Questioning the Survey:
A Look into Art History Survey and its Pedagogical Practices

JOSH YAVELBERG

George Mason University

The traditional art history survey course is a staple throughout higher education. This course has been taught in a similar manner for generations. This study questions several art history faculty members regarding their unique practices in an effort to understand the pedagogical implications as we move into the twenty-first century. Through continued dialogue, coupling reflections on personal experience, this heuristic inquiry intends to produce and share through a developing community of practice new pedagogical alternatives to what has become labeled, "Art-in-the-Dark."

Introduction

The art history survey has been taught in a similar manner for generations. As we progress further into the twenty-first century, much of the traditional curricular and pedagogical methods of the past have come into question as institutions move towards learner-centered models and technology to engage a new era of students. I too have questioned the traditional methods of art historical instruction, having come to the field of art history more as an artist than a traditional historian. After teaching art history survey to undergraduate classes for years at several institutions, and in different formats, I continue to question my approaches to what is labeled by many, "Art-in-the-Dark." I have become curious about what other instructors' perspectives were on the topic and what they may be doing in their classrooms so that I may further inform our understanding or this course and its implications.

For the purposes of my study, I have defined "Art-in-the-Dark" as a lecture format, survey of art history course oftentimes taught with large auditorium style seating and large class

sizes. Traditional assessment measures include essays, quizzes, midterm and final exams. The course derives from 19th century German rhetorical tradition where the knowledgeable sage conducts his or her lecture to an attentive audience. Robert Nelson (2000) provides a detailed analysis of the implications of this slide lecture approach. Nelson's historical review describes the slide lecture as once a major pedagogical innovation that engaged students through a choreographed journey utilizing visual technology. This once innovative practice has changed little in generations and Nelson himself questions where the art historian will stand in this new millennium. I posit that the traditional art history lecture, as Nelson describes it, places art historians in a unique position to inform future pedagogical practice by utilizing their skills for transforming lectures through the use of media.

A select few textbooks dominate this survey course. When studying for a doctorate in the field, I was required to pass a comprehensive exam that is common to most programs. It measured the knowledge of the three mainly used texts at the time (of which I reference the latest editions): Stockstad's *Art History* (2005); *Gardner's Art Through the Ages* (Kleiner, 2013); and the ever-famous *Janson's History of Art* (Janson, Davies, Denny, Hofrichter, Simon, Roberts, 2011). The exam was described as a certification of my qualifications to teach art history survey at almost any college; they would most likely require one of those three texts. These texts remain the foundation for such courses and guide much of the pedagogical practice. Even though they have evolved over time, there is still much criticism regarding their approach, cost, and the degree to which they have changed over time (Graham, 1995; Nelson, 1997; Schwarzwer, 1995; Weidman, 2007).

With the traditionalism of the survey in mind, I began to reflect on my role as an art history instructor. I have been teaching art history survey along with a variety of fine and applied arts courses at colleges throughout the Washington, DC metropolitan area. Each college has had a different curricular approach, but all have had similar described outcomes: to develop aesthetic or visual literacy and to form the ability to identify artistic movements or styles. Some colleges add competencies such as the development of appreciation for arts, creative thinking, or the ability to recognize the complexity and diversity of human experience. However, the main competencies remain as they have for decades. Personally, I have maintained a teaching philosophy that focuses on engaging students by making knowledge relevant to their personal

goals. This is often a challenge in art history as the majority of students enrolled are not art history majors.

As I continually experiment with different methods to reach my goal to engage students, my curiosity lead to the following questions of others in the field:

1. What pedagogical alternatives exist to the traditional "art-in-the-dark" art history survey course?

2. What is the perceived effectiveness by instructors using alternative pedagogical methods of these approaches?

3. What suggestions can be made for future pedagogical practice?

Methodology

The research in this study was conducted following approval from the Human Subjects Review Board of George Mason University. The method that I decided on to answer the research questions was a heuristic approach given my personal connections and experience with this topic. A Heuristic methodology allowed me as researcher to better inform my role as an art history instructor and to develop a dialogue with my colleagues that may inform both my understanding and future practice (Patton, 2004). Heuristics would allow me to work closely with my participants as peers to form an understanding of pedagogical challenges and form a consensus. I chose to approach instructors with whom I was familiar and who represented a range of curricular approaches. Also, I was cautious to approach instructors whom I perceived as struggling with similar questions in their own courses, believing that they would best lend voice to the concerns that I felt were at issue in the art history survey course. Following a call for participants, I was able to meet with three instructors having roughly fifty years of experience between them, currently representing three different institutions in the DC metropolitan area. One instructor teaches fully on-ground, one teaches both online and on-ground, and the other teaches fully online. This provided a rich variety and represented the field today.

These instructors met with me for discussions that lasted roughly one hour. Each was guided by an initial interview guide I developed to keep the conversations on track and to assure that we were addressing all of my questions in each discussion. After initial discussions, I took time to reflect on the experience before thematically coding the transcripts. I then reviewed the themes once again with the participants to assure validity and to engage in further dialogue. As

themes emerged, I reflected on my own experiences and conducted a more comprehensive literature review to gain further critical understanding of each topic. Following this research, I will conclude this study with, as Patton (2004) describes, a creative synthesis.

Results

Discussions with my participants were enriching and each mentioned the joy of being able to speak with a colleague about their work. They described the distance from peers that they often feel in their classrooms, and were anxious to share their experience and hear about my own. From the discussions, several themes emerged that I believe were of great benefit to my initial research questions: course design, technology, assessment, textbooks, and classroom issues such as engagement, demographics, or other management issues.

