EXPLORING THE ROLE OF AFFECT IN A HIGH SCHOOL ART CLASSROOM THROUGH YOGA-INFORMED PEDAGOGY

by

AMANDA ELIZABETH PRICE

(Under the Direction of Christina Hanawalt)

ABSTRACT

This dissertation study was designed in response to the focus in schools on test scores and accountability, which has increasingly impacted students' experiences in schools as well as art education curriculum and pedagogy. In this study, I responded to and aimed to disrupt the neoliberal culture of public schools in my high school art classroom by implementing a yoga-informed teaching practice. While yoga in the United States is most commonly associated with *asanas*, or body positions, the pedagogical approach I developed was grounded in the broader philosophy of yoga, drawing from the concepts of *abhyasa* (steady and consistent effort), *vairagya* (comfort with our efforts and contentment with where we are in the current moment), *ahimsa* (nonviolence), and interconnectedness. The yoga-informed pedagogy I implemented was also based on my research of engaged pedagogy (hooks, 2010) and contemplative practices aimed at disrupting neoliberalism through relational, process-oriented approaches to teaching. Using posthumanism and affect theory to guide my post-qualitative approach to research, I took on the role of educator-researcher to investigate how events in my public high school classroom from January to May 2023 were shaped by yoga-informed pedagogy. I analyzed the classroom events by thinking with theory to construct written narratives and collages based on transcribed

classroom conversations, photographs, students' in-progress and completed work, and educator-researcher reflections. By thinking with affect theory and using collage as analysis, I sought to understand what affects were produced and how classroom experiences were impacted. Throughout the study, tensions with neoliberalism were present, though teaching with a yoga-informed pedagogy and thinking with affect led to new understandings of the role of the assemblage and nonhuman bodies in education. Study events demonstrated how affects were both carried into and developed as part of the art classroom, shaping the experiences of both the students and the educator. I end the dissertation with implications for further understandings of affect and yoga-informed pedagogy's impact for art education practice and future research. I recommend a process-based approach that draws on yoga-informed pedagogy and takes affects into account in order to cultivate connection, vulnerability, and trust and push back against neoliberalism.

INDEX WORDS: philosophy of yoga, affect theory, art education, neoliberalism, post-qualitative research, assessment, arts-based analysis

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DEDICATION

To my students, past and present, for always inspiring, challenging, and learning with me. Without you, I wouldn't be the teacher-researcher I am today. I hope the rest of your educational journey reflects your enoughness and reminds you of your light.

Make good choices and be kind.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Teaching Art in Neoliberal Times

Over the years, neoliberalism has caused significant impacts to education and schooling in the United States. Dating back to the 1983 National Commission on Excellence in Education's grave warnings of economic loss based on educational "mediocrity" linked to international test scores, the focus of schooling has turned to an emphasis on standards, testing, and accountability to meet the needs of corporations in global markets (Hursh, 2000; Ravitch, 2014). Due to U.S. accountability systems that use end-of-grade and end-of-course standardized tests to determine whether students advance to the next grade or pass a specific course, the quality of schools, teachers, and students is measured by tests (Hursh & Martina, 2003; Ravitch, 2014). However, this increased focus on testing and accountability has not improved education (Hursh & Martina, 2003). In fact, research shows that "high-stakes testing and accountability has had a negative effect on teachers and students by narrowing the curriculum and increasing the number of students dropping out and teachers leaving schools" (Hursh & Martina, 2003, p. 33).

This culture of accountability works to foster competition within schools and results in the prioritization of state-tested subjects (Kimelberg et al., 2019, p. 28). As a practicing art educator in a high school, I am often simultaneously grateful for and frustrated by the fact that visual art is not subjected to the standardization or testing of other required academic subjects such as math or literature. I am grateful because I have the autonomy and flexibility to develop a curriculum well suited to my students, and I am frustrated because of the educational hierarchy–

–shaped by standardization, accountability, and neoliberalism in schools—that marginalizes non-tested subjects like art. My interest in exploring the impacts of standardization and accountability on art education first began during the COVID-19 pandemic, when I became acutely aware of this hierarchy. While I was grappling intensely with how to manage my expectations for students and my responsibilities to their learning, the guidance shared by the school district focused on "core academic classes" and said nothing of elective classes like art. This experience made clear that, despite the fact that the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) declares fine arts as part of a well-rounded education (Georgia Department of Education, 2023), the priority of my school system was narrowly focused on courses that had standardized tests and therefore impacted overall school accountability data.

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic led me to question the focus on assessment in education. If not assessment, what should educators be focusing on for their students? How would they know when they got there? My conversations with students about their classes, specifically celebrating or lamenting tests but rarely sharing what they were learning, were soon followed by conversations with colleagues and fellow art teachers who commented on the need to work with students to develop ideas and not just memorize facts and repeat information. The approach to teaching my colleagues were seeking seemed to be in opposition to the culture of accountability and neoliberalism so prevalent in our schools. As Harvey (2000) explains about neoliberalism, while education appears important, the focus is actually on supporting the economy and therefore neoliberal education "cannot be the kind of education that permits free thinking" (Harvey, 2000, p. 103). Despite some of my colleagues' desires to work against the way neoliberalism operates in schools, the fact remained that I continued to see students overly

influenced by grades, afraid of taking risks, hesitating to challenge themselves for fear of making mistakes, and letting their grades impact their view of what kind of students they were.

I knew when I began my doctoral studies that I wanted to connect my dissertation research to my classroom but, aside from critiquing neoliberalism and the accountability culture in schools, I was not initially sure how. In response to how the COVID-19 pandemic shifted how I thought about and viewed education, I found myself returning to two concepts: (a) how my classroom environment and pedagogy affected students amidst the requirements and expectations for what educators and students were required to produce in schools, and (b) how I defined success in my classroom. I also knew that, as I continued to move forward as an educator-researcher, I would need to include my own experiences, as there was no separating myself from my classroom, teaching, or the school. The entanglement of my identity and experiences led me to consider how I could incorporate what I learned from my yoga practice into my teaching. The result was this research, grounded in a practice of yoga-informed pedagogy, aimed at investigating a potential shift away from the neoliberal structures in public education.

In this introductory chapter, I offer a brief overview of relevant literature in connection with my own experiences as a high school art teacher. I begin by addressing the neoliberal contexts that prompted me to rethink current grading practices and investigate other possibilities. Next, I share how my own yoga practice provided inspiration for how to move forward and how an investigation of alternate approaches to pedagogy encouraged me to consider the role of mindfulness and an emphasis on process in education. I then explore affect theory as a theoretical framework, followed by an overview of the research study itself.

Neoliberalism and Art Education

I began this research based on personal motivations; yet, as I investigated the literature and continued reading, writing, and thinking, I was able to consider the broader social implications while also delving into specific individual experiences. The broader context was that educators in Georgia were (and still are) under increased scrutiny to demonstrate success through test scores while fitting within the conservative legislation being pushed forward[1]. At a national level, neoliberalism, standardization, and accountability have focused much of education and pedagogy on student achievement and outcomes, impacting as well the overall culture of schools (Atkinson, 2015; Baltodano, 2012; Kimelberg et al., 2019; Sabol, 2013). Framed by corporate reformers under the premise of educational reforms, the purpose of education has shifted to preparation for "global competitiveness, higher education, or the workforce" (Ravitch, 2014, p. 34). However, these reforms do not focus on "improving the classroom conditions but on increasing teacher and classroom accountability through standardized testing and increasing competition between schools" (Hursh & Martina, 2003, p. 46). Previous research covers the widespread impact of accountability and standardization on areas such as classroom frameworks and teaching strategies shaped by testing (Sabol, 2013), the evaluation of teachers (Palumbo, 2014; Sabol, 2013), and the prioritization of specific classes and advocacy for art education (Baker, 2012; Kimelberg et al., 2019; Sabol, 2013; Vasquez et al., 2010; Winner & Hetland, 2008). When schools operate under these neoliberal practices, the success of a school and of its teachers and students is determined by standardized test scores (Ravitch, 2014). In my own teaching experiences, I saw how this age of accountability in

[1] For example, in Georgia, House Bill 1084 was introduced to stop the teaching of "divisive concepts," or more specifically, targeting instruction on social justice and systemic racism.

education, with its emphasis on standardized testing data as a measure of school success, was increasingly affecting pedagogy.

While the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) includes art education as part of a well-rounded education, state and local school districts control how and where art shows up in school curriculum (Sabol, 2022, p. 128). With the quality of schools being largely determined by standardized test scores, the prioritization of tested subjects has led to a perceived devaluing of art education, marginalization of art curriculum, and a decline in art education access due to testing legislation (Kimelberg et al., 2019; Sabol, 2010, 2012). Furthermore, the focus on quantifiable scores has led to art educators focusing on the formulaic school art style rather than contemporary art education teaching practices (Hanawalt, 2018). To put it another way, teachers are providing students with specific steps to follow in order to create art products that can easily be classified as "good" when viewed by non-art-education specialists.

Not only does the current accountability culture impact what and how art teachers teach, it also impacts the form and significance of assessment practices, especially in high school contexts. Individual school districts have specific grading and assessment requirements for teachers. For example, in my district, teachers are expected to enter a minimum of one grade per week for all content areas. End of the semester awards are given to students who earn As and Bs, thus positioning and defining the students who receive these grades as "good." Making "good" grades shows one area of achievement, but it does not provide insight into how a student took risks, made mistakes, or thought critically about those mistakes. In my teaching experience I've observed that the need to earn a good grade results in students doing just that - working toward a finite end goal rather than experiencing learning as a process that includes making mistakes, applying feedback, thinking critically, and spending time exploring, investigating, and thinking.

These definitions of success are deeply ingrained in students, but they were also deeply ingrained in me. It took the closures of schools for the COVID-19 pandemic for me to fully question and redefine student "success" for myself.

Early on in my teaching career, I mistakenly believed that students would not be motivated to do quality work if their work was not graded. During my doctoral coursework I was discussing schooling and education with a fellow doctoral student who was a former high school teacher. "Well, we have to have grades," I said, thinking about motivation and accountability, and at the time, operating under the belief that grades were a nonnegotiable necessity. "Hmm, do we though? What would happen if we didn't?" she challenged me. I found I had never considered the possibility. I was caught up in the neoliberal discourse that students needed to produce grades to indicate successful learning. I considered myself to be an advocate for student learning and social justice, and yet, without even noticing it, I found myself a part of the neoliberal schooling machine.

Rethinking Grading and Assessment

As I began to question the role of grades and assessment in art education, I set out to develop a research project that might disrupt the neoliberal control of art students and teachers through the production of quantifiable data. My goal was to address the ways neoliberalism and accountability cultures cause harm to both students and teachers in public schools and to seek alternative ways of being. I examined the literature on the impacts of neoliberalism and considered the things I had control over in my classroom and soon discovered different approaches to grading and assessment, such as *ungrading*, that seemed to have potential as a form of disruption to status quo neoliberal practices.

Ungrading

Since the 2010s, university educators looking to address the criticisms of grading have increasingly turned to practices of alternative assessment, with "discussions on and experiments with alternatives to traditional grading" becoming popular in institutions of higher education (Gorichanaz, 2022). Blum (2022) describes ungrading as an approach to pedagogy and assessment that moves away from traditional grades to minimize the drawbacks and thus increase the focus on learning. Ungrading is a shift from assigning and justifying letter grades to developing other ways to provide feedback and foster student learning. In my experience with public high school education, districts and communities still rely on traditional grading both for communication and as an indication of learning. However, proponents of ungrading argue that the shift from summative and high-stakes assessments enables students to experiment, take risks, and take creative approaches without the fear of losing points (Blum, 2022). Since ungrading is focused on learning rather than grading, student experiences can be less competitive and more collaborative (Schinske & Tanner, 2014), a noted shift from the call for competition in neoliberalism.

