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"THIS IS A PUBLIC RECORD": TEACHING HUMAN RIGHTS THROUGH THE PERFORMING ARTS

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THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO
Dissertation Abstract

"This is a Public Record":
Teaching Human Rights Through the Performing Arts

Urban youth in the United States often experience daily human rights violations such as racism and violence. Therefore, Human Rights Education (HRE) can strengthen their understanding of these issues and unleash their power to act toward positive change. This qualitative study attempted to gain a deeper understanding of the use of performance arts to teach human rights in an urban high school setting.

The following meta-question guided this research: "Is it possible for HRE which integrates the performing arts as a pedagogical tool to provide a transformative educational experience for students?" To address this question, the study explored: 1) how the teachers integrated the performing arts with human rights content in their pedagogy, 2) what students, teachers, and artists reported about their experiences of and engagement in this pedagogy, and 3) what ways the students' creative work and reflections represented the transformative goals of human rights education.

Focusing on the experiences of teachers and students, this study documented the implementation of a human rights project at Hamer High School in Oakland, California. Participants included three classroom teachers, one teaching-artist, and nine students. The data collected consisted of observations, participant interviews, and students' creative work, including theatrical vignettes, multi-media, music, dance, spoken word poetry, and raps. The data reflected that learning about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) through performance arts provided a transformative experience for teachers and students and achieved the goals of HRE.

Students' ability to identify oppressive conditions through a human rights lens permeated the observations, student interviews, and final performance. Teachers encouraged students to connect the UDHR with their lived experiences and communicate creatively. Students were motivated by the opportunity to perform publicly, and their demand for human rights, particularly the right to be safe, was acknowledged by the audience. The culminating performance served as a public record of students' experiences, knowledge, and hope for the future.

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

Andrea McEvoy Spero	June 6, 2012
Candidate	Date

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CHAPTER I: THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Introduction

In July 1955, a group of Southerners, Black and White, attended a workshop at Highlander Folk School in Monteagle, Tennessee, intending to develop strategies to challenge Jim Crow segregation laws (Highlander Research and Education Center, 2010). As part of the workshop, participants studied the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Kohl, 2005). The following December, Rosa Parks, one of the participants, refused to relinquish her seat to a White passenger on a Montgomery city bus. Her direct challenge to the system of racial segregation and intimidation ignited the 381-day Montgomery bus boycott widely credited as launching the modern African American freedom struggle. Mrs. Parks returned to Highlander Folk School during the boycott and when asked what was on her mind before the arrest, she replied, "…I wanted to know- when, how would we ever determine our rights as human beings?" (Highlander Research and Education Center, 2010, para. 8).

The Highlander Folk School human rights workshop serves as merely one example of the critical role human rights education (HRE) has played in preparing individuals and communities in their struggle to achieve a more democratic and just society. How was the content of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights taught? How was the content made relevant to the participants' lives? What aspect of the Highlander workshop made the greatest impact on Parks and other participants? Unfortunately, Highlander does not have a detailed historical record of their workshop, but we do have an opportunity to better understand HRE programs active today. The teachers and students involved in current HRE programs have much to teach us about how to build

among youth the knowledge and skills required to advocate for themselves and their community in the effort to create a culture of human dignity.

Background and Need for the Research

As a distinct field of education, HRE originated with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which states in its preamble, "…every individual and every organ of society…shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms" (1948). Article 26 continues by asserting that not only does everyone have a right to free and equal education, but education shall be "directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms." In essence, every individual has the right to an education which promotes a culture of human dignity.

Currently, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2008) defines HRE as providing content knowledge about human rights and the mechanisms that protect them; imparting the skills needed to promote, defend, and apply human rights in everyday life; and fostering the attitudes and behavior needed to promote a universal culture of human rights. Although HRE resembles social justice, peace, and multicultural education, it is unique in being based upon international human rights treaties and mechanisms.

After the UDHR in 1948, subsequent United Nations' treaties and programs have expanded the concept of HRE and delineated the obligations of member nations to promote and sustain HRE. In December, 2004, the UN General Assembly proclaimed the World Programme for Human Rights Education to advance the implementation of human rights education in both traditional schools and informal community settings. The goals

are “to promote a common understanding of the basic principles and methodologies of human rights education, to provide a concrete framework for action, and to strengthen partnerships and cooperation from the international level down to the grass roots” (United Nations World Programme for Human Rights Education, 2004). The first phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education paid particular attention to the primary and secondary school systems in order to assess current HRE programs, explore best practices, and implement an HRE plan of action nationally.

Among the announcements on the closing of the 10th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in September, 2009, was a call for member states to begin preparing their national human rights education evaluation reports for the World Programme for Human Rights Education (Elbers, 2009). As of February 2012, eighty-one nations have submitted their reports, but the United States Department of Education has failed to provide an evaluation report for primary and secondary schooling as requested by the Human Rights Council. An official federal strategy to promote HRE in the U.S. has never been developed (Banks, 2000; Gerber, 2008).

The U.S. lack of commitment to an HRE policy and strategy especially affects students who experience persistent human rights violations in their schools and communities. Sadly, public schools in this country are more segregated than they were in 1970, on average state spending per student is one thousand dollars less in high-poverty districts than in low-poverty districts, suspension and expulsion rates have more than doubled in the last three decades, and the achievement gap for African American and Latino students as compared to White students continues to increase (U.S. Human Rights Network, 2010).

Urban youth are particularly impacted by racism, poverty, and violence, requiring a pedagogy which draws upon their prior knowledge in order to critically examine oppressive systems and practices (Duncan-Andrade, 2008). HRE has great potential to empower students to advocate for themselves, but no coordinated effort exists on the state or federal level to implement such a pedagogical approach. Furthermore, the U.S. lacks a nationally coordinated plan to address the human rights violations within the educational system. Therefore, we face an urgent need to equip urban youth with the knowledge and skills required to change the material conditions of their lives.

Despite lack of a national plan of action and federal policy in regard to HRE, teaching and learning about human rights are currently taking place in some U.S. classrooms (Banks, 2000; Gerber, 2008; Wade, 1992; Yamasaki, 2002). Of their own initiative, teachers, students, and administrators are engaged in teaching the knowledge, skills and values of human rights using varied curriculum and methodologies. While failure to create a comprehensive federal program for HRE may seem disappointing at first glance, it provides an exciting opportunity to allow an understanding of HRE in the U.S. to emerge from the ground up. In order for the U.S. to develop a concrete implementation strategy, an understanding of current U.S. HRE methodology is needed.

If we are to seize the opportunity to learn from those engaged in the practice of HRE, we have much to uncover about how these programs are implemented and the experiences of those involved. One such program is The World As It Could Be Human Rights Education Project (TWAICB) created by the Rex Foundation in San Francisco, California, in 2006. The program trains high school teachers and students in the use of performance arts methods to deepen their knowledge of the UDHR and to become

engaged in their communities to manifest the document's words (Rex Foundation, 2009). Participating teachers are invited to attend a three-day professional development workshop, receive support in planning classroom activities, and collaborate with artists during their human rights teaching unit. The culminating product is a performance for the school community of the students' creative pieces. This study explored how teachers at an urban high school in Oakland, California implemented these strategies, what teachers and students reported about the experience, and in what ways the students' work and experiences achieved the goals of HRE.

Statement of the Problem

A national study conducted by Human Rights USA (1997) establishes a baseline in awareness of human rights mechanisms and attitude towards human rights principles. The study found that only 8% of adults and 4% of young people in the U.S. are aware of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Despite their lack of knowledge, 83% of participants felt the U.S. should do more to live up to the principles of the UDHR. Therefore, a wide gap exists between a generally strong public support for human rights principles and minimal awareness of human rights documents.

For example, Dennis Banks (2000) surveyed education specialists in all 50 states in the U.S. to determine the degree to which HRE had been integrated into statewide education policy, standards, and frameworks for K-12 instruction. He found that 60% of the 50 states did not include HRE as part of their state mandated curriculum. He concluded conflicting definitions, vocabulary, and assessment made it difficult to measure the extent to which HRE was happening in classrooms across the states. Yet, some progress had been made in integrating human rights content into statewide mandates.

Banks identified the next level of study as an exploration of what was actually happening in the classroom.

To better understand HRE in action, attention to classroom practice is necessary. A study by Paula Gerber (2008) of secondary teachers in Boston, Massachusetts reinforced Banks' (2000) conclusions. She found that teachers were highly motivated to teach human rights despite a lack of formal curricular framework and training. Gerber's findings on HRE were based upon interviews with teachers, administrators, and government employees in Boston, Massachusetts. The interviews made clear that a majority of teachers did not conceptualize HRE as grounded in international human rights mechanisms and they lacked basic knowledge of these treaties. The teachers' motivation to engage their students in HRE was based on a personal commitment and was not related to curricular frameworks or government mandates. As evident from Banks' (2000) and Gerber's (2009) studies, the general public, and teachers more specifically, value human rights principles but lack formal knowledge about the international legal framework. Furthermore, the teachers in Gerber's study were committed to HRE despite the absence of specific training and state curricular standards.

Banks (2000) offered a general summary of current state mandates and curriculum including human rights in the US, and Gerber (2008) provided valuable data regarding why teachers choose to engage in HRE. However, they did not address how human rights are taught in the U.S. classrooms. To understand HRE's potential to empower individuals, we, as educators, need to pay careful attention to pedagogy.

A few empirical studies on HRE focused their attention on exploring methodology and experiences of teachers and students in the classroom. Two doctoral

dissertations examined HRE in elementary level classrooms. Yamasaki (2002) considered the influence of an HRE program on elementary students, cognitively, emotionally, and practically. Through a qualitative case study approach, she utilized student interviews, pre- and post- surveys and questionnaires. Wade (1992) also explored an elementary school HRE program through the students' response to the curriculum. She found that students' personal experiences and cultural background influenced their subsequent learning about human rights. The use of simulations, children's literature, role playing, and social action projects were found to be effective teaching strategies. Both studies focused on student experiences during a HRE program; one analyzed the effectiveness of the teaching techniques, but neither addressed high school level HRE methodology.

Felisa Tibbitts (2002, 2008), Executive Director of Human Rights Educators Associates (HREA), suggested that pedagogy is as important as content to the field of HRE. She described HRE pedagogy as one which intends to empower individuals and groups to reflect critically upon their life experiences and social, cultural, economic and political systems in which they are a part. Tibbitts recommended that teachers remain reflective about the entire process in order to achieve the goals of HRE. Interactive, learner-centered methods were emphasized. According to Tibbitts, HRE ultimately requires a pedagogy which builds critical consciousness and commitment to act to promote and defend human dignity.

One such method that adheres to the above recommendations is the use of performance arts. The integration of performance arts with human rights content calls upon intellectual, cultural and emotional intelligence and, therefore, has the potential to build critical consciousness (Boal, 2006; Gardner, 1990; Reyes, 2006a). By encouraging

students to participate in a creative process, the experience taps their personal relationship with human rights issues. A few HRE programs encourage the use of performance art and have provided insight into the impact on participants (Amnesty International, 2009; International Labour Organization, 2009; Olsen-Horswill, 2005; United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2005). However, a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of this method is needed. A gap presently exists in understanding teaching through the performance arts as a potential way to build human rights content knowledge and critical consciousness. My study intends to address this gap.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study is to gain a deeper understanding of human rights pedagogy in an urban school setting, and more specifically, how performance arts can effectively achieve the goals of HRE. The objectives of TWAICB represent the objectives of human rights education: to teach content knowledge, promote a culture of human rights, and achieve among participants a sense of empowerment and critical consciousness. This research study intended to learn about the process by which performance arts pedagogy may achieve the goals of HRE among high school students. This case study explored the experiences of teachers and students involved in TWAICB in order to provide a better understanding of this particular HRE pedagogy.

Research Questions

The following meta-question guided the research: Is it possible for HRE which integrates the performing arts as a pedagogical tool to provide a transformative educational experience for students? For this study, a “transformative educational

experience" refers to academic activities which engage students in addressing the oppressive conditions in their communities, build a sense of empowerment to change these conditions, and provide necessary skills to affect that change. With the meta-question in mind, these more specific questions informed the observation and interview process;

1. How do the teachers integrate the performing arts with human rights content in their pedagogy?
2. What do students, teachers, and artists report about their experiences of and engagement in this pedagogy?
3. In what ways do the students' creative work and reflections represent the transformative goals of human rights education?

Theoretical Framework/Rationale

The High Commissioner for Human Rights (2008) defines HRE as providing content knowledge about human rights and the mechanisms that protect them; imparting the skills needed to promote, defend, and apply human rights in everyday life; and fostering the attitudes and behavior needed to promote a universal culture of human rights. Prominent HRE scholars (Flowers, 1998; Gerber, 2008; Tibbitts 2008) agree upon this definition, but a discussion is taking place among scholars and practitioners regarding the best methods to achieve these aims (Suarez, 2007).

A general consensus exists in the field that teaching methods which actively involve students, relate the content to their lives, and are culturally relevant in turn make the content meaningful (Suarez, 2007; Tibbitts, 2008). Scholars also agree critical pedagogy provides the theoretical foundation of HRE (Meintjes, 1997; Suarez, 2007).

Critical pedagogy refers to the practice of education which is authentic and empowering (Freire, 1974). An authentic education occurs when individuals reflect critically upon their experiences and engage in a dialogical experience wherein they become consciously aware of one's context. Once becoming aware of current context and barriers to full equity and human dignity, individuals become politicized and empowered to take action in order to transcend current oppressive structures resulting in transformation. Similar to the goals of HRE, Freire (1974) views education as a method to empower individuals in the creation of a new reality.

Augusto Boal (2006) utilized performing arts as a form of critical pedagogy through a method referred to as Theater of the Oppressed, which challenges participants to create dramatic scenes which critique current systems of oppression and explore solutions. Through the creative process participants have an opportunity to develop critical consciousness. For this study, performance art is not limited to theater drama, but also includes original creations, whether theater, spoken word, music, dance, or media arts, which demand active and creative participation. The experience is both intellectually and emotionally engaging (Gardner, 1990).

Significance of the Study

Across the globe many nations are actively involved in the UN World Program for Human Rights Education. One needs only to visit the UN High Commission for Human Rights website to view national reports and action plans from various nations. The U.S. lags behind other countries in creating a national policy and practice in HRE (Banks 2000; Gerber, 2008; Suarez, 2007). This study aimed to fill a critical gap in the research regarding HRE programs in U.S. high schools by providing a deeper understanding of

performing arts methodology to teach human rights in an urban high school setting. By exploring the teachers' and students' experiences, a better understanding of the relationship between HRE and critical consciousness was gained.

This study explored the practice of HRE pedagogy in U.S. schools by examining the use of performance art to teach about human rights in an urban high school. Through a better understanding of a particular experience through which students studied human rights and communicated their knowledge in creative ways, my goal was to document a model for HRE practice. Successful HRE has the potential to create a more just, equitable and compassionate world. In documenting the uniqueness of the performing arts strategy in teaching human rights, this study informs public policy, teacher development, and curriculum design.

Background of the Researcher

As a high school teacher in Southern and Northern California for ten years, I brought to the study knowledge and curiosity around classroom pedagogy. As a teacher, I integrated the arts with content as a way to engage students, access prior knowledge, and deepen understanding of the content. I taught U.S. History, World History, Government, Economics, and Women's Studies, and used human rights as a central theme to each of the courses. From those experiences, I have been aware of the potential for success, as well as the hurdles to blending the performing arts, historical content, and human rights in a comprehensive public urban high school setting.

In addition, I developed curriculum for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute at Stanford University. In this role, I worked with historians, educators, and activists with expertise in human rights issues of the past and present. In

this role, I became aware of the historical precedent education plays in igniting and sustaining human rights movements. Beyond professional expertise, I have had a personal interest in contributing to the ongoing struggle for educational practices which support and promote human dignity. As a practitioner and researcher, I came to this study with curiosity and a sense of urgency. I wanted to answer the question, "Can HRE through the performing arts provide a transformative educational experience for youth who face human rights violations in their lives and communities?"

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In order to place the participants' experiences within the larger context of human rights education (HRE), this chapter begins with a review of the development and definition of HRE. The next section explores scholars' views on the pedagogical theories underlying HRE, followed by a discussion of how performance art teaching strategies fit both the objectives and pedagogical theories of HRE. Finally, this chapter reviews empirical studies regarding HRE practice, particularly in secondary classroom settings and involving performance art methods.

Human Rights Education as Defined by the United Nations

HRE was formally inscribed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948. The preamble proclaims "…every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms" (United Nations, 1948). More specifically, Article 26 of the UDHR states an individual's right to education, as well as, the right to an education about human rights. In paragraph 2 of Article 26, the goal of education is described as the "full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace" (United Nations, 1948). The field of HRE is, therefore, concerned not only with equal and accessible education for all, but a type of education which promotes a culture of human dignity.

According to the UDHR and subsequent UN treaties, the right to education is intrinsic to all other human rights because it is integral to the full development of the human personality. The UN is clear that education is a social, economic, cultural, and civil right. In order for individuals to participate fully in their community they require an educational system which promotes cultural expression, economic self-sufficiency, and political participation. As HRE scholar and practitioner Richard Pierre Claude (2006) argued, "Education is intrinsically valuable as humankind's most effective tool for personal empowerment" (p. 211). Given the interdependent nature of human rights principles, HRE is instrumental to the promotion and maintenance of human dignity.

Although the UN provides the formal documentation and the major institutional force behind HRE, the development of HRE is dynamic and has been influenced by scholars and practitioners in formal and non-formal settings around the world. Over the last 60 years, multiple UN documents, declarations, treaties and programs defining HRE have emerged. In their book, *Human Rights Education for the Twenty-First Century*, Andreopoulos and Claude (1997) explained, "Human rights education is not a passing teaching fad. It is not a whimsical invention from designer seminars mulling over dreams for the twenty-first century. Human rights education is an international obligation with a half-century history" (p. 3). In order to provide a foundational understanding of HRE, the following section reviews the UN documents, initiatives, and programs which contributed to the evolving definition, goals, and methodological recommendations over the years.

Early United Nations Human Rights Education Programs

In 1953, the United Nations launched its first HRE education effort as part of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Associated

Schools Program. The Program's charter was to build awareness about the UDHR's universal principles and the United Nations as an international peacekeeping body (UNESCO, 1953). It was neither consistent nor comprehensive and, as a result, had only minimal affect in informing the public about human rights (Andreopoulos & Claude, 2007; Suarez, 2007).

After the Associated Schools Program of the early 1950's and not until 1974, did UNESCO launch a more focused effort to define and promote HRE practice (Suarez, 2007). During the General Conference of UNESCO in Paris in 1974, participating members announced the Recommendations Concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace, and Education Relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (hereafter referred to as the 1974 UNESCO Recommendations). The 1974 UNESCO Recommendations defined the goal of HRE as challenging individuals to develop through educational experiences a sense of social responsibility and solidarity with less privileged groups, as well as to understand and assume his or her responsibility for the maintenance of peace and to struggle against colonialism and racial hatred (UNESCO, 1974). Focused on those with power and privilege, these recommendations failed to address the role of HRE in empowering those whose rights had been denied to act for themselves.

The 1974 UNESCO Recommendations urged UN member states to construct an educational policy promoting understanding and respect for all people, awareness of interdependence between people and nations, development of communication skills, awareness of rights and duties of individuals, communities and nations towards each other, and readiness on the part of individuals to participate. Providing a detailed list of

guiding principles, member states were asked to take appropriate steps to strengthen and develop HRE, including passing necessary legislation and creating teacher training programs.

In order to achieve these ambitious goals, the 1974 UNESCO Recommendations suggested education offer curriculum and activities to analyze barriers to peace and human rights, such as colonialism and racial hatred. The document specifically named apartheid as one such form of oppression and encouraged the role of education to critique such ideologies which breed national and racial hatred that are contrary to the purpose of HRE (UNESCO, 1974). By naming specific forms of oppression and racial hatred, such as South African apartheid, the 1974 UNESCO Recommendations dealt more directly with the causes of oppression and barriers to peace than did previous UN statements.

Furthermore, the 1974 UNESCO Recommendations suggested a pedagogy encouraging students to critique the incompatibility of the true interests of people with those of monopolistic groups holding economic and political power resulting in exploitation and fomenting war (UNESCO, 1974). According to the 1974 UNESCO Recommendations, learning activities should embrace the complexity of issues, encourage critical analysis, and sharpen students' knowledge. The document recognized visual arts and music as a valued way to develop intercultural understanding and encourage educational practices including the integration of art to promote creative imagination (UNESCO, 1974). Finally, the Recommendations urged teachers to link education and action to solve problems at local, national and international levels and to provide students with "possibilities for direct and continuous action aimed at solving problems" (p.4). In sum, the 1974 UNESCO Recommendations promoted active analysis

of oppressive systems, continuous, collective work toward solutions, and integration of creative activities to support analysis and problem solving skills.

Four years after the 1974 UNESCO Recommendations, during the 30th anniversary of the UDHR, UNESCO held a meeting of human rights educators, activists, and government officials to discuss the development of human rights teaching, The International Congress on the Teaching of Human Rights (UNESCO, 1978). The Congress announced a new concise definition of HRE; "Human Rights education and teaching must aim at: (i) Fostering the attitudes of tolerance, respect and solidarity inherent in human rights; (ii) Providing knowledge about human rights, in both their national and international dimensions, and the institutions established for their implementation; (iii) Developing the individuals' awareness of the ways and means by which human rights can be translated into social and political reality at both the national and international levels" (UNESCO, 1978, p. 2). The International Congress on the Teaching of Human Rights definition was succinct but limited.

The focus on individual instead of communal rights was the major limitation of this definition. According to The International Congress on the Teaching of Human Rights, HRE is meant to foster attitudes, provide content knowledge, and develop awareness on the part of the individual. Unlike the UN human rights treaties which tend towards collective as well as individual rights, this HRE definition moved away from the collective aspect of human rights embodied in the 1974 UNESCO Recommendations. For example, the 1978 Congress recommendations did not include the responsibility of individuals to critically examine systems of power, exploitation and racism, nor viewed HRE as a collective experience. Individual development of knowledge and skills was

emphasized rather than framing HRE as an experience to address interdependent issues. It did not view HRE as a means to promote community action in an effort to challenge oppressive systems. It also failed to address the importance of intercultural understanding and respect which the 1974 UNESCO Recommendations elaborated upon extensively. The 1974 document focused on the role of HRE to develop international relationships of respect and peace, whereas the 1978 document emphasized individual rights and freedoms.

As for the methods of teaching, The International Congress on the Teaching of Human Rights (1978) lacked pedagogical guidance. It contained no recommendations for the type of learning activities or instruction, and the only mention of teachers was in regard to the importance of their personal integrity and freedom of expression. Compared to the 1974 UNESCO Recommendations, this document was disappointing and weak. The 1978 recommendations contained little discussion of State obligations, a very individualized approach to HRE, and no recommendations whatsoever for best practices.

Human Rights Education and Human Rights Treaties

From 1948-1989, UN Committees were also engaged in drafting major human rights treaties. While not all human rights treaties included the role of HRE, four treaties tackled the right to education and, within that discussion, further articulated details of HRE. The first of these human rights treaties was the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) adopted in 1965. According to CERD, education should promote understanding, tolerance, and friendship among nations and racial or ethnical groups, as well as to propagate the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United

Nations Declaration on the principles of the treaty (UN, 1965). CERD states in Article 7 that State Parties are obligated to adopt immediate measures to align teaching and education with the aim of combating prejudices and racial discrimination. CERD's concept of educational purpose was similar to the 1974 UNESCO Recommendations in that it defined the role of HRE as a critical part of addressing systemic issues of racism, but did not address educational methodologies.

The following year, the UN adopted the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) which specifically mentioned the right to education (UN, 1966). The ICESCR, combined with the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), codified the rights declared in the UDHR. The ICESCR reasserted the UDHR's Article 26 by establishing every individual's right to education. It stated that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms (UN, 1966). Educational objectives should include the promotion of understanding, tolerance, and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace (UN, 1966). Because the ICESCR's purpose was to further explicate the rights listed in the UDHR, the language regarding education was very similar.