Course Design

Course design is traditionally driven by a chronological model. The model mimics the formatting of the commonly used art history survey texts. This design allows students to obtain the competency of forming an ability to identify styles and specific artworks. It also forms a method that encourages simple memorization of terms and artifacts that are subject to change for some of the following reasons: political correctness, copyright regulations and space. The participants in this study all described their alternative methods to transform this traditional course design, focusing on broader competencies in an effort to move away from memorization.

By broader competencies, one participant described his change of focus away from specifics toward broader cultural themes. His rationale for such a shift was one of relevance. He described the shift as justifying the legitimacy of visual artifacts by demonstrating how it influences and is influenced by culture. Not only does it validate art history as a relevant subject, but he also believes that the thematic approach provides a more interdisciplinary approach. This mimics the placement of the art history survey within the general education curriculum, and the student demographic that often includes a very small percentage of art history majors. As he exclaimed, "Art is 90% of human history which has been religious, political monuments, structures, [and] huge centers of culture, so it makes perfect sense to teach it that way." He continued:

> They're not memorizing. They're learning about larger issues and topics. They are seeing the narrative of history take place they are seeing how things take place in Egypt; how they relate to things in Rome; how the Romans appropriate things from the Greeks and Christians appropriate things from the Greeks... You do that by creating a narrative that's broader and not simply memorizing names and dates.

We continued this discussion, elaborating on the benefits of this direction to teaching art history:

> I: I think it would be great to teach one of these surveys, or part of it, and really talk about money.
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> J: It's interesting that you bring that up. Because this approach, rather than the memorization of names dates and time periods and these thematic subject matter approaches that you think are kind of arbitrary to the relevance, this method, do you think, makes it more applicable to some of the current political initiatives as well? Like, we're currently pushing the areas of science technology engineering and math and how does art history fit into those four? And I guess when you're talking about the engineering and construction of something, the scientific materials and how materials come together, that covers science. And some of the mathematical principles come in when talking about things like the Parthenon. And I guess this is kind of a method to tie those…
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> I: Or even if you want talk about the business of art, or the political nature of art, I mean people are interested in religion.
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> J: But what about patronage? And how the patron is important to the artist art history?
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> I: And the function of the art as kind of a media, and propaganda, and whatever you want to call it. How it functions. A person today is not necessarily interested in how beautiful Jesus looked to a 12th century pilgrimage guy but he would be interested in how this is part of the political iconography of French monarchs or whatever.

Here the discussion continued to describe the directions that one may take thematic approaches, which are broad, but specifically the connection to political initiatives that threaten the future of humanities and other liberal arts courses. It seems to be necessary for all courses and curricula to justify their benefits, and the thematic approach has the possibility of adapting to external pressures.

This same participant also claimed that he still mainly utilizes a lecture format, and in fact stresses his lecture format over the reading or the text, given his cultural/thematic approach. The lectures carry greater weight, and he does not hand out course notes, study guides, or PowerPoint printouts. Instead, he believes that students become more active learners when they are forced to take notes and participate in discussions. He also mentioned that this solves many of his issues with attendance; students are tested on what is covered in class and not from what they can read at home. "They show up because they know that if they miss the lecture they can't pass the quiz."

In designing courses, (though we are discussing alternative methods to course design), there are some successful elements to traditional approaches that cannot be denied. The challenge that this instructor believes he has overcome is one of engagement, though the fact that the students show up does not necessarily mean that they are engaged; rather, they may be falling into the same trap of memorizing for the sake of passing a quiz. Combined with a thematic approach, and more open-ended response questions on a quiz, (to be described below), the instructor navigates the memorization issue and enhances literacy and critical awareness on the part of his students.

A second participant in my study also discussed the thematic approach to art history. She described a particular instance:

> Going back to when we start with Mesopotamian art, I want them to look at images of power, both the places and the personages of people in power. I would like them to look at some of the stylistic things, such as symmetry and axial, and compare this to something in their environment now, with things like presidential campaigns and whatever else they find around. That is the same with Greek and Roman, to look in their environment for buildings which follow Greek and Roman orders. And that sometimes works. Of all the topics, the thing that gets the best discussion is the early Christian debate between iconoclasts and iconophiles.

This approach engages students in discussion and forms relevant connections to the contemporary world. These connections are often not readily made by students who believe that history is no longer relevant. Also, this instructor began to describe the enthusiasm that students have when engaged in discussion, rather than passively listening to a lecture. She mentioned the

importance of leaving discussions open-ended without a right or wrong answer, as the first

person to answer correctly leaves others with nothing to contribute.

The third participant further expanded on this issue of lecture and discussion in the

classroom, explaining that developing a dialogue with your class is important:

> Basically, it involves talking to them and engaging them in a lecture, which means not
> sitting back behind a podium pushing a PowerPoint machine but actually talking to them,
> walking around the room asking them questions that are not simply about the quiz or
> something they memorized. A question like, "Why do you think Christians use images?
> Why do you think…? How did Constantine's conversion to Christianity affect
> Christianity? Do you think it really changed it?" So, I mean, you talk about that and it
> leads into the topic rather than saying, "What's this image?" That just takes a little bit of
> getting to know your students and changes with every class. It depends on how big the
> class is, but that's what I do.

This instructor utilizes open-ended discussions to engage students in his narrative, but also

acknowledges that the issue of class size is a challenge, especially at institutions where art

history surveys are conducted in large auditoriums. He also emphasized the importance of

engaging with the students, moving around the room, rather than standing behind a podium and

speaking at the audience. This same participant mentioned the flexibility that he brings to

lectures or discussions, keeping them flexible to emphasize different sections or themes based on

the interest of the class. These are simple teaching techniques that are often overlooked by many

historians, since most are not trained educators, despite their knowledge and/or academic

credentials.