In his research on ungrading, Tim Gorichanaz, a researcher and professor in computer interface design at Drexel University, completed an interpretive phenomenological analysis of students' experiences with ungrading in a college course using his former students as interview participants. Prior to adopting ungrading, Gorichanaz (2022) observed students were sometimes "visibly discouraged after getting a bad grade on an assignment," and that student motivation was based on performance on tests rather than learning (p. 5). Furthermore, he noticed that student interview participants mentioned working to be a "good student" and defined "good" by being on time, participating and being respectful, and most of all putting in their best effort to

earn high grades (Gorichanaz, 2022, p. 7). Students in Gorichanaz's (2022) study "experienced ungrading as providing time for reflection and space to think," which led to increased "creative risk-taking and a deeper sense of accomplishment" in students (p. 8). Gorichanaz (2022) acknowledges that grading is only one part of education; other indications of student engagement and the success of ungrading included increased interest in the course material, more flexibility and freedom in coursework, more relevancy of assignments to student lives, an expansion of the ways learning was facilitated, and a stronger sense of community in the classroom. This research on ungrading indicates that there is potential to work against neoliberalism even without being able to fully switch to ungrading by "attending to the emotional quality of the classroom, implementing active learning, facilitating small-group activities, and so on (Gorichanaz, 2022, pp. 10-11). Rethinking grading and seeing the potential for working against neoliberalism led me to continue to further investigate alternate approaches to pedagogy.

Challenging Neoliberalism through Yoga

As I was rethinking how to define student success, a conversation with a colleague led me to see a possibility for connecting my desire to push back against neoliberalism with a potential approach to rethinking pedagogy through yoga. My colleague compared assessment in our high school classes to the pedagogical goals of the yoga classes I was taking in order to challenge the way success is defined in schools. "You wouldn't give someone a C for how they did in a yoga class, would you?" he asked me. His point was that the goal of a yoga class was not to earn a grade, but to continue with the practice; and, he was right. In my own yoga practice, regardless of how thoroughly I completed a yoga flow during the class, I always left feeling less in my head, more connected to the world around me, and ready to continue in the practice. My colleague suggested that, rather than using neoliberal norms of success based on graded

performance or products, success might be rethought with the simple goal of students *continuing with their artistic practice* after the class ends. As I considered the impact of my yoga practice on my life, I found myself intrigued by the potential impacts it might have on my teaching.

I first tried yoga as a way to move my body following a dance injury, and I found I was drawn to more than just the mindful movement. My yoga practice helped me feel more at peace, more connected to the world, and able to celebrate myself. While with dance there was always a push for perfection, yoga provided a radical self-acceptance. As I thought more about how the philosophy of yoga was informing my life outside of the classroom, I saw potential for it to inform my teaching as well. For me, the impact of yoga went beyond the physical movements, the *asanas* or postures that most people commonly associate with "yoga" in the U.S. Despite this common perception, yoga is not just a movement practice, but a way of life. As seen in Figure 1, the postures and flows of yoga that make up the *asanas* are just one part of the eight different limbs of yoga (Iyengar, 2002).

Figure 1

Patanjali's Eight Limbs of Yoga

(DiNardo & Pearce-Hayden, 2018)

Barkataki (2020) defines yoga as something more than what you *do*, stating that yoga is "something you are and that you embody" (p. 112). Thinking of how my yoga practice, especially the philosophy of yoga, informed my life and led me to feel more contentment and enoughness also led me to wonder how embodying yoga might inform my teaching practice to resist neoliberalism.

I began to investigate mindfulness practices in general as a form of alternate pedagogy and soon found that yoga had already become popular as a potential solution to the stresses experienced by students in schools. However, the forms of school-based yoga I found in the literature were most often entangled in neoliberalism, acting as a means to an end for increasing students' academic performance. Based on this literature and my own practice of yoga, I began

to see that there was untapped potential for the philosophy of yoga to be used differently, with the goal of disrupting rather than reinforcing neoliberalism in schools.

My use of the philosophy of yoga was not an attempt to commodify this Asian philosophy for the Western neoliberal goals of improving student productivity and assessment data. Yet, as I was working to disrupt neoliberalism, I recognized I was simultaneously a part of the neoliberal machine. There were limits to my own perception, especially as a White woman educator-researcher in a Western context; thus, I acknowledge that the romanticism of Eastern philosophies, often viewed as a commodity and resulting in their use as what Ahmed (2006) describes as a "supply point" (p. 114), coexisted with my attempts to incorporate non-modern (Cherniak & Walker, 2020, referencing Lugones, 2010) knowledges in my teaching and learning. To respond to qualities I saw as missing from or causing harm in education, I turned to the philosophy of yoga in an attempt to move forward differently. By doing this, however, I became situated amidst the inherent tensions of incorporating an Eastern philosophy while in a Western neoliberal society. I do not propose using the philosophy of yoga in classrooms as a solution to the problems of neoliberalism. Rather, I suggest that non-modern scholars and philosophies provide possibilities for charting a different path, though such efforts are not without their dangers.

Alternate Pedagogies

Informed by the philosophy of yoga, I began to further investigate alternate pedagogies, specifically those that were resistant to grades, testing, and product-driven assessment and instead focused on process and connection. I became aware of educators whose teaching practices acted as alternate pedagogies to the neoliberal norms and accountability cultures in schools. I found that the work of Myles Horton, bell hooks, and Jennifer Musial strongly

resonated with my desires to counter neoliberalism. Myles Horton, one of the co-founders of the Highlander Folk School (now the Highlander Research and Education Center) believed that education should be grounded in students' lived experiences and that educators should guide and empower students (SNCC Legacy Project, 2022). Horton described how the Highlander Folk School learned from the mistake of attempting to solve community problems rather than seeing the answers already present in the community members themselves. The lived experiences of the students were essential to their education. Horton (1990) argued that education itself could not be forceful, that it should be nonviolent and built on trust, love, information, and feelings.

Like Horton, bell hooks argues that educators should "share in the intellectual and spiritual growth" of their students (1994, p. 13). Rather than just focusing on what students are producing, their growth as learners and individuals is important. What hooks (1994) refers to as engaged pedagogy is defined as the practice of engaging students by "providing them with ways of knowing that enhance their capacity to live fully and deeply (p. 22). Ultimately, engaged pedagogy works to empower students and foster their learning and growth inside and outside of the classroom.

These ideas of connection, kindness, and trust also inform Jennifer Musial, an Assistant Professor of Women's and Gender Studies, in her incorporation of the teachings of yoga in her university courses. Musial describes how a feminist, anti-racist, heart-centered pedagogy can benefit both students and educators. Rather than feeding into the neoliberal culture of competition and accountability, Musial (2011) argues that student learning and growth can happen in a nurturing, creative community.

As I looked to these educators and others with alternate pedagogies, I was especially inspired by their practices grounded in nonviolence and connection. Their teaching practices and

the ties of nonviolence to the philosophy of yoga resonated with and inspired me. With their inspiration as a guide, I decided to create my own alternate pedagogy, one that was both nonviolent and yoga-informed. This approach would build on the philosophy of yoga in combination with the theoretical perspectives I was simultaneously investigating.

Developing Yoga-Informed Pedagogy

The yoga-informed pedagogy that I developed was situated at the convergence of yoga philosophy, affect theory, and efforts to disrupt neoliberalism. To be clear, I did not conceive of yoga-informed pedagogy as a practice of completing body movements, or asanas, in my classroom. Rather, this was an approach to pedagogy *informed by* specific concepts central to yogic philosophy that I attempted to embody. Yoga-informed pedagogy was informed by the following essential yogic concepts:

- *abhyasa*, or steady and consistent practice;
- *vairagya*, or comfort with our efforts and contentment with where we are;
- interconnectedness;
- and *ahimsa,* or nonviolence.

I did not describe this process explicitly to students as "teaching with yoga," but I did share that key concepts from yoga were informing my teaching. My approach to yoga-informed pedagogy was similar to hooks' (2010) engaged pedagogy in that it centered the interactive relationship of educator and student rather than the coverage of information (p. 19). I saw this relationship as essential for art education based on my understanding of learning and creating as a vulnerable act requiring a level of trust in order for it to happen authentically. I also understood curriculum as beginning with what students brought with them into the classroom, such as knowledge, skills, questions, beliefs, and affects. From there, students can engage in the art-making process to

investigate, explore, and express their ideas. Rather than working towards a specific end product demonstrated with a project exemplar, a yoga-informed pedagogy focused feedback on *the process* and on celebrating students to cultivate contentment with their creative practice.

Through yoga-informed pedagogy, I aimed to disrupt the competition of neoliberalism by expressing care and cultivating student growth. Specifically, I sought to hold space in teaching and learning for emotional energy. By providing students with ways of knowing and being that allowed them to live both fully and deeply (hooks, 1994), my goal was for yoga-informed pedagogy to respond to the unique needs of each student and foster connections. I designed the physical space of the classroom to be open and student-centered, allowing students to select where they sat and offering the ability for them to move around the room freely to access supplies. This environment became possible through a shared sense of responsibility and respect. My approach to yoga-informed pedagogy operated on the understanding that collaboration and connection were more important than compliance in the classroom. Further, my goals for yoga-informed pedagogy required me to shift how I conceived of the classroom as a whole.

The Yoga-Informed Classroom and Affect Theory

As I continued to read, think, and write, I learned of different ontologies, or theories of being, and epistemologies, or theories of knowledge and knowing. When I learned of posthumanism and affect theory in my very first qualitative research class, I found myself eager to learn more. The decentering of the human through posthumanism offered the shift away from the competitive individualism of neoliberalism that I needed, and I noticed how recognition for the agency of nonhuman and more-than-human bodies had correspondences to the yogic concept of interconnection. Further, posthumanism prompted me to pay special attention to the role of affective forces, understood as the unseen forces in a space that “stick” to bodies, human and

nonhuman, and thus compel those bodies to act (positively or negatively), develop subjectivities, or to be stuck (Ahmed, 2010; Hickey Moody, 2020). Hickey Moody (2020) says of affect,

> I think affect is a really important concept for educational researchers to think with. Education in any social context, whether it's in school or whether it's in public spaces, is primarily affective. Whether through the delivery of curriculum or learning through means other than curriculum, such as popular culture, learning is always an affective experience. And whether it's about interpersonal relationship or materiality and what material forms communicate, affect is core (p. 144).

Snaza (2020) further describes the educational experience as being "about affects circulating among bodies as students see, smell, hear, and feel each other" (p. 115). In his descriptions of teaching two different college courses, Snaza (2020) describes one class of students as being overwhelmed and bewildered while the other students were asking questions and passionate in their discussions. Snaza describes the differences in his two courses as being both about the curriculum and about something more, like *mood*, which through his studies of affect theory led him to state that "learning is always already as much about feelings as it is about thinking" (2020, p. 113). Reading and thinking about the work of Ahmed (2010), Hickey Moody (2020), Snaza (2020), and others helped me to see how affect theory could guide my teaching and research. I was interested in how a pedagogical shift through yoga-informed pedagogy could impact the affects in my art classroom, specifically my affective experiences as an educator and the experiences of my students.

