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"Art generates ludic, affective, and interruptive experiences that alter our relationship to social and political issues."

A Vision of Civically Engaged Art Education: Teens as Arts-Based Researchers

SARA SCOTT SHIELDS (iD)**, RACHEL FENDLER** (iD)**, and DANIELLE HENN**

Florida State University

Civic engagement is not just concerned with identifying societal and political structures. It is also concerned with how young people understand themselves as civic agents capable of starting and sustaining change. Seeing students as change makers is a civically engaged goal supported by literature surrounding the aims of art education in K–12 schools. Working in collaboration with local teens, we engaged in a weeklong art camp that facilitated teens' inquiry into the legacy of foot soldiers in the civil rights movement in Tallahassee, Florida. Teens explored the people, places, and events that mobilized the community as they made connections with current events and created a collective portrait of change makers. In this article we explore the question: How might positioning teens as arts-based researchers create an opening for young people to be civically minded critical thinkers and makers?

Correspondence regarding this article may be sent to the first author at skshields@fsu.edu.

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I n the United States, civics education is currently a required part of secondary education in 40 states and the District of Columbia (Shapiro & Brown, 2018). Civics education focuses on young people understanding themselves as civic agents who can participate in the public processes that have social, political, or cultural impact (National Council for the Social Studies, 2013). The objective of civics education is to develop the intellectual, dispositional, and participatory competencies students need to effectively engage in the public sector, to foster a body of civic-minded young people who invest and participate in their communities (Gould, Jamieson, Levine, McConnell, & Smith, 2011).

While this is a goal of civics education, it is also a goal that is supported in much art education literature (Blandy, 2011; Sabol, 2013; Seidel, Tishman, Winner, Hetland, & Palmer, 2002). For instance, a report on art and achievement for at-risk youth found:

Young adults who had intensive arts experiences in high school are more likely to show civic-minded behavior than young adults who did not. They take an interest in current affairs, as evidenced by comparatively high levels of volunteering, voting, and engagement with local or school politics. (Catterall, Dumais, & Hampden-Thompson, 2012, p. 28)

This study builds on the demonstrated impact of arts practices on competencies associated with civic behavior to explore the possibilities of developing curricula that intentionally address educating for civic engagement in the art classroom.

Working with local rising 8th-graders through recently graduated 12th-graders, the authors engaged in a weeklong art camp that facilitated participants' inquiries into the legacy of the civil rights movement in Tallahassee, Florida. Participants explored the people, places, and events that mobilized the community, using the personal histories of the Tallahassee Foot Soldiers[1] as a starting point. Over the course of the week, participants made connections with current events and created a collective portrait of these change makers. The authors designed this camp as a pilot program to inform the design of an asset-based secondary art curriculum that centers on civic engagement (López, 2017).

In this article, we explore the question: What does positioning teens as arts-based researchers do to shape civically engaged art education curriculum? We begin with a review of relevant theoretical and empirical literature, situating our inquiry at the intersection of civic and art education. Next, we introduce the methodological foundation for this study, where we position teens as arts-based researchers and explore the role of artmaking as it contributes to the development of civic skills. Finally, we close with a discussion of what civically engaged art curriculum might look like in K–12 contexts.

Cultural Production for Cultural Citizenship

The role of the arts in civic life is well documented. Sommer (2014) has discussed the ways in which public art has been successfully woven into a civic practice. From municipal interventions to public protest, her research demonstrates how art generates ludic, affective, and interruptive experiences that alter our relationship to social and political issues.

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For example, she discusses the initiatives implemented by the mayor of Bogota, Colombia in the mid-1990s and early 2000s, when the mayor employed mimes, concerts, mural paintings, and ephemeral performative projects such as the "Vaccine Against Violence" campaign or the "Women's Night Out" event, using the creativity of the arts to direct the public's attention to disregarded social mores and appeal for a heightened sense of civic responsibility. Sommer's (2014) work also revisits contemporary artists and collectives, such as projects by Alfredo Jaar or ACT UP, to document how art is capable of producing powerful messages with social and political impact. Her work reveals how both government-sponsored creativity as well as artists who choose to work as cultural agents for change use art to "[trigger] fresh perceptions and [unclog] procedures in ways that make it a social resource" (Sommer, 2014, p. 82).

In our project, the focus shifted from the social impact of art that Sommer discussed toward the potential of using art curricula to develop the social impact of young artists. The connection between art education and civic engagement emerges in the discussion on cultural production and its relationship to cultural citizenship. Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) discussed art as a form of cultural production, in support of a vision of artmaking as civically engaged; his approach positioned processes of symbolic making as intrinsic to participatory social practices. Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) argued that a cultural production framework assumes "every interaction is situated within a context of material as well as symbolic elements" (p. 226) and, in particular, recognizes that "the lives of *all* students are always-already imbued with creativity and symbolic work" (p. 227). The term cultural production emphasizes how artmaking is always in conversation with the social world of the maker. This argument suggests that to engage the arts in schools is a critical semiotic project, where "students might engage the symbolic material of their daily lives to recreate self-representations without necessarily recirculating dominant relations" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013, p. 227).

