (Overby & Jones, 2015). Video games can help highlight art education issues of visual perception, interpretation, and aesthetics within a digital space (Tillander, 2010).

Ways Art Teachers Can Use Interactive Worlds

There are a variety of ways art educators can use virtual worlds in their programs. The first possibility focuses on the creation of the avatar itself. 3D VW residents may personalize their avatars and profiles as creative outlets for self-representation. Students can interpret and reflect on the social, cultural, and metaphoric meaning of their avatar characters in art classrooms (Lu, 2013).

Second, students can experiment with the built-in creation tools and “ready-to-use” scripts. Users can create static, animated, and interactive art. Additionally, users can customize virtual art

spaces and avatars' appearances to film a movie (machinima) as an alternative video art form (Lu, 2013).

Third, teachers and students can use the virtual world as a creation and exhibit arena, in which viewers can speculate on an idea through their interactive and multimodal experiences with a virtual art piece or space and formulate learned concepts as their individual new knowledge construction (Lu, 2013).

Minecraft

One of the most common virtual worlds/games used by students today is Minecraft. Minecraft is a classroom-friendly program that taps the learning potential of virtual learning environments and can serve to support art curriculum. Minecraft offers a virtual space in which to create, collaborate, and reflect; the very traits that we honor in the art classroom. The game is engaging to both males and females, allowing educators to promote gaming and computing fields to female students. Minecraft is a contemporary version of children learning to construct and manipulate space using LEGOs or blocks and can be a gateway into architecture concepts, 3-D software, and collaborative artmaking (Overby & Jones, 2015).

Players select from three modes of game play: Creative Mode, Survival Mode, and Adventure Mode. Creative Mode is the most adaptable to educational settings. In Creative Mode, players

move around the landscape by flying or walking and can gather unlimited materials to build their creations. Players can log in independently and work alone or log into a server for multiplayer play. Educators can set limits and tasks for their students to keep them focused or allow more open-ended learning. From a simple shelter to the Taj Mahal, not only are the structural possibilities endless, but the ways educators can engage students in this virtual space is also unlimited (Overby & Jones, 2015).

Virtual Museums

Today's technology has dramatically changed how viewers can experience online museums and their collections. Many online museums are providing not only learning environments, but also discovering, interaction, and participation opportunities. Students can interact with online museums and galleries by visiting them or by following them through networking sites.

Museum created sites, are growing resources for art teacher's instruction. New technologies have made it possible for art museums to imagine, create, and deliver a broad array of teaching resources, from online interactive multimedia to tools teachers use to create their own resources (Wetterlund, 2008).

When thinking of social media, online museums might not be an obvious choice. However, the use of virtual museums to communicate between people and to educate is social in nature, and beneficial to learning (Salar, Huseyin, Colak, & Kitis, 2013). Picture a teacher guiding a classroom through the halls of the Louvre, students interacting with the works of art, choosing

where to go, what to see, and making critical judgements as they would in a real museum. The physical movement and controlling experience makes the learning interactive and social.

These virtual capabilities can provide access to rich and more different learning materials beyond the classroom walls to learners and teachers. Virtual museums are useful in child and adult education, social development, recognizing historical heritage and other societies. They have a meaningful social interaction capability. This interaction may occur between individual, society and the artists and virtual museums can be ideal environments for interaction (Salar, et al., 2013).

There is a difference between a virtual museum and an online learning museum. Learning museums are the websites designed for virtual visitors to interact in a context-based way. Information is presented according to visitors' age, background and knowledge. The site is didactically enhanced and the goal of the learning museum is to make the virtual visitor revisit and come to the museum to see the real objects (Salar, et al., 2013). The virtual museum is the next step to the learning museum, provides not only information about the institution's collection but link to digital collections of others. In this way, digital collections are created which have no counterparts in the real world (Salar, et al., 2013).

There are many advantages to using virtual museums in art instruction. (a) They provide worldwide access. Today it is acknowledged that a museum's knowledge is not only the local community's but also world's heritage. (b) Virtual museums provide a nonstop communication to users. Like other social media platforms they can be reached by students on their own time, in and outside of the classroom. (c) Virtual museums can be used for distance learning and lifelong learning. (d) Virtual museums are correct and trustworthy information sources (Salar, et al.,

2013). Students can search art museum Web sites and turn up images with reliable information and trustworthy attributions. Teachers and students using museum Web sites have access to accurate information to properly cite images (Wetterlund, 2008).