Another suggestion from the participants was to fully immerse students into the

discussion topics. For example, one could add music, poetry, and other art forms to create a fully

sensory experience. Also, the instructor should remain vigilant towards current museum

exhibitions that may lend further insight into the topic. One participant mentioned the benefits of

guest speakers to break from the voice of the instructor while lending validity to the instructor's

claims. Along the lines of guest speakers, this same participant discussed a class that she was

able to "team-teach." She mentioned finding both the students and herself more engaged and

challenged by the experience. It inspired her to become more critical of her teaching methods by

having them on display and worked-through with a peer. Finally, the students were never able to become too comfortable with a single teaching style.

This same instructor elaborated on the benefits of utilizing student teams within her courses. She utilizes teams in a variety of ways, primarily within the structure of classroom discussions and the development of study groups. For example, in discussions, she would ask students to come together to develop additional questions which would help guide and engage the direction of the class period. She would also have them come together in a similar manner to conduct peer reviews while discussing the importance of critical feedback, emphasizing the "critique sandwich." This required at least a paragraph response to peers, beginning with a positive comment, followed by a suggestion, and then concluded with a positive or encouraging response. In addition, students would come together to work in teams on presentations. Lastly, she used teams as study groups, providing the questions for the midterm or final exam ahead of time in class, and allowing them to discuss the responses. All of these techniques increased student engagement, peer mentoring, and allowed the instructor to pinpoint areas of student confusion.

In designing learning opportunities, all of the instructors described their use of museums. As the participants teach within the Metropolitan DC area, they all attempt to make use of the many free museums in the area. This provides students with first-hand art experiences. Museums are a great resource for engaging students out of the classroom. Students have the opportunity to apply concepts discussed in class to artworks that typically are not covered within the limited survey texts.

Although museums are a great tool for instruction, all the participants mentioned issues that they had with utilizing museums. Each mentioned difficulties in getting students to attend museum visits. The on-ground instructor was challenged by the operational hours of museums relative to the course time requiring visits outside of the typical class time. For example, this instructor would set up two visits where he would be there to guide them. The online instructor had similar issues:

> It was the most dreaded assignment and I got all kinds of excuses and students asking, "Couldn't we do this instead?" And unless they lived in Montana or Oklahoma, I worked really hard to find a place for them to go. I didn't allow them to go somewhere else instead… Oh! Unless they can prove they were housebound and they tried really hard to

do that too… And then afterwards… The assignment I gave at the Museum, and as
museum sites got better, it became hard to come up with something that they wouldn't
just copy what was online. I had them talk about the lighting, what objects [were around
the piece, etc.]"

The instructor brought up many issues encountered by such requirements - especially when the
instructor is not present with the students. Issues of attendance are always a problem, but they
become compounded when students believe that all the information they need is on the Internet.
Both instructors still pursued the museum visits as students often reflected on how rewarding the
experience was to them. I recalled too how students would ask me if these were the "real"
artworks, and they were impressed when they then understood that they were in the presence of
what they were actually studying.

In addition to the discussion of museum visits, my colleagues and I discussed the
possibility of travel. The on-ground instructor described organizing field trips to nearby cities
where it was possible to conduct similar experiential opportunities to the museum visits. The
online instructor expressed the importance that travel had on her understanding of the material.
This instructor also discussed the advantages of online education, as many of the students could
be anywhere in the world and bring that lived experience into the classroom, adding to the
engagement. With this, we also discussed the possibility of virtual travel, utilizing tools such as
Google Earth to visit locations and demonstrate alternative views to the structures that are in the
course texts.

Technology

Technology and its pedagogical implications are a growing discussion within higher
education. It is difficult to ignore the benefits of many current technological tools. However, it
seems that many art history survey classes choose to ignore these possibilities. On-ground
courses are becoming technologically enhanced by "smart carts." These are faculty stations
including a computer wired to the Internet and overhead projectors. Some schools have the
added opportunity of technologies such as Smartboards and audience response systems. There
are many technological tools available, and the instructors all mentioned the various ways that
they were utilizing technologies in their classrooms.

I previously mentioned that instructors were using Internet tools such as Google Earth to take students on virtual field trips. These instructors also utilized the Internet to discuss their museum field trips and to take students virtually to museums that were not geographically feasible. One tool that came up in all the discussions is the newly developed site hosted by the Khan Academy, Smarthistory.org (Harris & Zucker, 2013). The instructors all described the growing quality of the site and the benefits of the short, conversational videos to engage students in the same material found within the standard survey text.

These resources are all beneficial to faculty in technologically enhanced classrooms. This is even more the case when faculty utilize not only their own smart carts, but also the technology that students themselves bring to the classroom. The online instructor described a particular scenario:

I: So many of the students are computer this and computer that majors and know more than I do, but now I can't imagine being in a face-to-face classroom with students all on their laptops and phones that I would have to be competing with for their attention. In fact I gave a talk, lecture, in somebody else's class at the Corcoran about a year and half ago and I had it prepared as a PowerPoint presentation and I had a DVD to show part of... But there was one student there with her laptop constantly doing this and that and I was getting really pissed. All of a sudden, she raised her hand, and it turned out what she was doing was not gabbing away, but she was going further with what I was doing. And what she contributed to the class was going deeper. You know, that's an ideal situation but I'm not sure how often that...

J: so she was sitting there researching and using the Internet...

I: Yes.