Some art education scholars have used the rhetoric of cultural production to establish a link between the field of art education and the broader conversation on cultural citizenship (Kuttner, 2015; Stevenson, 2003; Thomson, Hall, Earl, & Geppert, 2019). Kuttner (2015) summarized cultural citizenship as "the right and capacity of people to develop and pass on diverse cultural traditions and identities while participating effectively in a shared cultural and political arena" (p. 70). Dolby (2003) observed that cultural citizenship is integral to civic participation, stating, "everyday cultural practices are not disconnected from pressing economic and political issues about the future of democracy in an increasingly privatized, globalized world. Instead, those cultural practices are a force in shaping and reshaping that world" (p. 272). The term cultural citizenship is useful for reorienting objectives within arts education to consider the cultural competencies needed by young people to fully participate in public life. It indicates a pathway through which critical and creative processes are understood as central to the civic agency of young people.

Kuttner (2015) observed that there is not a singular model that art education should adapt to develop cultural citizenship. Drawing on literature from civic education, he noted different notions of citizenship, indicating that several possible approaches, including informed, participatory, and social justice–oriented citizens, will impact the curricular design. Similarly, Thomson et al. (2019) advocated for an approach that

brings together the social semiotic work of meaning-making (which we take as cultural production when applied to arts education), with contextual and policy

matters (access and opportunity to produce) and ethical questions (how difference, equity, power relations and critique are afforded and constrained). (p. 184)

In the following section, we consider how current measures of civic engagement can be addressed through the art curriculum. Building on the three-pronged approach suggested by Thomson et al. (2019), we question how an asset-based pedagogy (López, 2017), which is built around *cultural content integration, cultural knowledge*, and *critical awareness*, is developed through artmaking experiences.

Civic and Art Education Through an Asset-Based Lens

In this review of literature we posit that, by creating pedagogical spaces in the art room reliant on assets such as young people's agency, leadership, and community histories, the art classroom might become a space to model and strengthen qualities necessary for civic engagement. Asset-based pedagogy juxtaposes critical awareness, cultural knowledge, and cultural content integration to design a curriculum that positions students' experiences, communities, and ideas as assets in the classroom (López, 2017). Asset-based pedagogy aims to open up students' potential by focusing on their talents and utilizing curricula to highlight the many assets their surrounding communities have to offer (Bastos, 2012; López, 2017). We see art rooms as places that can provide students with tools for meaningful cultural participation and production. This concentrated focus on students' engagement in their communities is the thread connecting the worlds of civic engagement and art education. In the 2011 Carnegie report (Gould et al., 2011), *The Civic Mission of Schools*, civic engagement is conceptualized through three categories of civic skills: intellectual, participatory, and dispositional. These three skills are described through a series of assessable goals or outcomes (Table 1).

We have begun to think about how the intellectual, participatory, and dispositional skills outlined in civics curricula might be the same skills that are necessary for obtaining the critical awareness, cultural knowledge, and cultural content integration that are central to an asset-based pedagogical approach. Additionally, it is here we see the arts as central in envisioning a civically engaged art education curriculum. This study seeks, in part, to understand the civic skills and curricular approaches necessary to foster civic engagement in youth through an asset-based art education lens.

Many models of art education posit that art in schools should contribute to just and equitable communities (Anderson, Gussak, Hallmark, & Paul, 2010; Dewhurst, 2010; Duncum, 2011; Garber, 2004; Hanley, Sheppard, Noblit, & Barone, 2013). There is also an interest in community-based art education, a model arguing for positioning art classrooms within community contexts, learning about art in local culture, developing service learning experiences, and creating projects focused on social change (Congdon, Blandy, & Bolin, 2001; Krensky & Steffen, 2008; Ulbricht, 2005). A focus on place-based art education highlights the importance of physical spaces as sites of learning (Blandy & Hoffman, 1993; Graham, 2007; Gruenewald, 2014). And of particular interest is how an asset-based model of art education might help art educators consider the potential of urban spaces as rich sites for learning about people and places (Hutzel, Bastos, & Cosier, 2012). Further, by taking cues from asset-based community development, this study seeks ways to position our surrounding community's "cultural, artistic, physical, and natural assets" (Bastos, 2012, p. 16) inside of our curricular and research design. Our research looks at how combining an arts-based research (ABR) approach in the art classroom alongside an inquiry into communities can generate curricular opportunities that acknowledge and rely on young people's assets, envisioned through the civic skills discussed above.

Table 1. Civic Skills

Intellectual	Participatory	Dispositional
Critical thinking	Engaging in dialogue with those who hold different perspectives	Tolerance, respect, and appreciation of difference
Perspective taking	Active listening	Desire for community involvement
Understanding, interpreting, and critiquing various media	Communicating and voicing opinions through public speaking, letter writing, petitioning, canvasing, lobbying, protesting (non-electoral means)	Rejection of violence
Understanding, interpreting, and critiquing different points of view	Managing, organizing, participating in groups Organizing and demonstrating	Concern with the rights and welfare of others
Expressing one's opinions	Building consensus and forging coalitions	Commitment to balancing personal liberties with social responsibility to others
Active listening	Community mapping	Personal efficacy and attentiveness to civic matters
Identifying public problems	Utilizing electoral processes	Sense of belonging to a group or party
Drawing connections between democratic concepts and principles and one's own life experience	Planning and running meetings Utilizing strategic networks for public ends	Readiness to compromise personal interests to achieve shared ends

Note. Adapted from *Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools* (Gould et al., 2011).