As part of the UN drafting procedure, the committee charged with writing the treaty added General Comments as a way to elaborate on particular aspects of the articles and the intentions of the committee. The General Comments on ICESCR's Article 13 explained that the right to education as indispensable to the realization of other rights by referring to education as an "empowering right" capable of lifting oneself and community

out of poverty and to protect women and children from exploitation. Unlike the UDHR and CERD, the ICESCR through the General Comments paid attention to educational methodology, albeit briefly. The treaty recommended that educational activities should be culturally relevant and adaptive to the needs of the community.

The ICESCR was followed by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1979. This treaty recognized worldwide gender disparity in education among most other aspects of life. CEDAW used forceful language requiring states to "eliminate discrimination against women so that they may participate equally in the field of education" (Article 10). The treaty did not define HRE specifically, but viewed education as a means to eliminate stereotyped concepts of the roles of men and women (UN, 1979).

Similar to the 1974 Recommendations, CEDAW cited the aim of education to actively address systemic inequalities. In addition, CEDAW included concrete actions for states to take to eliminate stereotypes and combat prejudices such as revising textbooks and adapting teaching methods (CEDAW 1979). CEDAW did not elaborate upon the type of teaching activities or recommended practice, although it mentioned methods should be adapted to meet the needs of the students.

The Covenant on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (1989) was adopted much later than the previous human rights treaties described above, but it is the most comprehensive of the UN treaties regarding HRE. Similar to the UDHR and other human rights treaties, CRC announced in Article 29 that education should develop the child to her/his fullest potential, develop respect for human rights, culture and language, and prepare the child for responsible life in a free society in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance,

equality of sexes, and friendship among all people, and respect for the natural environment (Article 29). The educational objectives expanded upon the earlier UN mechanisms by including respect for the natural environment. It should be noted that as of 2012, the United States is only one of two nations to refuse to ratify the CRC, the other being Somalia which has no current functioning government.

The CRC (1989) insisted upon the need for education to be holistic, child-centered, child-friendly, empowering, and relevant to their daily lives. Overall, the recommendations described the educational experience as a holistic life-long experience that is child-centered. It recommended that educational activities should be aimed at developing a student's skills and supporting human dignity, self-esteem, and self-confidence. The treaty described the holistic approach as one aimed at an appropriate balance between the physical, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional aspects of educational practice as a way for learning to become a lifelong process. However, these general pedagogical guidelines were not accompanied by specific recommendations on how to accomplish the aims.

Contemporary United Nations Human Rights Education Programs

Since the drafting of CRC, the UN launched three main initiatives encouraging the international community to take action implementing HRE principles. The first two, The World Declaration on Education for All, and The Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs, published by UNESCO in 1990, represented an effort to renew worldwide commitment to the basic educational needs of all children, youth, and adults (UNESCO, 1990). Both documents addressed the right to education which includes HRE. Over 150 member nations and the executive heads of UNICEF, United Nations

Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Bank pledged participation in The Framework for Action.

The Framework for Action called for education to instill a sense of responsibility to respect individuals' collective cultural, linguistic, and spiritual heritage and to further the cause of social justice (UNESCO, 1990). As compared to the International Congress on the Teaching of Human Rights (1978), the Framework for Action contained less focus on individualism and freedom and more emphasis on the collective and interdependent aspects of human rights. Reminiscent of the 1974 UNESCO Recommendations, the Framework for Action emphasized the importance of empowering individuals to act collectively to protect and uphold human dignity.

The World Declaration on Education for All and the Framework for Action identified the objectives of HRE, but the two documents barely discussed the type of teaching methodologies to achieve the goals. In Article 4 of the World Declaration on Education for All was brief mention of effective teaching methods. It declared for "active and participatory approaches are particularly valuable in assuring learning acquisition and allowing learners to reach their fullest potential" (UNESCO, 1990), but contained no further discussion of the types of methodology to achieve the goals.

United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004)

In 1993, the UN held the World Conference on Human Rights, calling upon nations to reaffirm their commitment to their international human rights obligations and to ratify all human rights treaties. High profile conference topics included human rights for children and women, and HRE. The World Conference on Human Rights proclaimed

the UN Decade for Human Rights Education from 1995 to 2004 and used more forceful language reaffirming that Member States were treaty-bound to ensure education aimed at strengthening the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The goal of the decade was to formulate effective strategies for furthering HRE at all levels, build and strengthen current HRE programs, coordinate the development of HRE materials, fortify the role of mass media in HRE, and provide for the global dissemination of the UDHR. This was an important turning point in HRE. During the 1970s and 1980s the UN programs increased the visibility of HRE, but widespread commitment was minimal. After the launch of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education, the international community adopted HRE as a central concern (Suarez, 2007).

The UN Decade for Human Rights defined HRE as "…education, training and information aiming at building a universal culture of human rights through the sharing of knowledge, imparting of skills and molding of attitudes" (United Nations, 1998, p. 3). This definition outlines two tiers to reach the objective of a universal culture of human rights. The first is to build content knowledge, primarily the awareness and understanding of major UN human rights treaties. Second, recognizing that knowledge of human rights mechanisms does not guarantee their promotion, HRE must include development of skills and attitudes aimed at the protection and maintenance of human rights principles.

As the Decade for Human Rights came to a close, a UN report (1998) identified both successes and shortcomings. Among the weaknesses, a deeper understanding of pedagogy was listed as a key limitation;

> One challenging area that needs further development is the issue of appropriate methodologies for human rights education, and in particular how to develop

> human rights learning starting from the daily life of people. This is also stressed in relation to the school system, since in some countries formal education is traditionally knowledge based, and this approach alone is not conducive to attitudinal changes which are the objective of human rights educational efforts (p. 8).

The report explained that because human rights education seeks to change attitudes, the traditional knowledge-based approach is not conducive. Consequently, the General Assembly proclaimed the World Programme for Human Rights Education to build upon the achievements, address the shortcomings, and better understand successful HRE practices.

World Programme for Human Rights Education

The World Programme for Human Rights Education was structured around an ongoing series of phases. The Plan of Action for the First Phase (2005-2009) called on Member States to integrate HRE effectively in the primary and secondary school system, develop a plan of action for assessing the current state of HRE, set priorities for action, implement and evaluate the actions taken and, finally, report progress to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN General Assembly Resolution 59/113 B, 2005).

The Plan of Action for the First Phase also provided a culminating definition of HRE:

> …education, training and information aiming at building a universal culture of human rights through the sharing of knowledge, imparting of skills and molding of attitudes directed to:
> (a) The strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
> (b) The full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity;
> (c) The promotion of understanding, tolerance, gender equality and friendship among all nations and linguistic groups:
> (d) The enabling of all persons to participate effectively in a free and democratic society governed by the rule of law;
> (e) The building and maintenance of peace;
> (f) The promotion of people-centered sustainable development and social justice.

Human Rights Education encompasses:

(a) Knowledge and skills- learning about human rights and mechanisms for their protection, as well as acquiring skills to apply them in daily life;
(b) Values, attitudes and behavior- developing values and reinforcing attitudes and behavior which uphold human rights;
(c) Action- taking action to defend and promote human rights. (p.12)

The Plan of Action for the First Phase's definition of HRE differed from earlier definitions in a few distinct ways. First, it drew on 40 years of HRE development and, by including peace and friendship among nations, the definition referred to the earliest objectives of the UN. Next, the UN Decade for Human Rights built upon more recent human rights treaties, including CRC, CEDAW and CERD by including indigenous rights and people-centered sustainable development.

This definition promoted a people-centered approach, sustainable development, and social justice not present in earlier definitions. It also introduced "action-taking," as well as knowledge-building and awareness, as part of HRE objectives. Aspects from earlier definitions were missing in the Plan of Action, for example, an understanding of communal responsibility present in the 1974 UNESCO Recommendations. The definition from the Plan of Action for the First Phase was more individualistic in focus. The emphasis was upon knowing one's human rights instead of understanding that each individual's human rights are interdependent. The more communal aspects were evident in earlier documents like the UN charter, the UDHR and the 1974 UNESCO Recommendations. The idea that a threat to one person's human rights is a threat to all human rights was lost.

As for HRE methodology, the Plan of Action for the First Phase offered nine principles for human rights education activities, including fostering respect for and

appreciation of differences on the basis of race, sex, language, religion, and political orientation. The first few principles cover the importance of considering cultural contexts and using methods which empower communities and individuals.

The last three principles are the most relevant to the proposed study. The Plan of Action for the First Phase recommended methodologies to be democratic and participatory. It expands by recommending educators "Make use of participatory pedagogies that include knowledge, critical analysis and skills for action furthering human rights" (p. 14). Next, the Plan of Action for the First Phase recommended the creation of "teaching and learning environments free from want and fear that encourage participation, enjoyment of human rights and the full development of the human personality" (p.14) The use of performing arts has the potential to meet these aims. Depending on implementation, the performing arts encourage participation in an atmosphere that supports individual talents and contributions in a supportive environment. The integration of music, dance, visual and performance art calls upon all aspects of the human personality and requires students to build knowledge, analysis, and action skills.

Finally, the Plan of Action for the First Phase recommended educational practices "Be relevant to the daily life of the learners, engaging them in a dialogue about ways and means of transforming human rights from expression of abstract norms to the reality of their social, economic, cultural and political conditions" (p.15). Again, the process of creating a performance for the community about the UDHR has the potential to support students in making connections between the abstract principles of human rights to their daily lives. As the students make decisions regarding the performance, they draw upon

the experiences relevant to their lives. The process called upon creativity, dialogue, decision-making, and synthesis skills--all practices inherent in HRE.

The Plan of Action for the First Phase also focused on the need to promote a common understanding of HRE teaching methodologies. To achieve this, Member States were required to take stock of successful HRE practices in their communities. This was to be followed by actions to support the pedagogy and to provide an incentive to continue or expand it. Finally, during the first phase, the UN, Member States and educational institutions were expected to strengthen partnerships and cooperation from the international level down to the grassroots (UN, 2009). This emphasis on connecting and learning from those engaged in the practice of HRE had never been mentioned in earlier UN initiatives. Citing the need for more research, the Plan of Action for the First Phase called upon governments to promote research in the field of HRE teaching and learning and to use the research to develop training for human rights educators.

The Plan of Action for the First Phase recognized the need to collect and disseminate examples of good practices in teaching and learning human rights. One of the outcomes of the first phase was the Human Rights Education in the School Systems of Europe, Central Asia and North America: A Compendium of Good Practices (2009). While the Compendium was an important step in collecting examples of HRE programs, each entry was too brief to offer educators a deep understanding of successful pedagogy. Of the recommended best practices in the Compendium, one program integrated the arts as part of the methodology. Amnesty International's Voice Our Concern: Art-Centered Human Rights Education Programming Project in Ireland incorporated visual and performing arts into the secondary school classrooms. The project goals and methodology

were similar to that of TWAICB. Artists were invited to work with students to create original works based on students' personal interest in human rights issues. The creative pieces were performed for the school community. According to the description, the activities were successful at engaging students in the content, but the description and assessment were brief.

At the closing of its 10th session, the UN Human Rights Council called for member states to begin preparing their national evaluation reports on the first phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education and to submit the report to the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Human Rights Education in the School System in early 2010 (Elbers, 2009). As of February 2012, the United States Department of Education has failed to submit a national evaluation report for primary and secondary schooling. An official assessment of current HRE programs, best practices, and comprehensive federal policy to promote HRE in U.S. schools has not yet been developed (Banks, 2000; Gerber, 2008; Stone, 2002).

The Plan of Action for the First Phase for the World Programme for Human Rights Education provided the most comprehensive recommendations of the UN programs, initiatives, and treaties developed over the last 60 years. Unfortunately, these critical guiding principles such as to "empower communities and individuals" and "build on the human rights principles embedded within different cultural contexts" lacked a discussion of how to accomplish these aims (p. 5). Among all the UN documents, content on teaching strategies or methodologies to promote and ensure the attainment of the goals presented in the HRE definition were missing. The focus of my research was to explore the use of performance arts as a pedagogical tool to teach human rights content and

principles in an urban U.S. public high school. Performing arts meets many of the UN recommendations since it is holistic and child-centered with the potential for empowerment. A better understanding of HRE through the performing arts provides guidance in meeting the objectives as stated by the UN definition.

On December 19, 2011, the UN General Assembly announced the adoption of the Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training. This Declaration culminated four years of work within the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee in consultation with governments, national human rights institutions, non-government organizations and academics. From many in the field of HRE, the document was cause for celebration because it required greater monitoring of states for compliance, defined HRE as a life-long process which occurs in both formal and informal settings, and called for the training of teachers, state officials, civil servants, judges, law enforcement officers and military personnel. The Declaration articulated HRE as encompassing knowledge and understanding about human rights, learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners, and the objective of empowering individuals to enjoy and exercise their rights (2011). Unfortunately, similar to many previous UN documents, definitive types of teacher training, pedagogical practice, and recommended curriculum are missing.

Human Rights Education As Described by Scholars and Practitioners

Drawing from the definition provided by the Plan of Action for the First Phase, The High Commissioner for Human Rights (2008) defined HRE as providing content knowledge about human rights and the mechanisms that protect them; imparting the skills needed to promote, defend, and apply human rights in everyday life; and fostering the

attitudes and behavior needed to promote a universal culture of human rights. This definition has also been used by scholars in the field (Flowers, 1998; Gerber, 2008; Stone, 2002; Suarez, 2007; Tibbitts, 2008).

The UN treaties, documents, programs, and initiatives served as the institutional foundation for HRE (Flowers, 1998; Gerber, 2008; Stone, 2002; Suarez, 2007; Tibbitts, 2008). Felisa Tibbitts (2008), Executive Director of Human Rights Education Associates, a leading international HRE organization, defined HRE generally as an "international movement to promote awareness about the rights accorded by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related human rights conventions, and the procedures that exist for the redress of violations of these rights" (p. 1) As for the detailed definition of HRE and its objectives, Tibbitts quoted the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' definition and, for this study, I utilized the same definition.

To achieve HRE goals, the pedagogical approach cannot be one of static top-down instruction. It must be holistic and transformative. If HRE is to be transformative and empowering, then attention to the way HRE is taught and learned is key. As the UN documents suggest, HRE pedagogy should be child-centered, culturally relevant, and pertinent to children's daily lives.

While the UN provided central leadership in developing the definition and objectives, the methodologies are influenced by those engaged in the day to day practice. As Tibbitts (2008) explained, "Although still a developing field, there is increasing evidence that HRE is emerging in the work of non-governmental organizations at the grassroots level as well as in national systems of education" (p. 2). Therefore the field of HRE has developed both from the ground up and from the top down. On the ground,

educators and students in communities around the world practice HRE determining objectives and methodologies along the way. At the top, UN treaty drafting bodies and programs seek to develop and promote the universal principles of HRE. The interplay creates a very dynamic and organic process.

Suarez (2007) compared the UN definition of HRE from 1978 to 1995 and argued that HRE is becoming increasingly concrete and ambitious. Using an epistemological approach, he studied how those in the field define HRE and its objectives. He analyzed the dialogue among HRE scholars and practitioners in a Human Rights Education Association online forum including over 2,000 archived messages. He found "…the movement has matured to the point where debates about process and content have real meaning and salience. The idea of introducing human rights to the formal school curriculum was radical just a few decades ago, and debates about pedagogy or how to evaluate HRE would have been entirely unrealistic" (p. 64). The discourse among scholars regarding the objectives, methodology, and assessment of HRE revealed a lively debate.

From his study, Suarez (2007) identified three core issues discussed among scholars and practitioners: (1) Why do we teach HRE?, (2) How do we teach HRE?, and (3) How do we assess our efforts? The dialogue illuminated several key beliefs and themes. Educators indicated the ultimate goal of HRE is to create citizens who enact human rights and are not merely students who know about human rights. Participants in the discussions also agreed that the methodology must be relevant to the lived experiences of the students and should address how to apply human rights in daily life.

In a few aspects, Suarez (2007) found the educators delved into issues not addressed by the most recent UN statements. Educators saw HRE as a frame by which to critique the hidden curriculum, power relationships in schools, and minority rights. They viewed HRE in opposition to traditional education which dominates and exploits. Furthermore, they argued HRE should be aimed at emancipation from overt and covert forms of domination and should challenge the traditional power structures. These concepts were evident in earlier statements by the UN, but absent in the more recent programmes.

While Suarez's (2007) study included educators in a global community, Gerber (2008) surveyed and interviewed classroom teachers in Boston, Massachusetts, to better understand to what extent teachers in the United States complied with and understood their human rights treaty obligations, particularly their obligation to teach human rights. When asked, do you teach (or have you in the past taught) human rights in any of your classes?, 95% answered yes. But when asked to define HRE, only 9% (or two) of the teachers defined HRE as related to UN instruments (p. 241). Gerber concluded that the teachers had differing understandings of HRE and were not generally trained in human rights. Finally, teachers "who are incorporating HRE into their work are doing so with a great deal of passion, but not necessarily a great deal of knowledge about how to do so" (p. 233). Gerber's study of secondary teachers in Boston found that teachers were highly motivated to teach human rights despite a lack of formal curricular framework and training.

Of the three main objectives of HRE, educators tended to be more concerned with promoting awareness and changing attitudes than with building content knowledge of

international human rights law (Suarez, 2007). In fact, Gerber (2008) found many educators who integrated human rights issues into their curriculum had little to no knowledge of human rights treaties and mechanisms. Rather, classroom teachers placed more focus on the transformative aspects of HRE in the hopes to promote awareness and action (Lapayese, 2002; Suarez, 2007).

An area of alignment among HRE practitioners and scholars was the direct relationship between the objectives of HRE and the methodologies used to achieve the goals (Flowers, 1998; Suarez, 2007; Tibbitts, 2002). They agree HRE's intention is to empower individuals and communities to promote and defend their human rights and to achieve a culture of human dignity. Therefore, the way human rights concepts are taught requires an approach that is empowering (Flowers, 1998; Suarez, 2007; Tibbitts, 2002).

In addition to promoting action, HRE includes the recognition of current inequalities and oppression, along with the achievement of positive social, political, economic, and cultural change. This transformation would require the creation of new policies, laws, institutions, and cultural norms to promote human rights principles. Being that HRE aims to identify oppressive conditions and achieve change, it is an inherently transformational process (Tibbitts, 2002), therefore the operating philosophy underlying HRE is critical pedagogy (Magendzo, 2005; Meintjes, 1997; Suarez, 2007).

Human Rights Education and Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy refers to an educational practice involving critical analysis of existing social, political, and economic realities and a commitment to transformation by those who are placed in solidarity with subordinated and marginalized groups as they work in solidarity with others toward liberation (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008). In

an educational setting, this is achieved through various approaches and principles, including dialogue, problem-posing, naming, recognition of teacher as learner, and empowerment of participants to create their reality. HRE seeks to achieve the similar objectives through liberatory teaching methods. The main difference is that HRE provides an international legal framework by which to analyze current conditions and to create a vision for what to achieve.

The most recognized theorist in the field of critical pedagogy is Paulo Freire (1970, 1974, 1987). Contrary to the traditional "banking" methods of education, Freire believed in the power inherent in individuals to develop critical consciousness through analysis of the world around them. Via a process of "conscientization," individuals name their world through problem posing and dialogue. A result of the process is the recognition that individuals are both historical products and producers of their reality. In recognizing the power within them to create their reality, individuals have the power to transform their world.

In Education for Critical Consciousness, Freire (1974) explained authentic education as a dialogical experience in which "human beings, by making and remaking things and transforming the world, can transcend the situation in which their state of being is almost a state of non-being, and go on to a state of being, in search of becoming more fully human" (p. 129). Similar to the goals of HRE, Freire viewed education as a method to empower individuals in the creation of a new reality: "As an active educational method helps a person to become consciously aware of his context and his condition as a human being as Subject, it will become an instrument of choice. At that point he will become politicized" (p. 48). The goal of HRE is to become aware of one's context and

condition within a human rights framework and to act toward a community of human dignity.

Freire (1970) noted the power of the visual image to enable critical dialogue and analysis of structural oppression. Augusto Boal (2006) expanded the role of creative arts in critical pedagogy to include theater techniques to empower participants. In *Aesthetics of the Oppressed*, Boal presented the creative process as a way to develop critical consciousness. He explained, "The aesthetics of the oppressed tries to help people in discovering Art, discovering their own art and by that, discovering themselves; in discovering the world, discovering their own world, and by that, discovering themselves" (p.36). Both Freire and Boal saw the role of art as a way for participants to name their world, create a vision for a new way of being, and by producing the image, make the vision a reality. By doing so the participant artist's power is exposed.

The purpose of HRE is to make personal connections with one's life and transform the culture to one that supports and protects the human dignity of all peoples. Tibbitts (2008) explained that HRE addresses a wide spectrum of learners and contexts, but the unifying aspect of HRE is the transformational process. Tibbitts described three basic approaches to HRE. In the values and awareness model, the main objective was to transmit basic knowledge of human rights issues and law. In the second, the accountability model, the participants were expected to become directly involved in the protection of individual and group rights. She recognized the limitations of both models. The values and awareness model attempted to achieve only content knowledge, while the accountability model's goal was to encourage individuals to become accountable without building knowledge and skills.

Tibbitts' (2002) third model, the transformational model, took into account the need to think critically about the current lived experiences of participants and to empower them to act. In this model, educational programs were "geared towards empowering the individual to both recognize human rights abuses and to commit to their prevention" (p. 4). This approach drew upon participants' personal experiences with human rights violations and aimed to develop skills such as leadership so that they may protect themselves and their community. The process was holistic and self reflective since it involved a critical analysis of current conditions and promoted activism, but Tibbitts identified the need for more research regarding the pedagogical approaches to achieve the transformational process.

Magendzo (2002, 2005) also discussed the transformational aspects of HRE and recognized HRE's philosophical foundation of critical pedagogy. He (2002) stated, "We can affirm with no doubt that Human Rights Education is one of the most concrete and tangible expressions of critical pedagogy" (p.3). As he explained, in critical pedagogy, as well as HRE, the goal, is emancipation from overt and covert domination and empowerment of individuals to attain their human rights. To achieve this, educational activities should grow from the experiences of the participants. After grounding human rights concepts in the experiences of the community, the next step is to promote critical analysis of current conditions and affirm the knowledge and voice of participants. An important aspect of the method is the recognition of the teacher as student and student as teacher. Finally, it is important to maintain a critical position within the institutional framework of education and the conviction that education is political. These are all shared foundations of HRE and critical pedagogy.

According to Meintjes (1997), empowerment of participants is a unique pedagogical objective of HRE and differs from the goals of other areas of conventionally defined education. Empowerment is a process of increasing control of their lives and decisions that affect their lives. This requires a dramatic difference from the traditional top-down teaching. "Students who are empowered, however, become conscious of their own participation in the creation of knowledge and of their own critical ability to conceptualize and reconceptualize their experiences of reality" (p.66). It is this creation of knowledge, conceptualization, and reconceptualization which is taking place when students are engaged in performance art, and in the process, expose their power.

Transformation and empowerment are shared objectives of HRE and critical pedagogy. Both call for naming one's reality through a critical analysis of current systems and the creation of a new reality, which in the case of HRE, is aligned with the international human rights frameworks. Transformation and empowerment should therefore guide the educational practice and philosophy. While there are multiple ways to achieve this, scholars of HRE and critical pedagogy recommend educational activities that are participant-centered, holistic, culturally relevant, and active. The use of performance art is one approach which may achieve this and, therefore, deserves further exploration.

Performing Arts Methodology and Human Rights Education

The goal of HRE is to provide transformational educational experiences and to empower individuals to create a culture of human rights. The pedagogy must model the goals it seeks to attain; therefore the process by which the objectives are achieved matter as much as the outcomes. Performing arts teaching methods refer to the inclusion of

activities to facilitate the creation of original poetry, spoken word, dance, music, media arts, and drama with the intention of public display. The use of performing arts in the classroom has the potential to accomplish the empowering and transformational goals of HRE.