Google Art Project

Google Art Project (or Google Arts & Culture) is the most impressive collection of online art to date. Its collaborative and interactive qualities make it a useful social media tool in an art program. Google currently describes it as “The Art Project”;

The Art Project is a unique collaboration with some of the world’s most acclaimed art institutions to enable people to discover and view artworks online in extraordinary detail. Working with over 250 institutions, we have put tens of thousands of works of art from more than 6,000 artists online. This involved taking a selection of super high resolution images of famous artworks, as well as collating more than thirty thousand other images into one place. It also included building 360 degree tours of individual galleries using Street View ‘indoor’ technology. The project has expanded dramatically since it first launched. More than 45,000 objects are now available to view in high resolution, an increase from 1,000 in the first version. Street View images now cover over 60 museums, with more on the way.^x

The site provides filter options so you can browse the collections by artists, works or types of art. You can also narrow down your choices by selecting a continent, a country or a city. An area called My Galleries encourages users to choose a personal group of artworks, whether for a class project or their own interest. After creating a Google account on the site, they can save their collection, including zoom views, plus add comments and share their collection and projects with

friends, family and fellow students through social portals such as Google Hangout, Facebook, Twitter and e-mail (Allan, 2012).

The Google Art Project actively encourages educators to use the site in their classrooms. Its Education section provides simple tools for students to learn about the work featured on the Art Project. The Education area is divided into four parts: an introduction; Look like an Expert, where you can use quizzes (or construct your own) to test what you or your students have learned; DIY, which enables visitors to search the collections and create their own gallery based on specific criteria such as era, style or subject matter; and What's Next, which lists additional art-history resources (Allan, 2012.)

Following Museum Feeds

A separate way to interact with museums and galleries is to follow their output on social networking sites. Most large museums around the world create daily tweets, Instagram posts and or Facebook posts. Students can follow, comment and interact with museums as well as contemporary artists. A recent survey American Attitude Towards Art, conducted by Invaluable, discovered for the first time, a higher percentage of US consumers primarily discover art using social media channels, such as Instagram and Pinterest, 22.7% use social media versus twenty percent using museums. The survey also found that almost half (44.3%) of Millennials (ages 18-24) use social media to discover art. Harnessing this shift in how people experience art, is important if art educators want to meet students where they are at and bring art education into the 21st century.

Online Student Works of Art

Student Galleries

An online student gallery site is a place for students to post and curate images of their artwork. The site can include comments, both from the artists and the audience. It enables users to come away with much richer experience, understanding, and interpretation of the complexity of images and visual culture (Carpenter & Taylor, 2009). Online galleries engage students in social interpretations of visual culture; viewers construct interpretations they would not derive in isolation. The forum for interpretation provides learners with a space to rethink and broaden their interpretations in relation to interpretations posted by others (Carpenter & Cifuentes, 2011).

These galleries have the capability of being far more than uploaded pictures from an instructor. At its simplest a gallery can be a collection of thumbnail pictures, with the capability of being enlarged, when clicked on. However, they can also be elaborate exhibitions located in virtual venues and supported by links to other art- related sites, such as assignments, archives of earlier work, or lesson plans (Burton, 2010).

When creating an online gallery, an art teacher should consider the following ideas. According to (Burton, 2010) an effective online gallery has many of these same characteristics. (a) They greatly expand the number of works of student art and student artists who can be seen. (b) They are updated frequently to attract repeat visitors, (c) They are visually appealing , (d) their mission or purpose is obvious and clear, (e)They are easy to maneuver , (f)They may be easily linked to other art-related features or sites, and 7 they advocate the art program.

Student Portfolios

Online student portfolios are websites that allow students to showcase their best work for the community to see. These are often hosted on a blog platform, such as WordPress, or on Google Sites. These sites feature editing tools that allow students to quickly and easily update and edit their pages and content. Students use online portfolios to post their work online, reflect on their learning experiences, share career goals, and express themselves. Student portfolios help students apply the ongoing social engagement model to their own practice. They help students engage the community, including other students, parents, teachers, colleges, and employers (Dixon, 2012).

The creation of student portfolios to collect, showcase, demonstrate growth, and reflects upon assessments and projects at the K-12 level is not a new phenomenon. Portfolios allow students to gain a better understanding of the assessment process, to think critically about the work they have done, to become more self-regulated learners, and to actively reflect on their progress through out a class or program Portfolios can also offer a structured environment where students can systematically analyze their learning processes and begin to develop beneficial habits and critical reflection skills (Karlín, M., Ozogul, G., Miles, S., & Heide S., 2016).

Student portfolios can help build ongoing social engagement online engagement with the school and with the students themselves. From sharing their projects online to build awareness to participating in collaborative projects, students can use online portfolios in ways that lead to a deeper level of engagement for the entire school community (Dixon, 2012). Student's portfolios can be used to create awareness and highlight student work. Teachers and students can give constructive feedback and groups of people can collaborate and share ideas.

Summary

This literature review discusses the benefits of social media in art education, including the use of online learning communities, collective knowledge, media literacy, technology navigation, meaningful engagement and connecting to broader communities. It also discusses the disadvantages, such as commercial properties, teacher constraints, and student safety concerns. This chapter also covered various examples of social media platforms available, and how they can work for art educators.

METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore how art educators are choosing to implement social media in their instructional practice and to understand their reasons behind their choices. As part of the study, a survey of 50 in-service teachers will be conducted to look for commonalities and differences among teachers' choices, experiences, and perspectives toward social media as an instructional and communitive tool. The results of the survey can lead to a better understanding of today's modern online world as it pertains to K-12 visual arts instruction.

Overall Research Questions

This study answers the following research questions:

- Are in-service art teachers using social media for instruction or to communicate beyond the classroom?
- What types of social media platforms are in-service art teachers using in their classroom?
- What are the perspectives of in-service art teachers about social media as a tool for their art program?

Significance

Art teachers who use social media may find value in the present study because of the wealth of information that is a direct relevance to their instructional experiences. The present study contributes a collection of practical uses of instructional social media platforms and venues. The intention is to gain information that can lead to open dialog about individual experiences, and

find similarities and differences in the ways teachers use technology as well as their perspective. Future students will benefit from teachers who gain a deeper and broader perspective of technology in their instruction. The resources gained through this study are resources that work for art teachers, thus improving their knowledge and practice. By examining the benefits and disadvantages to using social media in their programs, art teachers may approach this practice with the knowledge of these benefits and challenges. Teachers who do not currently use social media may find the results useful because using today's social media platforms may serve as a valuable instruction and communication tool.

Research Design

The data for this research was collected electronically as participants answered questions through an online generated survey. The survey in this research is both quantitative and qualitative in nature. Participants were asked to answer both multiple-choice questions and to give short written statements. Some of the questions generated qualitative results, while others, used comment sections to produce qualitative short written answers. Responses were sorted, categorized, and analyzed by the investigator, and used as the basis to understand in-service art teachers' use and opinions of social media.

Instrument

The instrument used to obtain present survey results was a private Google Form survey. It was created specifically for this research and disseminated to participants through a private link. The link was sent to professional in-service art teachers through the mass school e-mail system in the anonymous participating county. The email was sent by the Visual Arts Instructional Supervisor.

The survey included a variety of demographic questions, technical questions, and personal opinion questions.

Confidentiality of Data

The survey results are stored on the investigators computer and in the online Google Forms survey tool. Access to the data will be secured by the researcher's password. The results will be deleted after they are published in the thesis. The participants will be taking the survey anonymously.

Participants

The survey was sent to over 50 in-service art teachers teaching at Elementary, Middle, and High School levels, in one county, in the Washington, DC Metro Area. The county in which participants are employed has chosen to remain anonymous. The Human Subjects International Review Board approved research on these subjects as shown in Appendix A.

Of the surveys sent, 25 teachers completed the survey. Of the participating teachers, forty percent (10 teachers) taught at a High School level, eight percent (2 teachers) taught at a Middle School level, thirty-six percent (9 teachers) at an Elementary level, and sixteen percent (4 teachers) taught at multiple levels (Such as Elementary and Middle School.)

Prior to asking teachers about their use of social media, survey participants were asked to describe the basic technology set-up of their art room. When asked if their students have access

to computers while in the art room teachers surveyed fifty-six percent (14 teachers) said that no, their students do have access to computers and forty-four percent (11 teachers) said yes, that their students do. When asked if the teacher uses a projector or digital white board in your visual art instruction eighty-eight percent (22 teachers) said yes, they do and twelve percent (3 teachers) said no, they do not.

Risks, Cost, and Protections for Subjects

There is little risk to teachers who took this survey. Measures were be taken to protect teacher identities. The survey results are not be linked to teachers email accounts, making them unsusceptible to identification. If that were the case, this could put them in a vulnerable situation with their employer. The investigator took measures to keep all participants anonymous and their answers confidential. Individual information in this study will is not linked to a specific teacher, school, or district.

Limitations

Because the study will be conducted with a small number of art teachers from one school district, the results may not be generalizable to a greater population of teachers. Also, since teachers volunteered to take the survey, the results might reflect their interest in the subject matter of this survey, and would have different results if the entire art teacher population of the county had taken the survey. For example, if a teacher does not use social media in their instruction, they might have chosen to not take the survey at all.

Summary

The use of social media shows promise for all today's learners. Whether or not teachers are taking advantage of this resource, and if they are, exactly how they are implementing this practice remains to be determined. This chapter has included a brief description of the methodology used to survey in-service art teachers on their use of social media tools. The following results will include a summary of the responses from these teachers.

RESULTS

Responses to Research

Data from the remaining 18 questions refers to the teachers' use of social media in their art program as well as their views and thoughts about social media in art education.

1) Teacher Use: Are you currently using social media in your visual arts instruction, and how often do you use social media in your instructional practice?