Research Design

For this inquiry, we found ourselves with two separate research foci. The first positioned teens as arts-based researchers in a summer camp, and the second looked at what the teens learned and how that might inform a civically engaged art education curriculum. This type of nested inquiry is common where the research design consists of

two factors or variables that are nested one within the other (Peng, 2004). While nested inquiry frequently references studies designed through mixed method approaches, this term is also useful when conceptualizing a research project as an inquiry within an inquiry. These dual cycles are nested within each other and connected through the participation of the students in the research. In this article, we look at the ways the participants engaged in critical thinking and making, with the broader goal of understanding how this type of learning might inform an art curriculum focused on civic engagement.

Students as Researchers (SAR)

Ideologically, the SAR approach has ties to the emancipatory project of critical pedagogy. Fielding (2001) suggested that SAR was founded on "a transformative, 'transversal' approach in which the voices of students, teachers and significant others involved in the process of education construct ways of working that are emancipatory in both process and outcome" (p. 124). SAR projects support civic engagement, as they aim to advance research and school practice while also supporting student agency. In SAR projects, the researcher provides opportunities for student voice, especially for those who "have been silenced or devalued within traditional schooling systems" (Bland & Atweh, 2007, p. 339). As such, this model is becoming more popular when studying issues related to social justice in education (Smyth, Down, & McInerney, 2014; Smyth & McInerney, 2012). By positioning the teen participants as researchers, we hoped to engender a sense of ownership in the process as they inquired into the history of the civil rights movement in their city.

Data Collection

The project was centered around a group of civil rights activists known as the Tallahassee Foot Soldiers. These are individuals who participated in the civil rights movement in Tallahassee during the 1950s and 1960s. This southern capital possesses a rich civil rights history that goes largely unrecognized in local classrooms. Our

intent with the program was to connect a group of students to this history by exploring local, historic sites. We built the camp around firsthand experiences and primary sources: walking the city, visiting the state archives, and interviewing community members. Finally, we challenged the students to make art reflecting this history and its contemporary relevance.

Throughout all these experiences we asked teens to act as arts-based researchers as they located data that glowed (MacLure, 2010). MacLure's framing of glowing data offered an opportunity to invite our students to experience the *wonder* of material objects. As they walked through historic sites, engaged with primary documents, and listened to the words of actors in the civil rights movement, we reminded them that glowing data might cause them to "feel the wonder of data in the gut, or the quickening heartbeat" (MacLure, 2013, p. 229). We explained to the teens that these glowing data would be the feeling/place/thing/person that they would go on to recreate/reimagine/revisit during the production days.

Data Sets

Prior to camp, we created field guides to scaffold and document the students' research and artmaking. The guides included pages for taking field notes, prompts for investigation, opportunities for reflection, and space to plan their artistic process. The field guides contained resources: maps, schedules, contemporary artists, tips for archival research, and a list of people involved in the civil rights movement. Teens were encouraged to use their field guides in whatever way served their research and artmaking. The teens documented the preparation, design, progression, and completion of their artwork in the field guides. This field guide did not refer to the end product of artmaking, but rather emphasized "the *work* of art… [as] it signals a process of *doing* something that has aesthetic consequences" (Barone & Eisner, 2012, p. 48). The field guides served to contextualize the final art pieces,

allowing us insight into why and how decisions were made during the artmaking process. In this way, both the field guides and the artwork documented the students' ABR.

Our final data set was from the group interviews we completed on the last day of camp. These interviews investigated how the students identified and creatively responded to their personal data that glowed (MacLure, 2010). Students were asked to reflect on the most memorable parts of the week and describe their research process, final artwork, and key takeaways. The group interviews allowed students to continue the collective thinking they had engaged in all week without encountering common difficulties with interviewing younger participants, like awkward silences and having to unpack abstract and complex topics alone (Bassett, Beagan, Ristovski-Slijepcevic, & Chapman, 2008). While these data are rich with insight into how young people engage in ABR through the exploration of "data that glows," we are most interested in what implications the *work of research through art* might have in the development of curricula, so it is from this vantage point we moved forward to our analysis of the data.

Data Analysis

For this inquiry, we were interested in learning how the students' engagement in the summer workshop might inform a civic model of art education, specifically looking at how their process changed how we think about curriculum design. So, rather than engaging the data for an understanding of the students' experiences, we were more interested in how their work as arts-based researchers aligned with the skills necessary for civic engagement (Table 1) or for acting as cultural citizens. This focus on civic skills and curricular strategies stems from a desire to develop approaches to asset-based teaching and learning that can be implemented by practicing teachers. In this way, we tried to look at our data with the understanding that educational systems demand concrete outcomes, like those included in our earlier discussion of civic skills.