The World As It Could Be's methods were in line with the UN recommendations from the Plan of Action, the recommendations of HRE scholars, and the philosophy of critical pedagogy. By providing students with the opportunity to create unique performances reflecting their reality and their vision for the future, the potential for a truly transformational experience was increased. Teaching human rights through the use of the performing arts provided an opportunity for students to make connections between content knowledge and their personal experiences. Artistic expression helped to stimulate cognitive skills and aesthetic sensibility, and also results in intellectual and emotional engagement (Efland, 2002; Gardner, 1990).

According to the UN Programme for Human Rights Education's Plan of Action, HRE encompasses three main areas of learning. First is the building of content knowledge about human rights mechanisms and acquiring skills to apply them in daily life. The second is to promote values, attitudes, and behavior which uphold human rights. Finally, education should encompass taking action to defend and promote human rights. The use of performance art in the classroom is one such strategy. The experience of creating an original creative piece and performing has the potential to engage the heart, mind and voice.

Various educational scholars (Dewey, 1934; Efland, 2002; Gardner, 1990) explain the substantive roles the arts can play in cognitive development. The creative process is

intellectually stimulating and, therefore, draws upon and builds cognitive skills (Efland, 2002; Gardner, 1999). Understanding the complexities of human rights law and applying these concepts to current issues elicits comprehension, application, and analysis skills, all in the cognitive domain (Bloom, 1956). During the creative process participants find visual, verbal and bodily ways to express ideas. To create a performance students use cognitive skills of synthesis and evaluation. Efland (2002) elaborated on the inseparable nature of the creative process, cognitive activity, and understanding of sociocultural experiences.

The use of performance art as part of classroom activities taps emotions by drawing upon participants' personal experiences and diverse cultural backgrounds (Wolf, Edmiston, & Encisco, 2009). Through the creative process, participants apply abstract legal concepts to culturally and personally relevant experiences. The method of creating theatrical pieces taps real-life experiences plus imaginations which makes human rights legal concepts personal, emotional, and authentic.

In creating original performances about human rights issues, participants take on various roles and points of view, and therefore, facilitates a process of building empathy and understanding of others. One such example is the Storytelling Project Model researched by Bell and Roberts (2010). The Storytelling Project Model included exercises wherein participants explored issues of race and racism by telling stories in the form of visual arts, theater, spoken word, and poetry. The model was very similar to the methods and objectives of The World As It Could Be, except that the main participants in the Storytelling Project Model were adults, not high school students.

Bell and Roberts (2010) found that using performance activities allowed participants to think creatively, intimately, and deeply about racism. As they explained, "we tend to use abstract language that creates distance between ourselves and the emotionality that can accompany such talk, treating racism as something 'out there' but not 'here' in our daily lives" (p.4). Aesthetic experiences offered a productive space wherein provocative, charged topics could be "encountered and engaged on an embodied level" (p. 4). Bell and Roberts were speaking more specifically about issues of race, racism, and privilege which are interdependent with other human issues including economic, political, social and cultural rights. Just as discussions of racism in academic contexts may become abstract, human rights is often discussed in classrooms as issues that happen "out there," not "here" in our classrooms, schools, and community.

In addition, Bell and Robert's (2010) concluded that participants were able to connect the experiences of "others" by placing the actors into a place of "us" not "them." During the aesthetic experience, a productive space was created "wherein provocative, charged topics can be encountered and engaged on an embodied level" (p. 4). Through the exercise of embodied performance, individuals traversed traditional boundaries and were able to connect with the experiences of others. "We discovered that we could 'write' emotionally charged stories with our bodies, even if they were not our own. Although the destabilizing weight of oppression and the physical sensation of pushing against an obstacle were new to some and familiar to others, the performative space created by the exercise provided an opportunity to step into and experience the familiar and unfamiliar" (p. 4).

The use of performance activities also allowed participants to link individual experiences with systemic analysis. Bell and Roberts (2010) argued that by bridging the gap between the sociological/abstract and the psychological/personal contours of daily experience, the participants were able to "envision new possibilities for challenging oppressive circumstances" (p.4) This research supported Dewey's (1934) argument that when individuals become isolated from artistic experiences as part of their daily lives, they are less able to imagine a different way of being. By incorporating performance art into teaching practice, an opportunity was created for students to bind abstract legal concepts with personal stories and, in the process, build empathy for others and imagine a new reality.

Educator, artist, and scholar, G. Reyes (2006), shared an example of this process. His 7th grade students in Oakland, California, produced original pieces of spoken word poetry after in-depth study and skills-building. The culminating performance was held in front of an audience of peers, family members, community organizations, artists, and educators in East Oakland. Reyes credited the process and performance with cultivating public intellectuals capable of reclaiming their culture. As he explained, the youth in his classroom knew they were not inherently born with access to certain rights in society. Through rigorous study and encouragement, these students became public intellectuals armed with urban sociology. He argued that "building this culture takes us one step further to helping our youth become authorities, to feel active in their own education, and to 'take control of the language of their lives'" (p. 21). As experts in their experiences and as creators of original performances, students were active and powerful.

Abrahams (2007) discussed the potential of artistic expression as an empowering experience. He focused his study on the opportunity for students to compose their own musical pieces and saw this process as a model of Freirian theory. He explained that as students chose to tell stories from their lives, they engaged their imagination, intellect, creativity, and the celebration of musical performance. As Abrahams stated, "Music, by its very nature, has the power to liberate, transform, and effect change. This model enables students and their teachers to connect the music of the classroom to the music in their lives. As a result, students come to better understand who they are and embrace the possibilities of who or what they might become" (p. 229). The experience of creating shared original musical compositions based on lived experiences led to empowerment and transformation.

The function of the arts has been and continues to be the task of "reality construction" because art represents the world that exists or "imagined worlds that are not present, but that may inspire human beings to create an alternative future for themselves" (Efland, 2002, p. 171). In the case of HRE, performance arts teaching methods have the potential for providing students with the opportunity to mirror their cultural experiences and construct a new reality and is, therefore, transformational. "True understanding emerges when thinking, feeling and willing are in balance" (p. xii).

Freire (1974), Boal (2006), Gardner (1990) and Efland (2002) all discussed the importance of the creative process in reflecting individuals' present lives and the imagined future. Through the imagining and performing, a new reality may take shape. In the case of The World As It Could Be, students were encouraged to create imagined vignettes and speeches reflecting a spirit of human rights. Reyes (2006) challenged his

high school students to address similar issues in their spoken word performances. Reyes identified the experience as transformational for his students. “Giving these student poets these opportunities to find themselves through this culture of poetry helps them to take more control over growing into the person they want to become” (p. 15). He viewed the experience as a way to allow students to create their own meaning of the world around them.

As Boal (2006) explained, theater games are more than playful. In the process of critiquing current institutional and cultural structures, mirroring reality and projecting a new reality, a process of culture creation happens. This experimenting leads to new ways of thinking about community experiences interactions. The process is the end in itself. During the creative endeavor, a new reality is formed as well as a new personal identity. As for performance art, the participants “become” or embody a new persona and in the exercise play within the notion of what may be.

Schools are cultural and political spheres (Giroux, 1983) and, therefore, are the location for cultural and societal norms, values, and language (Abrahams, 2007). When students and teachers engage in critical dialogue about their lives, it is a political act (Freire, 1974). When they create a unique performance about human right issues relevant to their lived experiences, they participate in a transformative experience. The process of creating a performance for the community empowers students in that they are creating their own normative standards and culture.

Art is a means of communicating ideas, feelings, and solutions in a way other than written (Efland, 2002). If HRE is to transform a community’s current state to a new reality, then these communication skills are critical. The process of creating art, whether

poetry, short play or a painting, engages the mind, heart, and voice (Efland, 2002; Reyes, 2006; Wolfe, Edmiston & Encisco, 2009). Other strategies may inform about human rights but to transform imagination, interpretation and action are needed. Finally, the experience of creating and performing unique expressions has the potential to transform because students embody a new reality through their creations, as Freire (1974) suggested. This connects the heart, mind, and voice to become a vehicle for transformation.

Human Rights Education in K-12 School Settings in the United States

This section summarizes relevant research regarding the use of performance art methodology to teach HRE, recent international studies on HRE in formal secondary settings, and the status of HRE in U.S. K-12 schools. Empirical studies focused on HRE methodologies in U.S. schools were limited in the research literature and therefore, this study fills a gap in the current research.

A study in Hampshire County, England, found that when a human rights program was implemented in 14 schools, teachers reported an increased sense of self-efficacy and enjoyment of teaching (Covell & Howe, 2008). Pupils showed higher levels of engagement, rights-respecting behaviors and participation. In some of the schools, there was a reduction in detentions by as much as 50% and expulsions by 70%. The researchers noted the "most pronounced improvements in pupils' motivations, behaviors, engagement, and academic performance were in the schools with the greatest proportion of disadvantaged students" (p. 4). Covell and Howe provided interesting data regarding the impact of an HRE program, as reported by teachers and students, but the researchers paid less attention to the pedagogical experience.

As for research in the United States, two doctoral dissertations examined HRE practice in U.S. elementary level classrooms. Yamasaki (2002) considered the influence of an HRE program on students, cognitively, emotionally, and practically. She utilized student interviews, pre- and post-surveys and questionnaires. The study found curriculum choices positively influenced students' understanding of the content and the ability to relate to their daily lives.

Wade (1992) also explored an elementary school HRE program through the students' response to the curriculum. This study found that students' personal experiences and cultural background significantly affected their learning about human rights. The Covell and Howe (2008), Yamasaki (2002), and Wade (1992) studies all contribute to the understanding of HRE in the primary grades, but none explored the high school context nor focused on HRE methodology. Therefore, a gap presently exists in understanding best practices for achieving the transformative goals of HRE in a U.S. high school setting that I attempted to fill in my study.

Summary

Education is a human right, protected under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 26), The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Article 13) and The Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 28). HRE refers to both the right to education and the right to an education which promotes human dignity. The most recent UN initiative regarding HRE, The World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-2009), calls upon nations to protect and promote HRE. Integrating the performing arts with human rights content has the potential to meet the objectives of HRE, but a better understanding of this process has been needed. This study represents an

exploration of HRE pedagogy in a U.S. urban high school. By providing a deeper understanding of the process, the study will hopefully inform policy and practice so that the U.S. may fulfill its obligation to provide HRE to all students.

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH DESIGN

Restatement of Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative study was to gain a deeper understanding of ways to teach about human rights in an urban high school setting. More specifically, the objective was to examine how teaching and learning about human rights through the performance arts can effectively achieve the transformative goals of HRE. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2008), "Human Rights Education encompasses: (a) Knowledge and skills- learning about human rights and mechanisms for their protection, as well as acquiring skills to apply them in daily life; (b) Values, attitudes and behavior- developing values and reinforcing attitudes and behavior which uphold human rights; (c) Action- taking action to defend and promote human rights" (p.12). This study explored the use of performance art teaching strategies and the experiences of teachers and students engaged in the process.

Research Design and Methodology

A qualitative research design was used to explore the research questions because it allowed me to observe the teaching and learning process as well as to draw from the participants' descriptions of their experience (Bogden & Biklen, 1998). The study focused on how The World As It Could Be Human Rights Education Project (TWAICB) was implemented at Hamer High School (HHS) in Oakland, California, during the fall semester of 2010. A case study approach was chosen to allow for an exploration of an educational project located at a specific site during a limited time (Creswell, 2009). Because the research goal was to understand the participants' experience within their

setting, a qualitative design was most appropriate in allowing for the complexity of the human experience to emerge during data analysis (Creswell, 2009).

Research Setting and Population

TWAICB is a human rights education program funded and directed by the Rex Foundation. Since 2008, the program has supported Bay Area high school teachers and students in using performance arts to deepen students' understanding of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to become engaged in their communities to manifest the document's words (Rex Foundation, 2009). In August of 2010, three teachers from HHS attended TWAICB's three-day professional development workshop and committed to using the suggested strategies with their students.

In the fall semester of 2010, the teachers and students of HHS studied the UDHR and created original works including spoken word, poetry, dance, music, media arts, and theater. The various artistic pieces contributed to a culminating school-wide performance on December 10, 2010, as a celebration of the United Nations designated International Human Rights Day. The teaching and learning occurred within the formal classroom environment and during informal settings both on and off the campus.

HHS, one of 16 high schools in the Oakland Unified School District, opened in 2003 as part of a New Small Autonomous Schools (NSAS) policy. That year a larger comprehensive high school was broken into four smaller schools offering specialized fields of study. HHS's focus on international and U.S. law intended to prepare students for careers in law and public service. Additionally, HHS's East Oakland Step to College Program provided 31 students a four-year English Language Arts course taught by university professors which supported students through the college admissions process.

HHS's stated mission was to provide "a rigorous academic environment where students become articulate, skilled, active, caring critical thinkers" (HHS, 2010).

According to the Oakland Unified School District (2010), HHS's enrollment included 350 students with 14 faculty, one principal, and five support staff. The ethnic and racial distribution of the student population included 36.5% African American, 33.7% Hispanic or Latino, 15.3% Asian, 6.8% White (not Hispanic), 5.4% multiple or no response, 1.2% Pacific Islander, .8% Filipino, .4% American Indian or Alaska Native. The student home language diversity included 52% English, 31% Spanish, 7% Cantonese, 3% Vietnamese, 1% Khmer (Cambodian), 1% Mien (Yao) and 1% Arabic. English language learners made up 29.9% of the student population and 66.85% qualified for free or reduced price lunch. The attendance rate was 93.79% (Oakland Unified School District, 2010).

The City of Oakland, located in the Bay Area of California, is a very urban environment and hosts one of the most ethnically diverse communities in the United States (Reed, 2003). Despite its urban reputation, Oakland is also characterized by idyllic tree-lined streets and proximity to the outdoor settings of the Pacific coast and local mountains. As the birthplace of the Black Panther Party in 1966, Oakland has been the home of Black social advocacy, multi-ethnic solidarity and political organizing for three generations (Self, 2003). Oakland residents have also experienced increased violence and poverty in the last two decades and, in 2009, the year preceding my study, 124 homicides were recorded, mostly in the area surrounding HHS (Dolan, 2009).

Tony Smith (2010), Superintendent of Oakland Unified School District, described the community of Oakland as suffering from the loss of life and on-going threat of

violence. At the time of the study many families were facing inadequate and unequal resources, and the district was grappling with an unprecedented budget reduction of more than $100 million. HHS was part of a community facing human rights violations, but yet was a community of resiliency, sustained community activism, and generational knowledge of advocating for justice. For these reasons, Oakland, and particularly HHS, was chosen as the research setting to explore teaching and learning about human rights through the performance arts.

Participants

Participants included three classroom teachers, one teaching-artist, and nine students involved in TWAICB human rights project at HHS during the school year 2010-2011. Three teachers expressed a commitment to implement human rights content and performance art strategies during the semester. The creative director of TWAICB offered to work with the teachers and students as a teaching-artist during the semester. Her experience and involvement with the project provided a unique perspective. All four agreed to participate in my study after attending TWAICB summer institute. After the semester began, I asked for student volunteers to participate in the study, and 26 students agreed to be interviewed. Of those interviews, I narrowed my data set to nine student students representing a variety of ages, gender, ethnic background, and levels of involvement in the project.

Data Collection

The data included observations of the teaching and learning process, participant interviews, and students' creative work including the culminating performance. The data was transcribed, organized, coded, reviewed for emergent themes, and finally, analyzed

and interpreted. The form, content, and process were based on Bogdan and Biklen's (2007) recommended standards.

Observations

Observations began in September 2010 and ended in December 2010. I observed three classrooms daily: two English Language Arts classes and one Advanced Graphic Art class. In addition to formal classroom activities, I observed many of the informal planning and rehearsal sessions held at lunch and after school. The culminating performance was also included as data. During the observations, I took detailed field notes. I paid particular attention to the first and third research questions, but remained aware of additional data related to broader concept of human rights, critical pedagogy, transformative teaching and the integration of performing arts in the classroom. I used an observation guide which is included in the appendix.

From September 2010 to January 2011, I took detailed handwritten daily field notes. Each day I recorded in a calendar a brief description of the main topic and activity of each class and non-class meeting and other relevant events, such as a faculty meeting. I also coded each class with "UDHR," "Art," or "HR Content" to represent the content and methods included in that day's activity. In the evenings I transcribed my written field notes into digital versions. At this time, I added reflective notes to help me identify patterns, document contradictions, and inform my interviews. In this way the data collection and analysis were concurrent, as I constantly interpreted the data obtained during interviews and observations (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007). This process allowed for me to pay particular attention to emerging themes during classroom observations.

However, I performed more in-depth analysis and interpretation after the conclusion of the semester.

Interviews

I interviewed three teachers, one teaching-artist, and 26 students between October, 2010 and February, 2011. I interviewed the teachers at the start, mid-point, and end of the project and the teaching-artist after the culminating performance. My interviews with students began mid-way through the semester and lasted until after the culminating performance. I interviewed each student at least once. For a few students, our interview was cut short and we continued with a follow-up interview. During the interviews, I asked the participants to reflect on both the process and the product. I digitally recorded and transcribed the interviews verbatim. The interview questions were based upon the research questions and the interview guide is included in the appendix.

I conducted the interviews in classrooms during lunch, after school, or a free-period. My interview with the teaching artist took place off campus. Student interviews lasted from 10 to 20 minutes, whereas the teacher and teaching artist interviews were an average of 45 minutes. I noted the date and major topics of each interview in my observation calendar and added reflective notes at the end of each transcription. Some of the interviews were transcribed immediately and others were transcribed after the culminating performance due to time constraints.

Student Work

I collected a variety of student work during the semester. Many of the items were classroom assignments given to me by the teacher, for example poetry and graphic art posters. Many of the artistic contributions of the performance were created by students

outside of class. In these cases I asked students if they would be willing to share a written copy of their creative piece, for example, a rap. Finally, I took detailed field notes of the performance and included these notes as part of the analysis of student work. The questions which guided the analysis of student work are included in the appendix.

I organized the student work by each course and noted my initial reflections to help me identify patterns, emergent themes, and inform my interviews. After the performance, I reviewed my field notes with the third research question in mind. I compared and contrasted the observations, interviews, and student work as part of the in-depth analysis.

Data Analysis

From January to July 2011, I reviewed, organized, coded, and analyzed the data. First I reviewed each data set and organized it based on my research questions. For example, the content of a student's interview was coded by RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3. Once grouped by research questions, the data was then coded for emergent themes. For example, students often spoke of being proud of their participation in the performance. This received the code of "pride," but I began to notice sub-themes. For example, a few students mentioned they were proud to exhibit artistic talent, while others consistently mentioned pride in getting a positive message to the community. Another example is that for Research Question 3, I coded each of the three goals of HRE: "knowledge/skills," "Attitude/Behavior," and "Action." During this stage of coding and organizing, more in-depth analysis and interpretation took place. Finally, I created a web diagram to group and analyze the themes from each research question. After this stage, I revisited the relevant literature and research questions in order to guide the analysis.

Protection of Human Subjects

The Rex Foundation's Executive Director, the three teachers, HHS's principal, the teaching-artist, and students all agreed to participate. Permission was obtained from University of San Francisco's International Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) committee prior to observations and interviews. After receiving IRBPHS approval, consent letters were obtained from all participants. In the case of the students, consent letters were signed by both student and parent/guardian. The consent letters included a description of the research purpose and methodology. A copy of the consent letter is included in the appendix.

The interviews took place on a voluntary basis, and participants had the opportunity to withdraw from the interview at any time. Students did not miss instructional time to participate in the interviews. I made every effort to keep transparent the research process and objectives. All participants were given the opportunity to choose pseudonyms, but every participant in this study expressed their desire to be identified by their given name. Although participants wanted to be identified, I had promised to the principal that I would use a pseudonym for the school.

Reliability and Validity

In order to achieve reliability and validity, a number of actions were taken. First, field notes and interviews were transcribed with upmost attention to detail and accuracy. Second, Susan Katz, Dissertation Committee Chairperson, was consulted for each major step of the data collection and analysis.

Finally, I tried my best to take into account my positionality, assumptions, and potential biases during both data collection and analysis. I am a White, 40 year-old,

middle-class female who was born and raised in a suburban Southern Californian community and currently live in San Francisco, California. Thus my background and life experiences have been quite different from those of my participants. I have taught in public schools for ten years and have been actively involved in social justice organizations. As teacher of history, I consistently strived to provide a student-centered classroom that emphasized critical analysis of the past and present, often through a human rights lens.

As the researcher at HHS, I was aware that my position of class and race privilege would lay room for bias. I was concerned that I might not fully grasp the experiences of the students or be able to portray them accurately because of the difference in our age, race, and life experiences. Additionally, previously as a teacher, I had employed the creative arts and observed valuable outcomes among my students; consequently I knew I had preconceived positive notions of using the arts to teach about human rights. Therefore, I took purposeful actions to overcome potential bias, which I discuss below.

Through triangulation of the interviews, observations and student work, I was able to confirm themes against additional data. Furthermore, I utilized the participants' voice when reporting my findings and took every effort to accurately portray their statements. I continually questioned my assumptions and made adjustments to represent the participants' experiences as authentically as possible. For example, I planned to observe classroom instruction as the main source of data to answer how human rights through the performing arts was taught during the semester. Within the first two weeks I noted that teaching and learning through the arts also occurred during informal time. I then adjusted my data collection procedure so that I could capture these moments as well.

In summary, a qualitative case study approach was used to generate emergent themes about the use of the performing arts to teach about human rights and the experiences of the participants during this process. My data included observations, interviews, and student work which were organized, reviewed and analyzed. In the following two chapters I present my findings and analysis.

CHAPTER IV: PORTRAITS AND CHRONOLOGY

Introduction

In the fall semester of 2010, teachers and students at Hamer High School (HHS) developed and performed a three-hour presentation about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). For students and teachers, the performance was the culmination of three months of learning about human rights and applying these concepts to their lives. This chapter provides portraits of key participants and a chronology of the semester's events. The portraits and chronology set the context for Chapter V that explores the emergent themes from responses to the research questions.

Portraits of Teachers, Teaching Artist, and Students

John Nepomuceno

One young and passionate English teacher, John Nepomuceno, volunteered to lead the human rights project at HHS after attending the Rex Foundation's The World As It Could Be (TWAICB) summer institute. John, known as Mr. N on campus, was in his second year teaching at HHS. Though a novice, John was respected by students, teachers, parents and administration as a dedicated and talented teacher. As a young, energetic, Filipino male, John related well to the students' experiences, interests, and culture. He often talked about his background growing up in an urban, working class San Diego neighborhood. His classroom demeanor exhibited genuine care for the students' academic success, as well as their physical and emotional well being. For example, he took time each day to talk to students about their families and events in their lives. This relationship with students contributed to John's ability to elicit excitement and build commitment among students for the performance.

From the outset, John took responsibility for the project and the performance. In fact, students, teachers and administrators soon began to call it "Mr. N's human rights performance." His immense sense of ownership and passion for the project led him to teaching human rights during class, lunch, after school and on weekends. As a result, he played the role of classroom teacher, coach, recruiter, director, producer, and performer.

Deborah Juarez

The second major participant was Deborah Juarez, a veteran high school English teacher of 22 years. Deborah possessed a generous spirit and a willingness to embrace new ideas to improve her craft. As a mother, Latina and native of Oakland, she connected with students' experiences and interest in human rights issues of their community. Deborah was very interested in leveraging the arts to teach human rights, but also expressed concern about the demands of a major undertaking while the school struggled with low test scores and enrollment. Her reservations came from years of experience, but she was not jaded.

Deborah's teaching style was infused with a bit of maternal tough love. She held high expectations and unwillingness to accept excuses from students, but her care for them was abundantly clear in her daily interactions and positive reinforcement for each accomplishment. While observing her class, I was impressed by her unending patience, fortitude, and energy. Although Deborah had never used performance art in her classroom, over the years she had taught poetry in her English classes. As part of the human rights project, she committed to using poetry and the creative arts in her 9th grade classes and to help coordinate the culminating performance.