This scenario brings to light not only the possibility of students utilizing technology, but the fact that they are active learners, constantly testing the validity of the instructor's lecture. The instructor also acknowledged the deficiency that they had with technology and the flexibility and openness that they may have in the future to students' use of technology within their classroom.

Utilizing the student's engagement with technology was expanded to considering blended learning methods. The on-ground instructor described how he intended to develop short video lectures much like those found on Smarthistory.org of his lectures. The intent was for these

lectures to be viewed or listened to on any device outside of class. Class time would be utilized to engage students in discussions rather than having them sit and passively listen:

> I: What I eventually want to do is to provide some video lectures that complement classroom with maybe some other more text-based handouts that are available online with terminology. Again, that are not your typical Jansen or Gardner vocabulary, like, whatever, "vault" or "flying buttress," or something but more like other terminology that's broader that's not technical, its more cultural. Eventually I'd like to have these video lectures available so that students can listen to them on their phone take them with them and that reiterates what we're doing in class and it basically takes the place of the textbook and that would just echo the main form of the class, which is the broad general contextual historical multidisciplinary all that kind of stuff… that's what I'm trying to do. So I think the textbook, which is basically online, is just a virtual version of the textbook. Instead I would like to have more of a lecture that can be, like a video, and it would be basically images with me talking. It's like here in class, those will be available to you for your phone or other device and you could study, like students have to do, on the bus or the subway anywhere.
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> J: Do you think it's important that it's a video because you're showing images?
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> I: Yeah, I think it's important that it's a video because you can listen to it. The images since you're not really memorizing anything it's not like here's image one, blah blah blah…

The lectures, in this case, would take the place of the course reading. The instructor would like to see alternatives to the reading and reliance on a single textbook. As this is a visual course, the instructor also emphasized the importance of video. The instructor described the importance of acting in the lectures for his classes rather than relying on other resources. Students find the lectures more engaging and develop more trust in their instructor when they provide their own videos. This is superior to relying on resources produced elsewhere that could be found without paying for credits at the college.

The other major impact that technology has had on the survey class is the shift to online education. Discussing the art history course with two instructors who teach the course fully online was insightful as to the pedagogical adjustments made to accommodate for the asynchronous distance media. The technology was described as flipping the course from the

instructor focused model to a "learner-centered course design." This shift becomes clear as the instructor becomes a facilitator and relies on the course modules and reading to supplement the lectures. The faculty member as facilitator then becomes the guide-on-the-side by engaging students in discussions and providing feedback on course assignments. Students have to work harder and the instructor has to be more vigilant.

The online course has course modules developed by a content expert, often a full-time faculty member, combined with an instructional designer. These course modules are thematic making reference to the course text and other materials. The faculty assigned to the course then develops their expectations. Much of the course participation is run through discussion boards. The assessments are typically similar to the on-ground course with a midterm, final and research project of some kind.

The instructors discussed many issues with engagement in these courses. The asynchronous format and lack of physicality makes it difficult to make personal connections with the students. In discussing the online course with one of the participants, I described a growing issue with the course design:

In online courses the main thing is that everyone uses discussion forums. That's pretty much the standard method. It's the kind of post and discuss/respond. That's become pretty much the standard for online. And there's also the argument that we should be trying to break from that some way to because it's sort of restrictive in some ways, but the alternatives are difficult too. The method of assessment for online is still developing, so it's kind of the best thing we have now and people just stick with that. I would be happy to mention some of the ways I do things. I do pretty much the same thing.

I acknowledged the issue that online courses are already falling into a standard format much like the art history course had and there should be a push to move away or make things better, but I also acknowledged that I fall into much the same routine. I try new things, video posts, calling students, and whatever new method I tend to come across that shows promise. However, I too fall back into the same routines as most faculty in online courses.

The instructors described a variety of ways in which they attempt to overcome these issues. One instructor makes it a point to call each student and formally introduce herself. Also, the responses have to be more personal as students read through cut-and-paste feedback. This same instructor described how she would develop video responses to papers, in combination with

the tracked changes in Microsoft Word. She would utilize a program called Jing that is free and creates short screen cast videos that she could narrate to discuss the rationale behind her comments on the student papers. I discussed this same concept with the other online instructor. I would also provide video responses to some posts and encourage students to do the same rather than write in their responses. This provides more personality to the course. Though I have yet to have students take me up on the video responses, they have linked in short video documentaries that they find online when providing examples. These video posts receive more responses and feedback than the discussion posts that are simply text.

Assessment

The three instructors interviewed had a variety of modes of assessment that differ from the midterm, final, and paper format that is typical in a survey course. They described the most important aspect of any assessment, especially any alternative means of assessment. It is to form clear expectations. One must list the learning objectives for the course as well as the assignments and form rubrics that match those objectives. By doing these simple things, students will remain on track and be more successful.

The on-ground instructor, as previously mentioned, focused his course more thematically and forced students to take notes as he did not lecture straight from the text. This instructor's assessments were also different from the typical midterm and final with mainly slide identification and the occasional short answer or essay. He required bi-weekly quizzes that were essays written in class:

> All the quizzes are the same. They get two questions ahead of time and a study guide that tells them what to study from their notes and then they come back and answer the question in class as an essay that makes them more engaged because they had to pay attention in class, they take notes. Then you take good notes they'd understand things because of not getting credit for memorization artist repeating things. I emphasize always, "explain," "explain," "explain," "why," "why," "why," "why is this significant?" And when they do this they not only write better but they are more engaged in a class and I think they learn more. They might not learn the date of the Pantheon but they understand that the Greeks were extraordinary people in a way that's not your typical

Wikipedia explanation. And I just test them that way that's it. Then know the questions

ahead of time and they have to write.