Participating teachers were given the definition of social media as it pertains to the survey. The instructions to survey participants' state:

“Social Media as it pertains to this survey is defined as forms of electronic communication which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content.”

Of the participating teachers surveyed fifty-six percent (14 teachers) said yes, they are currently using social media in their instruction. Forty-four percent (11 teachers) said, no they are not. When asked how often they are using social media thirty two percent (8 teachers) said every class. Twelve percent (3 teachers) answered “every couple of classes,” four percent (1 teacher) answered “once or twice a month,” eight percent (2 teachers) answered “every few months,” and forty-four percent (11 teachers) said that they “never” use social media in their instructional practice.

Participants who answered no, I do not use social media in my instructional practice, did so for the following reasons; twenty-five percent (4 teachers) said they did not have enough time to do

so, 12.5% (3 teachers) said they did not think it was necessary, 12.5% (3 teachers) said they do not have the resources to do so, and fifty percent (8 teachers) had “other” reasons.

Participants were also asked if they use social media for reasons beyond instruction. They were asked if they used social media to communicate with students outside of the art room and if yes, what do they use? Fifty-six percent (14 teachers) said no they do not, and forty-four percent (11 teachers) said yes they do communicate with students outside of the classroom. Then asked, what social media tool or platform the teacher use to participate with students, participants responded with the following short answers: a class website, Google Classroom, Google Sites, Edmodo, ClassDojo, Remind, Instagram, and schoolnotes.com

Participants were also asked if they use social media to communicate with parents, and if yes, what they use; Seventy-eight percent (18 teachers) said no they do not and twenty-eight percent (7 teachers) said yes they do communicate with parents using social media. Specific short answer comments from teachers showed that they use the following platforms to communicate with parents; Google Classroom, Google Sites, Instagram, SchoolMax, Classdojo, and Remind.

The survey asked are teachers if they are using social media outside of the classroom setting as well. The participants were asked if they use social media for professional development, and if yes, what do you use? Sixty-four percent (16 teachers) said yes, they do use social media for professional development and thirty-six percent (9 teachers) said no they do not. In the qualitative comment section of the survey, teachers that do use social media for professional development said that they use the following platforms: Pinterest, Instagram, Facebook, twitter,

the artofed.com, teacher created blogs, Google Classroom, Google Plus, and closed teacher forums.

Participants were also asked; do you use social media for personal reasons outside of school? Ninety-six percent (24 teachers) of the participants said yes, they do use social media for personal reasons and four percent (1 teacher) said they do not.

2) Specific Types of Social Media

Next participants were asked to elaborate as to what types of social media they are, and are not using in their practice.

1. Are art teachers currently using online forums in their instructional practice?

Participants were informed that online forums, such as blogs or websites, are a type of social media in which people can communicate on specific topics. Then participants were asked if they are currently using online forums in your instructional practice, and if yes, please could they briefly explain what they do. Forty percent (10 teachers) said yes, they do use online forums and sixty percent (15 teachers) said no, they do not use online forums. Of the teachers that said yes, a variety of uses are described; some of the teachers use websites, specifically Google Sites and Google Classroom to post student work online, collect assignments, post student homework, syllabus, parent conference information, art careers information, and teacher information. One teacher uses ClassDojo to reward and monitor students behavior. Another teacher uses websites created by other art teachers and adapts them to her classroom.

2. Are art teachers currently using social networking sites in their instructional practice?

Participants were explained that a social networking site uses online technologies to communicate with other people. They were asked, are you currently using a social networking site in your instructional practice and if yes, could you briefly explain what you do. Eighty percent (20 teachers) said no, they are not using social networking sites in their instructional practice and twenty percent (5 teachers) said yes, they are. Those who are said that they are, said they use Instagram and twitter to post and share student work.

3. Are art teachers currently using online galleries to post student work?

When asked; are you currently using an online gallery to post student work and if yes, what sites do you use; eighty-eight percent (22 teachers) said no they are not and twelve percent (3 teachers) said yes they are. They mentioned using Google Photo, Google Images, and Google Sites to share student work.

4. Are art teachers currently building digital portfolios with students?

When asked; are you currently building digital portfolios with students and if yes, what sites do you use; seventy-two percent (18 teachers) said no they are not and twenty-eight percent (7 teachers) said yes they are. They mentioned using Google Classroom, Google Sites, Crevado, Tumblr, Flickr, and Three Ring to create student portfolios.

5. Do art teachers use online videos in their instructional practice?

When asked; do you use online videos in your instructional and if yes, what sites do you use; eighty-four percent (21 teachers) said no they are not and sixteen percent (4 teachers) said yes they are. They mentioned using YouTube and Vimeo to share videos with their students.