The written data were initially analyzed using structural coding. This approach allowed us to engage a large data set in foundational coding (Saldaña, 2015). Because of our interest in curriculum development, we coded the data as having intellectual, participatory, or dispositional civic skill outcomes (Table 1). The second wave of coding focused on the subsection descriptors from Table 1. While the written data were coded, the visual data from the field guides and the final artworks were analyzed using analytic memoing. The research team looked at the process thinking from the field guides alongside the final pieces, and our analytic memos focused on the connections between the civic skill outcomes (Table 1) and the teens' artistic decision making.

Because all data contained evidence of intellectual, participatory, and dispositional work, we found looking closely at three specific students[2] was a more effective analytic lens than looking across whole data sets of field guides, observations, or artwork. We utilized our codes, in tandem with analytic memos, to "generate language-based data that accompanies the visual data" (Saldaña, 2015, p. 43). When held in conference with the coded data, these two modes of representation illuminated one another, helping us understand what civic skills might be the tangible outcomes of an asset-based curricular model (López, 2017).

Findings

When considering our research question, we found three recurring ways that the students functioned as arts-based researchers: through material reflection, embodied practice, and historical relevance. These three approaches emerged as recurring values that held potential for designing curricula focused on civic skills (Table 1). In this section, we discuss material reflection, embodied practices, and historical

relevance through their alignment with the civic skills[3] outlined earlier. Later, we discuss these three themes in relationship to asset-based learning as a framework for future curriculum development.

Iyawa's Material Reflection

Iyawa[4] was one of the most prolific art makers of the week, creating four finished pieces. After the first day, she wrote in her field guide that she was shocked with how violent people were and how hatred could make people physically hurt and even kill one another, clear signs of the dispositional indicators of *rejection of violence* and a move toward *tolerance and respect*. This idea endured throughout her experiences of the week. Iyawa was inspired by our interview with Henry Steele, during which he talked about feeling defeated his entire life. He said, "[W]hen you experience that much difficulty,
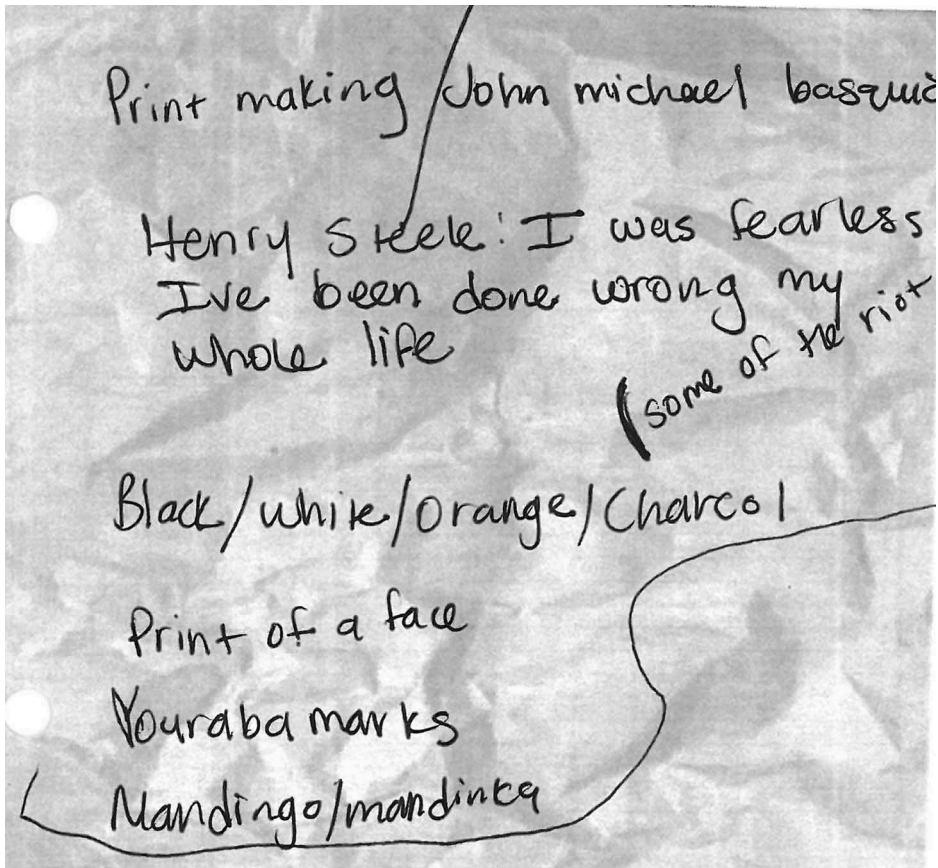

Figure 1. Notes from Iyawa's field guide. Photo courtesy of the authors.

eventually you get to the point that doing something potentially dangerous like protesting or speaking out is the only thing you can do," and he continued, saying, "I was fearless, I've been done wrong my entire life" (personal communication, July 11, 2018). Iyawa settled on printmaking (Figure 1) because "the style of the print felt like the tiredness he [Henry Steele] must have felt right before he decided to join the movement" (personal communication, July 14, 2018).