While speaking with this instructor, he had a pile of these quizzes in front of him. I commented at the length of the responses, and he mentioned that they often ask for more paper to write their responses. The students were not only providing a couple of sentences, they were fully engaged.

Besides the discussion posts, which consisted of a large portion of the course grades, the online courses provided some unique research projects. From the institution where one of the instructors teaches, the designed assessment reflects the course modules. Students are asked to produce a similar course module from artwork pairs provided to them. They are able to choose from a list of pairs. This assessment allows students to demonstrate research, analytical and comparative skills while relating the images to their historical context. The instructor mentioned that the engaged responses of the students were because of their personal connections to many of the images.

When discussing the topic of other assessments with these instructors, they mentioned other possibilities, such as having the students teach, as well as museum papers focusing on images they must see in person. We discussed the television show "C.S.I." as a model for developing research and critical analysis skills. Though there are many alternative ways of teaching, these instructors did not describe many methods that were extremely different from the traditional assessments mentioned. Mainly they continued with tests, often allowing students to see the questions ahead of time, and allowing for the creation of study groups.

Textbooks

The issue of textbooks came up often in the discussions. The online instructor was on the lookout for alternatives to *Gardners' Art Through the Ages* (Kleiner, 2013) mostly due to cost and often referred to Smarthistory.org (Harris & Zucker, 2013) or other sources to circumvent the readings. The issue that this instructor had was the fact that she had eight weeks to cover fourteen chapters, far too much for such a condensed timeframe. Though this online institution had eight-week sessions, other schools function with even shorter timeframes such as five weeks and even four-week courses, making it even more difficult to cover the previously prescribed material in the same detail. The on-ground instructor had even more issues with the textbook

claiming they do not really serve any purpose besides making money for the publishers. He described:

> As you know the art history textbooks have been around since the 1950s and they're all exactly the same except for some yearly little extra pictures and some politically correct additions. They are expensive and the industry doesn't want to change because it's working. Professors buy them, people require them. To me, they're very simple. They don't have any real interesting information other than names and dates and little tidbits about, you know, Charlemagne being the King of France or something. They're helpful if the student wants lookup maps and look up images for background if they wanted.

This instructor discussed issues of politics within the academy and ways in which the publishing companies are exploiting conservative methods of the art history field. He mentioned efforts that faculty have made to adjust to the field, but also acknowledged limitations of those adjustments. He described the fact that students often do not even read these books anyway, and it is the instructor's job to engage them and get them actively involved. The book just does not do that.

Classroom Issues

Discussions with my colleagues often sidetracked from alternative teaching methods to general teaching issues encountered in the classroom. Participants explained the reason for this diversion from the topic was due in large part to the rarity in which they spoke with their peers regarding classroom issues. The online instructor especially enjoyed the conversation as online instructors rarely ever meet their peers face-to-face within the same institution. Online instructors are often geographically disparate, making formal faculty meetings challenging. This same online instructor described the methods that she used to remain engaged with peers and development:

> I am on at least two professional list serves. Something called CAAH, which is over 25 years and running, Consortium of Art and Architectural Historians, which is international, or at least European and Western Hemisphere, and sometimes pedagogy comes up. In fact, Smarthistory folks are on it. I'm also on one on American art where pedagogy comes up a lot more often. So perhaps that's the best way I sort of follow those issues. In fact so many of my personal colleagues are retiring or have retired and I realize things are much more different now. Well, I guess the greatest trend now is the huge

percentage of people in graduate school are doing the modern and contemporary, and

very few people are doing anything earlier than that.

Remaining engaged in professional list serves is important as it maintains a community of practice that progresses the field. The instructor described the fact that these communities do discuss pedagogy, though rarely. They primarily focus on content developments that trend toward contemporary artistic study. This trend also does further disservice to the survey course as it demonstrates the narrow focus of many instructors who are asked to teach outside of their content area.

During our discussions, professional development came up often, further demonstrating these instructors' desire for pedagogical knowledge by continually requesting my rubrics and project descriptions. The online list-serves and other meetings that they attend rarely discuss teaching. Therefore, they were extremely interested in alternatives to the ways they had learned. Since these instructors were chosen for this study for their openness to alternative methods, they are not completely representative of the entire art history field that remains focused on content rather than on delivery methods.

An interesting topic did arise with regard to professional development and changes in the field. One instructor described the loss of the slide library, "I started out when the slide room was both a social and intellectual center. And now, most universities are doing away with slide rooms, and that's too bad. For the interaction between faculty…" The instructor went on to describe the antiquated skills learned regarding the physical preparation of slides by placing the image in glass. Also, she referred to the interactions that took place between faculty as they prepared their lectures.

The issue went deeper as the instructors discussed other issues, such as finding reliable image resources. They claimed that they often found themselves scouring Google for images for their course which were sub-par reproductions, never once considering the library's collection or the issues of copyright in displaying such reproductions. The instructors wanted images that were richer and more physical; images that they could really zoom into and break apart both aesthetically and formally. They desired to talk about the textures, surface quality, and brushwork. These elements are lost with "found" images. This complaint developed as they discussed their dissatisfaction with art historical documentaries, which often they found outdated and stuffy. They would not show many of them to their classes, and the students would not be

engaged. Familiar with glossy entertainment, today's students often voice their opinions about the low quality of old movies. These documentaries mostly mimic the lecture classroom when coupled with the lack of special-effects, discussions of old, immobile, artifacts which are historically out of context, and historians droning on throughout to low-budget music tracks.