Teaching and Researching: The Study

When I designed the study, I made use of being a teacher and researcher and chose to implement yoga-informed pedagogy in my art classroom as an intentional shift from the

neoliberal accountability practices in schools. For the research, I chose a post-qualitative approach, which centered the role of theory. My goal was to *think with* (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) affect theory in order to investigate how classroom experiences and affects were shaped by my yoga-informed teaching practice designed to push back against neoliberalism. My goal was to address the following research questions:

1. What affects become evident when a yoga-informed pedagogy focused on process, contentment, and connection is implemented within the neoliberal context of a public high school art classroom?
2. How do affective forces at work in a public high school, especially those produced by or entangled in neoliberal structures, shape the experiences of an art educator?

By focusing on what and how affects impact experiences in an art education classroom, and considering the intra-action of teachers, curriculum, the learning environment, and other social forces to analyze the role of affect and the impact on classroom experiences (Shin & Yang, 2021), this study aimed to provide valuable insights into yoga-informed pedagogy as an alternative way of being for teachers and students within a data-driven educational climate.

A Post-Qualitative Approach to Research

As I considered how I would conduct this study in my classroom, I knew I was most interested in learning more about the role and impact of affective forces following a pedagogical shift. A post-qualitative approach, which I describe in depth in Chapter 4, allowed me to think with affect theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) throughout the emergent process of implementing a yoga-informed pedagogy. Theory and process guided my research without a prescribed methodology, though documentation was essential for analyzing the role of affect in the classroom.

In order to document the events occurring in Room 1719 (my high school art classroom), I audio recorded the classroom conversations each day, took photos, asked students unstructured interview questions at different points in the semester, and wrote and recorded my own thoughts, reflections, and initial analyses. I chose these documentation processes because I felt they would be the least likely to disrupt the classroom environment, distract my students, or cause them discomfort.

When I initially began transcribing the audio recordings, I was overwhelmed by the fact that they were both chaotic and fragmented. As might be expected in an art classroom where students are working and talking in groups, the recordings had captured not just single conversations but numerous simultaneous conversations, including various interruptions and events. In addition, the audio files only included human voices, making me acutely aware that the other bodies, materials, and objects that made up Room 1719 were not present in the recordings. These frustrations led me to seek guidance from Kuby and Rucker (2016), who approached transcripts as (re)presentations of events that included the human and more-than-human without the limitations of dialogue.

Inspired by Kuby and Rucker's (2016) process, I used my transcriptions along with photographs, reflections, and unstructured interview notes to create narrative (re)presentations based on what I initially noticed and questioned during the study. I put Jackson and Mazzei's (2016) approach of "thinking with theory" to work in my analysis of how affective forces were shaping the classroom events and my experiences as an art educator. I immersed myself in the (re)presentations of the classroom events, rereading affect theory literature and surrounding myself with the photographs from the study. I asked myself, "How does this classroom event work? What 'bodies' are connecting or assembling within these moments? What are the affects

and effects of such assemblages? What other possibilities might exist?" The analytical writings that resulted from this work comprise Chapter 5 and contribute to existing scholarship by providing insights into the possibilities of alternate pedagogies, specifically yoga-informed pedagogy, and the role of affects in art education. This dissertation is not intended to be a one-size-fits all guide to disrupting neoliberalism. Rather, it is an exploration into what is produced when a yoga-informed pedagogy is enacted in the neoliberal context of a high school art classroom.

Dissertation Chapters

In this chapter, I have provided the background experiences and research that led to my dissertation study. I introduced my practice of yoga-informed pedagogy along with an overview of the research study. Chapter 2 offers a review of relevant literature, which served as a foundation for the research. My investigation of the literature explored the discourses and effects of neoliberalism on schooling, education, and art education, as well as school-based practices of yoga and other alternate and contemplative pedagogies. In Chapter 3, I discuss the theoretical frameworks used in this study, including post humanism, affect theory, and the philosophy of yoga that grounds yoga-informed pedagogy. Next, Chapter 4 explains the rationale for the post-qualitative approach to the research and provides a detailed explanation of the study, recording of classroom events, creating (re)presentations, and process of analysis. In Chapter 5, I think with affect theory as I revisit the events from the study and share my analyses through written narratives and collages. Finally, in Chapter 6, I conclude the dissertation with a discussion of the insights gained from this study and implications for future research in art education.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this literature review is to investigate current literature relevant to the study and the research questions. First, I explore the discourses and effects of neoliberalism on schooling, education, and art education. Second, I investigate school-based practices of alternate pedagogies, including but not limited to those in the field of art education, grounded in practices of nonviolence such as mindfulness and the use of yoga. Through this investigation, I seek potential responses to the question of whether nonviolent pedagogies can exist within the culture of neoliberalism in schools. My goal is to bring the research on neoliberalism in education and alternate pedagogies and mindfulness practices together in order to question whether current school-based practices of alternate pedagogies are aimed at disrupting neoliberalism or if they have been commodified by neoliberalism. I also investigate other practices in art education that disrupt or have the potential to disrupt neoliberalism. Finally, I summarize the theoretical frameworks that guide the study and discuss how they guide my study.

Neoliberalism

In order to understand the effects of neoliberalism on schooling, education, and art education, it is important to clearly understand what neoliberalism is and how it operates within schools. Neoliberalism aims to advance individual and personal freedoms rather than state obligations (Harvey, 2005). As described by Foucault (1977, 1994), the "heightened individualism" characteristic of neoliberalism is marked in terms of these individual freedoms, specifically through autonomy and choice. Furthermore, neoliberalism produces docile subjects

under strict governance who simultaneously, although paradoxically, view themselves as free (Foucault, 1977). According to Harvey (2005),

> The founding figures of neoliberalism took political ideals of human dignity and individual freedom as fundamental, as 'the central values of civilization.' In so doing they chose wisely, for these are indeed compelling and seductive ideals. These values, they held, were threatened not only by fascism, dictatorships, and communism, but by all forms of state intervention that substituted collective judgements for those of individuals free to choose…. More generally these ideals [of dignity and individual freedom] appeal to anyone who values the ability to make decisions for themselves" (p. 5)

In other words, under neoliberalism, state interventions are not supportive of individuals in society but rather detrimental to them. Furthermore, this notion of individual freedom is misled by the false "assumption that individual freedoms are guaranteed by freedom of the market and of trade" (Harvey, 2005, p. 20). In its commitment to free market principles, neoliberalism is opposed to any state interventions or social services to support citizens (Davies & Bansel, 2007; Harvey, 2005). The focus on the economy ensures that through the advancement of "personal freedoms" the market conditions allow and provide for the accumulation of capital to restore the power of economic corporations. Thus, personal freedoms are not supporting the individual, but the large corporations. All of this aims to restore class power (Harvey, 2005). As a result, neoliberalism has transformed the state from one that was previously responsible for human well-being *and* the economy into a state which provides power to global corporations while people are viewed as economically responsible for their own lives without the collective responsibility to support vulnerable and marginalized populations (Davies & Bansel, 2007). Furthermore, blame is removed from corporations and government and is instead placed on the

neoliberal citizen, who seemingly has the power of freedom in a market driven economy.

Neoliberalism and Public Education

Neoliberalism has significantly reshaped public education in the United States. Beginning with the Reagan administration's *A Nation at Risk*, several decades of education reforms focusing on testing results and the evaluation of teachers have shifted Georgia's political climate from "one of confidence and investment in public education to one of skepticism and funding deprivation" (Croft, Roberts, & Stenhouse, 2015, p. 71). The report marked a linking of education to the United States economy, claiming that major manufacturing industries were threatened to be lost to other nations as a result of "the mediocre quality of our public educational system" rather than due to poor corporate leadership (Ravitch, 2014). In contrast to her argument that education should help students become "healthy, knowledgeable, and competent citizens" (Ravitch, 2014 p. xii), educational systems guided by neoliberalism prepare students to be part of the neoliberal economic system (Davies & Bansel, 2007; Harvey, 2005) and thus view students (and as a result, teachers) as "human capital" (Ravitch, 2014, p. 35). The role of neoliberal ideals in education, specifically the role of free market practices and competition has resulted in large corporations selling curriculum, interim assessment programs, and standardized tests (Ravitch, 2014). All of this has contributed to the neoliberal "reform" of learning by way of testing and thus test score data as a way to determine student "success." The argument for the free market assumes that competition will improve all schools (Ravitch, 2014). In actuality, the reforms perpetuate societal inequities, as problems are concentrated in areas affected by high poverty and racial segregation.

The neoliberal shifting of education to part of the free market has led to an increase in accountability, performance goals, and increased emphasis on competition (Davies & Bansel,

2007). This push for accountability has led much of the educational discourse to focus on assessment and outcomes, rather than on pedagogical practices. Performance goals for educators are typically measured quantitatively, using data to determine the success of teaching. Thus, schools in the neoliberal United States measure success through standardized student test scores which are used to evaluate both students and teachers. To put it differently, the focus of success in schools is not on how content is taught, but on student "success," thereby encouraging teaching to the test (Ravitch, 2014) and shifting pedagogy to fit assessment. According to Atkinson (2018), the neoliberal agenda of education in the United States and England is grounded in supporting and maintaining economic growth and successful competition in "market economies," (p. 13) which has resulted in specific, prescribed ways of attaining progress and achievement through assessment. Specifically, "in a neoliberal system, the teacher becomes a producer of 'human capital,' and thus her level of production must be measurable" (Thompson & Jones, 2021, p. 94). Data-driven teaching and evaluation as enacted under neoliberal ideas of surveillance, evaluation, and competition have led to teachers experiencing the everyday trauma of "never being good enough while also not feeling entitled to do what is right – in the moment – for the children they teach" (Thompson & Jones, 2021, p. 90). Rather than providing teachers with professional autonomy, dominant forms of predetermined pedagogy support the needs of neoliberalism through controlled curricula and assessment and a distinct separation of teachers, learners, and knowledge. Analysis of teaching and learning often focuses on student assessment data rather than pedagogy and curriculum (Atkinson, 2015). Thus, the roles of the teacher and the learner are further separated.

Teaching, Learning, and Testing

In this age of accountability and neoliberalism, high-stakes testing has become a benchmark for determining success and failure. As stated by Sabol (2013), under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2002, assessment and testing data became "*the* focus of teaching" (p. 36). NCLB led to public schools being "standardized in the name of accountability," (Baltodano, 2012, p. 495) holding schools accountable for low scores (Ravitch, 2014). The more recent Race to the Top program continued the test-based accountability, only now teachers and schools were held accountable as states were encouraged to create and share data systems that linked test scores to individual students and their teachers (Ravitch, 2014). This requirement delegitimized the professional autonomy of teachers and instead prioritized the efficient output and production of data in order to determine success. Furthermore, this dependency on testing and data led to the public perception of an educational crisis (Ravitch, 2014). In Georgia, "students are required to meet certain performance expectations in reading and mathematics to be promoted to the next grade in grades 3, 5, and 8," (Georgia Department of Education, 2024) with possible policy variation for Charter Systems. High school courses with Milestones End of Course (EOC) tests (Algebra, American Literature & Composition, Biology, and United States History) count as the final exam grade, which is worth 20% of the final course grade. To put it differently, this is one example as to how success is determined by testing performance, not the overall learning process. The classification of "success" based on achievement has continued under additional federal and state legislation like the College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI) ratings (Georgia Department of Education, 2021).