Iyawa spoke about her own experience as the granddaughter of a Nigerian immigrant, drawing connections between the "marks on her grandmother's face" (personal communication, July 14, 2018) and the style of the image she created to be printed. This connection to the intellectual traits of *perspective taking* and *drawing connections between democratic concepts and principles and one's own life experience*, illustrates Iyawa's deep research-based thinking about not just the civil rights movement in Tallahassee, but also how this resonates with larger discussions of civil rights.

Further, the process of printmaking—creating an image over and over and over—spoke to the experience of being repeatedly exposed to hatred and violence. She juxtaposed her prints over backgrounds that she associated with the style of Jean-Michel Basquiat, whom Iyawa saw as a modern day advocate for Black people. This marrying of the printmaking imagery and the evocative paint work in the background really speaks to connections between Henry Steele's experience and Iyawa's Nigerian lineage (Figures 2 and 3). By presenting a series of pieces that explore *history, lineage, and social and political perspectives*, Iyawa showed an ease when moving between both the intellectual and dispositional traits identified as crucial to civic education; however, this work also shows a transition toward the participatory.

For Iyawa, making art; the physicality of touch, smell, and feel; and all the varying sensual associations she made, contributed to the recollection of her experience. During her interview,

Iyawa spoke specifically about the parts of the week when we stood in places that history had happened or talked to people that lived through the movement. She continually returned to the physicality of the experiences, the difficulty of carving the block, and the repetition of printing; for her, touching history and making art became cornerstones of her experience. This connection to the material might begin to hint at her propensity for the more participatory work required of authentic civic engagement. Through material interactions with art media, community stories, and physical places, Iyawa began to show competencies in *engaging in dialogue with others* and *interest in community mapping* and a predisposition for effectively *communicating and voicing opinions* (Figure 4).

Zoe's Embodied Practices

For Zoe, encountering the people, places, and artifacts of the civil rights movement in Tallahassee was essential for her to respond to history in her own way. Because of her background in music, Zoe knew from the beginning of camp that she wanted the creative output of her research to be a song, and she found that she was most profoundly impacted by walking through and looking at the city, speaking personally with activists, and handling documents in the state archives, evidence of the intellectual civic skills necessary to *understand, interpret, and critique various media*. These encounters strengthened the dispositional civic skills of *belonging to a group or party* and led to the intellectual propensity to *draw connections between democratic concepts and principles and one's own life experience*. Figure 5 shows a rough draft of Zoe's lyrics with reference numbers for the inspirational materials in the state archives written in the margins.

Zoe practiced *rich perspective taking*, as her song was written from the perspective of civil rights activists in a way that blurred the lines between past and present.[5] For example, the song's verses were specific to the civil rights movement in Tallahassee. In one of the verses, Zoe *identifies the public problems* of the bus
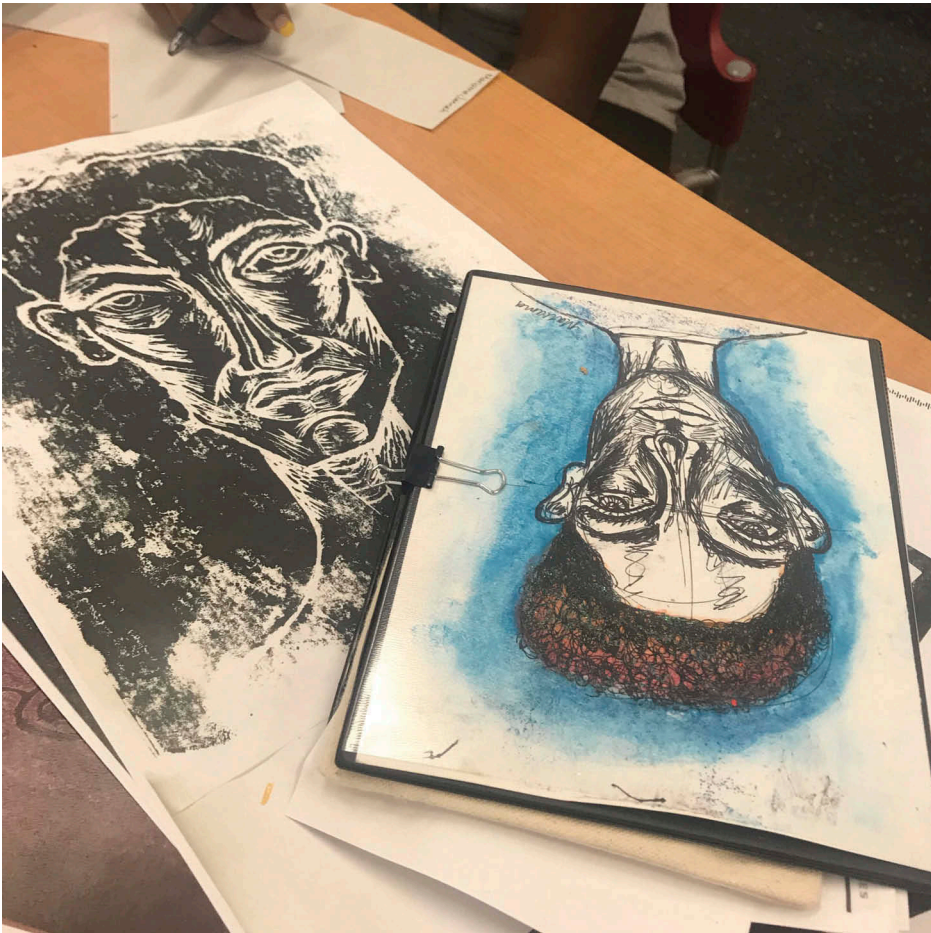
Figure 2. Iyawa's finished piece and process images. Photo courtesy of the authors.

