Combining Ethnographic Observations with Reflective Practice to Increase Cultural Awareness

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Today’s Topics

• Who is here today?
• Context & Research Framework
• Activities to Engage Yourself and Your Students
• Discussion & Brainstorm: How to bring these activities to your students!
Research Context:
University of Oregon

“The purpose of the multicultural requirement is to introduce students to the richness of human diversity and to the opportunities and challenges of life in a multicultural society.”

Category B of the multicultural requirements provide a learning environment that assists students to “gain scholarly insight into the construction of collective identities, the emergence of representative voices from varying social and cultural standpoints, and the effects of prejudice, intolerance, and discrimination.”

- UO catalogue

How do we know we have achieved our goals?
AAD 250: Art & Human Values

- Undergraduate general education course that satisfies the UO Multicultural requirement
- 4 credits offered face-to-face or 100% on-line since 1997
- Developed in a collaborative environment with leadership from Doug Blandy to foster fundamental understanding about the connection between arts, identity and community
Why is this important?

- U.S. white demographic will shift from 85% in 1960 to 47% of the U.S. population by 2050. *(U.S. Census, 2011; American Council on Education 2002, 2003)*

- Emergence of a global citizenry requires the capacity to interact with diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds effectively *(Ford Foundation, 2000; AACU, 2007)*.

- The future of the university depends upon its facility to prepare students and education professionals alike, to engage successfully in a global community *(American Council on Education)*.

- **One cornerstone of multicultural awareness is the capacity to understand one’s own cultural context** *(J.A. Banks, 2004a; Bennett, 1993; Brown, 2004a; Campinha-Bacote & Padgett, 1995; Ukpokodu, 2009)*.
Research Questions

Research Question #1
What is the relationship between engagement with art in an arts-based multicultural course at the undergraduate level and: (i) comfort with art, (CA) and (ii) self-awareness, (SA)?

Research Question #2
How does an arts-based multicultural course at the undergraduate level foster self-awareness?

Research Question #3
Does this undergraduate art and human values course to be examined satisfy the multicultural general education requirements, and if so how?
Links: Multicultural & Arts Education

• Emergence of Ethnic Studies, questioning origins of knowledge, social justice movement
• Needs of pre-service teachers to address a growing diversity in the classroom (Brown, 2004).
• Transformative pedagogy for pre-service teachers (Brown, 2004; Ukpokodu, 2009).
• Evolution of terms – multicultural, cultural competency, cultural proficiency (J.A. Banks; Lindsey, Roberts & Campbelljones, 2005).
• Visual Culture and Technology/Globalization
Multicultural Learning Models

*common threads – self-awareness*

Figure 1: Cultural, National, and Global Identifications

Cultural identification - self-awareness

J.A. Banks
Multicultural Learning Models

common threads – self-awareness

Cultural identification - self-awareness

C.A.M. Banks, Campinah-Bacote
Cultural Proficiency Continuum

Downward Spiral Conversation

Incapacity
Destructiveness

Blindness
Pre-Competence

Competence
Proficiency

Upward Spiral Conversation

From Cecil County Public Schools
Cultural Proficiency Professional Development
Let’s Clarify Terms!

• Ethnography
• Reflective Practice
• Cultural Awareness = Cultural Competency?
• Oh yes...and ART
“...art is a fundamental means of orientation, born of man’s need to understand himself and the world in which he lives.”
Arnheim 1969
What is ART?
ACTIVITY #1

*Art Object as a reflection of personal and cultural values*

- Art object selection
- Personal values reflected
- Dialogue & engagement with self & others
- Facilitated reflection
Conceptual Framework

Arts Engagement and Self-Awareness

Engagement = continual reflective process: responding, evaluating, judging, rethinking, and revising
- Emotional
- Multisensory
- Contextual
- Cognitive

guided by Lowenfeld, 1957; McFee & Degge, 1977; Eisner, 2002
Expanded Framework
Arts Engagement in Interactive Community

Filter: unique socio-cultural influences

Facilitated dialogue

ART

Filter: unique socio-cultural influences

Student

Student
Is Food Art?

Not Art

Art
ACTIVITY #2

Think of a great meal you have had.....