Under the guise of school reform, these neoliberal ideas of surveillance, evaluation, and competition have led to changes in teaching and learning that deprofessionalize and harm

teachers. By defining student success as determined by high stakes testing, education reformers can argue that "poor academic performance" is a result of poor teaching, ignoring the fact that teaching alone cannot overcome effects of poverty and racial segregation, as "schools and societies are intertwined" (Ravitch, 2014, p. 7). These neoliberal reforms work alongside educational policies to "reinforce intersectional forms of oppression" such as racism, classism, and misogyny and thus further delegitimatize and deprofessionalize the female-dominated teaching profession (de Saxe et al., 2020, p. 52). Teaching is viewed as a means to an end in this agenda, with success being determined by the production of test scores rather than critical thinking or authentic interactions with students (de Saxe et al., 2020; Thompson & Jones, 2021).

Furthermore, due to the narrative that these neoliberal reforms "level the playing field" of education (de Saxe et al., 2020, p. 55), teachers are in an eternal struggle to be "good enough" (Pittard, 2015) and "both students and teachers internalize their own feelings of inferiority, individual failure, incompetence, and self-defeat" (de Saxe et al., 2020, p. 55). Thompson and Jones (2021) state that this ongoing trauma produces "overwhelming feelings of never being good enough while also not feeling entitled to do what is right – in the moment – for the children they teach" (p. 90). Neoliberalism positions teachers and students to see their identities in relation to high test scores, and further dehumanizes them through the elimination of teacher autonomy. Gillespie and Thompson (2021) highlight how neoliberal discourses of competition extend beyond testing into the physical time and space of the classroom—that a sign of "good" teachers was a highly designed and curated, Pinterest-quality classroom. The "race and comparison to be good enough" is reproduced through the neoliberal emphasis on individual responsibility and consumerism as it converges with other oppressive systems (Gillespie & Thompson, 2021, p. 262). The use of high stakes, standardized testing as the indicator of student

and teacher success and failure has not only led to deprofessionalism and harm to teachers of these tested subject areas, but neoliberalism's reach also extends to untested subjects such as art education.

Neoliberalism and Art Education

While art education is not one of the academic content areas that is subjected to standardized assessment, neoliberalism still affects teaching and learning. Large-scale assessments influence funding and educational policy at all levels (Graham, 2019), in addition to impacting curriculum and pedagogy, how teachers are evaluated within their schools, and the availability (or lack) of art education programming for students. The neoliberal focus on data production is still reflected in the hierarchical classification of "core" versus "non-core" subjects. Even though NCLB, RTTP and the more recent Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) define the arts as part of the core of a well-rounded and balanced education (Sabol, 2013; US Department of Education, 2021), the arts are still commonly regarded as "non-core" subjects. Heilig, Cole, and Aguilar (2010) describe the effects of the accountability era on art education, stating that although "equal billing of arts education with other areas of education appears to pervade the standards, testing, and accountability discourse, this parity certainly does not exist in the underpinning reasoning associated with its stakes" (p.139). In other words, in spite of including the arts in policy, in practice preference is still given to "core" subjects. Thus, art educators must operate as advocates for their field, providing evidence that art education learning outcomes support broader educational goals (Sabol, 2013).

The hierarchical effects of accountability culture and the lack of testing in art education has led to misperceptions regarding a lack of importance and respect for the subject. This has

been further exacerbated by the focus of schooling on college and career readiness. As stated by Heilig, Cole, and Aguilar (2010),

> In policy and practice, arts education is still not differentiated as a core subject in the stakes associated with tests and accountability ratings, which relegates the arts to a secondary status. (p. 143)

While there are certainly benefits to not having standardized tests, the lack of testing in the arts has the detrimental effect of causing arts education to often be viewed as expendable. In fact, as a result of policies intended to increase standardized test scores in reading and mathematics, numerous students in public schools in the United States have limited or no access to arts education (Baker, 2012). Well-intentioned advocacy that justifies the arts as supporting student achievement in 'more important' subjects such as English and math is actually detrimental to art education (Baker, 2012).

A worthwhile education does not need to prioritize one subject over another, but instead needs to use all of the subjects, including arts, English, science, math, and others, to develop students to their fullest potential and prepare them as citizens (Baker, 2012; Ravitch, 2014). This is in contrast to the focus of a neoliberal education on test scores produced by students to determine success and on education to prepare productive workers to support the economy. The continuing prioritization of state tested subjects, despite policy that indicates visual art is equally important (Every Student Succeeds Act, US Department of Education, 2021), is indicative of how a larger neoliberal school culture of competition affects art education. The fostering of competition within schools supports the goals of neoliberalism rather than creating an environment grounded in creativity, exploration, and collaboration. Kimelberg, Adelman, Rabii, and Tompkins (2019) explored the effects of the language of competition for visual arts

educators, finding that there is a perceived devaluing of art education, a marginalization of the curriculum, frustration with evaluations, and overall negative effects on job satisfaction. The similarities between the culture of productivity and accountability that is characteristic of neoliberalism and the capitalist viewing of workers as expendable is striking.

Beyond the scope of the effects of neoliberalism on art education policy, the curriculum and pedagogy of art education is also affected. Hanawalt (2018) explored the forces behind the prevalence of a narrow "school art" curriculum, which continues to exist despite the university preparation of art teachers towards practices that reflect "contemporary art and society" (p. 91). In her study with beginning art teachers, Hanawalt (2018) found that the "forces of accountability and compliance" that permeated school cultures through teacher evaluations and standardized testing, for example, shaped the curricular practices of the beginning art teachers (p. 92). In order to be seen as a "good art teacher," educators were required to "perform according to expectations of administrators and school cultures, manage student behavior according to school norms, and provide clear evidence of student learning through documentable, quantifiable results" (Hanawalt, 2018, p. 99). The effect of neoliberalism on art education curriculum in the study was clear; student art needed to fit the "drive to produce quantifiable data" (Hanawalt, 2018, p. 99) and therefore new art teachers were compelled to produce those desired results through narrow forms of school art grounded in formalism. Kimelberg et al. (2019) explored the effects of the language of competition for visual art teachers, finding a perceived devaluing of art education and as a result art teachers feeling devalued as well, a marginalization of the curriculum, and frustrations with evaluations. Surprisingly, there are cases of art teachers who still work against the neoliberal status quo in considering curriculum for their students (Hanawalt, 2020), with Rizzuto, Cordeiro, and Roda (2022) finding that arts educators' teaching

philosophies naturally include social emotional learning (SEL) and incorporate a focus on process-based learning. This is not to suggest that these teachers are not affected by neoliberalism. Both findings can coexist, as neoliberalism is currently so engrained in school culture that it often goes unnoticed.

Part of curriculum and pedagogy is assessment, and accountability culture also manifests in how art educators are evaluated within their school systems. Teacher evaluation methods vary by state, by district, and even by school. In Georgia, teachers are evaluated using the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES), which consists of teacher assessment on ten performance standards, professional growth, and student growth to form the overall Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM) (Georgia Department of Education, 2021). As the student growth measure is based on state assessment data, for art educators and other teachers of non-tested subjects this can mean their student growth measure is determined by scores outside of their subject area, from students they do not teach. Georgia teacher assessment is not the exception, as Palumbo (2014) found that art teachers in Virginia shared the same concern.

While many approaches to pedagogy continue to be reduced or minimized by accountability and assessment practices, how might alternate approaches, particularly pedagogies of connection and nonviolence, disrupt the forces of neoliberalism in education? In the next section, I discuss how alternate pedagogies have been adopted and adapted into schools and examine whether these practices are examples of disruption or have been co-opted by neoliberalism.

Alternate Pedagogies

In the previous section, I examined how neoliberalism's prevalence in United States schools has resulted in a focus on data, specifically through the prioritization of state-tested

subjects, which in turn fosters competition within schools and positions art education as expendable. With school culture focused on the production of data according to neoliberal ideals, what sorts of alternate pedagogies might oppose, challenge, or disrupt the forces of neoliberalism in schools?

Myles Horton, one of the co-founders of the Highlander Folk School (now the Highlander Research and Education Center), believed that education should be grounded in the lived experiences of his students and that educators should guide and empower students based on their lived experiences (SNCC Legacy Project, 2022). Horton described how Highlander learned from the mistake of attempting to solve community problems rather than seeing the answers the community members already had themselves (SNCC Legacy Project, 2022). Horton (1990) stated:

> You can't use force to put ideas in people's heads. Education must be nonviolent… I know that any decent society has to be built on trust and love and the intelligent use of information and feelings (p. 41).

Following Horton, education can be used to enable students to use their knowledge to find and create solutions as agents of positive social change rather than forcing students to produce data in the preparation for supporting a capitalist society, as in a neoliberal pedagogy.

Similar to Horton, bell hooks argues that education should be a "practice of freedom," and that educators should "share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of our students" (1994, p. 13). hooks' engaged pedagogy, a "progressive, holistic education" that synthesizes hooks' experiences, Black feminism, Freire's notion of conscientization or critical consciousness, and the Buddhist teachings of Thich Nhat Hanh "begins with the assumption that we learn best when there is an interactive relationship between student and teacher" (hooks, 2010, p. 19, 1994, p.

22). hooks (1994) argues that educators should "create pedagogical practices that engage students, providing them with ways of knowing that enhance their capacity to live fully and deeply" (p. 22). hooks's (2010) requirement of "present moment awareness" and "conscious mindfulness" in her engaged pedagogy result in a "sensation of communal spirit" in the classroom (p. 150). Ultimately, engaged pedagogy works to empower students and foster student growth in their lives in and out of the classroom.

One aspect of engaged pedagogy is fostering the ability of students to live fully and deeply, which caused me to see parallels to the practice of yoga. Yoga can be defined as the practice of calming the mind in order to find unity within, specifically "collective consciousness and liberation" (Barkataki, 2020). Musial (2010), an Assistant Professor of Women's and Gender Studies with interests in yoga as social justice, connects the ethics of yoga (one of which is *ahimsa* or nonviolence), the *Chakra* system of the subtle body, and bell hooks's *engaged pedagogy* (2010), to propose "an integrated, nurturing, mutually constitutive feminist, anti-racist, heart-centered yogic pedagogy that benefits all" at the university level (2010, p. 212). *Chakra,* the Sanskrit term meaning wheel, represents the intersections of energy in the subtle body; when the energy flows freely through the chakras one is spiritually healthy, while chakral blockages can result in illness in the mind, the physical body, or the spirit (Judith, 2011). The consideration of the chakras, spiritual balance, and growth demonstrates similarities in the needs of yoga practitioners and academic students.

Drawing from hooks (2010), Musial's feminist, heart-based pedagogy includes the concepts of connection, kindness, trust, and reflection to cultivate an environment for transformative learning as a method to dismantle the "hierarchical epistemic structure of academia" (2011, p. 215). Musial (2011) provides insights into how an anti-oppressive yoga

practice may be integrated into a university pedagogy. She draws upon bell hooks' (2010) "engaged pedagogy" in emphasizing well-being and establishing trust. Musial (2011) states,

> If feminist teachers provide students with the non-judgmental space to explore ideas and shapes, if one can supply the architecture and mechanisms by which to address discomfort (whether through creating guidelines for how to have a productive disagreement or cuing joint integrity in difficult body placements), then uneasiness can be the prologue to moments of important change. (p. 217).

She states that student growth may be encouraged through the incorporation of "creative self-expression into student learning" (Musial, 2011, p. 224). This intersection of creative production such as artmaking and the philosophy of yoga as an anti-oppressive pedagogy provide a suitable interpretation of how yoga can be used in schools without furthering neoliberal, oppressive ideals. The work of hooks (2010) and Musial (2011) connect to Horton's (1990) argument that education must be nonviolent. Furthermore, their work provides us with insight into the direct applications of yogic philosophy concepts, which include nonviolence and "present moment awareness" (hooks, 2010).