Pedagogical practice is rarely mentioned in art history and is not an isolated issue to the discipline. As one instructor states regarding the instructional methods of art historians:

> …because art historians are trained that way, they've been trained that way for years. It's like any other discipline. In the social sciences you're trained a certain way to get a PhD. And the people who were training you did the same thing the same way. The people that are coming out of grad school right now with an art history degree have been taught to teach the survey the same way it's been taught. And then the people who hire them at X University who have a PhD in art history, let's say, also taught and were taught the same way. So it's really hard to break out of that when that's the case.

This instructor mentioned this cycle, and described the issues that this course has relating to the place it holds within the curriculum:

> The other problem is that the majority of places that teach art history, art history is simply an elective. It's either simply an elective for the humanities, or fine arts, or art and humanities elective, or not elective for certain arts majors. Usually in places that don't even have an art history program, just art majors. So they have ceramics and painting and sculpture in graphic design but because of accreditation they have to have art history surveys. I think they have to have two years of art history, the one-year survey, and then usually two other classes, modern art or something else. Anyway it's just accreditation… These classes are just there to fulfill a requirement for accreditation. And as I've heard from people, and in my own experiences, while the chairs for these programs are not art historians and are artists, sculptors, or whatever, they don't have time to mess with the curriculum. They want "X" amount of F I T's, or whatever they're called, you don't want people to get out. You want to keep our majors. "Don't make this too hard." I've had students come and say, "this is a very boring class. It's not relevant to their major." Even though their major is art, have had students tell me this, "Why do I need to learn this crap? This has nothing to do with what I'm going to do." And so when you have that kind of attitude from the students, the junior faculty members who are afraid of being fired or

losing tenure, hell, just getting a contract renewed, and it can change anything. In fact,

they're going to dumb it down even more. And they make it easier.

Here the instructor described the issues of where this course fits within most curricula and even

within the overall conversation, the difficulty of getting and even maintaining a job teaching art

history because there are no jobs in the discipline.

Instructors are forced to "dumb down" their courses, or make adjustments to their

outcomes to accommodate gaps in student knowledge. All three of my colleagues described the

difference between the knowledge they expected their students to bring into their class and the

actual knowledge of their students. The main discussion was about writing and research skills,

which students lack as a result of writing that has become shorter, especially in an online format,

and their shallow research skills, consisting of Wikipedia. All the instructors described methods

that they utilize to scaffold research and demonstrate good practices and methods for finding

credible sources of information. Issues that students have with content knowledge are often more

surprising. For example, students rarely know history, and as one instructor put it, "We were

looking at Baroque art and the students didn't even know the Bible." These issues take time

away from discussing the artworks and instead force the instructor to focus more on describing

contexts in order to frame meaning. Each of these classroom issues, however, are great areas of

opportunity to construct teachable moments and challenge art history instructors to become

stronger guides.

Another topic of agreement was plagiarism. The instructors spoke at length about this

growing issue, and how to combat issues of academic integrity. This should be addressed in

teaching subjects beyond art history. When speaking with the on-ground instructor regarding the

way in which he conducts quizzes, he spoke at length about this very topic:

J: …And the advantage of them having to write it in class is no that there may be no real

way to cheat.

I: Right, which again I don't want them to do anything online because I don't have time

to be checking for cheaters. I know that people have all these methods, but I don't want

to have to go around doing that. Regardless of what people say, cheating is rampant. It's

almost taken for granted. I don't think the administrators know how rampant it is, and

when you tell students to do something at home, you're basically telling them, well

you're not telling them, but you're seducing them into cheating because students are just

as busy as everyone else nowadays, and they're not going to do something when they can do it easier. And not to mention, as you know, many students don't even know what plagiarism is.

J: I think that's more of the issue. That they haven't been corrected at some other time so they don't really understand what plagiarism is, proper citations, or things like that.

I: This to me is foolproof. You can't cheat and you need to know your stuff in order to pass these classes and quizzes. I found people cheating, but it's getting rarer and rarer. Students talk and you (the instructor) kind of get a reputation that if you take my class you're going to have to write. That's the way it is. Don't expect anything less than that. It takes a while. And students these days aren't necessarily good writers, and you have to help them use the resources that they have, but it's something that I think works for me.

The instructor here acknowledged that cheating is rampant and discussed how he does as much as possible to have students work under his supervision to avoid the issue. The quizzes are not set up so that students can cheat, and the questions are provided ahead of time. Though the issue is present and this instructor is aware, he has found a method that works for him and applied it consistently, forming a reputation that students have come to respect. It is important that instructors find what works for them, and stick to their methods. They must not fall victim to the latest trend.

The notion of doing things at home or online was what the on-ground instructor referred to as "seducing [students] into cheating." The online environment holds that risk and makes authenticating work even more difficult, as the instructor may never see their students. This lack of physical presence on campus has led to a sense of isolation for the online instructor missing the slide library. But that lack of physicality also takes a toll on the level of engagement from the students within a course. To remain engaged, students need to understand that they need to check in almost daily to complete assignments within the shortened semester system. The online instructor attempts to let students know that they should only take two courses at a time if they wish to complete the assignments, but many students still try to take on too much work. At the other extreme, there are also students who only speak once or twice, and fall out of the course dialogue. In these instances, the faculty is encouraged to reach out, but that becomes difficult due to the lack of physical connection or presence.

Finally, there is the issue of the art history survey demographic. The instructors described the placement of the course within the curriculum as a general, liberal arts elective. This brings to the course not only arts students, but also students from every degree program at the institution. The students are welcome, however, the instructors did not belittle the challenges that have come from trying to engage each new audience. They all described the ease of teaching this course in the traditional manner to students whose major is art history, but such students are rare. Demographic diversity issues have become even more acute. There are students admitted into programs with lower and lower admissions standards. The instructors discussed the trouble that they have with the knowledge that students have coming into the course as they take the course within their first few terms at institutions with open enrollment policies. According to them, these policies allow students to be admitted to the institution with extremely low standards of admission that are often so low that these students would not have been admitted to other institutions of higher education.