Anita Gilliam-Smiley

HHS's graphic art teacher, Anita Gilliam-Smiley, was unable to attend TWAICB institute, but enthusiastically joined the project upon hearing about it from her fellow teachers in early September. The third teacher to attend the institute, a history teacher, initially expressed interest in participating, but ultimately chose not to use performance art in his class. As a result, Anita became the third teacher-participant. Anita began her career in web design and later became a teacher. She, like John and Deborah, was an Oakland resident. Although she taught part-time to be home with her young daughter, she was a strong presence on campus, collaborated with fellow faculty, and had a close relationship with students.

Anita's rapport with students was clear in the first few minutes of my initial observation. She was friendly and approachable, combined with a 'get down to business' attitude. She had strong classroom management skills, while also showing flexibility to pursue creative ideas initiated by students. She described her teaching style as built on trust and explained that once she establishes the trust she can help draw out their creative talent (Interview, December 6, 2010). Her respect for students, high expectations, and genuine care for them were evident in their daily interactions. Anita's enthusiasm, creative ideas, and commitment to the human rights project grew throughout the semester. She used the UDHR as the framework for her Advanced Graphic Design poster assignment. The class contributions to the performance grew organically to include a quilt and short film.

Ellen Sebastian Chang

Ellen Sebastian Chang, the Creative Director of TWAICB since its inception in 2006, brought to the project over 20 years of experience as a theater director, writer, performer and creative consultant. Previously, she had worked with various Bay Area schools and non profit organizations as a teaching-artist. She was the co-author of the TWAICB Human Rights Education curriculum guide and co-directed the summer institute. Her implementation of TWAICB project in three urban schools gave her a unique perspective on the events at HHS.

Ellen chose to become involved with TWAICB because of her conviction that the performing arts offered a unique and valuable way to teach about the UDHR. She stated that teaching and learning about human rights through the performance arts allows for human right concepts to become personalized. As Ellen explained, the students' individual experiences and learning "goes from self expression to collective understanding because great art does create collective understanding" and this understanding becomes a catalyst for the future. (Interview, February 11, 2011).

As the Creative Director of TWAICB, Ellen worked with teachers and students to facilitate the project and lend support. During the three day summer institute, she shared with teachers several strategies for using theater exercises in the classroom and offered recommendations for developing performance pieces. At HHS, she attended three faculty meetings, guest taught one of Ellen's and John's classes, and guided students through a dress rehearsal just before the performance. When working with the students, Ellen had a commanding presence without being intimidating. She engaged with students immediately and helped them in fine tuning their performance.

Student Participants

My field research included observations of teachers and students from faculty meetings, daily classes, lunch meetings, after school rehearsals, and the final performance. The number of students observed totaled over 100 and, of those, I interviewed 26 students. I narrowed my discussion to interviews with nine students (five females, four males): Stephanie Zambrano, Julio Madrigal, Taytiana Brown, Earsy Jenkins-Crockett, Nixon Callejas, Naja Hearron, Lucias Potter, Mi Hua and Roy Ramos. The majority of students who participated in the human rights project were from John, Deborah or Anita's classes. These classes were mostly sophomores and seniors; therefore my interviewees included five seniors and four sophomores enrolled in the classes. However, three students, Julio, Nixon and Naja, were not enrolled in one of these classes but were involved in the lunch and after school planning sessions and were performers. Students of various ages, genders, ethnic backgrounds and levels of participation were represented.

Stephanie Zambrano

Stephanie Zambrano served as one of the two Masters of Ceremony for the performance and read her poem "My Dream of Oakland" (Appendix D) early in the show. As a senior, she was enrolled in Deborah's freshman English class as a make up course. A tall, confident, mature and friendly Latina, she served as a teacher's aide to Deborah and was eager to help other students with editing their essays or completing assignments. Her concern with racism, immigration rights, and gun violence led to involvement with La Raza, Homies Empowerment, and a recent one-hundred-block march for immigration rights.

Lucias Potter

Lucias Potter was a very serious, reflective and wise young man. Like Stephanie, Lucias enrolled as a senior in Deborah's ninth grade English class as a make-up course. He acted as a big brother to the freshmen. He regularly participated in class, but only after listening carefully to the contributions of others. During class he often drew connections between the literature and historical events in ways that exhibited mastery of content as well as critical analysis.

An African-American male, Lucias drew from his personal reflections on historical events and their relationship to current issues. He often discussed these issues with his grandfather who had been active in the Black Panther Party during the 1960's. These insights could also be seen in Lucias' two performance poetry pieces, "Emancipation Exaggeration" (Appendix E) and "Health Care" (Appendix F). "Health Care," was performed live, and the second poem, "Emancipation Exaggeration" was part of the short film produced in Anita's Graphic Art class. Lucias contributed to the lunch and after school rehearsals and was instrumental in creating the theatrical vignettes for the show.

Taytiana Brown

Taytiana Brown, an African-American female, was a senior in Anita's Advanced Graphic Art class. She worked as a mentor with middle schoolers and was a leader on campus. She wanted to become a probation officer so that she could "make a difference in their [her parolees] lives and try to help them better themselves" (December 6, 2010). When I began asking questions about the human rights project, she had an abundance of things to say about school, human rights, the community, and art in the classroom. For

her human rights poster assignment, she chose to explore the issue of water boarding and torture at Guantanamo prison. Discussing her poem, "Untitled", Taytiana said she wanted to let people know that although the world is cruel, we can find solutions and hope.

Earsy Jenkins-Crockett

Earsy Jenkins-Crockett, a sophomore in John's English class, was a very active student. As a cheerleader and member of after school clubs, she was a leader among her peers and described herself as a serious and focused student. She actively participated in class, especially in her analysis of literature and the connection to the UDHR. For example, she discussed with me her reaction to learning about the murder of Emmett Till. Earsy, who is African American, had a strong emotional reaction to the historical account because she thought of how she would react if her nephew were killed in the same way. In addition, she connected Emmett Till, the Holocaust, and the UDHR as part of one ongoing struggle (Interview, November 17, 2010). These insights added to her contributions to the creation of the theatrical vignettes and artistic direction of the performance.

Mi Hua

Mi Hua, a friendly, funny, and outgoing senior, was enrolled in Anita's Advanced Graphic Art class. She did not want to perform, but did want to contribute to the project. In class, she created not only her assigned human rights poster, but also the graphic title page for the short film. Her human rights poster depicted the issue of human trafficking. She was very concerned about human trafficking, especially of young women. Her goal was to build awareness through her art and the performance. Long term, she was

interested in studying international business in college so that she could work to address global poverty.

Roy Ramos

Roy Ramos came to the project dedicated to protecting immigration rights and ending racial discrimination. In particular he was active in the campaign to repeal SB 1070, an Arizona law that discriminated against Latinos. Roy was a very kind and thoughtful sophomore in Anita's class who went above the assignment requirements to create not just one, but three posters. He was very proud of the artistic elements of his work, and most importantly, he wanted to inform others about injustices happening against Latinos in the United States. As part of his involvement in Homies Empowerment, he was chosen as a student leader to travel to Los Angeles for a conference of La Raza organizers.

Julio Madrigal

Julio Madrigal, Nixon Callejas, and Naja Hearron were not enrolled in the three classes I observed daily, but they volunteered to participate after hearing about the performance. Julio, a senior Latino male, spoke about his closeness to his family and his plans to start a nonprofit organization with his friend and classmate. The two were part of a class project to create a school garden. Julio was very concerned about environmental racism and urban food deserts. He and his classmate had won a grant to start a community gardening and education program. Julio's contribution to the project was a speech about environmental justice.

Nixon Callejas

Nixon Callejas, a sophomore proud of his El Salvadorian background, was a consistent participant in the planning of the performance. At the beginning of the meetings, he was quiet and shy, but his confidence grew throughout the semester. In the few weeks before the performance, he worked closely with John to improve his rap, "United As One" (Appendix G). Nixon had written raps before, but had never performed. He explained his motivation for performing, "I feel that we could probably end violence, senseless violence at least" by getting the message out and unifying people (Interview, December 7, 2010).

Naja Hearron

Naja Hearron was an African American female student in her sophomore year at HHS. She was outgoing, outspoken, polite, and confident with an infectious smile. She brought a balance of fun and seriousness to the lunch and after school meetings. Although she was seemingly fearless as she took the stage to boldly act out scenes, she required a great deal of encouragement to sing in front of the entire school. She attended John's English class and had a strong relationship with him. Her older brother was a former student of John's whom he asked to be the godfather of his son. John attended many of Naja's family events and talked often with her Mom.

Chronology of Semester

August and September

At the end of TWAICB institute in August, John and Deborah committed to build on their school's social justice mission by introducing the students and faculty to the UDHR and creating a performance on December 10, 2010, International Human Rights

Day. Ellen Sebastian Chang, the Artistic Director of TWAICB, offered to meet with the HHS teachers and students to support the project. Sandy Sohcot, the Executive Director of The Rex Foundation and cofounder of TWAICB also offered to meet with administrators and provide institutional support.

On September 23, 2010, the second HHS faculty meeting of the new school year, John and Deborah shared information about TWAICB and their goal of creating a culminating presentation. John described the institute as "life changing," and Deborah shared her conviction that a school-wide effort to integrate the arts and the UDHR would benefit the students in multiple ways. The faculty and administration had consensus that since the school is a Law and Public Service Academy, the project aligned well with their mission and philosophy. Many teachers offered to introduce the UDHR in their classes and correlate articles in the document within their curriculum (Field notes, September 23, 2010).

While the faculty agreed the experience would be valuable for the students, they shared concern about how and when students would work on the school-wide performance. At the end of the meeting, the principal expressed interest but voiced apprehension, "Some of them [students] don't have art. When do they do it?...You [teachers] really need to show the alignment to the Standards [California State Content Standards]" (Field notes, September 23, 2010). HHS, one of three academies on a larger campus, was under increased pressure to perform well on the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). Due to budget cuts, one of the three academies was scheduled to be closed and since its HHS enrollment and test scores were low, HHS was in a vulnerable

position. The meeting ended with general support peppered with some skepticism about logistics.

Each teacher integrated the UDHR content and the arts in varied ways. My observations focused on John, Deborah, and Anita's classes, although from casual conversations and faculty meetings, I was aware of the ways other teachers were using the UDHR. In John's case, he chose to split his semester into three units, "The World As We Know It," "The World We Never Really Knew," and "The World as It Could Be". The course reading list, writing assignments, and class activities were carefully constructed to meet content, skills, and philosophical goals. He was purposeful in building content knowledge about human rights and developing academic skills of reading and writing. As a teacher of sophomore English, he also had the responsibility of preparing students for the CAHSEE.

During the first unit, "The World As We Know It," John assigned articles pertinent to human rights issues: racial profiling, immigration policy, and youth violence. Students read a simplified version of the 30 articles of the UDHR, and John shared his ideas and excitement about the performance. In this unit he emphasized content relevant to their lives and provided opportunities for students to explore issues through a human rights lens (Interview, November 17, 2010).

In September, Deborah launched her freshman English class with a lesson on human rights and poetry. Together the class read the 30 articles of the UDHR and discussed briefly the historical background of the document and its relevance to current issues. To introduce poetry, she gave her class a warm up exercise to write about an incident in which they saw human rights either dismissed or honored. This activity was to

help students connect personally to the UDHR. After a short debrief of the warm-up activity, Deborah shared with students some of the qualities of poetry: how it is structured, the rhyming, and use of imagery. She then asked students to write about a human rights issue relevant to their lives (Interview, November 17, 2010). The poetry from the first class was used to ignite ideas among her second class and continued through the day. This lesson served as a foundation for connecting the UDHR to literary themes, as well as writing assignments in the course.

For Deborah, fiction and nonfiction literature provided an entry point to explore human dignity. Throughout the semester, she regularly asked students to identify human rights issues within the literature. For example, her textbook included the short fictional story, "The Necklace" by Guy de Maupassant (1907). After reading this story of economic stratification and classism, she asked students to refer to the UDHR and to identify which of the 30 articles related to the characters' conflicts.

Like John and Deborah, Anita introduced the UDHR in the first few weeks of the semester. She asked her Advanced Graphic Art class to choose one of the 30 articles in the UDHR and to create a poster to communicate visually that particular human rights issue. Anita had a set of technical skills in mind for the graphic arts class, and typically she chose a unifying theme to pique students' interest. For Fall 2010, she chose the UDHR as the central framework. To accompany their work on the poster, students were required to write a one-page paper articulating the motivation behind their choices. Anita encouraged students to identify a human rights issue to which they could relate on a personal level. She explained the posters would become part of the December 10th

performance, encouraging students to check in with John if they were interested in being part of the performance (Interview, December 6, 2010).

October

By the first week of October, John, Deborah, and Anita had introduced human rights to their classes, tied their curriculum to the UDHR, created assignments to apply current (mostly local) issues to the articles, and encouraged students to participate in their school-wide performance. Deborah and John actively recruited students by drumming up excitement in their classes, leveraging a healthy amount of competitive spirit, and seeking out individual students with hidden or obvious talent. John, Deborah, and Anita taught mostly sophomores and seniors; therefore a mix of students from these grades showed interest in participating. John's relationship with the students played a critical role in drawing them in. During class he spoke often of the human rights project and invited students to join him at lunch and after school for planning sessions.

John's second unit, "The World We Never Really Knew," began on October 4th. After drawing direct parallels between the UDHR and their lives in the first unit, John chose historical fiction and nonfiction about South Africa's Apartheid system and the Holocaust in Europe. The goal of this unit was to build historical knowledge of human rights during the 20th Century (Interview, November 17, 2010). To better understand Apartheid in South Africa and the Holocaust, students read short stories from *Somehow Tenderness Survives: Stories of Southern Africa* by Hazel Rochman (1990), and *Night* by Elie Wiesel (1960). Students watched and discussed the films "Schindler's List" (1993) and "The Pianist" (2002) (Field notes, October 2010).

On October 4, Deborah's students viewed video clips of the human rights performance from two other local schools, and she asked them to think about reading their poems as part of the performance. A few of her students, including Lucias Potter and Stephanie Zambrano, expressed interest in participating. Although she didn't implement performance art within her classroom, Deborah wove human rights issues throughout her assignments and actively recruited and encouraged students to perform in the culminating presentation (Field notes, October 4, 2010).

On Monday, October 25, the first after-school meeting for the December 10th performance took place. Three students attended, including Naja Hearron, Nixon Callejas and Earsy Jenkins-Crockett. John started by explaining that he was there to facilitate and advise. He wanted them to take ownership of the performance. Naja shared her idea of singing an India.Arie song, and Nixon described themes in his rap. The students discussed the mix of song, dance, and theatrical pieces they wanted to cover topics including the right to be safe, hope for unity, immigration rights, police brutality, and the killing of Oscar Grant. Grant was a 22 year-old unarmed man who was detained, shot in the back, and killed by a BART police officer on New Year's Day in 2009. The incident occurred within blocks of HHS and resulted in mass protests against racial profiling and abuse by police officers.

The following Thursday during the after school meeting, Naja sang "I am Not My Hair" in front of this group of five students and John. She was extremely nervous and shared that she was singing publicly for the first time. Her fellow students and John gave her strong encouragement including, "Take your time" and "We believe in you." Naja sang with a slight quiver in her voice, while her fellow students listening attentively.

They left that meeting with the decision to continue practicing on their own (Field notes, October 28, 2010). The next few after school meetings were empty of students, but not without extensive recruiting and friendly pestering by John during the school day. Students seemed to be interested, but often had additional commitments in the afternoon.

November

Anita's class continued work on their human rights posters during September and October. After learning that students had created poems in Deborah's class, Anita asked a few of her student poets if they would like to perform. For those poets who expressed interest but were reluctant to get on stage in front of the entire school, Anita suggested alternatives, such as creating a short film of students reading their poetry or interviews with students about the human rights issues of their lives. Anita also suggested creating a quilt-like art installation of the UDHR. She asked for volunteers and three seniors, Eunice Medina, Rubi Castillo, and Anjanette Bashful, took on the challenge. During the weeks in November, Anita's class worked on the short film, and individual posters (Field notes, November 2010). Roy Ramos and Nicholaus Ross conducted and filmed short interviews and poetry readings by students. These contributions required students to work in teams collaboratively and collectively. Students committed time outside of class and without the incentive of extra points or grades (Field notes, November 2010).

On Wednesday, November 3, a large group attended John's after school planning meeting. This session took on a more dynamic feel. Chairs were moved out of the way, and students practiced tutting, a popular dance. Friendly banter and teasing led to bouncing around ideas for the performance. Students talked about a recent shooting at a local club on Halloween night. They talked about their frustration with not being able to

have fun on Halloween without the fear of violence and wanted to depict the randomness of violence in their greater community. These ideas began to take form as theatrical vignettes. This energetic and productive session lead to increased discussion in John's class about the performance. A few students continued to meet after school and some practiced their piece of the performance independently (Field notes, November 3, 2010).

On November 10, Ellen Sebastian Chang was invited by Deborah and John to visit their classes to introduce performance art and inspire students to participate on December 10th. She immediately got them up on their feet and engaged them in theater warm-ups and exercises (Field notes, November 10, 2010). Ellen explained to students how each activity connected to human rights principles. These exercises were the first time students in Deborah and John's classes moved around and interacted with one another to create a piece collaboratively (Field notes, November 10, 2010).

Finally, John's third unit, *The World That Could Be*, included the culminating performance as a vision of hope for the future. On Thursday, November 18th, with only three weeks to the performance, John asked his Sophomore English class to create skits representing the UDHR articles for the performance. The lesson, "Storytellin' through Skitmakin,'" was one of two classroom activities during the semester in which John used performance as a way to teach about human rights. He split students into groups of four or five. Each group had a sheet with instructions asking them to create a 20-30 minute skit based on one of the UDHR articles. Many groups had a hard time getting started, but as ideas began to flow, some skits came together. The skits were approximately three to four minutes each and focused mainly on the right to a fair trial, the right to feel safe, and the right to racial equality (Field notes, November 18, 2010).

In the last two weeks before the performance, excitement grew among teachers and students. John's classroom and the immediate area outside his room filled every day at lunch and after school with 20 to 30 students. Students rehearsed individually and in groups. One group of dancers choreographed and practiced independently at the YMCA where they had more room. Students brainstormed ideas, created rough sketches, gave feed back to one another, and negotiated changes. John and Deborah provided suggestions and encouragement, but left the students to run the rehearsals (Field notes, November, 2010).

During these weeks, John kept track of the various performance pieces and checked in with individuals and groups often. For some, he let them practice on their own, for others he offered suggestions and guided their creations. He acted as a director and coach. Considering each contribution, he drafted a script that compiled the various pieces into a cohesive performance (Field notes, November, 2010).

December

The weekend before the performance, John and students, Jeanette Vargas and Salvador Mateo, spent two days making stage props and a multi-media backdrop. Jeanette, an artist and poet, painted a mural on a wood fence for the skit, "Border Fence." This theatrical vignette poked fun at the ironies of the U.S. immigration policy. John worked all weekend and for the week before the performance he labored past midnight editing the script and film. He reflected on why he was willing to commit the late nights and relentless work to the project, "I want people to see that these kids in Oakland can do some pretty heavy stuff and do it right" (Field notes December 6, 2010).

The two days before the performance included very busy after school dress rehearsals. Students stepped into leadership positions naturally as they fine-tuned their performances. John offered concrete advice at points, but mostly let the students lead. Anita and Deborah also attended, gave encouragement and a few suggestions, but like John, allowed for students to give the direction.

Finally, Friday December 10th arrived. Students were required to pass through a metal detector and bag check at the school's front gate. Angelo, one of the school's security guard, stated the checks had began recently due to recent trouble, not on campus, but in the community. Inside the auditorium students made last minute adjustments, practiced skits, tested audiovisual equipment and placed a Día de Los Muertos (Day of the Dead) altar at the front of the stage. Anita worked with students to hang the human rights posters perfectly. Students were visibly happy, energetic, and nervous. A sense of community and celebration filled the room. At nine in the morning, the audience began to take their seats. Special guests from the community, including parents, district staff, and Sandy Sohcot (Executive Director of the Rex Foundation), were seated in the front few rows.

After an introduction by Stephanie Zambrano, the first performance pieces included "I am Oscar Grant," "La Maquina Para Cortar Pasto," "Driving While Black," and "I am Not My Hair." The audience offered enthusiastic support. One scene for which the audience went wild was the "Teach Me How," a vignette set in a club with a young man teaching a young female how to tut (a popular dance). The club scene erupted in chaos and gun shots ending with a by-stander on the ground. The scene transitioned to an emergency room where a doctor explained he cannot treat the victim because he has no

health insurance. Lucias took center stage and read his poem, "Health Care" (Appendix F), about the inherent inequality of U.S. medical system and the human right to universal health care. The audience silently listened to Lucias' every word. Lucias was followed by Jeanette Vargas performing her poem, "My Oakland" (Appendix I) about the struggle and beauty she witnesses in her city. Ms. Gilliam-Smiley, in the front row, wiped away tears. Next, Nixon took the stage rapping his "United as One" with a burst of energy and confidence not seen in the rehearsals. He was moving across the stage forcefully, emphasizing his points. Students were clapping, smiling, shouting, and cheering.

For the next piece, John asked for a moment of silence. On the large screen photos and names of the many youth killed in Oakland in the last year were accompanied by the Puff Daddy and Faith Evans' song "I'm Missing You." The room became very quiet and serious. The next few pieces included the Advanced Graphic Art class short film titled "Through Their Voices," a poem by Taytiana Brown and a powerful rap by JV BRWN (John Nepomuceno) titled "Crack Shame." Although the performance was nearing the three hour mark, the audience continued to be engaged and supportive to their fellow students.

The final act included "To Hell with Stereotypes: Flippin' the Script on Racism and Inequality." In this scene students of various ethnic backgrounds danced to different types of music; country, techno, rap and hip hop. The audience, some of whom were now on their feet, laughed and cheered. This was followed by Julio's speech about environmental justice, beginning with a powerful statement, "I introduce myself as a soldier." Standing alone on stage he couldn't remember the next line. Members of the audience yelled, "It's ok" and "you got it," and Julio began again, gaining momentum

with each line, like a preacher moving the congregation. Breanna Ford closed by singing "Human Nature" by Michael Jackson. The bell for lunch rang and mid-song some students began to exit, while others remained. The performance ended at noon lasting just over three hours. (Field notes, December 10, 2010).

Participating students were ecstatic and gathered in John's room to celebrate at lunch. They laughed and congratulated each other sharing reactions like, "That was hella tight! It was long though," "We did good!" and "Once I got on stage, I wasn't nervous any more." John shared how proud he was of their hard work. As the celebration continued, a fight broke out in the next building. In John's following class, students continued to discuss the performance and the fight. Nixon asked with confusion, "You know how they were fighting at lunch, I was thinking didn't we just give you a message about human rights?" (Field notes, December 10, 2010).

John asked students what they learned from the performance and they responded, "Don't get stopped by the police," "I have the right to dance," "No matter what color you are you are equal," "Asians can dance," and "Every one is equal no matter what country they was born." Isaiah, a senior, said, "People were crying during the birthday scene." Another students added, "I knew every one on that screen." Students expressed pride in sending out a message about human rights to the community and many shared interest in performing again next year (Field notes, December 10, 2010).

The following Tuesday a debrief meeting was called by the principal. John, Anita, Deborah, the principal and assistant principal all attended. The meeting began with the principal asking for photos and a write-up for the local newspaper that had expressed interest in writing a story about the performance. The assistant principal acknowledged

the performance had positive outcomes from school and larger community. The teachers' discussion of how to continue the student engagement were interrupted by the principal stating, "My feeling on this is that things have to stop this year because there is so much other academic things that need to happen...I do have to concern myself with the testing which will allow us to sink or swim and we are already sinking." She shared her concerns about the CAHSEE, how much time was spent on the performance, and stated that any continuation of the project should happen in art classes or for the Senior Project. John explained that his sophomores would be starting "CAHSEE bootcamp" and would continue until the test. Deborah added that the performance was an educational assembly; students were respectful, the content was concrete and authentic, and student-generated. The principal expressed her concern about the length of the performance and the need for more rehearsal. Anita reiterated the positive outcomes, "It was our first one and it was fantastic...we needed this at our school. We need something where students get to express themselves." The meeting ended abruptly with the bell (Field notes, December 14, 2010).