In this next section, I examine alternate pedagogies that are used in schools, such as those grounded in yoga, mindfulness, contemplative practices, and Asian philosophies. I begin by examining how yoga practices and mindfulness are currently being used in schooling and to what ends and then move on to examine additional alternate pedagogies. Although my own yoga practice led me to radically shift how I defined my students' success while teaching in the COVID-19 pandemic, my review of this literature led me to recognize how yoga and mindfulness are often utilized in schools in ways that are complicated by entanglements with neoliberalism and colonialism.

School-Based Yoga and Neoliberal Ideals

Similarly to the increase in popularity of yoga in the United States, the use of yoga programming in schools has grown in recent years. Butzer et al. (2016) found 47 publications of school-based yoga interventions in peer-reviewed journals beginning in 2005, with the majority of the studies conducted in the United States and from 2010 onward. The goal of the review was to investigate yoga and contemplative practices as a way to enhance the quality of education in the United States. Their focused review of literature was limited to school-based yoga programs that are currently active in schools and incorporate yoga postures, breath work, relaxation techniques, and mindfulness and meditation (Butzer et al., 2016). Butzer et al. (2016) indicated positive, although heterogeneous results from their review in factors such as "emotional balance, attention control, cognitive efficiency, anxiety, negative thought patterns, emotional and physical arousal, reactivity, and negative behavior" (p. 50). Positive results were also found based on teacher-reported factors such as "classroom behavior and social-emotional skills, performance, impairment, concentration, mood, ability to function under pressure, hyperactivity, social skills, and attention" (Butzer et al., 2006, p. 51). Additionally, Butzer et al.'s (2016) review found that "data from school records and academic tests have shown post intervention improvements in student grades and academic performance" (p. 51). These results indicate a focus on student outcomes within the classroom setting related to behavioral norms focused on attention and productivity. Similar positive, yet varied and limited results were found in Serwacki and Cook-Cottone's (2012) review, which examined yoga-based interventions for both typically developing youths and those with disabilities in schools. Specifically, students with disabilities exhibited reduced stress and lower heart rates as well as increased attention, concentration, communication, and confidence. Typically developing students showed improvements in self-

image in addition to decreased anxiety and "negative behavior" and impulsivity (Serwacki & Cook-Cottone, 2012, p. 106). However, the variability of the yoga interventions meant the results as a whole could not be generalized. Both of these reviews of literature examined how yoga interventions could serve current needs in schools, specifically student behaviors and performance.

In examining the literature on yoga in schools, I conducted my own review in order to determine if programming supported neoliberalism in schools or pushed against it.
Several studies noted that the results of the yoga programming, "intervention," or practice resulted in students having "increased focus" (Reindl et al., 2020), being less prone to distraction (Mrazek et al., 2019), demonstrating improved attention, memory, and concentration (Verma & Shete, 2019), and exhibiting improved levels of academic engagement or performance (Felver, 2013; Reindl et al., 2020). Taylor, Gibson, and Conley (2019) tied yoga programming to school counseling programs through student requests and needs assessments targeting areas of self-control and anxiety. In each of these studies, yoga is viewed as a method to improve student behaviors and academic performance according to criteria grounded in neoliberal ideals, such as competition and market-based and data-driven performance. Another example of this is the idea of yoga in schools resulting in improved emotional regulation (Dariotis et al., 2016; Reindl et al., 2020; Taylor et. al, 2019) and teacher-rated improved social skills (Chadwick & Gelbar, 2016). Yoga and mindfulness programs in schools also found a general improvement in improved breathing (Reindl et al., 2020), calmness, and emotional regulation (Dariotis et. al, 2016; Taylor et. al, 2019,). Furthermore, Chadwick and Gelbar (2016) found that adolescents in their study self-rated a decrease in their anxiety following the yoga/mindful intervention. Students also noted that they were "more aware of their thoughts and feelings" (Taylor et. al, 2019, p. 7).

While these findings are more in keeping with the central tenets of yoga and mindfulness, it is worth noting that these findings exist simultaneously with those that reinforce the neoliberal characteristics of schooling. For example, Taylor et al. (2019) stated that there are similarities between the school counseling standards related to academic, college and career, and social/emotional success and yoga. In this case, yoga programming is serving the neoliberal goal of preparing students to be a part of the economic system through college and career readiness.

Study limitations indicated both colonialism and neoliberalism in effect. Certain studies of yoga practices for students limited the participants to those in a general classroom and/or free from any "major illness" or "physical deformity," as was the case in Verma and Shete's study (2019, p. 2). This is of note because this exclusion serves to perpetuate the misconception in the United States that yoga is not accessible to all types of individuals and bodies. I would argue that this division of participants is reflective of how yoga has developed its own set of Westernized norms, such as the oppressive "idea that certain bodies are 'normal' while other bodies are abnormal, such as bigger bodies or people with disabilities," which is also evidence of lingering colonialism (Barkataki, 2020, p. 75). In addition to colonialism, neoliberal educational ideals manifested not just in the focus on school-based outcomes, but also in the way yoga in schools is studied. Based on the review of a selection of literature on the use of yoga in schooling, I found that overall study goals and outcomes were linked to student performance as part of larger neoliberal goals rather than goals associated with yoga, such as collective consciousness and liberation (Barkataki, 2020).

Yoga in "Urban" Settings

In my limited review of literature, I repeatedly noticed an apparent focus of yoga programming in school settings defined as "urban." While urban is a term used to denote a city

population, I have placed urban in quotes as the term is often a way to connote schools populated primarily by students of color (Watson, 2011). With the focus on improved student performance and behavior, it is not surprising that the reviewed literature repeatedly discussed yoga programming in "urban" schools, which, based on the criteria of accountability and testing, are often deemed "struggling." The findings of the studies focused on the mental ability of adolescent students and reducing stress through improved impulse control and emotional regulation (Dariotis et al., 2016; Verma & Shete, 2019). While yoga has the potential to be a liberatory practice in its use in schools, particularly those that serve low-income youth of color, yoga "can be used to reify policies and beliefs that position youth of color in deficit ways... perhaps it does both" at once (Johnson, 2020, p. 2). This section will specifically focus on the discourses surrounding how yoga may be used as a liberatory, anti-oppressive practice or a perpetuation of White, neoliberal ideals.

Rather than remaining split between the cognitive aspects of the mind and emotions as well as physical discourses in schooling, yoga can provide a holistic approach of connecting mind, body, and spirit (Johnson, 2020). However, yoga can also result in perpetuating the aspects of schooling which make students most vulnerable: a simplified curriculum which upholds marginalizing norms (Boler, 1999; Emdin, 2016; Nolan, 2011). Therefore, one must consider intent as well as impact and method. Is yoga programming used with the intent for liberation of minoritized groups or the upholding of White behavioral norms? Jackson (2020) posits that the integration of classroom yoga practices emphasizing self-care "makes demands on students, to be happy, content, still, and peaceful with the world around them, to the benefit of educators and institutions interested in maintaining what are often unjust and problematic status quo" (p. 123). The focus on yoga programming as a means of impulse control or behavior modification in

schools is centered around normative school behaviors, reducing disruptions, and increasing focus (Dariotis et al., 2016). Johnson (2020) describes how, following Nolan (2011) and Goffman (1961),

> Youth use these oppositional behaviors as a way to speak back to unjust policies. Instead of seeing these behaviors as pathological, we can reframe them as resistance to, and interrogation of, social and educational policies. (p. 7)

Preventing so-called "outbursts" thus perpetuates the White normative behaviors characteristic of systemic biases in schools. Therefore, rather than attempting to control students' behaviors through co-opted versions of yoga and mindfulness, the true solution is in the implementation of anti-oppressive policies and practices. Similarly, the results of Johnson's (2020) critical qualitative study show that yoga provided a space for students to be relaxed and challenged, though "it is only with intention and practice that it does not reify narratives of power and patriarchy," especially when "students themselves replicate these narratives" (p. 32). Therefore, Johnson argues that for yoga to provide an inclusive and welcoming practice in schools, particularly for students of color, there needs to be a safe, community space that involves teacher leadership and provides explicit instruction in the discourse of yoga, focusing on kindness and compassion for oneself and others. Furthermore, in a school setting there must be an acknowledgement and response to the heteronormative discourses in sports and school culture (2020). Again, this relies on the shift in policy to reflect on unjust policies and discourses, not merely focusing on implementing White normative behaviors in populations of color.

Additional Approaches to Contemplative and Mindfulness Practices in Schools

The use of yoga and contemplative or mindfulness practices in schools as interventions to improve mental, emotional, physical, and/or behavioral health is part of a growing research field

(Butzer et al., 2016). There is, however, much variation in the content, form, and intent for yoga and other Asian philosophies practiced in schools. The role of yoga and mindfulness in schools, perhaps bolstered by the therapeutic function of education – the affective dimension of learning (Hyland, 2009), has resulted in numerous programs of mindfulness-based curricula focused on developing student self-esteem and emotional intelligence, as well as linking "all forms of learning (perhaps especially the undervalued basic skills and vocational kinds) with the needs, interests and values of learners, thus fostering engagement [and] motivation" (p. 128). While there are yoga and mindfulness "interventions" which support the goals of neoliberalism through the focus on improving academic performance rather than "nonjudgmentally being aware of internal states," (Chadwick & Gelbar, 2016, p. 100), there are several examples in the literature which explore the possibility for change in schooling practices through the use of Asian philosophies and practices.

Kwah (2019) discusses the use of contemplative practices to address the need for individual and collective healing from racial oppression in the United States. She argues that we can "expand the ways we conceive of and apply mindfulness practices to promote the health of all beings" through the use of traditional Buddhist notions of wisdom and compassion, or loving-kindness (Kwah, 2019, p. 1124). Kwah (2019) views the act of drawing as "a compassion practice," or a way to visualize and manifest loving-kindness," for "attending to and potentially healing from racial oppression" (p. 1129). *Loving-kindness* reflects the interdependence of Buddhist wisdom and compassion as part of a fully interdependent reality and the capacity and desire to care for all beings, which is in contrast to the humanist tendency to view the self as separate from others (Kwah, 2018, p. 1125). According to Kwah (2018), the "mindfulness meditation practices are conducted first to stabilize the practitioner's mind and establish the view

of non-duality between self and other," for "until a person resolves her own negative emotions and conflicts, she is not able to bring benefit to others" (p. 1125). Compassion and wisdom are each dependent on the cultivation of the other. Her work is noteworthy in that it seeks the disruption of oppressive and harmful systems and practices in place rather than using contemplative practice to maintain the current oppressive status quo. Kwah (2019) describes mindfulness as an act of survival, as one is experiencing the vulnerability and awareness of one's body and the rejection of one's body by the dominant culture. Therefore, embodiment is an aspect of how racial oppression is reproduced and experienced (Kwah, 2019). The same argument applies to the trauma experienced through neoliberal accountability culture and testing. There is a need for multiple modalities, such as the body, affective responses, and arts-based practices, to understand and share the meditative experience.