Reflection

I entered this heuristic study seeking insight into alternatives to the traditional pedagogical methods for teaching art history survey and selected faculty that I believed to have had some strong opinions on this subject. Though they did have strong opinions, I would not claim that their methods of instruction were paradigm shattering. Each was taking steps toward student-centered pedagogies and each was concerned with issues of engagement and retention. The themes that emerged from our discussions - course design, technology, assessment, textbook, and classroom issues - are issues that all faculty face, and are not restricted solely to art history. The question remains, where does the art history survey fit within the future curriculum and what pedagogical methods exist that are truly challenging the status quo?

Art history survey courses are not only a requirement for those in art history, but also are a requirement for students in a variety of liberal arts majors and a general elective for those in other degree programs. I would not make the case to simplify the survey towards becoming similar to an art appreciation course as I feel the skills that are taught in art history are different from art appreciation. Art appreciation implies a shift towards cultural and aesthetic understanding without a heavy dose of historical context. These courses tend to last a single term. Art history, on the other hand, typically expresses a deeper and more formal understanding

of artworks as they function within the greater context. The art history course teaches essential research and analytical skills that turn students into scholarly detectives, placing artists and artworks within the pantheon of history based on historical knowledge. This distinction describes the importance of this course for future art historians seeking an introduction and foundation into their program, but also a unique skill set for those in other fields of study.

The art history survey finds itself in a unique position as it remains a staple of many curricula; however, arguably it has not kept up with the change in focus of the academy towards a more student-centered model of instruction. The pressures of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) movement will soon require that art history justify itself and the skills it produces for a demanding student and public consumer. The student body is also increasing, becoming more diverse, and includes varied needs for both student support and learning styles (Hainline, Gaines, Feather, Padilla, & Terry, 2010). Furthermore, the skills required for a twenty-first century population are vastly different from previous generations to remain both flexible and competitive throughout life (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2002). The art history survey must clearly align its outcomes and state the skills it develops if it is to maintain its place in curricula.

Many of these issues of a changing population and demands for evidence of generalizable skills can be easily overcome using clearly listed objectives and student learning outcomes, as described by one of the instructors interviewed. Art history faculty rarely are instructed in pedagogical methods, assessment strategies, learning styles, curricular design, or any of the theories discussed in education. As described by those interviewed, the art history instructor commonly teaches in the manner in which they learned thus continuing the cycle that has been in existence for generations of art historians. In what ways can faculty break this mold?

To answer this question, I conducted a more thorough literature review seeking published pedagogical models that have been employed in art history courses, expanding on the models adapted by my colleagues and me in our courses. Many searches directed me to a special edition of the *Art Journal*, "Rethinking the Introductory Art History Survey: A Practical, Somewhat Theoretical, and Inspirational Guide" (Collins, 1995). This issue contained a strong overview of different approaches to the course along with quickly delivered course and project ideas to support a variety of competencies such as developing writing skills, visual and cultural literacies, and developing analytical or research skills. The theoretical approaches included analyses of the

survey text, feminist modes of instruction, collaborative learning models, and even the incorporation of music. This may immerse students in the context, as one of the participants in this study had described with her use of poetry and other cultural artifacts.

The issue also describes various art history approaches that different schools have begun taking to break from the traditional mold. As this issue was produced nearly eighteen years ago, I decided to take a quick survey of the persistence of the curricular approaches mentioned by reading through each school's website. For some sites, I was able to discover the information on the pages dedicated to the Art History department. For other schools, I searched their published curriculum for mention of the courses and their course descriptions. Swathmore College's "Critical Study in the Visual Arts" (Cothren, 1995), The University of Texas at Austin's "Art History 301, an Introduction to the Visual Arts" (The 301 Project, 1995), and Harvard's "Art and Visual Culture" course (Winter & Zerner, 1995) are still in existence, Harvard's with both faculty still listed within the department. The School of the Art Institute of Chicago's description of the combination of art history and studio arts (Elkins, 1995) could not be rebuked by their website's statement (School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 2013). In addition to offering degrees in modern and contemporary art history at both the graduate and undergraduate level, the department is fully integrated into studio and design education across SAIC (School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 2013). While these courses seemed to have survived the years, others such as Northwestern University's "Introduction to Visual Culture" (Clayson & Leja, 1995) has no record past 1998, Oberlin College's "Approaches to Western Art History" (Mathews, 1995) seems to have ended in 1999, and the University of Wyoming's "Survey Studies" companion course (Schaefer, 1995) was mentioned within the article as subject to concluding due to shifting credit requirements within the college.

I particularly enjoyed reading Mark Miller Graham's (1995) piece, "The Future of Art History and the Undoing of the Survey," as he makes specific suggestions for the future of art history survey. First, he suggests that we stop using the survey textbook as its coverage is impossible to achieve. Second, we should avoid completeness as it "undermines and problematizes notions of canonical works and focuses us to rethink basic models of artistic creation and influence" (p.33). Third, we should rethink the content of the course. Fourth, he suggests demonstrating the discipline of art history and the role of the art historian in writing that history. Finally, we should teach conflicts and encourage debate. Although I found these points

rather interesting, I noticed that many of them have gone largely unheeded, as there has not been a substantial issue of this publication since readdressing these concepts.