boycotts and the dispositional value of *compromising personal interests to achieve shared ends* when she sings, "We would rather walk in dignity than ride in humiliation." However, her chorus felt like a contemporary cry for freedom and the rejection of violence today: "It's time to break free. Break free for you and me.… 'Cause that's the way that it should be."

For Zoe, gaining the confidence to act boldly came from interacting with history in the uniquely personal and unfiltered way facilitated by this camp. Zoe engaged in *community mapping* as she discovered one of the activists was buried in the same cemetery as her grandfather. More than anything, Zoe treasured the interviews and site visits because "it was so
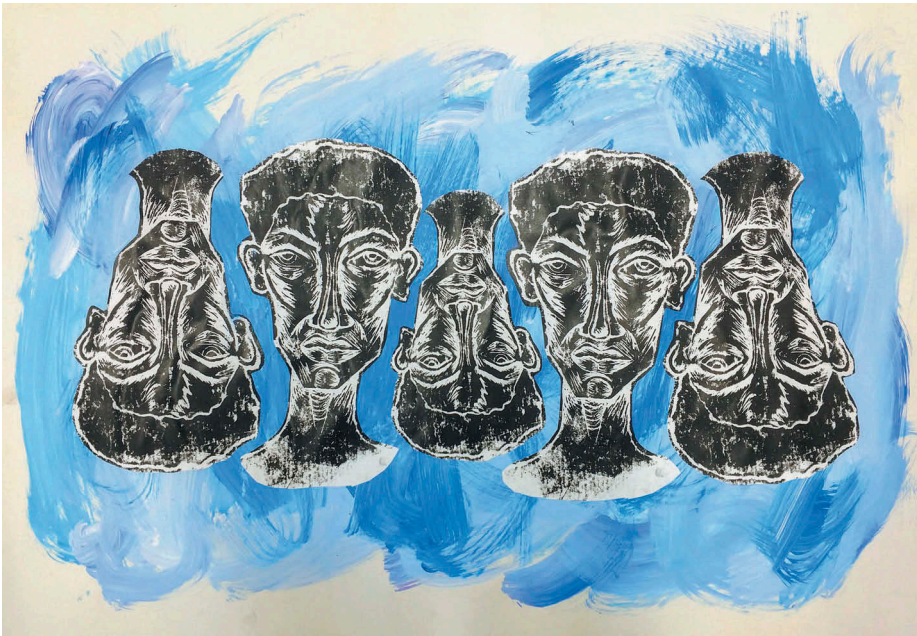
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Figure 3. Another of Iyawa's finished pieces. Photo courtesy of the authors.

different meeting them in person than looking them up online… [and] if you were taking a car or something it would be different. You were exercising and talking and seeing it—not through a window but through your own eyes" (personal communication, July 14, 2018). When listening to Zoe's final song alongside her interview transcripts, the listener has a sense that the embodied nature of the work positioned her to not just engage in the intellectual and dispositional work of *expressing and respecting opinions*, but also, the positioning moved her toward the participatory work of *communicating and voicing opinions* through a protest song.

Tiffany's Connection Between the Then and the Now

Tiffany focused on the bus boycott as her data that glowed. Her project emphasized a key moment in the legacy of Tallahassee's contribution to the civil rights movement, and it connected that moment to the here and now. This connection between the past and present made the project feel more relevant. This connection began when she engaged in a photography project (Figure 6) reminiscent of the retro-photographic style of Ricard Martínez. Later, at the state archives, Tiffany continued to encounter evidence of protest and resistance. In response, she demonstrated a clear disposition for civic work, reflecting: "There were a couple folders and they were called Freedom photos and they were of people protesting and stuff like either in Tallahassee or near it or just in Florida and general. I was like: Hey, this is how we should be when our civil rights aren't being protected" (personal communication, July 14, 2018).

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Figure 4. Iyawa's final piece (the red text is from archival police reports of Black community members congregating together in public). Photo courtesy of the authors.

In her final piece, Tiffany emphasized this connection between past and present. She created a 3D bus using cardboard and collage. One side of the bus depicts the 1950s city bus. The other side reveals the inside of the bus. It contains black and white silhouettes (sitting together), along with quotations about and photographs of the bus boycott and its historical significance. In her final interview, Tiffany said that she was surprised to learn that sleepy Tallahassee had an important role in the civil rights movement, commenting, "[Y]ou wouldn't think that people [here] would do that kind of thing, like that's something for the news" (personal communication, July 14, 2018).