The Daoist tenets of non-action, the interdependence of things and objects, and non-linguistic learning can be used to expand art education from the Cartesian focus on the mind to include affects (Shin & Yang, 2021). Shin and Yang explore the connections and intersections between Daoism and new materialism, and critically analyze art educators' pedagogical practices through the intra-action of human and non-human and the negative effects on students' learning (2021). These intra-actions include curriculum structure and content, the classroom environment and resources, the spoken and written language used, students' social statuses, and school policies (2021). Shin and Yang propose that the intersection of Daoism and new materialism "provides suggestions to address neglected areas of art education pedagogy, such as affects, non-linguistic expressions, and intra-action" (2021, p. 246). The essential interconnectedness of human and non-human shifts away from the centering – and blaming when profitable – of the individual and the focus on outcomes and surveillance that characterize neoliberalism. Thus, the

pedagogical considerations proposed by Shin and Yang (2021) are an example of disrupting neoliberalism at the classroom level. Similarly, Smythe (2020) calls for utilizing the Daoist concept of "emptiness" as a "healing balm" for an educational system in which "teachers and students are expected to work with the speed, accuracy, and efficiency of a computer processor" (p. 29). He does so through limiting externally motivating praise and other rewards, letting go of punitive and dehumanizing grading practices, and letting go of some of his own authority as the teacher in the classroom (Smythe, 2020).

Implications and Discussion of Neoliberalism and Yoga

This literature review provided insights into how neoliberalism and Asian philosophies such as yoga intersect and interact in schooling and art education. In recent years, yoga and Asian philosophies have been researched as potentially offering solutions to the stress and struggles of schooling. However, the underlying societal goals influence how those philosophies and practices are implemented. Ultimately, while there is a wide variety of yoga and mindfulness programming in schools, two main groupings emerged: a so-called "secular" use of yoga and/or mindfulness in schools as supplemental programming to support students' academic performance and normative behaviors, and a more pedagogical approach that viewed Asian philosophies and/or a yogic mindset as having the potential to disrupt the harmful hegemonic status quo in schooling practices.

In order to fully understand and then explore the potential for a philosophy of yoga to be applied within art education pedagogy, one must truly identify how neoliberalism is currently influencing the educational field. I argue this is difficult for two reasons: (a) it is so prevalent that it is no longer noticeable, and (b) an outside researcher may not be aware of school-based hidden curricula. Neoliberalism operates in United States public schools by predominantly focusing on

the creation of "college and career ready students" (Georgia Department of Education, 2021) to productively contribute to the economy. This is supported through standardization and an overall audit culture consisting of testing and ranking performance, which results in a predetermined pedagogy focused on assessment and performance as a streamlined diagnosis of success or failure. The focus on data and use of specific curricula in order to determine "success" undermines the professional autonomy of educators. Additionally, assessment has become the focus of schooling, though that does not necessarily mean learning.

Art education is specifically affected by neoliberalism through the continuation of hierarchical classification of subjects as "core" and "non-core," curricular and pedagogical influences, and a school culture lacking respect for certain subjects and as a result, teachers. While legislation and policy include fine arts as part of a "well-rounded education" (Every Student Succeeds Act, Georgia Department of Education, 2023), in practice art is often viewed as less important or as a support for tested subjects. The ever-present forces of neoliberalism have resulted in a culture of competition with a push to produce quantifiable results rather than an environment that cultivates creativity, collaboration, and experimentation.

This literature review provided insights into the recent and rapid increase in yoga in schools and how those programs were largely entangled in neoliberalism. While it is not often the case, yoga and mindfulness can be used authentically and to disrupt neoliberalism in the implementation of anti-oppressive policies and practices that are grounded in heart-centered and interconnected pedagogies. Mindfulness can be used to cultivate "present moment awareness" (hooks, 2010) rather than impulse or behavior control, and focus on kindness and compassion for oneself and others, human and non-human. For mindfulness practices to be effective at disrupting neoliberalism, the focus cannot be on implementing White normative behaviors.

One of my initial observations in summarizing this literature was that some of the literature addresses the relationship between neoliberalism and the physical practice of yoga in schools, but there is little work that addresses affect and the philosophy of yoga. I suspect that this area is under researched due to the fact that yoga is already addressed within the context of large studies that support neoliberal goals related to school "reforms." In this study, I use yoga philosophy and affect theory with the goal of disrupting neoliberalism. Therefore, in the next chapter, I explore affect theory, particularly in the context of education. Then, I discuss how I have combined aspects of alternate pedagogies that push back against neoliberalism, affect theory, and learnings from my own teaching experiences to develop what I refer to as yoga-informed pedagogy.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK (THINKING DIFFERENTLY)

The goal of this research was to investigate how affective forces shape classroom experiences, specifically looking at what affects were produced through an intentional pedagogical shift from the current outcome-oriented educational discourses and tactics to a focus on process and connection. To fully understand this study, it is important to understand the theoretical framework and key concepts that ground it. First, I begin by situating the theoretical framework within the posthumanist turn, which provides a foundation for the discussion of affect theory that follows. I discuss how these frameworks are important to this research study as well as art education research more broadly. Then, I discuss how my previous teaching experiences, my interest in affect theory, and my investigation of alternate pedagogies that push back against neoliberalism led me to develop what I refer to as yoga-informed pedagogy. Finally, I will address the ways affect theory supplements and intersects with yogic philosophy and yoga-informed pedagogy.

Posthumanism

There is no one definition of posthumanism. Scholars describe the theoretical variations as feminist materialisms, new materialisms, agential realism, and affect studies (see Kuby and Roswell, 2017). What all theorizations of posthumanism have in common is a rethinking of the role of the human that provides a way of thinking differently about the world. Posthumanists view humans as part of a "more-than-human" assemblage, but this does not mean a rejection of the human. The "post" in posthumanism does not suggest a move beyond or after humans, but

instead that humans are not more significant than nature or objects (Taylor et al., 2022, p. 208). Dernikos, Ferguson, and Siegel (2020) state that "human beings never act alone and are always entangled within their environments" (p. 436). Posthumanism centers this entanglement of humans and nonhuman materials (Kuby & Rucker, 2016, p. 28). Physicist and feminist philosopher Karen Barad (2007) states that

> by posthumanist I mean to signal the crucial recognition that nonhumans play an important role in natural-cultural practices, including everyday social practices, scientific practices, and practices that do not include humans" (p. 32).

In posthumanism, materials, not just humans, are active agents. For example, in a classroom, students and materials are performative, mutually intra-active agents (Barad, 2007). In their work, Barad explores "how our intra-action with other bodies (both human and nonhuman) produce subjectivities and performative enactments" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 111). Intra-action opens new possibilities for understanding how people act, learn, and know in a post-human world.

Knowing in Being

Barad's theoretical framework of agential realism refers to the study of knowing in being, or an ontoepistemology (Barad, 2007; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Posthumanist theory requires we move our thinking beyond epistemology, or knowledge, which arguably dominates educational research, to consider ontology, or realities and truths, and axiology, or relationships and ethics (Kuby & Rucker, 2016, p. 15-16). Barad (2007) describes knowing as a material practice of engagement with and through the world, as bodies are becoming together. Kuby and Rucker (2016) elaborate on Barad's (2007) argument to say,

> The world (both humans and nonhumans) is becoming, not fixed, meaning the intra-activity that produces knowledges and realities is not stable or fixed, but ever-changing moment by moment. This has huge implications for how we think of classrooms and materials (p. 16).

Rather than humans having full control of materials, both humans and materials have agency and both humans and materials influence and shape the other. Teachers, students and materials intra-act and have joint agency in becoming, creating newness, changing realities, and learning the artistic process. Jackson and Mazzei (2012) elaborate that

> thinking of knowing in being does not mean that we privilege the material, but we adhere to a fundamental break in a privileging of the discursive and a thinking of knowledge as the sole domain of epistemology, what Barad refers to as an "onto-epistem-ology. (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 119, referencing Barad, 2007)

As described by Jackson and Mazzei (2012), the material and discursive bodies exist simultaneously and continuously intra-act, creating "the mutual constitution of agency" characteristic of ontoepistemology, or knowing in being. Discussing ontoepistemology leads me to additional posthumanist ideas necessary to understand this way of thinking differently about bodies in the classroom. In the next section I further describe the following posthumanist ideas: enacted agency, entanglement, intra-action, and becoming.

Agency, Entanglement, Intra-action

With the decentering of the human as the sole agential body comes the inclusion of the discursive and material, with each being equally important. While a humanist perspective positions agency as solely with the human, a posthumanist perspective sees agency as being distributed (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 113). The act of "knowing in being" does not privilege the discursive over the material or vice versa; it presents the two as entangled together. This

"ethico-onto-epistemology" (Barad, 2007, p. 185) views "knowing, being, and acting on/in/with the world simultaneously" (Kuby & Rucker, 2016, p. 29). According to Barad (2007), agency comes from the intricate network of both human and nonhuman bodies. Agency is thus not a quality or trait possessed by humans, but an enactment (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). It is something that is possible because of how those bodies, both human and nonhuman, are connected and entangled, and how they respond to each other (Barad, 2007). According to Barad (2007),

> to be entangled is not simply to be intertwined with another, as in the joining of separate entities, but to lack an independent, self-contained existence. Existence is not an individual affair. Individuals emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-relating. (ix)

Thus, entanglement occurs when bodies intra-act in a way that they cannot be separated (Kuby & Rucker, 2016, p. 44).

In this entanglement, an important concept of Barad's posthumanism is the idea of the cut. Kuby and Rucker (2016) describe how, in Cartesian epistemology, subjects and objects have a distinct separation, or "cut" (p. 44). However, Barad (2007) states that subject(s) and object(s) are entangled and not cut or separated into parts. Lenz Taguchi (2010) describes how through this entanglement any meaning-making and learning is dependent on the surrounding material world. Moreover, the material world "acts upon our thinking just as much as our thinking acts upon it" (p. 49). In other words, we cannot just consider an outcome or an artifact as being an indication of student learning; we need to consider all of the bodies entangled together, including students, teachers, materials, time, environments, and affects. Students are in a state of becoming with materials and spaces, as the materials and spaces are becoming with the student. Kuby and

Rucker (2016) further describe how the environment, materials, and space are all entangled with teaching <—> learning (p. 42). This entanglement of bodies can be described through Barad's intra-action, or how "discourse and matter are understood to be mutually constituted in the production of knowing (Barad, 2007, p. 71-72).

Through intra-action, both humans and nonhumans are in a state of becoming as the intra-actions produce knowledges, experiences, and possibilities. Jackson and Mazzei (2012) describe becoming as "a state of being in between" (p. 87). The process of becoming-with can be described as full of possibilities, and it is these possibilities that produce experimentation and change (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012), for both nonhumans as well as humans. Based on these complex relations and interconnections, I turned to affect theory to make sense of what these human and nonhuman assemblages were producing in the art classroom.

Affect Theory

The theoretical foundation of this study is grounded in affect theory. The "affective turn" (Clough, 2007) made emotions and affects the object of scholarly inquiry in a new way. Affect is, put briefly, everywhere (Dernikos et al., 2020). According to Seigworth and Gregg (2010), there is no single or absolute definition for affect, and there never will be. They state (2010), "affect arises in the midst of *in-between-ness:* in the capacities to act and be acted upon" (Seigworth & Gregg, p. 1). More specifically, affect is the name given to "visceral forces beneath, alongside, or generally *other than* conscious knowing" that propel us to movement and/or thought as well as cause stillness or overwhelm us (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, p. 1). The ambiguity of these vital forces rests on the fact that affects are beyond or other than conscious knowing. These "forces" or "forces of encounter" can further be described as "swells of intensities that pass between 'bodies' (bodies defined not by an outer skin-envelope or other

surface boundary but by their potential to reciprocate or co-participate in the passages of affect)" (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, p. 2). These forces can lead bodies to act, feel, connect, respond, and/or be reoriented.