6. Do art teachers create and post instructional videos online?

When asked; do you create and post instructional videos online and if yes, what sites do you use; sixty-eight percent (17 teachers) said no they are not creating and posting instructional videos online and thirty-two percent (8 teachers) said yes they are. They mentioned using YouTube, Google Class, imovie, and GoAnimate.

7. Do art teachers use podcasts in your instructional practice?

When asked; do you use podcasts in your instructional practice and if yes, which podcasts do you use, 100% (25 teachers) said no they do not use podcasts in their instruction.

8. Do art teachers use instructional or museum websites in their instructional practice?

When asked; do you use instructional or museum websites in your instructional practice and if yes, what site do you use most often; 70.8% (17 teachers) said yes they are using these sites and 29.2% (7 teachers) said no, they are not. The websites visited most often by the art teachers survey were; the National Gallery of Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Newseum, Smithsonian Institute, Brooklyn Museum of Art, Phillips Collection, Museum of Modern Art, Tate Museum of Art, Khan Academy, Kennedy Center Artscape, YouTube Instructional videos and Froknowsphoto.com.

9. Do art teachers use online collaboration tools?

When asked; do you use online collaboration tools such as Wikis or Prezi and if yes, which online tools do you use; participant's eighty-four percent (21 teachers) said no, they do not and sixteen percent (4 teachers) said yes, they do. Participants mentioned using Google Apps, Google Drive and Prezi to collaborate online.

10. Do art teachers use virtual worlds or games in their instructional practice?

When asked; do you use virtual worlds/games in your instructional practice, and if yes, which sites do you use; 95.7% (22 teachers) said no, they do not use virtual worlds or games in their instruction, and 4.3% (1 teacher) said that they do. The one teacher that said yes teaches with Kahoot and Quizlet.

3.) In-service Art Teachers perspective:

Participants were asked to give their opinions about using social media in their instruction. They were asked; do you think social media has a place in a 21st-Century visual art curriculum? Of the participating teachers surveyed Eighty-eight percent (22 teachers) said that yes, they do believe that social media has a place in a 21st century visual art curriculum. Twelve percent (3 teachers) said that they do not believe so.

Participants were asked to reflect on their resources regarding social media. When asked; do you feel you are educated on the current methods of social media that can be used for educational purposes? Sixty-four percent (16 teachers) said yes, they are educated on these methods and

thirty-six percent (9 teachers) said no they are not. When asked; do you feel equipped with the proper technology, training, and support to use social media in your art program; sixty percent (15 teachers) said yes, they were and forty percent (10 teachers) said no, they are not.

Lastly the art teachers who are using social media for instruction were asked to reflect on the positive and negative outcomes of the experience. On the negative side, participants were asked to briefly explain any negative consequences they have experienced, due to social media.

Teachers commented on the difficulty of controlling students to stay on task when working with the technology. They also talked about the amount of time needed to develop lessons with social media, and the frustrations of the technology needed to access it. Teachers also talked about the need to be “hyper vigilant with cyber bullying and appropriate use for both teachers and students; relationship lines can blur.”

Participants were asked to briefly explain how their program has benefited from social media.

One teacher wrote that it “showcases the positive things happening in my classroom and school.”

Another wrote “[it allows] collaboration with other art educators.” And another wrote “It is easy for students to see what they have done and to write artists statements about their artwork.” One teacher with students of a large ESOL population wrote that by using Google Translate “A lot of students feel more confident writing out their thoughts [online] as opposed to speaking aloud.”

Brief statements from teachers read that social media use has; “helped me with resources,”

“helped keep students active and imaginative,” “Immediate feedback and rewards,”

“collaborative, fun, and students communicate easily.”

Summary

This chapter discussed the results of the in-service art teacher survey regarding the overall questions; are in-service art teachers using social media for instruction or to communicate beyond the classroom, what types of social media platforms are in-service art teachers using in their classroom and what are the perspectives of in-service art teachers about social media as a tool for their art program? The overall consensus, according to the survey used in this research is that, yes there are some are teachers believe social media has a place in an art education program, but only about half of the teachers surveyed were using some type of social media, mostly already existing websites, blogs, museums sites, and instructional videos. There are also about half of the surveyed teachers who do not use social media due to various of reasons,

DISCUSSION:

ACTUAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND TEACHER PERSPECTIVES

Classroom Realities

After discussing the positive and negative aspects of social media in education, one has to wonder what it actually looks like in use. Are in-service art teachers using this in common practice? According to the teacher survey in this study only fifty-six percent of in-service art teachers are using some type of social media in their instruction. Out of that fifty-six percent only thirty-two percent use it on a daily basis. That is a strikingly low number if it compared to the ninety-six percent of art teachers who say they use social media in their personal life and the eighty-eight percent that think social media has a place in a 21st-Century visual art curriculum. We know that social media practices are increasingly woven into the everyday lives of teens and adults, becoming a significant part of how they relate, know, and learn (Castro, 2012.) This all raises the question, what are some of the reasons there is a lack of changeover from the real-world to education, specifically in the visual arts?