In the two weeks between the performance and winter break, students completed written reflections and participated in discussions during Anita, John, and Deborah's classes about the performance. The theme of human rights continued to permeate the class content and discussions, but the excitement that came from preparing for the performance had ended. John's students focused on practice tests for the CAHSEE, Anita's class turned their attention to preparing the yearbook, and students in Deborah's class began reading a new short story from their text.

On January 8, 2011, less than a month after the performance, a HHS sophomore, Lovell Hadnot, was shot and killed at 5:00 pm a few blocks from school. John spoke

about the reaction of the students in relation to the UDHR project, "Between the crying and the tears, they have had a lot of positive things to say about what we've done as far as putting out the human rights and what people ought to know they should do or demand. Whether it is demanding our own safety or demanding the right to be able to freely walk around this neighborhood." He concluded, "Ultimately, I think we need more time to process that as time goes on, but I think the seeds have been planted without a doubt" (Interview February 16, 2011).

In the next chapter, I address the three research questions and emergent themes from the data. The portraits and chronology presented in this chapter set the context for these themes, especially for the first question about how the teachers integrated the arts and the UDHR in their pedagogy.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS

Research Question 1

How Do the Teachers and Teaching Artist Integrate the Performing Arts with Human Rights Content in Their Pedagogy?

In my observations and interviews, three common teaching strategies emerged as the teachers and teaching-artist integrated the performing arts with the UDHR. First, John, Deborah, and Anita did not start from scratch. Building academic skills, fostering the ability to identify social justice issues, and encouraging students to act as advocates for themselves and their community infused John, Deborah, Anita and Ellen's teaching philosophy before the start of the project. Therefore, they seamlessly wove the UDHR into their existing curriculum and pedagogy. Second, the teachers encouraged students to express creatively issues relevant to their lives, and the freedom to choose topics and modes of expression allowed students to build ownership. Third, the teaching and learning about the UDHR through the performance arts occurred inside and outside the formal classroom.

Connecting the UDHR with Existing Objectives

The classroom teachers, John, Deborah, and Anita, folded the UDHR and the arts into their existing curriculum. To do so, each reworked their semester to different degrees, but none entirely revamped their approach or content. They integrated the UDHR as part of their curriculum and teaching methodology. From my first observations, it was clear that the content of the UDHR was more easily integrated into their course than the use of performance arts. In the previous chapter, I described how the teachers folded the UDHR into their courses. John reworked his entire semester, Deborah altered

her opening lesson and connected literature to human rights themes, and Anita made slight adjustments to her poster assignment and allowing additional activities to grow organically.

John Nepomuceno

In past years, John had covered issues of social and economic injustice, both current and historical, in his curriculum. John viewed the UDHR and the performing arts as an opportunity to further his goal of examining the impact of racism among his students so that they might identify injustices. In the year before this study, he had explored current issues such as, racial profiling and youth violence, as well as historical Holocaust and Apartheid literature, but not through the lens of the UDHR. In the semester I observed, he employed the same readings from the previous year, but reorganized them around a human rights framework. As the students read, discussed, and wrote about current and historical issues, John encouraged them to think about how to express their experiences and reflections as part of the performance.

John began his semester with news articles about local issues, such as racial profiling, and asked students to examine the issues and their personal experiences through a human rights lens. Next, they studied the key global events of the 20th Century, including Apartheid and the Holocaust, and the relationship of these events to the UDHR. John explained, "That was a big part in terms of getting kids to think globally, so we move from the local to the global, look within ourselves, looking outwardly" (Interview, November 17, 2010). The ability to connect past, present, local, and global, and to identify systemic patterns was an important skill John wanted to build among his students.

Developing abilities to analyze patterns of injustice, connect to students' lives, and act toward prevention was a pedagogical goal prior to the human rights project, and the UDHR provided a new framework to guide the study. John shared,

> I think the way that I organized this presentation, this performance, is probably my way of helping the kids understand that there is a sequence to things and there is not a sequence to things. There are just events that happen in the world and there is a need and an importance to have a better understanding of why these things happen and what we can do to prevent stuff like this from happening in the future (Interview December 6, 2010).

John intended that the students build the critical thinking skills necessary to frame events in their community as human rights issues and to begin to act toward changing the patterns.

The UDHR provided a frame by which to examine injustice, and the performing arts offered a medium by which to develop and elevate students' voices. The ability to speak, write, and communicate effectively was an important skill John aimed to develop, not only because of its academic value, but more importantly, because his goal was to support students in advocating for themselves and improving the conditions of their lives. John told them, "I don't want you guys going out there with a weak voice, you got to go out there with all you got" (Interview, November 17, 2010). He further explained, "I want them to be able to arm themselves with thinking to effectively voice out their opinions...to effectively back up their statements because the rest of the world won't listen to them" (Interview, November 17, 2010). Organizing the semester around the UDHR and encouraging students to create a performance provided a new way for John to achieve his existing goal of building students' critical analysis skills and the ability to articulate the issues of their lives and to create a new reality.

Deborah Juarez

Like John, Deborah did not radically change her course content. Instead she crafted the human rights lessons around her existing goal of building academic skills and social justice themes. In Fall 2010 she used human rights as one more reference for examining the same themes. Deborah asked students to reflect on a piece of literature, a nonfiction article, or a writing assignment through the lens of human rights. She frequently asked students to refer to the UDHR and identify a specific article reflected in a reading assignment. When I asked her how she incorporated the UDHR in her curriculum, she explained,

> I think it is hard *not* to incorporate it. I think everything has to do with human rights, practically everything. And all of the literature that we read, it is always trying to teach us some kind of moral lesson, you know? There's always values that are expressed through literature and ways of living and ways of being and how can that not come up, you know. How can human rights not come up? So, it is kind of hard to avoid it, so every now and then I will say, "So, what does this have to do with the UDHR?" (Interview, November 17, 2010).

The literary content and academic skills had not changed from previous years, but the consistent reference to the 30 articles of the UDHR provided a new thematic tool.

Deborah also discussed how the UDHR and the arts helped to crystalize the existing school mission of social justice through advocacy. Created as an academy within a larger campus, HHS was in its third year at the time of the project. The faculty and administration had created a series of courses around law and activism. Deborah acknowledged some of the challenges of the human rights project but concluded, "I think it was definitely worthwhile because it was the first time that I actually felt a direct link to the thematic piece of it so I could reference and name it because really, we were really loosey goosey this first few years in terms of our theme" (Interview, February, 10, 2010).

She said the faculty didn't know how to fully integrate the law and advocacy theme into each classroom, but the UDHR focus "was a nice way to do it for me in my English class and when you say 'through the arts' it is through the poetry and through the writing and, so, I actually liked it" (Interview, February, 10, 2010). The UDHR and the performing arts offered a unifying framework for her course as well as the academy's mission.

Anita Gilliam-Smiley

The idea of teaching human rights through the arts found fertile ground in Anita's teaching philosophy and curriculum. For example, the previous year in her Advanced Graphic Arts class, Anita asked her students to create posters depicting social justice leaders in the past and present. At the beginning of the school year, these posters including, Cesar Chavez, Malcolm X, and Dolores Huerta, lined the school hallways. Building around the same teaching objective, Anita used the UDHR to provide a foundation for her semester poster assignment. Anita saw the human rights project as a way for students to communicate their knowledge and experience visually and, in turn, develop their voice. Anita adjusted her existing curriculum to incorporate the UDHR, but her goal of developing visual and written communication skills about social justice issues remained the same.

The three classroom teachers, John, Deborah and Anita, did not abandon their existing teaching philosophy, strategies, curriculum or objectives. Instead these teachers introduced the UDHR as framework to organize their curriculum. John chose to shape his semester around three units; starting with human rights issues of the present, then the past and finally, the future. In each unit he taught academic skills of reading, writing, and analysis with the ultimate goal of developing student's ability to examine injustice and

act toward change. Deborah introduced the UDHR as a thematic frame for writing poetry and studying literature. In Deborah's opinion, human rights through the performing arts not only gave an organizational frame to her semester, but also crystalized the academy's mission statement. Finally, Anita used the UDHR as a foundation for her poster assignment and way to build creative expression.

Freedom to Choose Issues Relevant to Their Lives

The teachers encouraged students to explore and communicate issues relevant to their lives. They trusted the students' experiences and knowledge regarding human rights issues in their community. This trust in turn led to autonomy and ownership among the students. The classroom assignments called upon students to choose a topic for which they had direct experience or had a passion. In the classroom the teachers chose the method of communication, such as a poem or poster. During the lunch and after school sessions, students selected both the topic and the mode of communication, for example, dance, song, or rap.

As the lead facilitator of the performance, John created an atmosphere during lunch and after school sessions where students chose the topic and way in which they wanted to communicate. John explained that he gave "free range on what they want to cover and how they want to say it and how they want to show it. They want to take ownership over the performance and that's exactly what I want to happen" (Interview, November 17, 2010). He came to the UDHR project with great respect for students' real-life knowledge and ability to express themselves in less traditional ways. John believed, "These kids have a voice beyond just reading and writing. These kids have the skills; I would like to even say 21st century type skills, that allow them to express themselves in a

way that other people can't" (Interview, November 17, 2010). John's decision to allow students the freedom to create the individual performance pieces based upon issues relevant to their lives built a sense of ownership among the students.

Deborah and Anita differed from John's decision to allow students to choose their mode of communication. They both encouraged students to choose a human right with which they felt a personal connection, but the form of communication was not optional. Deborah asked her students to express themselves through poetry and, in Anita's case, she assigned the graphic art poster as the mode of communication. Both teachers saw the ability to express oneself as a skill needed to advocate for human rights. To strengthen that skill, they encouraged students to begin with what they knew and created a culture of human dignity where students' culture, knowledge, and experiences were valued.

Although Deborah asked students to write about a human right being honored or dismissed, all but a few were about violations. Deborah and I discussed her decisions to use poetry as a pedagogical tool to teach about human rights. In reflecting on the students' poetry, she identified the right to be safe as a prevelant theme. Almost all of her students' poems described violence in their community. Deborah explained that poetry gave freedom to students to connect and communicate about the issues relevant to them,

> Well, I think that is what the poetry did for them because if they didn't know what to write about, they ended up writing about something that was real specific to their own lives—somebody dying because this is a dangerous community, you know? We have the right to feel safe, or, you know, other issues related to their personal lives. It definitely came up in the poetry and I think more immediate for them because they're immediate concerns are around their community and how the community presents itself to them, you know, kind of as a threatening place and that came up quite a bit so, and I guess I expected that because, yeah I knew that it was their reality but it certainly came up in the poetry (Interview, November 17, 2010).

The poetry called upon students to name their world and connect their experiences to a human rights framework.

Anita relied on students' experiences, prior knowledge, and personal interests to guide them in choosing the topic for their poster. She focused less on teaching content and more on building among students technical and artistic skills as a way to express themselves. Students were encouraged not to "do the typical" but to push themselves to communicate creatively. She told students, "You have to really tap into that creative side and use textures and use filters and that kind of thing to express what you are trying to say. You can use pictures to express it, but it has to be more" (Interview, December 6, 2010). She wanted to build among students the ability to communicate "what they feel their human rights are" and to use creativity to educate others (Interview, December 6, 2010). As a teacher, Anita was comfortable with - and in fact encouraged - a variety of interpretations.

One of Anita's goals was for students to choose issues relevant to their lives and to teach others. She asked them to pretend the person looking at their poster did not know their human rights, "Can I look at your imagery and learn something...You are teaching someone something. You can have words, but the visual has to match what you are trying to say in the text" (Interview December 6, 2010). She respected their prior knowledge and natural creative skills. Her objective was to hone their technical skills so that they could successfully communicate to others the issues of their lives and community.

Ellen also employed the philosophy of allowing the performance to grow organically from the students' lived experiences, interests, and passions, although her methods differed from the classroom teachers. Using theater exercises, she asked students

to communicate through movement, sound, and eye contact. In her few days teaching at HHS, she used theater games to get students warmed up and then built extension activities from topics that naturally grew from student contributions. Like the other teachers, Ellen encouraged students to draw from their knowledge and experience.

As the students participated and acted out human rights scenarios, Ellen explained the importance of eye contact in recognizing a person's humanity, the power of choosing to participate, and the ability of actors to communicate through movement with the audience. She explained how actors in theater use these techniques to cause others to believe and care about a particular human rights issue. With each exercise, Ellen called upon students to build from their prior-knowledge. All four teachers encouraged students to connect the UDHR to issues relevant to their lives and to communicate creatively. Whereas, John allowed students the freedom to choose the mode of communication, Deborah, Anita, and Ellen attempted to develop among students particular communication skills, such as, writing a poem.

Beyond the Formal Classroom

Teaching and learning about human rights through the arts occurred both inside and outside the formal classroom space and time during the fall semester at HHS. To achieve the production of the performance, a substantial amount of time was dedicated outside of the classroom. This was due to various institutional barriers including, pressure of the CAHSEE, State Standards, and the traditional practice of segmenting disciplines. As a result, certain types of teaching and learning happened during class time, while others took place during lunch, between classes, and after school. Reading, writing, and discussing the UDHR, its historical context, relevance to current events, and connection

to literature were common during John and Deborah's class. Creating graphic art posters took place during Anita's class. Therefore, some of the elements of the performance were created during class, but the opportunity to develop performance skills such as public speaking, rap, dance, and acting occurred outside the formal class.

The culminating three hour, four act performance on December 10th showcased 28 artistic pieces including spoken word poetry, dance, theatrical vignettes, rap, multimedia and song by students and faculty. Of the 20 pieces performed by students, all were developed and rehearsed outside formal class time, except for one. Julio Madrigal's environmental racism speech was written and rehearsed during his Service-Learning Waste Reduction Project (SLURP) class. In the case of the Advanced Graphic Art's short film, some poetry readings and interviews took place during class, but the editing and production were conducted by Anita and her husband in the evenings at home. Human rights history, concepts, and current issues were presented and discussed in formal class time and space, but the bulk of the performance was created, refined, and rehearsed at lunch, after school, and on weekends.

The dynamic between teachers and students were slightly different during class, as opposed to out-of-class time. John began the lunch and after school sessions by sharing some general ideas, but once the students were started, he allowed them to brainstorm and create with little interference. His style was more coach-like as he would jump in to guide or help with a suggested solution. The freedom to decide upon elements of the performance was handed over, almost entirely, to the students. In addition, many students rehearsed their songs and poetry on their own, mostly at home in the evenings.

One dress rehearsal provided an illustration of the coach-like quality of John's teaching methods. Nixon Callejas showed obvious nervousness as he took the stage to perform his rap. Standing motionless, he stumbled through the first few lines. Isaiah Clayton, a senior, gave him encouragement, "Get into it. Nod your head." John stepped in and offered constructive suggestions, "Spit it like you feel it! Like you are mad." Deborah also encouraged Nixon, "The movement will help you keep the beat." Nixon began again and teachers and students alike were supportive and collaborative, giving each other ideas on equal footing. John admitted to Nixon that he was also nervous, "I'm hella nervous. You wanna get your confidence, just like I gotta get my confidence up." John practiced his rap next. He stumbled over lines a few times and lost his breath at points. By rehearsing with the students, John showed his commitment to the project as well as his vulnerability. After he performed, John spoke individually with Nixon offering concrete strategies for improving his rap (Field notes, December 6, 2010).

One of the positive outcomes of the lunch and after school planning was that the students assumed leadership of the project. John reflected, "Lunch and after school was voluntary and the fact that so many kids showed up- a lot, especially the last two, two and a half weeks before the show. I mean that spoke volumes to me...it makes me smile. They came. They came in big numbers, too, I mean this classroom on any given day was packed" (February 16, 2011). He continued, "I feel like the kids ran it in a way...that actually made them take ownership for what they did" (February 16, 2011).

Deborah also noted the uniqueness of the project in being truly student-centered and empowering. Like John, she was immensely impressed with the students' dedication and ownership. She reflected,

> So, something like the UDHR presentation, that was a full blown commitment on the part of the kids, which is interesting, that is the difference. There is something like that where you get full commitment and there is something like, you know academics where you get, 'I am doing it because I have to or I want to graduate and this is how I get my grade' because that was not how they got their grade. They didn't get a grade based on that performance (Interview February 10, 2011).

Her comments reflected the extensive work the students put forth. The students who chose to participate in the performance did not receive any extra credit for their work. In Anita's class for example, a few students created more than one poster. Mi Hua designed graphics for the film, and three female students took responsibility for creating the quilt.

The teachers committed tremendous time beyond their formal duties to the school, especially John. When I asked John about losing sleep and working all weekend, he responded, "I think the biggest reason why is that I am so indebted to the youth, the community, the world. I feel like I have a responsibility as a teacher, as a socially conscious teacher, to impart positivity in the world in whatever way I can" (December 6, 2010). John's comments represented the commitment evident in my observations of all the teachers. For both teachers and students, the teaching and learning about human rights through the performing arts went beyond the formal classroom space and time.

Summary

In answering Research Question 1: "How did the teachers and teaching artist integrate the performing arts with human rights content in their pedagogy?", I identified three major themes. First, the teachers integrated the human rights content into their existing semester curriculum and school mission. They found the UDHR provided a framework for their existing goals of developing among their students the ability to identify injustice and advocate for themselves. Second, John, Anita, and Deborah,

allowed students to choose human rights issues relevant to their lives and to develop creative ways to communicate their knowledge and experiences. In this way the UDHR and the performance became personalized and localized. Finally, elements of the performance, including movement, song, public speaking and music, were developed almost entirely outside of the formal class time and space. It was the combination of in-class and out-of-class teaching and learning that resulted in the culminating human rights performance.

Research Question 2

What Do the Teachers, Teaching Artist, and Students Report about Their Experiences of and Engagement in This Pedagogy?

In our interviews, I asked teachers and students about their thoughts regarding the use of the performing arts to teach and learn about human rights. Four major themes emerged: pride in the process and product, deepening of academic learning, relevance to place and time, and difficulty of using the performing arts in the classroom. Participants were proud of individual contributions, the performance itself, and especially of delivering a message about human rights to the community. Second, teachers and students spoke of how they believed the performing arts, particularly poetry, deepened academic learning. Third, participants described how learning about human rights through the arts connected strongly with the students' experiences and community. Finally, the teachers articulated the difficulty of integrating the arts as part of classroom pedagogy.

Pride in the Process and Product

In interviews and during classroom observations, the strongest reaction students and teachers had to the process and product was an enormous sense of pride. Students enthusiastically shared not only their pride in their individual contributions: posters, rap, song and poetry, but also their collective message to the community evoked the deepest response. I observed this excitement, enthusiasm, and nervousness in the weeks leading to the performance.

Nixon's reflection was a prime example of the satisfaction students' had about sharing a human rights message. In our interview Nixon spoke of his pride and motivation for participating. Although he had experience writing and recording raps, the December 10, 2010, presentation was his first live performance. He practiced for weeks and was visibly nervous before the show. When I asked about what motivated him to participate, he said he wanted to be part of getting out a message. He admitted, "I was getting kind of nervous and I was like, nah I don't know if I should like quit. I don't want to do it no more, but then I thought to myself it was important because I got to send out a message...." (Interview, December 7, 2010). Other students, including Lucias, Taytiana, Earsy, Naja, Stephanie, and Roy, also referenced their motivation in getting a human rights message to the community.

Stephanie summed up the sense of celebration with a huge smile on her face, "I felt so proud of myself and everyone! I felt accomplished! It was finally over and out of all of the hard work and stuff, it was finally over...we just wanted to be a part of it and we thought that our voices were being heard through the skits, through the plays, through the poems, through the songs, the message" (Interview, December 14, 2010).

Naja discussed her pride in informing the audience about the conditions she and her peers face. She wanted to give people an understanding of "what we go through every day and what other people go through every day, whether it is in this country or another country. It doesn't matter. It is what we go through" (Interview, December 3, 2010). She also wanted her fellow students to know about their rights so that they may advocate for themselves.

> I want them to know that this is every day, like it is stuff that is going on every day and people don't know that they have their rights, that this is not supposed to be happening to them. They think that it is just part of the system, you know, and it is not supposed to be happening. I want them to know that they have rights. That this stuff, there is a way out of it, it is not supposed to continue, you know, it's a way out (Interview, December 3, 2010).

Naja's motivation to share a message about human rights inspired by her to participate and contributed to her pride in bringing the performance to fruition. Her sense of pride was shared among her fellow participants.

Each student's contribution drew from his/her individual concerns regarding an issue. They spoke of their motivation to educate others and build awareness. Driven by his passion to build awareness about events in Arizona, Roy took great care in choosing images and design to represent his pride in the struggle for equality. His poster about repealing SB 1070 included a photo of himself at a Latino leadership conference (Appendix H). His hands held behind his back with his fingers crossed represented his hopefulness. Roy added the words, "Repeal SB 1070" and the image of the Huelga bird, symbol of the United Farm Workers. He commented on what he hoped to convey with these images, "To see our pride and our roots that this is like, we don't use it as a gang, we use it as our roots and that we really don't want a lot, we just want to be free" (Interview, December 1, 2010). By choosing certain images, he sought to convey to

others his people's historical and ongoing struggle for justice. The poster was very personal to him, and he expressed the importance of sharing within the larger community his identity and activism. Roy explained his involvement in the project as motivated by his desire to inform others and to make sure teachers knew he was a "good kid, not a trouble maker" (Interview, December 1, 2010).

Taytiana Brown echoed a similar theme when asked about her reactions to the project. She was motivated to read her poem on stage because she wanted to share with younger students a message of hope and resiliency against human rights violations;

> I want to show the lower classmen that no matter what your age, no matter what you are going through in life, you can always have something to look forward to. You know, like maybe this is extra stress, but at the same time, when it is all said and done, when it is all finished, the end project, you could just sit back and be like—hey you know I did have a part in that. Hey I did teach somebody new. I did have something. I did help the community somehow, someway. So yeah (big smile) (December 6, 2010).

Nixon, Stephanie, Naja, Roy, and Taytiana's comments represented the pride in getting out a message- a response which I heard from many students. Students shared their satisfaction in the hard work required to create the performance, but their greatest pride was building awareness and teaching others. They believed that they could uplift others by exposing their personal experiences and hope for the future. The public performance became a testimonial of their experiences, knowledge, and message about how to attain a community of human rights.

The teachers also spoke of their pride in the students' dedication and the process of elevating the students' voices regarding the human rights issues of their lives. Ellen, Deborah, John, and Anita shared their pride in the student message and their ability to build awareness among their peers. Ellen explained the importance of taking an

individual creative piece and bringing it to an audience. She noted that the act of performing to the public elevates the content and is an important reason for why the students were so proud. "That's what happens. That's why I wish performance was a bigger part of the educational experience. It creates a level of importance of how you communicate knowledge. A test is a private experience which the student turns in to someone, who judges it privately. This is a public record" (Field notes, December 10, 2010).

Deborah described the performance as more rich than she expected and was especially amazed at the poetry. Deborah observed how proud the students were: "They all wanted to claim it. It was something that they would have been glad if their parents showed up for. They all, there was a commitment towards it. A real big commitment toward it" (Interview, February 10, 2011). Her description confirmed my observations of students' enthusiasm, excitement, and pride the days leading up to, and especially, the day of the performance.

John invited community members, parents, and the Superintendent of Oakland Unified School District. He wanted them to see what the students could accomplish. His remarks after the performance reflected his immense pride;

> I feel very honored to be part of this...an enormous sense of pride for our kids. They brought their A+ game...The fact that there was just so much soul in it. The kids really put it through, I mean even down to the acting. Yeah, there was some pretty raw moments during practice but when it came out to the final product, I was very surprised to see the amount of seriousness that the kids took upon, I mean yeah, there was a little giggling here and there but the kids are really—they brought their A+ game (Interview, December 15, 2010).

Aware that HHS faced possible closure due to budget issues, the students and faculty spoke often during the semester of wanting to prove their school was worth saving. They

saw the performance as an opportunity to publicly display their talent, commitment, ability to take seriously human rights issues, and their knowledge regarding the solutions. John and Deborah credited the performance with uniting students and creating a positive atmosphere on campus. Individual satisfaction led to a sense of community pride.