• Visual Appeal
• Ambience
• Smells, Sounds, other Visuals
• Service/hospitality
• “Tastes Great”
• Connection to Community
HUNGRY?
Managing Perceptions and Assumptions
“Tell me what you eat, and I’ll tell you who you are”

- Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin in 1825
Food as Cultural Expression
Fast Food Values

Profit
Low Cost
Speed
Uniformity
Convenience
Slow Food Values

Sustainability
Diversity
Pleasure and Quality in Everyday Life
Inclusiveness
Food as Ritual

Food has long been the central activity for gathering - celebrations, spiritual practice, mourning, and daily life.
Expression of Ethnicity
Intangible cultural heritage of agriculture and food UNESCO
From https://makanaka.wordpress.com/2010/03/21/a-global-weeks-food/
The Intersections of Food and Art

- Ritual & Ceremony
- Socialization Tool
- Terroir – Reflection of Geography
- Expression of Ethnicity
- Aesthetic Experience
EXAMPLE ACTIVITY: Personal Food Ethnography

What foods were important to you when you were growing up? Why?

Where did your family of origin consume its meals? Describe the environment, people present, methods of preparation and serving, and any details that were common and/or significant.

Were there any rituals, ceremonies or holidays where food was a central focus of the celebration? What and how did the food contribute to the specialness of the occasion?
Artifact #4: Difference between Craft and Fine Art

Objective:

- Examine methods for evaluating qualities of art, such as product versus process, the difference between craft and fine art

Original Post:

Food Essay

Fabio Parasecoli article on Is Food Art? was an interesting read where he points out his views on whether food should be considered art or not. He explains that this topic is something that has been more recently debated by many scholars on whether it should be accepted that food is art, as this topic is becoming more highly viewed throughout the world. Parasecoli brings up two aspects the can connect food and art. His first is that, “innovation and creativity are included among the traits that are most commonly attributed to a successful chef.” His second point is that there is a common framing of
Artifact#3: Food as Art

This picture describes the basic ideas that “Food and art are indeed intertwined with each others in many aspects” presented from both this week’s reading and outside research.
This is a photo of a fruit tart that I made last summer for a family barbecue. I feel that it represents my artistic abilities because I made the dough, filling, and glaze from scratch, by myself. I then arranged the fruit in such a way that looked aesthetically pleasing to myself and my family and friends who ate it.
Reflection:

This tiny little picture above is a prime example of a dish that my mom cooks on a daily basis for my dad, brother and I. The perfect blend of taste and healthiness with a little home-cooked flare. Now the underlying question still remains, could this be classified as as a piece of art? The answer to this question, at least in my mind is absolutely. I’ve seen the amount of effort that my mom puts into each dish and they truly are masterpieces. Now some people could look at these and say well it doesn’t look like a masterpiece. It’s presentation isn’t as high of quality as it should be to be considered art. This was the argument that I struggled with the most. The idea of the process of art versus product and crafting of the art versus fine art really got to me and I couldn’t figure it out. After digging through the previous weeks reading a found a quote that finally allowed everything to click for me. Dissanayake states in her article *What is Art For?* that, “the idea of art takes into account all of human history, all human societies, and accounts for the fact that art is a psychological or emotional need and has psychological or emotional effects” (Dissanayake, 15). My mother feels a need and a calling to provide for her family and the primary way she knows how is through her cooking. Her background and heritage show through each one of the dishes she provides which connects to Dissanayake’s point of art accounting for human societies. All of the facts are there show that this type of food and cooking is indeed an art form. However, I would say that my mom’s cooking closely relates more to a craft rather than a fine art.
Qualitative Results*: Self-awareness

Low Scoring:
- I am more aware of the white/hetero normativity of our media and culture
- I understand stereotypes a lot better now and can recognize them.
- The media shape the thoughts of the viewers

High Scoring:
- Cultural identity is my association with the society of people whom I live and interact with on a day-to-day basis. Thus my own identity is shaped based on these interactions and societal rules to shape who I am

- I now try to challenge my beliefs and my values and strive to be open to other values.
- Before this class, I was aware that other had their own point of views, but did not value them. After taking this class, I realized I had grown a tremendous amount during these 3 months and now know that others perspectives are just as valuable as my own.
- I deepened my perspective on my own value system and roots of issues that arrive in my life through the interpreting of art and reading of others experiences.

For full research information contact kassia@uoregon.edu
Direct discussion of personal values and beliefs may threaten identity and safety.

Responding to art reveals personal values and beliefs in a way that may be less threatening.*

*Before being able to develop increased self-awareness (Mazlow “self-actualization”) one must address basic safety needs.
EXAMPLE ACTIVITY

http://blogs.uoregon.edu/foodartsimpact/

FOOD ARTS IMPACT

Collecting and sharing stories about the impact of food and art in our lives

Credit: Scott Huette