Unfortunately, there is an overall lack of research in this area as it pertains to art education. Social media in education is a broad topic that is ever growing with the expansion of social media platforms. The lack of social media in today's art instruction can be accredited to a variety of reasons, the first being a lack of research and support. While a number of art education studies show how technology can be used with both K–12 students and preservice teachers, there are fewer studies that document how standards of learning are uniquely applied with technology in art education. (Patton & Buffington, 2016).

Another reason is the fact that until the release of the 21st Century Skills Map for the Arts in 2010, no K–12 educational standards specific to the visual arts included a significant emphasis on the use of technology as an artmaking medium or an educational tool (Patton & Buffington, 2016). Simply put, teachers are not required to use social media, therefore they do not.

Third, art teachers are not receiving appropriate training to be able to comfortably use social media in their programs. According to the survey in this research, only sixty percent of teachers felt equipped with the proper technology, training, and support to use social media in their program. This leaves the remaining forty percent (almost half) feeling unequipped to use such tools and resources.

While the use of computers has continued to become more entrenched over time in art education and preservice teacher certification coursework, researchers continue to raise concerns about how technology is introduced in preservice art teacher preparation programs and sustained when teachers are in their classrooms (Patton & Buffington, 2016). The issues of teacher training, technological infrastructure, and authentic engagement are still at the forefront of providing quality digital instruction in the art classroom (Delacruz, 2004).

Lastly, art teachers are simply consumed by the physical constraints of teaching such as; time, technology available, classroom management, and administrative control. Only fifty-six percent of the art teachers surveyed in this research said that their students have access to technology in the art room. In addition, the number of students who have access to technology outside of the classroom is much more complicated to understand due to the large varying factors of student age, economic situation, and physical situations.

Interestingly, eighty-eight percent of the teachers in the survey said that they do have use of a projector or digital white board. One has to wonder with such powerful technology, why are only fifty-six percent of teachers using social media?

There is an increase in the adoption of social media in instructors' personal and professional lives (Moran, 2012), with Facebook being the most visited site for personal use and LinkedIn the most used for professional purposes. However, frequency of personal use seems to be mostly associated with the frequency of professional use rather than with the frequency of teaching use. These results show a generally more favorable attitude towards personal sharing and professional development through online social networks rather than integrating these devices into teaching practices. (Manca & Ranieri, 2016). This is also reflected in the survey, when asked; do you use social media for professional development? Sixty-four percent said that yes, they do, describing using platforms such as Facebook, twitter, Pinterest and Instagram. Comparing this to the fifty-six percent of teachers who are using social media in their programs and the ninety-six percent of art teachers that use social media for personal use, it seems that yes, actual in-class use is the least common use of social media for art teachers.

Though the actual adaption and use in the classroom is still viewed as an uncommon practice, there are some teachers using social media in their instruction today. Finding examples of such work is difficult because most art teachers do not publish their classroom activities; we are forced to rely on academic studies of teachers and those who put their students' work on the Internet (Patton & Buffington, 2016).

One example, both art students and teachers often searched online websites for images and other resources for art learning purposes. Overall, Ninety-eight percent of the surveyed art teachers in

2006 reported that they used the Internet sources to gather information or images for class-room lessons (Roland). More than eight out of every ten art teachers in a 2007 survey indicated that they either always (Nineteen percent) or frequently (sixty-five percent) used the internet resources in their lessons or classroom presentations. Furthermore, twenty-two percent of these art teachers reported that their students published their artwork online during the previous year. The survey results confirmed that the art learners and educators made choices to explore the Web resources, engaged in freely offered online learning lessons or discussed their own artwork with others through online podcasts or chats (Roman & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2016). However the findings show there is a large gap between the ninety-eight percent of teachers were using the world-wide-web for research and twenty-two percent publishing student work. As social media platforms become safer and more common, is it likely that this gap will minimize, or are there too many obstacles blocking social media from expanding in education, despite its many benefits?

Change is on the horizon, instruction will most likely follow the real-world shift that now embraced social media as a way of life. Whether creating something to add to social media, or asking students to use it to explore and interact, the possibilities are endless. Teachers integrate multimedia in a variety of ways. Some of the common ways in which teachers integrate multimedia are to introduce a topic, to demonstrate a concept, to enhance the lesson and to practice an exercise. Several teachers use free off the shelf multimedia products in their classroom. With the ease in multimedia creation these days, teachers have been creating multimedia products themselves (Martin & Carr, 2015).