Though not a substantial issue on the topic, the dialogue has continued with Bersson's (2006) piece regarding the lecture in the art history survey course for the College Art Association's (CAA) publication along with a talk, "Pedagogy for the 21st Century: Transforming the Art-History Survey and Art-Appreciation Courses," at the same association's conference that year (Wheeler, 2006). Not yet disheartened, I attended the same association's conference in February 2013 with an ear to where this dialogue has progressed, if at all. During the conference, I encountered several disparate and developing communities of practice engaged with the questions outlined in this study. The most formal group recognized by CAA is Art Historians Interested in Pedagogy and Technology (Och, 2013) which held a session titled, "Technology and Collaboration in the Art History Classroom" that covered such subjects as interactive classroom techniques, audio casting, wikis, Voice Thread, and virtual collaboration. With similar interests, Professors Lise Kjaer and Marit Dewherst of the City College of New York and City University of New York chaired a session titled, "Imagining Creative Teaching Strategies in Art History" for which roughly sixty people were in attendance. It covered topics such as reenactment, mini-conferences, guided discovery, and a method described as an "archive paradigm" discussed by Robert Peterson from Eastern Illinois University. Yu Bonk Ko of Dominican College discussed using the sketchbook for mind mapping exercises in his panel, "Working with the Sketchbook Page." Acknowledging the growing needs of art history instructors to have better access to resources and information for personal pedagogical development, Michelle Jubin and Karen Shelby, both instructors at the City University of New York, initiated the development of a web resource: Art History Teaching Resources (http://arthistoryteacher.wordpress.org) (College Art Association, 2013).

Creative Synthesis and Future Research

Heuristic inquiry, as Patton (2004) describes, culminates in a creative synthesis. Based on informal discussions with my colleagues, academic discussions at the CAA conference in New York, my literature review, and a quick online survey, I have come to understand that there are entirely too many alternative approaches to the traditional art history survey course. I came to the study having compiled, created, and exercised many different strategies for my own survey

courses, and I wanted to know what others were doing. Some were doing similar projects, and others, at conferences, happened to be taking alternative approaches. My colleagues did not discuss many, as I called it previously, "paradigm shattering" methods. The discussions that I had with peers at the CAA conference demonstrated not only their continued interest in this topic, but also the abundance of interest given the large turnout to panel sessions and feedback returned to the professors beginning a web resource. Academics are discussing the change, but one theme stood out over all others, the need for a community of practice to connect instructors to the growing body of resources and information, as well as to continue the dialogue.

As such, I utilized my renewed understanding of the art history survey to develop new methods for approaching my courses and editing my assignments. I included projects utilizing mapping, group discussion, trans-media approaches, and creative interpretation, clarifying my outcomes. Following in the footsteps of Art History Teaching Resources developed by the two professors from the City University of New York, I set out to develop a web resource to further engage faculty in a community of practice for continued focus on the issues that have been discussed in this study and allowing for a venue for future issues to be discussed. Using an open licensed content management system, Joomla, I produced ArtHistorySurvey.com (Harris & Zucker, 2013). The site contains a main page to provide announcements and community news stories, a resource area for providing web links, syllabi, lesson plans, project ideas, and publications, and a discussion forum for members to continue discussions, ask questions, and seek answers from their peers. The community goes a step further, influenced by a feature that I found on the Journal of Interactive Technology and Pedagogy (JiTP) webpage, "Teaching Fails," an area where faculty can describe their attempts at using new methods and the issues that they encountered in an effort to spark dialogue regarding those methods and elicit solutions (2013). This community is monitored by myself and the established academics in the community. Although members can produce articles, the articles are form-based for information consistency and the publication is monitored for quality.

The design considerations were based on a need for a platform that fostered community involvement and was flexible, adjusting to the needs of a growing membership. I believe this design is simple, yet meets these needs. Currently, it has few flashy components allowing users to focus on the content and delivery of meaningful resources and discussions. To model the use, I began populating the site with my own resources, projects, lesson plans, and other materials that

I had recently revised and found important to informing art historical practice. As each area has commenting features, it is my hope that others become involved and begin a dialogue connected to each resource. To further spark dialogue, I have begun placing open-ended questions into the forum for informal discussion and debate.

There are many areas for future research on this topic. The dialogue with my colleagues demonstrated many themes that I had not originally anticipated. These included issues of faculty development, the use of survey texts, and the institutional politics that create barriers to change in the survey course. These issues can be studied further with more targeted research and questions directed to a broader audience. Pedagogical alternatives became only a small part of the discussion. Although several alternative teaching methods and projects were discussed, there were many other alternative strategies that were not touched upon in discussions with my colleagues. However, I have noticed them in conference proceedings. I believe that there are many rich alternatives that would yield strong results, though I believe further studies should be conducted with specific projects within art history survey courses, and with stricter research methods. Many project descriptions and presentations are shaped by informal studies conducted within a professor's course rather than compared with traditional approaches. Furthermore, these studies do not look at factors such as student engagement, literacies, or other competencies in detail to form stronger educational justifications for their use.

If there is to be change in the methods of art history survey instruction, educational and art historical researchers need to come together to discuss alternatives and test the effectiveness of a variety of approaches. Further research is necessary not only to inform practice, but also to sustain the importance of this course within the curriculum during a time where educational focus is shifting away from the arts and humanities towards science, technology, engineering, and math. These competencies can find a place in the art history survey course which many students in a wide variety of majors still take as either a general elective or required elective at most institutions. It is up to the art history community to continue this dialogue in a more formal context and deliver the results of this growing discussion at conferences and through publications. I can only hope that my website will be viewed as a valuable contribution to this effort, sustaining a community of practice and informing future practice.

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