John's overall goal as a teacher was to give voice to the voiceless. In reflecting upon the semester and the performance he said it "exceeded his goals and objectives" (Interview, December 16, 2010). His exuberant reaction to the process and culminating performance gave him a sense that he had achieved his goals. He stated, "This is what I came to teaching for - for the kids, for the youth, put out their voices when they have to. Establish their voice if they don't think they have one, give voice to the voiceless and what better way to do it than this? This is why I do what I do...and it [preparing for the performance] has given me more purpose in my practice" (Interview, November 17, 2010). On a personal level he added, "As a human being it enriched my understanding of what it is to be human" (Interview, November 17, 2010). Students and teachers alike shared that the experience led to pride in both the process and the product, especially in bringing a positive message to the community.

Deepening Academic Learning

For much of her career in theater, Ellen has introduced classroom teachers to the performing arts as a tool to engage students. What she observed at HHS reconfirmed her conviction that the use of performing arts often deepens academic learning. She argued that creating artistic interpretations of the UDHR, "invigorates the classroom" because it required students to apply content and ideas in multiple ways (Interview, February 2, 2011). Individual expression became personalized, and through the act of performing

their knowledge and experiences become elevated. She defended art as "not just playing around, it's challenging," explaining that students are engaged cognitively and emotionally when developing artistic expression. Furthermore, performance art led to a deeper understanding of content for the participants and audience because "art is at the core of what makes us human" (Interview, February 2, 2011). Ellen elaborated that "every culture has a form of play, every culture has a form of ritual, dance, art making, and song. So if we start at that core, what better platform to start to teach human rights because when we start at that very basic level then there is no difference" (Interview, February 2, 2011). She concluded that the universality of art, as well as the ability to tap into the basic emotional and intellectual core, makes communicating through the arts rigorous and real (Interview, February 2, 2011).

John described the phenomenon slightly differently than Ellen. He commented on how well the arts facilitated a connection between personal experiences and universal themes of justice. Students were asked to think critically about their world, apply universal human rights principles and, ultimately, communicate their understanding in creative ways. He commented on how students moved from personal understanding to connection with universal themes. "I think that helps one create a sense of understanding within the classroom itself but it also creates a very individual sense of presence of being, of knowing where they stand in life. I think that is what I saw as I saw some of the more serious ones especially" (Interview, February 16, 2011). He observed that the students took their creative expressions and compiled them into one presentation that was "very serious, very deep, and very real" (Interview, February 16, 2011). He noted the process of communicating human rights issues through the arts became very personal and authentic.

Deborah reflected on the pedagogical use of poetry to access funds of knowledge and make personal connections to content. For example, Deborah articulated the unique value of poetry in allowing students the freedom to express themselves in their own words. She argued that the human rights poetry lesson introduced difficult ideas in a very real and personal way. Through poetry students had the freedom to express themselves in their own words in ways other writing assignments did not do. Deborah explained, "Sometimes I have noticed that when kids are getting some external support from professors or whatever that they start using words like, I don't know, like 'hegemony' or whatever and I am not sure they know how to use it." Although this vocabulary gave them a starting point it, she said it sounded false (Interview, November 17, 2010). The process of creating poetry, on the other hand, was more real and organic because "they use their own words to say something profound, but simple at the same time, and it reflects their reality" (Interview, November 17, 2010). Poetry was more from the gut than a mental place, she argued. Writing poetry deepened academic learning by providing a way for students to articulate their experiences authentically.

Taytiana confirmed Deborah's observations about poetry and the opportunity to express themselves in their own words. Taytiana reflected, "when it is just you and a piece of paper, and a pencil, you can write down whatever you feel. You don't have to worry about nobody telling you anything. You don't have watch your language. You can just express exactly how you feel and then at the end it will come out to be something so powerful and you will be like—oh, I didn't know that I had that in me!" (Interview December 6, 2010). She argued that youth do not often have the opportunity to "express exactly how you feel" in formal classroom settings, but when they do they often tap into

deeper understanding. She echoed Deborah's assertion that expressing oneself through poetry was more personal and authentic because it had the power to unleash talent, emotions, thoughts, ideas, and knowledge unlike other types of writing assignments.

Furthermore, Deborah believed that engaging in creative expression students tapped into their emerging consciousness. Deborah noted "how much learning was going on, both for the participants and the audience, including the adults" (Interview, February 10, 2011). She explained this learning was accomplished in part by presenting the UDHR as a "lens by which they [students] can articulate their experiences," thereby developing their consciousness about society and their community. She excitedly reacted to the performance, "What happens when you actually give them an opportunity to do it? You get this real insightful, intelligent, critically thought out piece of writing. It is kind of amazing" (Interview, December 14, 2010). She saw writing poetry as a way to draw out an emerging consciousness and performing the poetry as a way to make individual understanding communal.

Deborah was explicit in the importance of the physical performance of the poetry. She saw the value in individually written poetry, but also identified the role of elevating the student voice by performing to an audience. Deborah continued by explaining the individual, authentic, and organic contributions moved from personal to communal understanding when they were performed. Like Ellen and John, she explained that the public event gave a powerful experience to speak their truth. "It is real simple but it's real. I think those simple ideas, they stay with a person once you speak it, once you speak it, it is there for you forever, you bring it to the surface and it becomes something that

resonates against all experiences that follow and so I think just speaking it is a way of allowing consciousness to grow" (Interview, December 14, 2010).

Once students named their experiences in their own words and articulated it on stage, the audience witnessed their testimony. Deborah stated this was an important part of naming their reality and providing testimony to the community;

> It's a way to do that. This is my reality, let me look at it more closely and then thereby distance myself from it, maybe not be so affected by it if I can find this distance you know, that will actually allow me to have control over any of it, you know. So, they have to have that in order to have consciousness you have to have that, that ability to step outside of it, look at it, talk about it and thereby be free of it in a way of its negative impact on your emotions and so forth (Interview, December 14, 2010).

The performance grew from individual testimonies to collective understanding, allowing students a freedom from the negative impact of their personal experiences. Ellen also noted this process, "I think learning goes from self expressions to collective understanding because great art does create collective understanding." The performers became the teachers, and the performance became a type of dialogue.

Lucias noted the value of using the arts to draw students in and pique their curiosity. He compared reading about the UDHR in a textbook and viewing a "hecka sick" rendering of the UDHR in graffiti. He argued that youth would react to the graffiti and ask, "What does that say? That's hecka tight! UDHR, what is that?" and "Okay, this cat got style, what does he know about UDHR and why is it important?" (Interview, December 8, 2010). Lucias identified the dual impact of the creative arts as not only deepening learning for the students, but also catching the attention and teaching the audience. He explained,

> Rap is just basically poetry, which we have a lot in our performance. And it all, it comes back to like Oakland and the way youth think. If they have, youth

> are actually really smart out here. They, um, one thing youth is really good with rap is metaphor and when you understand rap music that means that you can understand things beyond the surface. You understand deeper and with today in Oakland—especially Oakland—we have a lot of art, as in graffiti, or we have a lot of murals and bringing that and incorporating it—it really catches the attention of our youth more than a ten pound book would (Interview, December 8, 2010).

As Deborah had described, performance is a form of dialogue, but Lucias expanded on this by explaining that one had to understand youth to be able to talk to youth. In this way the youth-generated art communicated in a way that resonated with their peers. Lucias described the traditional way of teaching, which placed the teacher in a position of lecturing instead of dialoguing with students, as too prevalent in school.

Lucias made clear that youth learn in a different way and that schools had not adapted to the way youth learn. His example of graffiti art and rap illustrated that learning need not be boring. This was very similar to Ellen's point that "education can be fun and difficult. Art is not just playing around, it's challenging" (Interview, February 2, 2011). Lucias gave an example of reading a newspaper or writing an essay, noting that the students "don't have any passion about it, but seeing a play with their peers, and their students and their teachers, it's going to like open their eyes." He described the students who came after school to practice as participating not only because it was fun, but also because it was thought-provoking and meaningful. He noted the importance of dialoguing with youth in forms engaging for them.

Lucias explained that art engages students emotionally and intellectually. He offered an example: "Well, it is all coming back to the youth today look at it. Like right now, I am scheduled to read my poem. If they want me to write an essay about it, I can write an essay about it and get up there and read an essay (laughing), but nobody's going to listen to me because it is going to be boring (laughing), right? If I write a poem, it is

like a difference between speaking to your mind because all day we are in school, they just talking to our mind, we get burnt out. But, when you write a poem, it is not only speaking to your mind, but it is speaking to your heart" (Interview, December 8, 2010). Lucias' example aptly summarized reflections of the teachers and students regarding the ways performance art led to a deeper connection to their academic learning.

Unique to Place and Time

When I asked students and teachers to share their reactions to the performance, their reflections on how it connected to their community stood out. Students and teachers chose to focus on human rights issues not in far away places, but rather in their own immediate community. The poems, posters, and theatrical vignettes were relevant to their time and place. They felt the focus on Oakland was a major contributor to the performance's impact.

John stated that HHS students were invested in the UDHR performance in a way that students at other schools might not have been because of the harsh realities of their environment. "These kids live it all the time which is why I feel like they have a stronger grasp of these deep things because they can relate to it in such a personal level" (Interview, November 17, 2010). He believed their life experiences gave them first hand knowledge of human rights issues and, conversely, informed their actions toward solutions. John described his students as "diamonds in the rough" who he expected would "tap into themselves as artists and as well as organizers and achievers and activists and advocates for this community and for themselves and for this world" (December 6, 2010). In other words, the UDHR was real, not conceptual, and this was represented in the performance.

John noted that students chose to present universal human rights issues by depicting on stage their personal impact. He explained,

> There was something very distinctly Oakland about what we did as far as content was concerned that just made ours a lot more personable, a lot more authentic...Racial profiling, police brutality, health care—we covered that...Immigration is a big one. We don't live on the border, but a lot of our kids are affected by the border. We are 500 miles from the nearest border, but yet the border was still here on our stage. Hell, the kids made a border (Interview, December 15, 2010).

By choosing artistic representations of personal experience, the performers connected to the audience. John pointed out that "they didn't talk about children infanticide in China; they didn't talk about that, that is too disconnected. It was all connected and so that is what made it more pertinent to them" (Interview, December 15, 2010).

Deborah also noted how the performance was directly related to local experiences, "The environmental justice piece, you know, that kind of related directly to Oakland—I thought that was pretty cool. Everything was connected to Oakland...It was really connected to their experiences, our experiences" (Interview, December 14, 2010). She was amazed at the poetry performances, especially Jeanette Vargas' "My Oakland" (Appendix I) which described with vivid detail the beauty of Oakland despite the hardships. Deborah concluded, "This was an assembly about the UDHR *in Oakland* and how it affects Oakland or how it is connected to Oakland and that really drove it across" (Interview, December 14, 2010).

Deborah argued that since the performance was directly related to their world, it was "an opportunity to process that thinking that really doesn't get processed normally because nobody's asking the questions, nobody's creating the discussion panel or anything. It is through thinking through and also through education that we come to a

greater consciousness" (Interview, December 14, 2010). She gave the example of the depiction of Oscar Grant's murder and the opportunity to process that event. "It is a big visual in this community, but I don't know that it is been processed. At least in school it hasn't been processed. So I like that they gave an opportunity to process it whether it be through a poem or a commentary or whatever, it was like something happened in our community that was not right!" (Interview, December 14, 2010) According to Deborah, creating and performing artistic interpretations of their communal experiences helped students through a cognitive process leading to critical consciousness.

Furthermore, the UDHR provided a lens through which to examine events in their community. Deborah argued that knowing the 30 articles of the UDHR led to empowerment; "It really does mean something for you to be told that you have Human Rights and that no one can take those rights away from you and especially if you are coming up in this community where people are getting killed right and left." She continued, "You need to feel empowered sometimes because this environment can disempower you" (Interview, December 14, 2010). She explained the set of articles of the UDHR provided a sense of legitimacy to the injustices they named because the UDHR was an outside source with international authority (Interview, December 14, 2010). Deborah described teaching the UDHR through performance art as an uplifting and empowering experience for her students and the school community.

Ellen had a different perspective regarding whether depicting the violence was empowering. She felt that showing the amount of violence in students' lives was necessary and respected the students' desire to express it. However, she felt the performance needed to go one step further to provide possibility for changing the

conditions of their lives. Depicting violence without showing the ability to make choices or shift the outcomes was troubling to her. She explained her concern:

> To just show violence—I don't know what it does other than just keep reinforcing that you know, five people got shot in my neighborhood. Okay, but you've got to go deeper than that. You've got to give an audience and yourself a way to think about it because otherwise to just say that five people got shot, it is a way of where you acquiesce and just surrender and go hey, that is just the way it is. No, that is something that happened but doesn't have to continue to be. That's just the way it is, because change happens with thought and questions (Interview, February 2, 2011).

Ellen believed theater offered an opportunity to learn about human nature, why individuals make choices, and the consequences of those choices. When creating a play, the actors fabricated conditions to result in a catharsis and eventual resolution. She felt this process provided the actors and audience with a chance to create moments to influence the outcome of a given situation. She believed this process could have been better explored during the HHS performance.

Although Ellen expressed concerns, she agreed the performance represented the youth's lived experiences and connected to their unique place and time. She commended the students and teachers, especially John, in presenting the events and concerns of their community with authenticity. She felt the artistic representation of human rights issues in their community provided an opportunity for the youth to process personal experiences and develop critical consciousness. The challenge lay in moving from a depiction of violations to a representation of what it would take to create a community where human rights were promoted and defended.

Difficulty of the Arts Becoming Part of the Classroom Pedagogy

Teachers, teaching artist, and students all identified the value of performance art; however they were acutely aware of the obstacles which limited the integration the

performance art into classroom pedagogy. Pressures from high-stakes testing, institutional restraints, and traditional teaching methods were forces that pushed performing art outside the classroom.

Five of the nine student participants explicitly lamented the absence of the arts in classrooms. My observations revealed that the human rights project was a rare example of performing art pedagogy inside the classroom. Taytiana and Lucias, in particular, encouraged teachers to use poetry and creative arts more often and expressed concern that teachers did not provide enough opportunities for creative expression. Taytiana argued, "The more teachers ask the students to tap into their creative side or get more deeper into it, get personal with it, like the stronger the outcome would be or the stronger the impact that it will have on people around them" (Interview, December 6, 2010). She stated that teachers often had low expectations of students, but if teachers encouraged students to "tap into their creative sides," they would be very impressed with the student work (Interview, December 6, 2010).

Although teachers and administrators met at the beginning of the year and were committed to the creation of the performance, the use of performing arts during class time was rare. In Anita's Advanced Graphic Design class, students learned and applied skills to create original posters, but they worked individually. The exception was the creation of the film and quilt, but these were optional assignments created mostly outside of class time. During his formal instructional time, John guided students in artistic interpretations of content twice in four months. In Deborah's class, the only performance art activities occurred the day Ellen visited the class. A majority of the December 10th performance was created outside formal class time.

John shouldered the majority of the work beyond the classroom. He recruited students, facilitated the creation of skits, coached the performers, wrote the program, and led rehearsals. At lunch and after school, John did not hesitate to teach performance and was comfortable in the role of director, producer, and coach. When I asked John about the limited use of performance in the classroom, he, like Deborah, identified the pressure of "so much" material to cover and the pressure to prepare students for the CAHSEE. He concluded that the intense work both inside and outside the classroom took a "hell of a toll" and that he was in danger of "burning myself out" (Interview December 15, 2010).

Deborah was also aware of the distinct difference between in-class and out-of-class preparation for the performance. During our last interview, Deborah articulated succinctly the barriers to integrating performance art into formal instruction. First, she listed many benefits of using the performing arts, "They can relate to it on so many levels, it's real, it develops their voice and ability to communicate ideas in various ways, self-expression and they are proud. It's student-centered. They also are motivated, there is an internal commitment, not for a grade, accountable to themselves because they chose it. Because it is all these things it is empowering" (Interview, February 10, 2011). She said that in her 22 years of teaching, she could think of only one other example of this type of learning, motivation, and authentic experience. (Interview, February 10, 2011). Deborah explained "everybody kind of knows" that acting, moving, and being hands-on helps people learn more, but "at the same time we don't do that, we lecture and we fill empty vessels and stuff like that" (Interview, February 10, 2011). She concluded, "That whole, creativity always gets the back burner all the time" (Interview, February 10, 2011).

Deborah identified the limited amount of time to cover material, the responsibility to improve students' reading and writing proficiency, and the pressure of the standardized tests as causes for the arts being pushed outside of the classroom. She saw the greatest barrier as the "dominating force" of the "way we teach" (Interview, February 10, 2011). She described it as an implicit and explicit message that learning must follow a more teacher-centered, traditional approach and that it "can't be about their [student's] enthusiasm or joy. Somehow because it reeks of creativity, its insightfulness is not as, I guess, important as something that is more formulaic" (Interview, February 10, 2011). As she noted:

> There's that history and that pull and there's that way of getting things done that is a dominating force. Whenever you take on something new like, something that is more hands on, more creative, then there is always going to be a tension of 'This is not familiar. This does not feel familiar. This doesn't feel quite like school or whatever.' (Interview, February 10, 2011)

This "dominating force" that ranked art as non-academic impacted the way the performance was created.

Deborah referenced the debrief meeting after the performance as a good example of how difficult it was to change traditional orientation, specifically evident in the principal's message about returning to their curriculum and test preparation. For Deborah, the message was couched as, "The kids have to know that it can't be about their enthusiasm and their joy of learning" and "they have to learn to read and write still. They have to learn to express themselves in a traditional way still" (Interview, February 10, 2011). Deborah lamented,

> Somehow because it reeks of creativity, its insight-fullness is not as, I guess, important as something that is more formulaic. 'Did they learn the form? This form that I deem as academic and more important.' But yeah! You looked at the

> presentation in its entirety and there was a hell of a lot of process in that! (Interview, February 10, 2011)

Deborah argued that in order to bring the performance arts into the classroom, school-wide change was required. Noting the burden on John, Deborah suggested the project become more institutionalized within the school. She felt a team effort was needed for the project to avoid falling on one sole teacher.

Deborah also talked about the difficulty of letting go of the reins of control in the classroom, "I need a number of people to help me out of that orientation. The orientation I'm used to" (Interview, February 10, 2011). In order for the performing arts to be integrated into the formal classrooms, teachers needed more support and accountability. She offered the state standards as one way to mandate content and pedagogy and called for internal and external collaboration to shift the traditional ways of teaching (Interview, February 10, 2011).

I asked Ellen about the reluctance of teachers to use the performing arts in the classroom. Ellen echoed much of John and Deborah's points, but with a slightly different perspective. First, she explained that teachers tended to have a tremendous workload including paperwork, grading, and responsibilities that they stepped back with almost a sigh of relief when she, as the teaching artist, arrived. Second, in her years as a visiting artist in schools, she had experienced a common pattern of content area teachers being anxious about using the arts because they didn't identify as artists. She described teachers who withdraw allowing her to take over as the expert and that they lack the confidence to jump in and lead creative exercises. This dynamic was evident in my observation of Ellen's visits to Deborah and John's classes.

Similar to Deborah, Ellen identified a hegemonic force that deems performance art as extraneous and relegates it to electives or after school activities. Ellen explained, "That's systemic, so I don't know until education as a whole starts to rethink how we continue to have integrated education throughout that is going to continue to happen." She offered an example of how educators tend to react when she visits a school, "They go, "Okay this is just playing around. Nothing is really happening here other than just playing around" (Interview, February 11, 2011). She said students often start out thinking the same way "until they get challenged and I say, 'No. You have to think a little bit deeper'" (Interview, February 11, 2011). She said this was due to a prevailing attitude that using performance art in the classroom is not academic.

Like Deborah, Ellen mentioned the post-performance meeting. Ellen did not attend, but heard about the meeting through Sandy Sohcot. Ellen shared her strong reaction to hearing the principal's statements regarding the need to get back to teaching,

> I am livid that an educator would say that. I am livid! And you can definitely quote me on that. I was livid! And I thought that that is the kind of thing, if I had been in the room, I think it would be everything I could do to not really challenge her in front of everyone and say, "Then you don't understand what true teaching is and true education is!" (Interview, February 11, 2011)

Summary

When discussing their experiences of and engagement in the use of performance art to teach about human rights, four major themes arose from the participants. Pride in the process and product was the most common reaction. Participants also discussed how the performance deepened the learning about the UDHR and helped to develop communication skills. Connecting their learning to the events of their community was

also an important aspect of their experience. Finally, the teachers and teaching artist articulated the barriers to including performing arts as part of classroom pedagogy.

Research Question 3

In What Ways Do the Students' Creative Work and Reflections Represent the Transformative Goals of Human Rights Education?

In reviewing the students' creative work and reflections, the objectives of HRE were represented in multiple ways. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2008) "Human Rights Education encompasses: (a) Knowledge and skills - learning about human rights and mechanisms for their protection, as well as acquiring skills to apply them in daily life; (b) Values, attitudes and behavior- developing values and reinforcing attitudes and behavior which uphold human rights; (c) Action- taking action to defend and promote human rights" (p.12). The content of the students' creative contributions, attitude toward the performance, reflections on the message they hoped to convey, and reaction to the death of a classmate met the HRE stated objectives. The transformative aspect of HRE refers to the process by which individuals build knowledge and awareness about human rights and move toward actively defending and promoting human dignity.

Knowledge and Application: Connecting to Students' Lives

In considering the first goal of HRE (the knowledge and application of human rights documents to daily life), the students' artistic contributions correctly identified articles from the UDHR and applied them to personal or local issues. For example, in Anita's class, each student created a poster and written response articulating the connection to UDHR article. Students chose a variety of human rights issues.

In his poster about Arizona SB1070, Roy correctly identified Article 7: the right to be equal before the law, and Article 26: the right to education. Through words, color, symbol, and composition Roy challenged the Arizona law as a direct affront to the right of racial equality. By choosing the Huelga bird and the words "Viva La Raza," Roy invited viewers to connect with the historic struggle for justice of Latinos and Latinas in the United States. The image of his own hands with fingers crossed both personalized the human rights issue and represented his hope for a new reality.

Image 1

Brown Is Not A Crime by Roy Ramos (2010)

As we discussed his poster, Roy also named Article 19: the right to freedom of speech and expression as part of his motivation to participate in the project. He passionately and eloquently argued that "everyone has a great voice" that should be heard and by using that voice an individual can help to end inequality and injustice. I asked if he saw himself as one of those voices. He answered quickly and confidently that he viewed the performance as an opportunity to exercise his right to freedom of expression and to communicate creatively his experiences and knowledge, especially from a Latino perspective. Roy's discussion of his poster and involvement in the project represented HRE's goal of knowledge and application.

For Deborah's poetry assignment, students were asked to depict an incident where human rights had been dismissed or honored. Again, students exhibited knowledge acquisition and application skills. Overwhelmingly, the student poems dealt with violations. The most common article was Article 3: the right to life, liberty, and security of person. For example, in Deborah's first period class, of the 13 poems submitted, ten dealt with violence in their community. Six out of the ten students wrote about a family member or close friend who was either shot and wounded, or killed. In one case, a student's friend was killed by a hit and run incident. Three of the thirteen portrayed interracial relationships, the freedom to move across borders, and the right to love and friendship. Only one poem contained a hopeful message of human rights being honored. The poems identified the incongruent aspect of the UDHR ideals as compared to the students' reality.

The performance provided many examples of knowledge and application. The compilation of poetry, rap, theatrical vignettes, song, and dance included 16

contributions. All of the 16 dealt with either Article 1: all human beings are free and equal or Article 3: everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person. The depiction of violence and racism dominated the performance and were topics within 13 of the 16 acts. One of the foundational concepts of human rights law is the interdependence of one right with another. Many of the contributions dealt with more than one human right and exposed the interconnectedness of economic, social, political, and cultural rights.

The content of the students' performance illustrated not only their ability to identify and apply the UDHR to concrete examples, but also their comprehension and application of more complicated aspects of human rights law. Despite the way each right is separately delineated in the UDHR, all rights are interdependent. For example, Lucias' "Emancipation Exaggeration" and "Health Care," as well as Julio's environmental racism speech, provided a complex analysis of the interwoven aspects of racial equality and economic rights. In the three classes I observed, teachers did not explicitly delve into the relationship between economic, social, political and cultural rights, but that connection was not lost on the students.