It is important to realize that using social media in an art program is not a cut-and-dry experience. Teachers tend to incorporate it into other aspects of instruction, maybe without even

realizing it. If a teacher shares a YouTube video, tours an online gallery, or listens to Ted Talks on the ride home from work they are using social media. Possibly broadening teachers' perspectives of social media could influence their choices.

Teacher Perspectives

Since the use of social media in an instructional practice is currently a teacher's choice, versus a requirement, it is imperative to understand teacher's perspective in order to understand how or why it would be used.

In 2015, a survey was conducted by the Harris Poll on behalf of the University of Phoenix, it stated that nearly 9 of 10 (eighty-seven percent) of teachers have not incorporated social media into their classrooms (Bolen, 2015). The survey also found that more teachers, sixty-two percent, said they are reluctant to incorporate social media in their classrooms than in 2013, when fifty-five percent reported such hesitation. These poll results for the overall teacher population are about ten percent higher than the results from the survey in this research, stating only fifty-six percent of art teachers are using social media.

Social media can be an intimidating tool, but educators understand that it has a useful and meaningful place in today's learning. A study of over 1,200 K-12 principals, librarians, and teachers found that, overall, a majority of educators see a high value for social networking in education despite concerns about confidentiality and privacy, legal liability, professionalism, and the time required to implement social networking effectively.^{xi} The survey results from this research agree, with eighty-eight percent of art teachers surveyed think social media has a place in a 21st-Century visual art curriculum.

If teachers are hesitant to use social media, but understand its value, it begs the question, what are some of the reasons that most teachers choose to not use social media? According to Manca and Ranieri (2016) teachers' attitudes towards social media are rarely studied and the results from the limited studies available show a wide range of results. Studies have reported that most of the respondents showed positive attitudes towards integrating Social Media in their teaching. However, very few declared using these tools or planning to do so. Scarcely perceived usefulness and low compatibility with current practices emerged as the most recurring reasons for low adoption. Teachers tended to blame intrinsic factors for their lack of use, such as time or training, in comparison to intrinsic factors, such as motivation or beliefs.

Manca and Ranieri (2016) continue to reference studies showing tensions existing between online social networks and faculty identity, as well as between personal connections and professional responsibility. Their research showed that while social networking sites can be positively used for professional purposes, the values embedded in such tools are the object of resistance or rejection when transferred to their teaching and research.

Familiarity with these tools and how they are experienced and understood also contribute to teacher's perspective of social media use. Teachers tend to favor closed platforms such as Learning Management Systems that are more teacher-centered and rely less on students' contribution and their online social networking (Manca & Ranieri, 2016).

Thinking of the future, beliefs about teaching influenced future teaching behaviors. Thus, teachers' beliefs about the role of information communications technologies for teaching and learning may influence teachers' decisions to either integrate informal communication

technologies into their classrooms or to limit their efforts to use it (Sadaf, Newby, Ertmer, 2012).

Support for Teachers

In order for teachers' perspectives and actions to change they need support from outside the classroom. Beliefs about teaching influence future teaching behaviors. Thus, teachers' beliefs about the role of information communications technologies for teaching and learning may influence teachers' decisions to either integrate informal communication technologies into their classrooms or to limit their efforts to use it (Sadaf, et al., 2012). Social media in general is a new and rapidly changing communication too. Using social media for instruction is uncharted territory, and even though there are teachers who see the benefits of it and brave to explore and try the new tool, almost half of the art education population is hesitant to use it. These teachers will need support to do so.

Starting at the beginning, the support for teachers begins in their pre-service education. Although today's pre-service teachers are proficient in using social and communications technologies, they are not well prepared to use Web 2.0 technologies for teaching and learning suggested that one of the essential factors for successful technology integration rests with the pedagogical and personal beliefs of teachers. Therefore, researchers have emphasized the need to identify and develop pre-service teachers' beliefs during their teacher education programs to prepare these future teachers for the successful use of technology in their classrooms (Sadaf, et al., 2012).

Once pre-service teachers' beliefs have been identified and developed, they will also need to be taught appropriate responsibility when referring to social media in their programs. Teacher education programs must accept the responsibility of ensuring that teachers enter their classrooms with an understanding of both the transformative capabilities of new technologies and the risks that they may present. By highlighting the advantages of education-specific platforms in terms of controlling potential risks, teacher educators will likely facilitate increased teacher competence and confidence in incorporating the technology that is vital for student learning in the 21st century (Howard, 2013).

Another training necessity is to instruct teachers how to evaluate social media platforms, and determine which is best for their own use. Teacher education programs that address the implications of open versus controlled access sites with their teacher candidates provide them with the tools to evaluate current platforms, as well as the ones that are likely to arise in the future (Howard, 2013).

Beyond training teachers, administrators also need to understand social media in order to support their staff and school. The abundance of social technology has begun to shift the role of the school leader from site administrator to community engagement specialist. Savvy school leaders are responding to this shift by rethinking their leadership strategy, moving from simply communicating to truly connecting (Dixon, 2012).