In this project, Tiffany learned about the rich past of the mundane bus system, which was transformed in her eyes once its connection to protest was revealed. This revelation, coupled with the knowledge about the everyday acts of protest that built the civil rights movement, developed intellectual, dispositional, and participatory indicators of civic engagement, as the experience led Tiffany to reflect on how we could do better today to respond to racism, among other social conflicts.

Discussion

As we conclude this inquiry, we return to our original question: What does positioning teens as arts-based researchers do to shape a civically engaged art education curriculum? We suggest that fostering multimodal artistic practices might contribute to civically engaged practices among young people. This occurs by creating curricular opportunities that guide young people to act as arts-based researchers
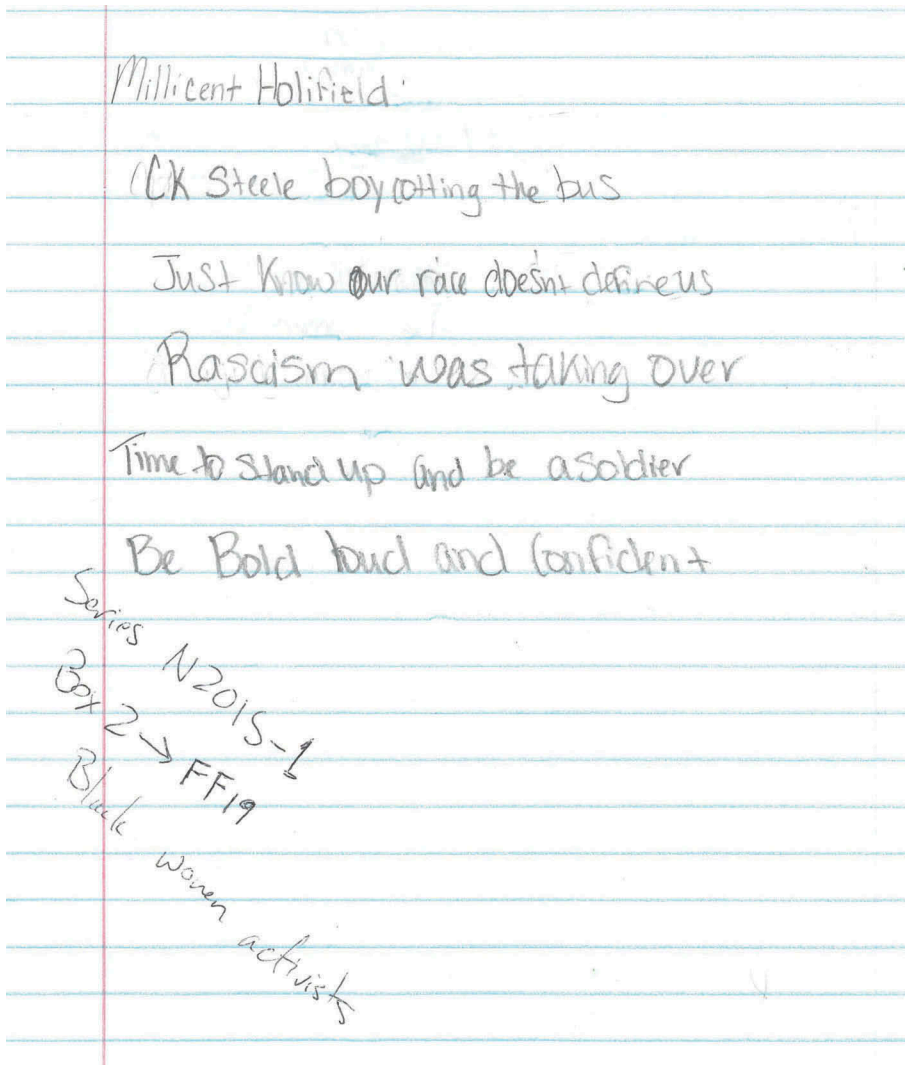
Figure 5. Planning stages of Zoe's song. Photo courtesy of the authors.

as they address civically relevant topics. By producing, sharing, and discussing visual content, young people are able to learn from history. It then becomes the role of the educator to create a participatory methodology of engaging in ABR with students. This is where

Figure 6. Student photograph in the style of Ricard Martínez (www.arqueologiadelpuntdevista.org/bio/) at the Greyhound bus station. Photo courtesy of the authors.

the work of the students in our summer camp met the tenets of asset-based curricula. This kind of student-led inquiry is key in creating equitable learning environments (López, 2017). Instead of viewing schools as institutions charged with saving young people, an asset-based approach to civically engaged art curricula engenders individual agency. By positioning students as arts-based researchers, teachers ask students to identify their strengths and then utilize those strengths to guide their learning experience. In this way, a curriculum that centers students as arts-based researchers begins to model the participatory processes that are the foundation for civic engagement. By engaging young people in authentic conversations about the history in their own communities, through their own lived experiences, and with their own ideas for how to share their learning, art education curricula begins to look more like a research experience and less like a classroom one.