Ahmed (2010) describes affect as "sticky," specifically as being "what sticks, or what sustains or preserves the connection between ideas, values, and objects" (p. 24). The fact that affect "sticks" is part of what compels humans to act, be affected, and/or to feel. Massumi defines affect as an impingement or intensity on the body "and at the same time the idea of the affection" (p. 92, 1995). He argues that, due to its autonomy, affect is fundamentally separate from emotion (1995). Like Massumi, Watkins (2010) describes how affect is often viewed as a "preconscious" happening, separate from the more social emotion, and is thus viewed as "autonomous" and "ephemeral" with an immediate impact (p. 269). However, Watkins (2010) also suggests that affect has the ability to stick and accumulate, thus forming dispositions and shaping subjectivities. Thus, affect has the ability to shape and alter how humans view, interpret, and understand bodies (human and nonhuman) in the world.

While affect does not have one absolute definition, affect theory provides the potential to cast "illumination upon the 'not yet' of a body's doing," emergent futures, and infinite potential connections and belonging to the world (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, p. 4). The use of affect as the theoretical framework for this study came with the hope that "things might feel and become otherwise" in education and schooling (Dernikos et al., 2020, p. 20). As I considered my own affective attachments as an educator-researcher, I sought to learn more about how these affective forces impact and shape my experiences as an art educator, especially in relation to the prominent neoliberal forces in schools.

Ahmed and Affect

As there are numerous approaches to affect that make it impossible to fully resolve affect in one neat definition, this study focused on one orientation of affect theory: affect as a vital, changing field of "becomings," integrating both human and nonhuman, following Ahmed's theorization (2010, 2015) as based on Deleuze/Spinoza (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, p. 6). Specifically, this "route locates affect in the midst of things and relations (in immanence) and, then, in the complex assemblages that come to compose bodies and worlds simultaneously" (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, p. 6). This "not yet" or "perpetual becoming (always becoming otherwise, however subtly, than what it already is)" (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, p. 3), leads us to "move toward and away from objects through how we are affected by them" (Ahmed, 2010, p. 32). Rather than focusing only on the human, the integration of nonhuman and more-than-human objects provides insight into how affect connects, guides, interrupts, and/or reorients. Through affective encounters, objects take on attributes that imbue them with a unique identity (Ahmed, 2015, p. 52). Objects can become saturated with positive affect and are viewed as "good objects," specifically because "we judge something to be good or bad according to how it affects us, whether it gives us pleasure or pain" (Ahmed, 2010, p. 31). A positive affect is thus something that causes us to be happily affected. Ahmed (2010) describes,

> We are moved by things. And in being moved, we make things. An object can be affective by virtue of its own location (the object might be *here* which is *where* I experience this or that affect) and the timing of its appearance (the object might be *now*, which is *when* I experience this or that affect). To experience an object as being affective or sensational is to be directed not only toward an object, but to "whatever" is around that object which includes what is behind the object, the conditions of its arrival. What is

> around an object can become happy: for instance, if you receive something delightful in a certain place, then the place itself is invested with happiness, as being "what" good feeling is directed toward. (p. 33)

If objects can be "good" or "bad," is the same true for spaces? And if so, what does this mean for classrooms and education? What objects or spaces would be so saturated with affect that students would view them as "good" or "bad?"

Ahmed (2010) elaborates that bodies do not arrive in neutral, that they always arrive with some sort of mood, and therefore those moods affect that process of becoming. As bodies do not arrive in neutral and already have some sort of mood or emotion, affect works with these predispositions as it accumulates and forms additional moods or feelings and shapes ways of seeing, feeling, and knowing. Similar to affects, Ahmed (2015) describes emotions as making and shaping the surfaces of bodies as forms of action and orientations towards other bodies. Specifically, like affects, emotions "stick" to and shape the surfaces of bodies (Ahmed, 2015, p. 4). However, unlike the idea of emotion as being "subject-centered" and "intentional," Ahmed argues that emotions are "about responsiveness and being responsive" (Schmitz & Ahmed, 2014, p. 98). Emotions are "what attaches us, what connects us to this place or that place, to this other or that other" and "is also what we find most touching; it is that which makes us feel" (Ahmed, 2015, p. 28). Furthermore, humans respond with love or hate not because something is loveable or hateful. Objects and others are perceived as having these attributes through these affective encounters, thus giving the subject a unique identity (Ahmed, 2015). In this way, both emotions and affects are produced through and shape encounters between bodies, objects, and places and can accumulate over time. Ahmed (2006) states, "we are affected by 'what' we come in contact with," and as "emotions are directed to what we come in contact with: they move us toward and

away from such subjects" (p. 2). Like Ahmed, Cvetkovich (2012) theorizes affect as a category that includes emotions. The inclusion of emotions as part of a broader category of affects opens up "a critical space to rethink the relation between mind and body" (Ahmed, 2015), which is of particular relevance to how educators view and approach pedagogy.

Affect and Education

Considering all of the objects and attachments of schooling, a pedagogy that does not consider affect thus neglects the network of interconnected attachments. The Cartesian assumption that subjects are "self-contained and rational" (Blackman, 2012; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) presents classrooms as "immobile backdrops and students as affectively contained, rational subjects" (Dernikos, 2018, p. 4). However, both good and bad feelings can stick to bodies, and as a result those bodies can get stuck by particular feelings they become associated with (Ahmed, 2010, p. 39). For example, students of color cannot control nor escape others' affective responses to their "racialized bodies" (Dernikos et al., 2020, p. 9). Thus, both the classroom space and pedagogy must consider the presence of relational, affective forces. Dernikos (2018) argues that the classroom is "an active body that is not only alive, mobile and permeable, but also affectively intertwined with other relational forces (e.g. race, gender) actively assembling in any given moment and space" (p. 4). For example, it is not simply enough to place students of color in courses that are populated by predominately White students, such as Advanced Placement classes (see Xu et al., 2021), and expect them to be fully "successful," without considering the affective forces present within the curriculum, pedagogy, and environment.

A pedagogical application of affective assemblages is found in the conceptualization of the classroom as an active part of the posthuman educational assemblage. Affect theory

reconnects us to the mind/body; specifically, how the non-human—materials, objects, things, animals—affects the mind/body, causing shifts in thought, feeling, and action (Ahmed, 2015). In terms of education and pedagogy, this is significant as affect theory provides the theoretical framework to see the potential impact of the human and nonhuman on the mind/bodies of students as well as teachers. Dernikos (2018) argues that there is no set boundary nor difference between a student and the classroom setting, and she points out that educators should recognize "classroom texts as unpredictable *willful objects* that transmit forces (e.g. of race, gender) which stick to student bodies" (2018, p. 2). These forces circulate in classroom spaces and "affectively position students," often negatively "in ways that inflict trauma" (Dernikos, 2018, p. 2). The numerous objects of schooling – spaces, procedures, surveillance, tests, grades, achievements, shortcomings or failures, white neoliberal norms of production – are all entangled with other social bodies, human and "more-than-human" (Dernikos, 2018, p. 5).

The openness and vulnerability of human bodies that results from a lack of distinction between objects and bodies (Dernikos, 2018) allows for the circulation of objects and affective situations. Ahmed (2015) states that objects are "sticky" because they are already viewed as being the cause of something good or bad, as already being saturated with positive or negative affect. The more an object circulates the more affective it becomes (p. 45). Affective encounters occur when objects appear to have a unique identity, or are saturated in affect (Ahmed, 2015). Ahmed (2015) draws on Marx's critique of the logic of capital to explain this economy of affects and how bodies and "sticky" emotions we associate with signs, figures, and objects act on and are acted upon.

According to Brennan (2004), "we are not self-contained in terms of our energies. There is no secure distinction between the 'individual' and the 'environment'" (p. 6). Based on

Ahmed's (2010, 2015) view of affects and emotions as "sticky," the interconnection of all bodies helps to facilitate the circulation of affective forces or emotions, including through objects saturated with affect. Ahmed (2015) argues that "knowledge is bound up with what makes us sweat, shudder, tremble, all those feelings that are crucially felt on the bodily surface, the skin surface where we touch and are touched by the world" (p. 171). From this perspective, wonder, "as an affective relation to the world" (Ahmed, 2015, p. 179), is about seeing the world anew. Therefore, pedagogy can be thought of in regard to this "affective opening up of the world through the act of wonder" (p. 181), though "emotions should not become the end goal of teaching, as this would result in teachers being tasked 'to 'fill' students with' the right emotions as if the students themselves were containers" (Ahmed, 2015, p. 182, referencing Freire, 1970).

By viewing individual humans as entangled and interconnected with other bodies, human and nonhuman, educators could shift away from the domination of the mind and logic in current pedagogy and consider the *intra-action* among teachers, curriculum, the learning environment, and other social forces such as race, class, and gender to analyze how these objects of affect/emotion affect students' learning (Shin & Yang, 2021). Both Hickey Moody (2020) and Snaza (2020) describe learning and education as fundamentally and unavoidably affective. Students enter a classroom space with their own affective accumulations and due to the ways "race, gender, class, sexuality, ability and other vectors of social stratification shape the bodyminds of students and teachers… not everyone is in the same place even when they're in the same space" (Snaza, 2020, p. 113). Everyone encounters affect as it is "communicated through tone, volume (loudness/quietness), body language, color choice, or texture: things that extend beyond words" (Hickey Moody, 2020, p. 146) as well as the nonhuman participants (lighting, temperature, desks, windows, artwork or posters on the walls, other curricular materials) (Snaza,

2020). These affective flows could manifest as misogynistic or racist trauma (Jones & Spector, 2017), bewilderment (Snaza, 2020), a feeling of enoughness or bodily-not-enoughness (Hughes-Decatur, 2011), or an openness to vulnerability (Snaza, 2020), among many other possibilities. Cvetkovich (2012) argues that the affective "forms of unhappiness and hopelessness" in higher education are produced because of "forms of productivity demanded by the academic sphere" (p. 19). The need to consider affect in educational spaces rests on the argument that affects can change a body's capacity to act (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Hickey Moody, 2020); what and how affects are circulating determines how students "can listen, how they can respond, and how they can engage" (Snaza, 2020, p. 116). Incorporating affects into pedagogical practices and the study of education opens up the field to new understandings and possibilities.

In this study, the use of affect, particularly my own affective attachments and how I have been affected as an educator-researcher, was accompanied by the hope that it was possible to experience schooling differently or "otherwise" (Dernikos et al., 2020) rather than continue to operate under harmful neoliberal norms. It was with this hope that I created my own teaching practice, which I refer to as yoga-informed pedagogy, and think with affect to better understand how affects are produced and move through spaces, objects, and experiences. To put it another way, thinking with affect theory allowed me to examine how all the parts of the classroom – the environment, curriculum, teacher and students, objects, conversations, pedagogy, human and nonhuman, are interconnected. This interconnection is one example of the commonalities that are present for affect theory, posthumanism, and the philosophy of yoga. In the next section, I define key concepts of yoga, including interconnectedness, unity, abhyasa and vairagya, and ahimsa, which provide new insights and a framework for educational research and practice as these

different ways of thinking about the world intersect and converge, opening new possibilities and futures.

The Philosophy of Yoga

While the commodification of yoga in the United States may focus largely on yoga as a physical practice, there is more to yoga than physical movement. Susanna Barkataki (2020), an Indian yoga practitioner, teacher, and advocate for sharing the history and philosophy of yoga through practice, states that "yoga has always been a science of liberation. It is a coherent method for personal freedom, social justice, and equity that has been tested over time and in practice" (p. 38). Barkataki (2020) articulates that "yoga is a complex and comprehensive system of specific practices of body, mind, and spirit that guide the individual and society toward liberation and freedom from suffering" (p. 38). The yoga system promises, through consistent practice, a steady mind, learning to minimize distractions and increasing awareness, a greater understanding and acceptance of the self and others, and freedom from fears and expectations (DiNardo & Pearce Hayden, 2018). It is through this dedicated practice that yoga invites practitioners to enter into a union with oneself and experience their connection and unity with everything else. Barkataki (2020) states, "yoga teaches us again and again the intimate truth of our ultimate interconnection. Connection with self and connection with one another. We are all interconnected" (p. 5).