Recommendations for Future Research

The results from this research are minimal and this study raises questions that could be answered through additional research. First, a larger scale study could be done to gain a better understanding of how art teachers are actually using social media. It would be beneficial to

research and compare results from multiple communities, school districts, and states. The socioeconomic impact on a specific group's use of technology would have a direct connection to their use of social media. Researching teachers in a variety of school settings would lead to a deeper understanding.

Second, this research leads to questioning of teachers motives and opinions. This research has pointed out that ultimately social media in today's classrooms depends solely on teacher choice. Further research to gain insight about what drives today's teachers to use social media and technology in general would be beneficial to the art education community. Also, questioning how administrators and communities can encourage and support more tools such as social media in art education programs.

Third, the survey results in this research showed that 100% of art teachers in the county survey were NOT using podcasts in their programs. This is interesting compared to the many positive attributes appointed to podcasts in the literature review. With so many museums, galleries, and educational venues using podcasts, it would be interesting to conduct further research as to why it does not transfer over to art teachers.

Lastly, as access to technology continues to expand, it will be imperative that teachers and administrators stay current with the tools that families are using to communicate. The third recommendation for further research would be to survey what social media platforms are available for art teachers in the future. As teachers, we are responsible for finding the best ways to engage and involve parents to benefit our students, we need to continue to investigate and

experiment with new tools and methods to keep up with the change in general communication practices.

Final Thoughts

Social media is a relatively new tool in today's world; however it has proven to be have a lasting presence in the lives of billions of people and when used as an educational tool can be powerful and meaningful for students, teachers, and larger communities. With every new social media platform created, opportunity is waiting.

As Roman and Ottenbriet-Leftwich (2016) explain, the free resources that make all of these online social experiences have exploded, and it is time for teachers to take advantage of them;

The online information revolution and digitization of educational content offers opportunities for art students and teachers to select their own learning or teaching materials and pursue paths never before possible. The availability of free resources one can find online has exploded in the recent years (Bonk 2009). In addition, because of the development of the Web 2.0 technology, the online resources have become more and more user-friendly, affordable and accessible, which provides 'a rich treasure trove of tools for students and teachers to investigate and create art in collaborative and individual ways that enrich and expand learning beyond the classroom' (Nguyen and Szymanski 2013: 93). Students and teachers are being given the freedom to explore rich veins of information as desired. According to Waks (2013), the Web with the Web 2.0 tools provides abundant opportunities for creative self-expression, social exchange and collaboration. (Roman & Ottenbriet-Leftwich, 2016, p. 13-22)

Not only does social media open doors of opportunity, but it also has the ability to transform how art teachers instruct and construct their programs.

Teaching art through social media does not mean that the responsibility of what we have come to know as an art-teacher identity is dissolved. What shifts is how the responsibility is distributed throughout the collective. As a complex dynamic system of artistic inquirers develops, a history and pattern of interaction is shaping and supporting future inquiry. A system of relations through social media can support inquiry and distribute the responsibility of an art teacher. In the 21st century, we must take into account that the collective also teaches. (Castro, 2012. p. 166)

As shown in the survey conducted in this research, actual use of social media by today's in-service art teachers shows that most teachers are "on-the-fence" about using social media in their programs. The survey also shows that teachers acknowledge social media has a place in a 21st Century art program. With support from the national level, district leaders, and local communities; teachers will have the ability change the way they instruct. By setting up safety guidelines, supporting teacher training, and encouraging change in the way students learn, social media has the opportunity to be a powerful tool for today's art students.

In web 2.0 fashion, social media platforms will always continue to change and grow, as a result teachers of 21st Century students will have to continue to explore and research new platforms to remain current. Hopefully as more educators use social media; such services like Facebook, twitter, and Instagram will develop safe platforms for young learners, much like Google Classroom has.

It is hopeful that with acceptance and safe online environments, that art educators will begin to meet students in their playing field and engage, instruct, and empower them using today's social media tools.

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APPENDIX
Human Subjects Approval

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY



Human Subjects Institutional Review Board

Date: January 8, 2016

To: William Charland, Principal Investigator
Tonya Kirby, Student Investigator for thesis

From: Amy Naugle, Ph.D., Chair

Re: HSIRB Project Number 16-01-03

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project titled “Digital Technology and Online Forums in Today’s Art Room” has been **approved** under the **exempt** category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note: This research may **only** be conducted exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project (e.g., ***you must request a post approval change to enroll subjects beyond the number stated in your application under “Number of subjects you want to complete the study.”*** Failure to obtain approval for changes will result in a protocol deviation. In addition, if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

Reapproval of the project is required if it extends beyond the termination date stated below.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: January 7, 2017

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