Lucias' poem, "Health Care," offers a prime example of students' ability to express the complexity and interconnectedness of human rights principles. In the first stanza of his poem, Lucias asks:

> Is it not true we as humans have
> Right to life?
> Or are you only allowed life
> If you have the proper wealth?
> If those in such power
> Must protect our rights as human
> What is life without the guarantee
> of the common health?

Before we are countries
And before we are nations
We are first human

His poem weaves the right to healthcare, or lack thereof, to economic disparity. He identified the universal nature of this right and the primacy of human rights above national boundaries or political ideologies. Furthermore, he questioned the U.S. failure to guarantee healthcare despite its power and wealth. Lucias exposed this with the following lines;

Some countries rich
So some countries got it
Some countries claim super power
But still don't have it
Some countries' too impoverished hands
Can't grasp it
Some countries can give it
But too selfish to route it

His words also blend the interconnectedness of the right to life, the right to security of basic needs, and the special protections of women and children. The following lines illustrate his point:

No one shall be denied it yet
The world spins despite it
Some single mothers are forced to choose
Is it dinner or medicine her child will lose?
(Health Care, 2010).

In his poem, Lucias not only clearly identified and applied the rights enumerated in the UDHR, but also presented three major conceptual elements of human rights principles: universality, inalienability and interdependency. By doing so, he achieved the first goal of HRE - content knowledge, the second goal - an attitude and behavior to uphold human rights, and, by performing his poem he exhibited the third goal - action taking.

In his interview Lucias discussed the objective of his poem was to illustrate the interrelationship among the rights to food, safety, shelter, and healthcare.

> Healthcare as a whole, that really took my interest because that is like the basic, bare essentials that all humans should have. You should have a house to live in. You should have enough food, not like just enough food. You should have enough food to feel comfortable. You should be comfortable as a human being and the fact that we do have, on earth, we have more than enough to feed everybody, and everybody to be full, so why are people going out poor or why are people hungry? Just because you don't have enough money shouldn't judge how much you are fed, because you are human (Interview, December 8, 2010).

His poem was part of a larger scene reenacting violence at a local night club followed by a hospital scene. The scene and poem wove the right to be safe from violence, the right to healthcare, and the right to economic stability. Lucias extrapolated:

> That is one thing that we charge people for and if you don't have enough money you can get turned down at a hospital when you're hours away from death. Like a human life, a human soul, you going to die and they will turn you down because you don't have enough money. That's just greedy. It just really shows the true colors of the so called "home of the free, or home of the brave, land of the free" (December 8, 2010).

Through his poetry, Lucias illustrated the interdependence of one human right, healthcare, to another, economic security. He also critiqued the U.S. capitalist system. His analysis was presented through performance poetry and connected with local experiences. In this way, he not only exhibited knowledge and application skills, but also he engaged and taught others through his art.

Attitude and Behavior: Community of Human Dignity

The second objective of HRE (developing values and reinforcing attitudes and behavior which uphold human rights) was evident in students' choice to participate and in the attitude students expressed toward the performance. Over 40 students either performed on stage or supported the project in various roles. Their decision to

communicate a message to their community about human rights and to commit a substantial amount of time outside of class exhibited an attitude and behavior supporting human dignity.

In interviews, a consistent response to the question of why they chose to participate was that they wanted to share a message of a community based on mutual respect. Stephanie's comments represented an example, "Yeah. I try to respect others how I would want to be respected too. When I hear people talking or acting negative towards each other, I get mad, I don't like it and I see that here all the time. I am so for human rights because I don't think anyone should deserve to be treated like less than anyone else depending on race or anything like that" (Interview, December 7, 2010). Many of the performers expressed a personal commitment to creating a community of human dignity.

Deborah observed this positive attitude and behavior both from the participants and the audience. First, she spoke of the respect with which the students treated the project: "It was a choice to participate and they took it seriously" (Interview, December 14, 2010). Furthermore, she noted the attentiveness of the audience.

> There was a seriousness about it, that kind of (pause) kind of belies the—you know, because I am used to frivolous behavior all of the time—the F word going off at any point in time, and there was a seriousness that the kids took with it, whether it was the audience or whether it was the performers, it was like, Wow! I was pleased... Even though there was some definite difficulties—the people in the back couldn't hear as well as the people in the front, you know, there were some definite difficulties, so for it, for them to maintain themselves the way they did, it wasn't because you know, there are no amount of teachers that could have settled down an unruly crowd once they got started and they never got started. The respect they gave to it speaks volumes...they gave their fellow peers respect but they also respected the content (Interview, December 14, 2010).

Deborah's description of the respect students gave to their peers and the human rights content was supported by my observations. Before, during, and after the performance, students exhibited interest in the content and admiration for the performers.

Action Taking: Educating Others

As for the final goal of HRE (action taking to defend and promote human rights) the students manifested their attainment of this goal through their participation in the project. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the students did not receive credit toward a grade. Their participation was voluntary and therefore provides evidence of action-taking to promote human rights. Inherent in the goals of HRE is that the educational experience should be a transformative one. Therefore, the question remained: Was teaching and learning about human rights through the performing arts a transformative experience? Did it move students from knowledge to activism?

Interviews with students suggest that the experience was transformative in two distinct ways. First, a few students, Earsy and Naja, for example, spoke of how being exposed to the UDHR changed they way they thought and acted. However, many of the student-participants were already aware of the UDHR and were active in human rights issues. Performing on stage provided an opportunity for students to become teachers. This was the second way in which the experience was transformative. For example, Roy and Stephanie had participated in marches for immigration rights, and Julio had cofounded a nonprofit to combat environmental racism. In other words, the UDHR provided a frame or structure to the issues in which they were already active. The opportunity to create and perform during a school sanctioned event provided a literal and symbolic platform. For these student-activists, the stage realigned their position from

learner to teacher. Once on stage, the performers presented a public testimony and answers to what it would take to create a culture of human dignity. The students taught the audience about human rights and how it applied to their lives. They went even further by offering solutions to the violations they witnessed in their community.

Earsy provided a prime example of the transformative aspect of HRE. Before the project, Earsy was not aware of the UDHR,

> I am going to tell you straight up being honest; I did not know that I had human rights. I didn't know nothing about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights whatsoever and like hearing about it I'm like, 'whoa! this is interesting. I really do got rights!' If I ever become a lawyer, this is going to be my best friend...It changed the way that I think and feel (Interview, November 17, 2010).

She not only identified a change in herself, but she took it to the next level by actively educating others. On her own initiative, she interviewed six classmates about their awareness of the UDHR as an extra assignment in her journalism class. In her first interview, one of her classmate admitted he didn't know about the UDHR. She responded, "You don't? Well, you should," and insisted he read her copy of the 30 articles (Interview, November 17, 2010).

Another example of the transformative aspect of HRE through the arts was the impact of performing on stage. The students were elevated to a place of leadership by participating in the project. In one example, John witnessed a distinct change in Nixon after he performed his rap, "United As One";

> He was very scared in the beginning and during his practices he kept messing up a little bit, not being as clear and eventually as I coached him through it and talked him through it and just gave him some advice like just go out there and just do it! Don't even hesitate, but be loud. Be upfront about your stuff. You are good. You know you know your stuff. I think the transformation really didn't fully set in until he went up on that stage and in front of everybody and did it. I will tell you this, his confidence has been pretty much high up there ever since. He walks with a certain swagger since then. He might not know, but

> I see it. He walks more chest out and people giving him his props and it really opened him up to a lot more things and he is working with a friend who produces music (Interview, February 16, 2011).

John noticed that many of the students who chose to participate were already leaders on campus, yet a few, like Nixon, had not previously taken a publicly active role in advocating for human rights.

For those who were already leaders in various justice issues, their knowledge informed the performance's message. These student-activists had a great deal to teach others, including adults, about solutions to the prevalence of human rights violations around them. Their performance contained several solutions to the violence they experienced, for example, Roy's poster for the repeal of Arizona law SB 1070. Above all, the students shared the importance of human relationships as a means to defend and promote human dignity. Seven of the nine students interviewed for the study identified community building as a path to end racism and violence. The performance provided the stage by which the student-activists shared a road map to human rights.

For example, Stephanie had learned about the UDHR the previous year in her Law and Public Service course, but her knowledge of what it took to create a community of human dignity grew from her activism with the organizations, La Raza and Homies Empowerment. Her poem, "My Dream of Oakland" (Appendix D), urged youth to unite. In our interview she talked about the importance of the Homies Empowerment mentors who organized large dinners and encouraged rival gang members to get to know one another. Stephanie talked about the message in her poem, "I wrote about how, I have a dream that one day there will be peace in Oakland where there won't be rivalry gangs or you know, people against each other because we're all the same people you know? We

are fighting our brothers and sisters. Like, we are killing our own brothers and sisters and I have a dream that one day we can all just hang out and come together and there will be peace in Oakland" (Interview, December 7, 2010). Stephanie saw through her activism that developing relationships were the key to creating a community of human dignity and less violence.

Nixon echoed Stephanie's experience. He spoke of a similar strategy to stop the racism and violence he had witnessed in his neighborhood:

> I feel like if we unite people, it is like, I feel that we could probably end violence, senseless violence at least. Like gangs for example, we got gangs like Norteños, Sureños or even Border Brothers, they are killing each other, because I know a lot of people that gang bang and it is like they are killing each other when it is their own race, but when you ask them, like, "What do you represent?" they are like, "Oh it's Latinos. I'm here to - I represent Latinos." In the sense that comes to mind, it's like okay, you represent Latinos then why are you killing other Latinos? And that is why I feel like, if we unite, you know, it is going to change a lot of things, especially in the violence sense at least (Interview, December 7, 2010).

Nixon's participation in Homies Empowerment was where he experienced the power of building relationships. Through his rap he hoped to spread that message.

Roy was the third student to cite the impact of Homies Empowerment on his understanding of how to create a community of human dignity. He explained the Homies Empowerment events were the only time youth got to "kick it with people from rival neighborhoods" (Interview, December 1, 2010). He said the Wednesday night dinners gave them "our childhood back" by allowing them to spend time together and feel safe (Interview, December 1, 2010). Part of Homies Empowerment community building work was to teach about Latino/a history. This influenced Roy to chose the following quote by Cesar Chavez for his poster, "We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community. Our ambitions must be broad enough to

include the aspirations and needs of others for their sakes and for our own" (Interview, December 1, 2010). The role of human relationships in the development of community was a central theme in Roy's art and the students' message on stage. The active participation in the performance provided evidence of attainment by students of the third goal of HRE, action-taking. Many of the performers were previously active in human rights issues and, therefore, their message of what it would take to create a community of human dignity represented action-taking in the form of educating others.

Application to the Reality of their Lives: The Loss of a Classmate

One month after the performance, a sophomore student named Lovell Hadnot was shot and killed near campus. Although my observations had ended, I had previously scheduled a final interview with John and Deborah with the intention of capturing their reflections about the final performance and semester. Our conversation turned to the tragic loss of a student.

Deborah explained the overwhelming sense of hopelessness that overcame students. She shared that many students and teachers attended the funeral. She reflected on the possible influence learning about human rights had on the students' process of healing:

> We can't get past it right now because of how bleak it might be, but I think things could turn out for the better and I think that something like this, getting this message across, it may not automatically filter in with the kids right away, but I think down the line it will. Kids aren't going to forget. I seriously doubt that they are going to forget what they saw (referring to the performance) (Interview, February 10, 2011).

John described the Monday after Lovell was killed as a very difficult day. In all his classes, "We had conversations across the board between sophomores and seniors—what do you guys think about this? What do you think we've learned from the UDHR?

That is what I brought up, like what did we learn from what we've learned? What's got to happen? What's got to stop?" (Interview, February 16, 2011). He said two of the seniors who were involved in the project spoke up about making the right choices. These two seniors, one who performed in the theatrical vignettes and another who created a poster, stated that their peers need to make the right choices in life. John explained that they were not being callous; rather they spoke of their own experiences of trying to change their lives and wanted the younger students to make similar choices.

John shared a similar sentiment as he reflected on Lovell and the performance;

> I am fairly certain he [Lovell] was in that show watching, who knows, [others] were probably thinking the same thing; 'man that could be me next. What do I need to do to fix things up?' And I am hoping that the kids understand that everybody has got the right to live. Why don't you just live? Live a better life. Don't get caught up in the same stuff everybody else is doing (Interview, February 16, 2011).

He hoped the students involved in the performance and those in the audience would choose a path toward life, but he also revealed his frustration that his students were not safe despite their life choices.

Two of John's students shared the same frustration. Sophomores, Earsy and Dajanique, were involved in the performance and were close to Lovell. John described their reaction, "Between the crying and the tears, they have had a lot of positive things to say about what we've done as far as putting out the human rights and what people ought to know they should do or demand whether it is demanding our own safety or demanding the right to be able to freely walk around this neighborhood" (Interview, February 16, 2011). As for John, his reaction was much the same as his students, "Lovell died in broad daylight. He got killed in a parking lot right on Bancroft walking from a store. Shouldn't people have the right to do that in broad daylight?" (Interview, February 16, 2011).

The two seniors who spoke in John's class argued that youth had the power within themselves to make decisions to keep themselves and others safe. By identifying control over their destiny they illustrated a sense of empowerment. Earsy and Dajanique's demand for the right to walk safely in their neighborhood also represented the ability to act toward changing the conditions of their lives. All four recognized Lovell's right to life and safety as a human right. Participation in the human rights performance may have contributed to that sense of advocacy.

On the other hand, the students' discussion in John's class neglected to include a structural analysis of why society failed to keep youth safe. The human rights treaties hold governments legally responsible for promoting the equality, freedom, and security of those who live in its borders, especially children. Also seemingly absent from the students' discussion was inclusion of concrete actions toward positive change. I did not observe the conversation, so I do not know first-hand the extent of their reflection, but it brought to mind Ellen's concern that the performance lacked an exploration of actions to change outcomes. Combined, these caused me to reflect on the extent to which teaching and learning through the performing arts empowers students to act collectively to challenge the structural conditions which stand in the way of a culture of human rights. John's final comment about Lovell's death and his students' reaction and the impact of the performance provided some hope, "I think we need more time to process that as time goes on, but I think the seeds have been planted without a doubt" (Interview, February 16, 2011).

Summary

The findings showed that students involved in the human rights project achieved the goals of HRE in various ways. The students' poetry and posters offered examples of knowledge and application of human right mechanisms and concepts. Students' willingness to commit themselves to the project, as well as the audience's respect for the performance, exhibited an attitude and behavior in support of human rights. Their ability to teach others about how human rights applied to their lives and community represented the third goal; action taking. Finally, as conveyed by John and Deborah, the students' reaction to the murder of a classmate provided a sober moment to reflect on the goals of HRE. According to Deborah and John, the students were able to discuss the death of a classmate through a human rights lens, but the level to which their understanding transformed to concrete action for positive change was not yet known.

CHAPTER VI: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

Summary of Findings

After reflecting upon the data and emergent themes, I now return to my meta-question: "Is it possible for Human Rights Education (HRE) which integrates the performing arts as a pedagogical tool to provide a transformative educational experience for students?" For this study, a transformative educational experience referred to learning activities which engaged students in addressing the oppressive conditions in their communities, built a sense of empowerment to change these conditions, and provided necessary skills to effect change. To answer this question, I explored how the performing arts and the UDHR were integrated, what the participants revealed about the experience, and the ways the teaching and learning represented the transformational goals of HRE.

My first research question focused on how teachers integrated the performing arts with human rights content in their pedagogy and three major themes emerged. First, teachers adjusted their semester courses as they added UDHR content, but did not completely rewrite their curriculum or change their pedagogy. They reported that the UDHR gave an organizational framework to their existing social justice objectives. Second, students were encouraged to choose issues relevant to their lives and community and the medium to express themselves creatively. Teachers found integrating the UDHR content easier than using performance art in the classroom, and as a result, the culminating performance grew from both formal and informal teaching and learning.

The students showed immense pride in their creative pieces and the final performance, especially in presenting a message of human rights to their peers. Teachers

and students also reflected on how learning through the arts connected their lived experiences, culture, and community with academic content. Students were encouraged to connect the UDHR with issues relevant to their lives and community, and thus the performance became a public record of their unique time and place. Finally, data showed that the students not only achieved knowledge and skills recommended by the goals of HRE, but also became active in educating others.

Through my observations and interviews with participants, I concluded that teaching and learning about the UDHR through the performance arts provided a transformative experience. Students' ability to identify oppressive conditions through a human rights lens permeated my observations, student interviews, and the performance. Communicating creatively to an audience about their experiences, knowledge, and solutions to human rights violations represented the skills necessary to effect change. The students who had been active in local issues, such as immigration rights and violence prevention, shared the importance of community building as one possible solution to human rights violations. The extent to which the experience will lead to long-term transformation of the conditions of their lives is yet unknown, but as John stated, "seeds have been planted" (Interview, February 16, 2011).

Discussion

Purpose to Their Practice

When asked to reflect on the semester, the teachers shared their immense sense of pride and satisfaction in facilitating a meaningful experience for their students and community. All three classroom teachers dedicated time and energy beyond the formal classroom because they believed that the arts served as a means to reveal their students'

knowledge, creativity, and power. John shared that teaching human rights through the performing arts represented the reasons he became a teacher - to support youth in establishing their voices. He concluded that the process "has given me more purpose in my practice" (Interview, November 17, 2010). Deborah also commented on how the project gave renewed meaning to her teaching and to the school's mission of law and public service. She said the performance was one of only two examples in her 22 years of teaching of student-led activities that promoted an enthusiasm for learning and a deeper connection to the material. Although the teachers and teaching artist acknowledged barriers to fully implementing the project during formal class time, their overarching conclusion was that the UDHR aligned with their curriculum and contributed to a meaningful experience for themselves and their students.

The teachers' and teaching artist's reflections on the experience were similar to responses from teachers in studies by Covell and Howe (2008), Gerber (2008), Suarez (2007), and Yamasaki (2002). Covell and Howe (2008) interviewed teachers in Hampshire County, England, about their experiences implementing the Rights, Respect, & Responsibility program. This program took a whole school approach by introducing human rights content to classrooms and creating new school policies based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Hampshire County teachers described the human rights program as increasing their self-efficacy, sense of achievement, and enjoyment of teaching. The teachers further stated the experience reminded them of why they went into teaching - to make a difference, a response almost identical to John's statement about giving purpose to his practice.

In Gerber's (2008) study, teachers in Boston also noted increased enthusiasm and joy for teaching after including human rights to their courses. These teachers were motivated not by mandated curriculum or a countywide program, as in Hampshire County. They were motivated by a personal commitment to engage their students in the study of human rights. The HHS teachers were similarly motivated by a desire to provide youth with an opportunity to transform their lives and community, not by a district mandate.

Gerber (2008) and Suarez (2007) concluded that classroom teachers tended to focus more on the transformative aspects of HRE in the hopes to promote awareness and action, and less attention to the legal mechanisms of human rights. Gerber (2008) warned that although teachers were teaching human rights with a great deal of passion, they had little to no knowledge of how to do so. Only 9% of the teachers she interviewed defined HRE as related to United Nation (UN) documents.

Confirming Gerber's (2008) findings, all three of the teachers in my study believed in the transformative possibilities of HRE; although they used the UDHR as a framework, they paid less attention to the legal mechanisms. Unlike the teachers in Gerber's study who had limited knowledge of how to teach human rights, John and Deborah incorporated the historical and legal aspects of the UDHR due in part to their training at the TWAICB three-day institute. Anita, who did not attend the training, participated in the project with passion and commitment, but relied on the content area teachers to cover the UDHR. This pattern indicated that providing teachers with background information and training about international human rights law could increase the possibility of more content in the classroom.

Despite the positive personal and professional outcomes, teachers in Covell and Howe's (2008), Gerber's (2008), Suarez's (2007), and Yamasaki's (2002) studies identified difficulties in implementing HRE. Covell and Howe's (2008) participants expressed concern about excess workload and the possibility of decreased test scores. Gerber's (2008) Boston teachers discussed crowded curriculum, limited resources, lack of training, and absence of government mandates. Educators in Suarez's (2007) study were concerned about the pressure on individual teachers who implement transformational pedagogy within traditional school settings. Interestingly, Covell and Howe's (2008) study found that within schools that fully implemented the program where the administration provided leadership, the head teacher was also trained, and the curriculum was integrated into what teachers were already doing, fewer instances of teacher burnout or discussion of barriers took place as compared to schools which only partially implemented the program. My research confirms that when the HRE program is not school-wide, individual teachers tended to identify barriers and become susceptible to burnout.

Connecting the UDHR to Students' Lives and Community

All three classroom teachers initiated their human rights lessons by tapping into the experiences of their students. This pattern continued throughout the semester as students prepared for the performance. The students' creative pieces were relevant to their lived experiences; therefore the UDHR became personal. In the end, their culminating presentation was what Deborah called the "UDHR *in* Oakland" (Interview, December 14, 2010). John explained that he felt the students had a stronger grasp of the seriousness and complexity of human rights because they could relate to the content on a personal level

(November 17, 2010). Students emphasized this point and spoke of their motivation and engagement being deepened partly due to the application of the UDHR to their lives and community. Furthermore, the use of creative expression provided students with ways to link individual experiences with systemic analysis.

Other empirical studies attested to the success of connecting the UDHR with the students' lived experiences. Both Yamasaki (2001) and Wade (1992) studied the impact of teaching about human rights in primary grades in Minnesota and Massachusetts, respectively. In both cases, the content covered in class was dominated by human rights violations outside the U.S., for example child labor in Pakistan, with few examples of local issues. In both studies, human rights were presented more often as violations that happen to "others." In post interviews, Yamasaki (2001) found that sixth and seventh graders remembered and discussed topics relevant to their students' lives as compared to human rights issues in far away places. Wade (1992) found similar responses among fourth graders whose personal experiences, developmental levels, and family and cultural backgrounds influenced their interests in human rights content.

Covell and Howe's (2008) study showed that students exhibited higher levels of engagement, motivation, and academic performance when the content connected with the lives of the participants. Not only did students take their learning more seriously, but also the classroom atmosphere was transformed to possess a stronger sense of community and mutual respect. In schools that fully implemented the human rights program, students became more active in leadership positions within the school. Furthermore, the researchers found that the positive effects of the program were most pronounced in schools within underserved neighborhoods. In these schools there were increased levels

of academic engagement, student motivation, and school attendance. The students were profoundly affected in a positive way when they felt their teachers and administrators acknowledged them as rights-bearing citizens and respected their rights, specifically the right to participation. Similarly, HHS students in my study were highly motivated by having their rights recognized and respected, especially their right to express themselves creatively through performance.

Performance as Public Record

The students in John, Deborah, and Anita's classes were not only encouraged to connect the UDHR with their lived experiences and local community, but also they had freedom to communicate in creative ways. Making the UDHR relevant to their lives paired with the opportunity to express themselves artistically enhanced student engagement. As Ellen articulated, communicating through the arts is rigorous and real, requiring students to apply content in multiple ways and invigorating the classroom (Interview, February 2, 2011). During interviews and observations, teachers and students reported that learning through the performing arts increased motivation and deepened the learning experience because students had the freedom to communicate creatively.

Bell and Roberts' (2010) study examined a project wherein a group of 11 adults explored issues of race and racism by telling stories in the form of visual arts, theater, spoken word, and poetry. The topics and modes of expression explored by the participants were similar to those in my study. Bell and Roberts found that by creating artistic representations about human rights issues, participants took on various roles and analyzed issues from multiple points of view. Through acting out scenes, participants encountered and engaged in provocative topics on an embodied level thereby allowing

them to think creatively, intimately, and deeply. Students and teachers in my study also noted how exploring human rights issues through creative expression allowed them to think critically and communicate authentically. As Deborah explained, the experience of creating and performing artistic interpretations of personal or local human rights issues, for example the death of Oscar Grant, helped students through a cognitive process which led to critical consciousness (Interview, December 14, 2010).