By asking students to gain historical and cultural knowledge and then examine how events and culture parallel the contemporary world, we saw students engage in intellectual and dispositional civic skills. Participants took this cultural and historical context and used art materials to insert themselves into the conversation. We saw our participants gain a critical awareness that moved their thinking out of the art room and toward the participatory skills necessary to be civically engaged members of their communities. The ultimate aim of this work was to support students in becoming civic citizens and for critical, creative processes to facilitate their participation in cultural production through processes of representation, communication, and disruption.

We found that, when presenting research opportunities to students, teachers should consider ways to encourage and provide opportunities for consideration of material reflection, embodied practices, and exploring the relevance of history. By asking teachers to move these into central places in their curricula, teachers might begin to shift the landscape of the art classroom away from finished products and toward the intellectual, dispositional, and participatory values present in civically engaged educational pursuits.

Through material reflection, students might begin to connect the physicality of art processes to their own sensual experiences during their research journey. By asking teens to draw parallels between the concepts that resonate with them and the actual material choices they make, educators open up opportunities for students to use materials to say something in their arts-based inquiries. Instead of experience being created around a material process, the research team provided opportunities for materials to emerge alongside their students' conceptualizations of their research. We also believe it is important to provide chances for students to engage in embodied practices. We found that through the processes of walking

and interviewing, Zoe was able to move outside of traditional product-oriented goals to develop and eventually perform her own protest song. Zoe's work highlights the importance of embodied encounters with ideas, and we believe this must move beyond just internet searches and class discussions. Students can benefit when encouraged to think about how to situate their work in their community (local and virtual), both during the early research conceptualization as well as the final product. Finally, we cannot underscore enough the importance of historical context. Tiffany expressed the opinion that, in her town, she believed that nothing ever happens. This project opened her eyes to the legacy of the past and galvanized her understanding about what options for resistance people have today. By asking teens to do the work of arts-based researchers and make direct parallels between the past and present, we saw them take their research out of a static historic moment and transform it into a much more potent and personal form of history in the making.

Future Considerations for Teens as Arts-Based Researchers

This work is not without difficulty. As Fielding (2001) indicated, research invitations made toward young people vary in the amount of input and leadership they expect participants to adopt. The more personally invested a student is in the project, the more likely it is that students will assume the responsibilities needed to carry out an inquiry. While the research team worked to put together resources for students to engage in dialogue with Tallahassee's civil rights history, we remained cognizant of the importance of allowing students the space to discover their own interests. This became key to the process of positioning students as arts-based researchers, but it also highlights a fundamental limitation to this work.

In this way, art educators need to conceptualize teens not just as researchers but as critical arts-based researchers. In the context of this project, we drew on Finley (2011) who defined critical ABR as "an activist approach to research in which the ultimate value of research derives from its usefulness to the community in which the research occurs" (p. 435). Critical ABR is useful for introducing the work of making art without overlooking the artistic qualities embedded in art practice. In a statement echoing much of what we found in our participants' work, Finley (2008) discussed critical ABR as a "radical, politically grounded statement about social justice and control over the dissemination and production of knowledge" (p. 72). And yet she framed this work as one of discovery and invention. As teachers begin to find ways to create opportunities for critical ABR in their own curricula, they must centralize the importance of experiencing the world differently through processual/productive means of engagement. What Finley (2008) proposed, and what we find resonant in the potential for this type of curriculum, is the accessibility for young people to come into knowledge during artmaking. This is not production in the service of messaging, but a material exploration that is open-ended, insightful, and generative. Teachers must ask students to engage in a critical arts-based examination about something that has contemporary relevance and accessibility, using materials to closely explore an issue they find personally compelling.

We hope from these experiences we can begin to trace our way toward a process of civically engaged art education. It is our opinion that this must go beyond teaching students about social issues and instead draw on the rhetoric of cultural production to intentionally support a model of cultural citizenship. Within the network of activities that compose the process of civic engagement, we identify the asset-based characteristics of cultural content integration, cultural knowledge, and critical awareness as foundational objectives that inform curriculum design. As discussed earlier, these characteristics echo the aims of an art education for cultural citizenship by developing informed, participatory, and social justice–oriented citizens (Kuttner, 2015). By extrapolating from the experiences of our summer program, we found that artmaking processes contributed to civic practice by situating students as arts-based researchers. This positionality created a pathway for students to actively make connections and to position materials, people, places, and events as tools through which they can begin to dialogue and interact with and contest their past, present, and future selves.

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O R C I D

Sara Scott Shields (iD) http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9981-1115

Rachel Fendler (iD) http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3539-0179

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ENDNOTES

1 The Tallahassee Foot Soldiers is a group of activists recognized for supporting the local civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s.

2 These three students were chosen because of their in-depth engagement in the process of research documentation. As such, these students exemplified the role of arts-based researchers and gave us a wealth of physical data to engage with after the conclusion of the weeklong intensive.

3 In the discussion, the civic skills the data were coded with are identified through the use of italicized text.

4 All student names are pseudonyms.

5 To listen to Zoe's song, follow this link: https://bit.ly/2YW0knl.