Bell and Roberts (2010) argued that discussions of racism in academic contexts tends to become abstract and distant, but examining racism and its impact through physical and interactive activities can lead to more intimate analysis. Bell and Roberts concluded that by bridging the gap between the sociological/abstract and the psychological/personal contours of daily experience, their participants were able to challenge oppressive circumstances in concrete terms. Similar to Bell and Roberts' participants, the HHS students challenged human rights abuses by applying abstract and legal concepts to personal experiences. For example, Lucias' poems, "Emancipation Exaggeration" and "Health Care" examined the complexity of historic and systemic racism in very real and accessible language.

Although Bell and Roberts' (2010) study drew similar conclusions about the potential of performance exercises to analyze and tackle issues of racism, their participants did not perform publicly. Reyes' (2006) study, on the other hand, explored and acknowledged the importance of public performance for the youth, especially those who are often marginalized. His study described how performing spoken word poetry cultivates young public intellectuals capable of reclaiming their culture. Reyes' students created, rehearsed, and revised within the formal classroom in contrast to the HHS

students who conducted most of the rehearsing and revising during lunch and after school. Despite this difference, Reyes' participants shared similar positive reactions to the opportunity to perform publicly as the students in my study. Since Reyes' participants were also Oakland youth, the issues in their poetry resonated with those addressed by my participants.

Reyes (2006) contended that creating and performing spoken word poetry for a real audience rather than the teacher alone provided youth the opportunity to take control of the language of their lives and become active in their own education. In my study, the culminating public performance provided motivation and pride among the participants. Furthermore, the audience provided a witness to the youth's knowledge and thereby honored their experiences. For example, Naja and Nixon specifically cited the importance of getting a message of human rights to their peers and larger community. Students were motivated by the opportunity to perform publicly because they wanted others to bear witness to their experiences. Their knowledge was honored and the demand for human rights, particularly the right to be safe, was acknowledged by the audience The culminating performance served as a public record of students' experiences, knowledge, and hope for the future.

For HHS students, the performance was not only a public record of the oppressive circumstances of their lives, but also it was a direct challenge to the audience to participate in changing those conditions. For example, Lucias, Roy, Stephanie, Taytiana, and Julio had, for the first time, a school sanctioned public platform to share their knowledge, exhibit their leadership, and call their peers to action. These students were already poets and artists, but without and audience. Since schools are political spheres,

when the students took the stage they were placed in a position of power. Once these young poets and artists spoke their truth, they became the teacher. The stage literally and figuratively elevated the youth to positions of expert, teacher, and activist.

My research documented the value of creative expression as a way to process personal and communal issues regarding human rights. During the semester, I observed and documented how the creative process and artistic expressions of human rights issues personalized the UDHR. The poetry from Deborah's class provided a prime example of how artistic interpretations allowed students to move toward critical consciousness. Yet, the pivotal element was the pairing of the creative process with the opportunity to perform to the community. Their consciousness became empowerment when the youth were transformed into experts through their public performance.

The event became not only a public record of human rights violations; the stage transformed students to human rights activists who called the community to action. Individuals may expose their power by expressing critical consciousness regarding human rights and the world around them, but transformation must be collective to cause systemic change. The performance was a community event wherein youth named their world and called for collective action to create a new reality. By doing so the young performers were transforming their culture. Therefore, the opportunity for public performance was critical to the transformative goal of HRE.

Summary

In conclusion, my findings were supported by several other empirical studies. Covell and Howe (2008), Gerber (2008), Suarez (2007), and Yamasaki (2002) all emphasized that teachers found the integration of human rights into their curriculum as

increasing their enjoyment of teaching and giving purpose to their practice. Similar to my participants, teachers in these studies noted the barriers to fully implementing the curriculum, although those in schools with administrators' commitment reported less burnout and difficulty (Covell and Howe, 2008; Yamasaki, 2002).

Yamasaki (2002) and Wade (1992) examined the implementation of human rights curriculum in elementary classrooms. Both found that although the majority of class content focused on human rights issues outside the U.S., students found the topics more closely related to their community as having a greater impact upon their understanding of human rights. The participants in my study focused almost entirely on how the UDHR manifested in their lives and community and concluded that this contributed to their commitment to the project. The HHS students also reported feeling a sense of ownership and responsibility to get a message to their peers about human rights. Covell and Howe (2008) found that students in schools located in underserved communities had the highest level of positive improvements in school engagement because the acknowledgment of their inherent human rights helped to transform their relationship with school.

Although Bell and Roberts (2010) and Reyes (2006) did not name their teaching and learning as HRE, their studies dealt with the use of performance art to explore and analyze human rights issues, such as racism. Both studies supported my finding that through creative expression of complex issues participants were able to communicate deeply and authentically. Moreover, Reyes concluded that elevating students' voices to the public stage resulted in the creation of public intellectuals whose experiences and knowledge were honored by the audience. This matched my findings regarding the experiences of teachers and students at HHS.

Recommendations

Practice

Both my empirical findings and review of the literature contribute to my recommendations for teaching practice. First, I encourage teachers to connect human rights concepts to issues relevant to students' lives and community. This is especially important in urban school settings with students who face racial inequality, economic disparity, and violence. Pedagogy which challenges students to identify and examine their experiences through a human rights lens is more meaningful and, ultimately, more empowering than studying human rights in far away places. Second, providing students with the freedom to develop creative communication skills further personalizes and deepens the learning. The teachers at HHS showed that the opportunity for artistic expression allowed students to choose how to share their knowledge, leading to a deeper sense of pride and ownership. The creative medium also engaged youth who witnessed the performance, thereby creating a peer to peer learning experience.

In addition, I recommend that teachers pursue venues for students to share their creative expressions publicly. A performance requires skills in critical thinking, decision making, creative problem-solving, and verbal, physical, and written communication. At HHS, the performance gave voice to youth in turn allowing them to become experts. Their testimony was both a personal and collective call for human rights and dignity. I recommend that teachers pursue the use of creative expression in the classroom and to identify spaces for students to share publicly their knowledge. These pedagogical strategies were evident in this study, and I advocate their use as a successful way to engage youth in HRE.

Policy

The difficulty of integrating the arts as part of formal classroom pedagogy was a major theme among my findings. Class time at HHS was reserved for content knowledge, as well as reading and writing development. In contrast, singing, dancing, rapping, speaking, and acting skills were developed at lunch or after school. Deborah spoke about the way art has been often deemed as "fluff" and then not accepted as the "meat" of content area courses (Interview, February 10, 2011). Teachers felt under constant pressure for their students to perform well on the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE).

Furthermore, many of the students identified community building as an answer to violence and racism, but were given few opportunities to work collaboratively. Typically students produced individual work and were tested individually. Conversely, creating the performance required students to collaborate, communicate knowledge, negotiate, compromise, edit, synthesize, and agree upon a message. This process built a sense of community, but also took a great deal of time. As Deborah argued, if the arts are to become part of classroom practice, then institutional change is needed. Covell and Howe's (2008) study reaffirmed that the human rights curriculum was more successful when accompanied by had a countywide mandate and strong support from site-based administration.

Therefore, I recommend a shift in educational policy to embrace the arts as inherently academic and valuable. The predominate view that art should be relegated to electives or outside the formal content area classroom should be challenged by students, parents, teachers, and administrators. In addition, I suggest that federal, state, and local education agencies promote Human Rights Education and the arts as part of mandated

curriculum. This change can be accomplished by providing guidelines for teachers and administrators, reevaluating assessment tools such as the CAHSEE, and creating time within the official school schedule for collaboration.

Teacher Development

For human rights and the arts to be integrated into classrooms, teachers deserve quality training and resources. Deborah and John participated in a three day professional development training that included content knowledge about the legal mechanisms and suggested strategies for using the performing arts to teach about human rights. Trainings such as these should be available to in-service teacher as well as preservice teachers. I recommend that professional development and preservice teaching courses specifically address the barriers educators face and provide ongoing support to assist teachers in integrating the arts and human rights content.

Further Research

My study focused on the experiences of the teachers, teaching artist, and students during a four-month long HRE project. I documented evidence of students achieving the goals of HRE, but to better understand the potential for transformative change, a longer term study would be valuable. For example, observing during an entire school year and then returning to interview students one and two years later would provide a better understanding of the ongoing impact of HRE through the performing arts. It would also be informative to compare the implementation of HRE and the arts among different school settings. As noted earlier, Covell and Howe (2008) observed noticeable differences in schools with students in underserved communities.

One theme emerging from my findings was the value that youth placed on having the opportunity to offer a public testimony of the violence and racism in their lives. This provided an important step in the transformative process and should be a topic for further research. Gerber's (2008), Wade's (1992), and Yamasaki's (2002) teachers all focused on the human rights violations of "others." Students in these studies were not asked to explore and present the human rights issues of their own lives. In this way my research context was unique. The HHS students named the human rights issues in personal terms and, in doing so created a public record. Their performance was a form of activism. The field of HRE would benefit from further research regarding the importance of naming the issues of their lives as evidence of the action-taking goal of HRE.

Another aspect worthy of further study is the fact that youth have knowledge of what is needed to create a culture of human dignity. The UN definition of HRE, as well as HRE scholarship, assume the learner will be transformed after acquiring the knowledge and skills that their teacher provides. Critical pedagogy accepts the learner as teacher and teacher as learner. In the case of HHS, participants, including Lucias, Taytiana, Roy, Nixon, Stephanie, and Julio, were not only already aware of their human rights, but were activists with solutions. The field of HRE would be strengthened by more research on the knowledge youth, especially those living under oppressive conditions, have to offer about what it takes to create a community of human dignity.

Conclusion

The use of performance arts to teach about human rights in an urban high school setting is unique and powerful. In this study, students and teachers alike exhibited pride in creating a culminating presentation that represented the human rights issues of their community. By joining passion, knowledge, and experience around human rights issues close to home students created unique expressions elevating their knowledge and power. Students felt performance and creative art had the potential to capture people's attention thereby providing an opportunity for students to share a message. The creative presentation served as public testimony of their lived experiences. The process and product clearly reflected HRE goals. I believe this study has the potential to inform educational research, policy, and practice regarding the successful implementation of HRE.

Faced with the intensity and prevalence of human rights violations both locally and internationally, people can potentially feel hopeless or powerless. As the teachers and students at Hamer High School shared, creative expression led to a sense of hopefulness. It was not a naive, utopian message of hope. Instead, the students exposed the raw realities of their lives. Scenes of violence were reenacted, and photos of loved ones lost flashed by on the screen as the audience sat in absolute silence. These images were juxtaposed by shouts of encouragement as Nixon rapped "United as One" and cheers for Jeanette who boldly took the microphone to recite her poem, "My Oakland." The youth on stage spoke truthfully of both the beauty and pain of their lives. From their willingness to perform representations of their vulnerability, strength, resiliency, joy, and knowledge, a message of hope emerged. Through their performance, these young public intellectuals

envisioned a reality where their right to freedom, equality, dignity, and safety will be honored and protected. Jeanette's poem provided an image of that community:

> My dream will always stay strong
> It will come out soon when I see Oakland as my lover
> Till death do us part
> Because I love you
> And no one can tear us apart
> (My Oakland, 2010).

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Observation Guide

Research Question 1: How do the teachers integrate the performing arts with human rights content in their pedagogy?

A. What is the atmosphere in the classroom?
B. What type of relationship do the teachers, artist, and students have with each other?
C. What content do the teachers and artist cover? How is it covered?
D. What performance art strategies are evident? How often?
E. How are the HR content and performing arts strategies integrated?
F. How are the students reacting to the content and methods?
G. How are skills to promote, apply, and defend HR in everyday life covered?
H. Are all students actively involved? Are the activities and assignments teacher-directed or student-directed?
I. Are students' experiences, culture and prior knowledge part of the content and activities?
J. How are students encouraged to connect content with personal lives?
K. How are students' voices encouraged?
L. How are students' creative ideas encouraged?
M. How are attitudes and behavior to promote human rights fostered?
N. Do the activities and assignments promote critical thinking, analysis, and synthesis skills?
P. How do the activities, content, and classroom environment model human dignity?
Q. In what ways are students developing skills to process, heal, and take action in regards to the human rights issues in their lives?
R. In what ways are students developing skills to promote and protect the human rights of others in the community?

Research Question 3: In what ways do the students' creative work and reflections represent the transformative goals of human rights education?

A. Are there examples of an understanding of human rights history, the UDHR, human rights issues, human rights legal mechanisms?
B. Are there examples of students' personal experiences and knowledge?
C. Do the students exhibit a sense of ownership or pride in the work?
D. Does the student work exhibit analysis of current oppressive systems, policy or practice?
E. Are student voices represented and encouraged?
F. Do the students exhibit skills needed to process, heal and take action in regards to the human rights issues of their lives?
G. Are there examples of student skills, attitude or behavior to promote and protect the human rights of others in their community?

Appendix B: Interview Guide

Research Question 1: How do the teachers integrate the performing arts with human rights content in their pedagogy?

A. Can you describe your unit(s) on human rights?
B. Why did you choose to teach about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?
C. What are your teaching objectives/goals for the students, both academic and emotional?
D. How did you go about achieving those goals?
E. How did you use the performing arts to meet these goals?
F. Why did you choose to integrate human rights content with the performing arts?
G. In what ways do your students' personal experiences relate to human rights content?
H. How did you go about building content knowledge about human rightsUDHR?
I. How did you go about building skills to promote, apply, and defend HR in the everyday lives of your students?

Research Question 2: What do students, teachers, and artists report about their experiences of and engagement in this pedagogy?

Teacher and Teaching-Artist Interview Questions:
A. Looking back on the semester, what would you say about your experience teaching human rights with the arts?
B. Did it go as planned? Were you able to achieve the goals and objectives you set? Were there any surprises?
D. Did the content and method align with your theoretical approach to teaching?
E. What aspects of this unit were you especially proud of?
F. How did the students react to the content and the method?
G. Which activities or assignments had the biggest impact on your students?
H. Do you think students came away with skills and knowledge to process, heal, and take action in regards to the human rights issues of their lives?
I. If you were to start this unit over again, would you change anything?
J. Was it a transformative experience for your students? For you? In what ways?

Student Interview Questions:
A. Which activities stand out as meaningful to you? Can you describe them?
B. Did you participate in any of the performance art activities? What did you think about those activities and assignments?
C. Do you feel the experience was challenging on an academic level? On a personal level?
D. What type of skills did you learn that help you deal with human rights issues in your life?

E. What type of skills did you learn that help you defend and protect the human dignity of others?
F. What would you change about the lessons, activities, or assignments?
G. What did you know about human rights before this semester? What do you know now?
H. How did you feel about human rights issues before the semester? How do you feel now?

Research Question 3: In what ways do the students' creative work and reflections represent the transformative goals of human rights education?

Student Interview Questions:
A. Did you know much about human rights before this class? If someone asked you what human rights are, what would you say?
B. Do you feel you are better at analyzing the oppressive systems which lead to human rights violations?
C. Do you feel that you know more about how to work towards solutions to human rights violations?
D. How has it changed the way you think about your classmates, school, family, your community, and the world?
E. Have any of the things covered in class or the activities helped you deal with issues in your life?
F. Do you think learning about this has had an impact on how students treat each other at school?
G. Are there ways you can take action outside of school to promote human rights?
H. Have you done anything to defend or promote human rights recently? This may include really small acts to larger acts.

Appendix C: Student Work Guide

Research Question 3: In what ways do the students' creative work and reflections represent the transformative goals of human rights education?

A. Are there examples within the student work that represent an understanding of human rights history, the UDHR, human rights issues, and human rights legal mechanisms?
B. Are there examples of students' personal experiences and knowledge?
C. Do the students exhibit a sense of ownership or pride in the work?
D. Does the student work exhibit analysis of current oppressive systems, policy, or practice?
E. Are student voices represented and encouraged?
F. Do the students exhibit skills needed to process, heal, and take action in regards to the human rights issues of their lives?
G. Are there examples of student skills, attitude, or behavior to promote and protect the human rights of others in their community?

Appendix D: Student Poetry

I Dream of Oakland
by Stephanie Zambrano

Like Martin Luther King said
"I have a dream."

I have a dream
That races unite
Black and Brown
Fighting for real justice
in our world of injustice

Deep East Oakland hanging out
with people from the 30's and sixties

teenagers hanging out, walking around
on the streets with nothing
to fear from

We are a lot of teenagers
here
in Oakland.
Imagine
If we unite
get educated
what a powerful community
and people we will
become.

Black and Brown Fighting for our rights
and statistics
we are a community
of all Black and Brown.

Appendix E: Student Poetry

Emancipation Exaggeration
by Lucias Potter

Emancipation Proclamation
was supposed to free the slaves.
The most false approximation
Let's fast forward to today.

There's more Blacks locked up to date
compared to slaves.
The other half's locked up
believin' oppressive ways.

If there's people mentally captured
There's gotta be slave masters
You sayin' F the police
but when they show up, you want peace
Willie Lynch still got you whipped tricked
now look at this:

You want to kill yo own kind "cuz you too scared to face the oppressor"
We roast blacks that look like us, we thinkin' we're lesser
But don't roast light skinned Blacks
Cuz they're closer to white
We're more oppressed and afraid
then 1654

Jail and military ain't free
This government playin' it low key
Desensitize the young blacks so
when they lynch us, on the row, it's easy
like how they said a Negro's 3/5th a man
Slave descendants die in the Army everyday for Uncle Sam
The media puts Black women in sleezy skirts
Same as sellin' half naked slaves for slave births
Now the media portray us with no shirt, gangsta muscles
Just like they stripped us down so the bidders can price our muscle

They say slavery has ended, but it's a lie like counting voters
Don't let the government and media trick you, cuz it ain't over

Appendix F: Student Poetry

Health Care
by Lucias Potter

Some countries rich
So some countries got it
Some countries claim super power
But still don't have it
Some countries' too impoverished hands
Can't grasp it
Some countries can give it
But too selfish to route it
Some countries dying
And just can't live without it
Is it not true we as humans have
Right to life?
Or are you only allowed life
If you have the proper wealth?
If those in such power
Must protect our rights as human
What is life without the guarantee
of the common health?
Before we are countries
And before we are nations
We are first human

Native or foreign our blood is red
Rich or poor you have the right to be fed
In fact to be poor is not an option:
We have the right to economic stability
According to our human rights
This should never be a disability
No one shall be denied it yet
The world spins despite it
Some single mothers are forced to choose
Is it dinner or medicine her child will lose?

Though the declaration claims
Women and children are protected
The human rights of some
Have been surgically dissected
Like a doctor and a scalpel digging for organs
Congress cut our rights with laws
From Florida State to Oregon
Removing your right to health

If your family is short on wealth

If only some countries got it
The world still lives without it
But these are human rights
And we were not born without it
The soul is priceless so
Figures are never worth it
Superpower or 3rd we are
Human so we deserve it
What is it? Its healthcare
And every human deserves
Their unalienable welfare

(Universal Declaration of Human Rights Articles 22 and 25:
Everyone has the right to have his or her basic needs met and to live in dignity, and everyone has the right to food, clothes, shelter, medical care and economic security. Mothers and children have the right to special care and assistance.)

Appendix G: Student Rap

United As One
by Nixon Callejas

I don't represent Norteños, Sureños, or the Border Brothers,
I'm here for you and me, to put it down for all of us.
We're only human so we're fighters and lovers,
But at the end of the day, we all are brothers.
We take the same risk, by walking the same street,
Knowing we can die, faster than a heart beat.
I could stand here and tell you things you always see,
But I'ma stand here and show you what we could be.
I believe in change, lets make it a better place,
Where people come in and out, no matter the color, no matter the race.
If you think about it, we all want the same little thing,
No matter if your broke, or you carry bling.
We all want to be equal,
But how can we get that if we're killing our own people.
Let's not fight ourselves, lets stick together,
Let's unite to make this world better.

We blame the government for all of our mistakes,
Why? If they don't tell us, the road we should take.
I'm not saying they're innocent, no not at all,
Cause they only stand there, waiting for us to fall.
They making more jails, instead of schools,
They think we're good for nothing, just some stupid fools.
Black and Latinos, are fighting their war,
Yet they see us, lower than the floor.
Open your eyes, see the real enemy,
It's not each other, we are family.
You probably thinking, well aren't you white?
Na, I'm Salvadorian, fighting for our rights!

Appendix H: Student Poster

Brown Is Not A Crime
by Roy Ramos

Appendix I: Student Poetry

My Oakland
by Jeanette Vargas

In my Oakland is full of dreams
Where Oscar Grant is in my history book
My Oakland is my Una Familia
where we as one can go to college without having any papers
Where my art can be all over Oakland
My Oakland is where kids can be hyphy over knowledge
My Oakland is where dreams do not disintegrate they stay humble
To that die hard Raiders fan
Who walks around the streets
Happy and not angry at the world
Man, Oakland to me is beautiful as the trees swinging from side to side
My Oakland is the empty lot next to my house
Where kids can stay away from violence
and parents can get a job without having any papers
They can make money without cleaning someone's house
My Oakland is where kids can play on the playground without hearing "BANG BANG"
Another shooting no not tonight
My dream will always stay strong
It will come out soon when I see Oakland as my lover
Till death do us part
Because I love you
And no one can tear us apart.

Appendix J: Informed Consent

Student Name
School Address

Dear (Student Name),

I am writing you to ask for your participation in a research project that I will conduct this fall. The research will contribute to my dissertation in the Doctoral Program at the University of San Francisco's School of Education.

My research is focused on the way the arts are used to teach about human rights in a high school setting. Your involvement in The World As It Could Be Human Rights Education Project offers a unique opportunity for me to learn more about this teaching strategy.

I am requesting your help by allowing me to interview you for approximately 10 minutes about your experience participating in a class which uses art to teach about human rights. The interviews will take place in your classroom and will be digitally recorded. I will also seek your parent/guardian's permission for your participation.

Participation in this study may mean loss of confidentiality. Every effort will be taken to protect your identity. I will use pseudonyms rather than real names and all documentation will be accessible only by me. You will have the option of choosing your pseudonym, or, if you choose, to use your legal name. It is possible that some of the questions about teaching human rights may make you feel uncomfortable. PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY IS VOLUNTARY. You may decline to participate in any or all parts of the study at any time.

While there will be no direct benefit to you from your participation in this study, the anticipated benefit of the study is a better understanding of teaching human rights through the arts. There will be no cost to you as a result of taking place in this study, nor will you be reimbursed for your participation.

If you have any questions about the project, please do not hesitate to contact me. My cell number is 415-310-8931 and my email is andreamcevoy@yahoo.com. You may also contact the IRBPHS at the University of San Francisco, which is concerned with the protection of volunteers in research projects. You may reach IRBPHS office by calling 415-422-6091, by emailing IRBPHS@usfca.edu, or by writing to the IRBPHS, Department of Psychology, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1080.

My hope is to contribute to the field of education and I am deeply grateful for your generosity in facilitating my learning about strategies for teaching human rights.

Sincerely,

Andrea McEvoy Spero
Doctoral Student
University of San Francisco

Appendix K: Research Participants Bill of Rights

The rights below are the rights of every person who is asked to be in a research study. As a research subject, I have the following rights:

1. To be told what the study is trying to find out;

2. To be told what will happen to me and whether any of the procedures, drugs, or devices are different from what would be used in standard practice;

3. To be told about the frequent and/or important risks, side effects, or discomforts of the things that will happen to me for research purposes;

4. To be told if I can expect any benefit from participating, and, if so, what the benefit might be;

5. To be told of other choices I have and how they may be better or worse than being in the study;

6. To be allowed to ask any questions concerning the study, both before agreeing to be involved and during the course of the study;

7. To be told of what sort of medical or psychological treatment is available if any complications arise;

8. To refuse to participate at all or change my mind about participating after the study is started; if I were to make such a decision, it will not affect my right to receive the care or privileges I would receive if I were not in the study;

9. To receive a copy of the signed and dated consent form; and

10. To be free of pressure when considering whether I wish to agree to be in the study.

If I have other questions, I should ask the researcher. In addition, I may contact the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS), which is concerned with the protection of volunteers in research projects. I may reach IRBPHS office by calling 415-422-6091, by emailing IRBPHS@usfca.edu, or by writing to the IRBPHS, Department of Psychology, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1080.