For the sake of clarity, when I refer to yoga throughout this chapter, I am referring to the system of yoga, aligning with what Barkataki defines as being more than simply something you do. Yoga is "something you are and that you can embody" (2020, p. 112). The practice of yoga is the calming of the fluctuations of the mind, leading to unity within, calming our own mental talk, and finding a sense of ease. In order to authentically embody yoga, I first will provide a brief

history of yoga and overview of the philosophic teachings. However, this writing is by no means a comprehensive presentation of what yoga is. I instead focus on the application of the philosophy, as the topics of yoga history and philosophy are best transmitted orally, as yoga teachers (including mine) have done throughout history (Barkataki, 2020).

Honoring Yoga

Iyengar (2006) describes yoga as a "mirror to the self" (p. 125). Thus, I begin by providing my own context and path to yoga, reflecting on my own positionality and challenges. I identify as a White woman, born and raised in the United States, and a developing scholar in the field of art education who is committed to equity and justice. I recognize the inherent risks in writing about and utilizing yoga philosophy in my research. As stated by Barkataki (2020), "white supremacy is a critical part of yoga culture… when we examine it, we can address it, rather than perpetuate it" (p. 76). The challenge is to ensure authenticity and to avoid fragmenting ideas as much as possible. This is especially challenging when, even after significant reading and research, I recognize that there are still gaps in my knowledge. Learning is an ongoing process, one filled with vulnerability and mistakes. It is not my intent to be a "white intermediary," as Todd (2016) cautions against, and present the philosophy of yoga in a way that oversimplifies, stereotypes, or misrepresents (Cherniak & Walker, 2020). It is also not my intent to "pick and choose and to take what we want from the yogic system because it benefits us without regard for those we are impacting" (Barkataki, 2020, p. 59). Rather, it is my intent to embody yoga as an effort to position the philosophy of yoga within an expressed need to consider Eastern philosophical perspectives in art education pedagogy (see Shin & Yang, 2021). The teachings of yoga "focus on principles that can be responsive to the injustices that are happening in the world," (Johnson, 2017, p. 34). Therefore, in an attempt to minimize cultural

appropriation, I begin with the source: first providing a brief history of yoga and then discussing Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, or guide to living *despite* our human minds.

The Teachings of Yoga – A Brief History

Yoga originated in South Asia an estimated 5,000 years ago, though little is known of its specific origins. Additionally, the ancient practice of yoga was varied and nonstandardized. What can historically be agreed upon is that "yoga practices sprung up in an Indic culture that respected and learned from nature and deeply valued spiritual exploration" with practitioners devoting their lives "to the exploration of how to relieve suffering and find liberation through daily moments in deep practice" (Barkataki, 2020, p. 36). Yoga comes from the Sanskrit word *yoj,* meaning to yoke or connect (Iyengar, 1979). Using Sanskrit, the original language used when yoga first originated, Barkataki (2020) argues is important because "each sound has embedded within it the essence of the meaning of yoga itself" (p. 16). The unity comes from joining and disciplining the powers of the body, mind, and soul (Iyengar, 1979, p. 19). Moving away from separation and towards unity, to the "dignity and worth of all beings" was what enabled Indians to nonviolently refuse British colonization (Barkataki, 2020, p. 11). More recently in yoga's history, yoga's introduction to the United States is most significantly credited to BKS Iyengar, who focused on alignment, precision, and modifications to make yoga available to all. Iyengar's teachings included the Yoga Sutras, which I will discuss in the following section.

The Yoga Sutras

In this section, I use the Yoga Sutras to explain key tenets of yoga, using BKS Iyengar's *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* (2002), which I supplement with contemporary literature. The Yoga Sutras serve as the foundation for the practice of yoga in the pursuit of peace, clarity,

connection, and living a fulfilling life of ease. The Yoga Sutras act as a map or guide for how to achieve these pursuits. Little is known about Patanjali other than what is known through legend. Patanjali did not create yoga, he collected existing teachings and organized and compiled them into the Yoga Sutras. The Sutras consist of four portions or books (*padas*). First Patanjali explains what yoga is, what a steady mind looks like, and the various obstacles that prevent one from maintaining balance. The second book presents the tools and practices that support the goal of yoga: unity and a life of ease, contentment, and purpose. The last two books describe the transformation that leads to the full and complete understanding of one's true self and potential.

> DiNardo and Pearce Hayden (2018), two yoga teachers, say of the Yoga Sutras:
>
> If our time on the mat is an opportunity to feel where we are in our body and in our physical life, then this is a chance to take our practice off the mat and to learn where we are in our mind and spirit. It is a way to interact with the ancient philosophy in an active, modern way (p. 2).

Their work, *Living the Sutras*, aims to be "a bridge between the ancient theory and the modern-day application" (DiNardo & Pearce Hayden, 2018, p. 5). The sutras begin by defining yoga and explain that when the mind is steady and calm, one can know their true nature. Sutra 1:12 describes two main tenets of yoga within one phrase: *abhyasa-vairagyabhyam tan-nirodhah.* This translates to "the mind's fluctuations are stifled through practice and acceptance" (DiNardo & Pearce Hayden, 2018, p. 25). DiNardo and Pearce Hayden (2018) further elaborate on this as the act of steady, consistent effort toward a goal (*abhyasa*) with the simultaneous comfort with one's efforts and acceptance of the results (*vairagya*). To put it another way, these two "seemingly oppositional ideas work together to create balance. The steady, consistent effort leads us in the right direction and acceptance allows us to continue the journey without being

held back by the pleasure and pain of everyday life" (DiNardo & Pearce Hayden, 2018, p. 25-26). *Vairagya* is a recognition that where one is *is* enough. This contentment in the present moment does not lead to stagnation or a lack of progress, instead progress can remain steady and constant despite outside conditions. The Yoga Sutras also describe methods for cultivating a singular focus and being in the present moment, providing different methods to clear and calm the mind. Patanjali closes the first book by describing the "depth and focus and the possibilities that exist when the mind is calm and peaceful" (DiNardo & Pearce-Hayden, 2018, p. 67).

In book two, Patanjali prepares us to stay with our discomfort, and then shares the practices of *ashtanga yoga*. Ashtanga translates to eight (*ashta*) limbs or rungs (*anga*) and describes a systematic discipline that helps "improve our relationships with the world, others, our body, mind, and spirit (DiNardo & Pearce-Hayden, 2018, p. 70). These limbs are as follows: *yamas* (universal code of conduct), *niyamas* (how to treat ourselves), *asana* (physical postures), *pranayama* (breath work), *pratyahara* (turning the senses inward). The last three limbs are known as *samyama*, or the combined and simultaneous practice of meditation (Adele, 2009; DiNardo & Pearce-Hayden, 2018, p. 143). The eight limbs of yoga "deliberately work us from the outside to the inside, focusing on our connection with the world and our relationship with others before turning to our body, mind, and spirit" (DiNardo & Pearce-Hayden, 2018, p. 103). DiNardo & Pearce-Hayden describe how the *yamas* and *niyamas* make up the "core values of yoga" (p. 102). It is these values that provide the basis for embodying the system of yoga.

Ahimsa, the first and foundational *yama* can literally be translated as nonviolence. While *ahimsa* may seem to be passive no action, nonviolence is of such value that it is the foundation or core of yoga (Adele, 2009). Beyond just a call to not commit violence, ahimsa has a wider, more proactive and positive meaning: love. This is based on the view that violence can extend to

a state of mind (Iyengar, 2006). Additionally, based on the concept that fear creates violence, ahimsa calls upon humans to have the courage to act, to treat ourselves with love and kindness, and to honor the relationship we have with others, both human and beyond (Adele, 2009). Iyengar states,

> The yogi believes that every creature has as much right to live as he has. He believes that he is born to help others and he looks upon creation with eyes of love. He knows that his life is linked inextricably with that of others and he rejoices if he can help them to be happy (2006, p. 32).

In describing *ahimsa*, the Yoga Sutras state that all beings are linked and have an equal right to life (Iyengar, 2006). In her book *Skill in Action*, Michelle Cassandra Johnson (2017) presents a framework "that illustrates what it means to live yoga for the transformation and liberation of all beings" (p. 11). She describes this act of living yoga, or skill in action, as being

> about feeling the connection between all beings and taking steps to serve the collective good with a goal of justice for all. It asks yoga practitioners and social change agents to take the benefits and lessons that come from a contemplative practice and to use their power to influence the world. (Johnson, 2017, p. 11)

Thus, the act of *ahimsa*, or nonviolence, extends beyond a call to avoid violence – it requires living yoga with the recognition everyone is interconnected and has the right to a life of ease.

As noted earlier, this summary does not offer an exhaustive or comprehensive explanation of yoga. It does, however, provide the background and context for how the philosophy of yoga served as the foundation for my yoga-inspired pedagogy. Therefore, in the next section I share how I adopted unity and interconnectedness, *abhyasa*, *vairagya*, and *ahimsa*

into pedagogy as I attempted to live and practice yoga "as a way of being, a philosophy, and way of life" (Barkataki, 2020, p. 60).

Yoga-Informed Pedagogy

For this study, I focused on the philosophy of yoga in conversation with affect theory with the goal of intervening in the current educational climate, shaped by harmful neoliberal systems that result in discourses of success and failure, to implement an approach to pedagogy that privileges contentment and the interconnection of bodies (human and non-human) within the classroom. My approach to pedagogy drew from yoga philosophy, affect theory, and efforts to push backs against and disrupt neoliberal systems. I grounded my practice in the yogic concepts of *abhyasa*, or steady and consistent effort, *vairagya,* or comfort with our efforts and contentment with where we are, *ahimsa*, or nonviolence (Iyengar, 1979), and interconnectedness (Barkataki, 2020). These yogic concepts synthesize and converge with my inspiration from the nonviolent pedagogical approaches of the Highlander Folk School (SNCC Legacy Project, 2022) and bell hooks' engaged pedagogy (1994, 2010). Furthermore, all of these concepts have correspondences to affect theory. By drawing on these concepts, I developed my own unique approach to teaching that aimed to reject the Cartesian mind and body binary and focused on thinking/feeling/being an educator-researcher as I attempted to balance the mind, body, and heart in education. This practice is what I refer to as *yoga-informed pedagogy.*

Yoga-informed pedagogy is outlined here, but it is important to note that embodying the philosophy of yoga in my classroom went beyond what is expressed on these pages. The study of yogic philosophy is deeper and more expansive than could be easily and readily adapted from these pages to a teaching practice. I recognize that care must be taken to avoid cultural appropriation and the perpetuation of White supremacy, and in some ways, as a White woman, I

cannot fully eliminate either of these two things from occurring. Because my practice involved embodying and orienting myself toward the philosophy of yoga, I must address the inherent tensions that arise when existing in a Western neoliberal system and simultaneously attempting to draw from Asian philosophy. According to Ahmed (2006), orienting oneself through facing one direction is also participating in the history of giving certain directions to specific places, such as "*the* East, *the* West, and so on" (p. 113). The farness and exoticness of the Orient is "not only where we are not, but it is also future orientated, as a place we might long for and might not inhabit." (Ahmed, 2006, p. 114). Thus, Ahmed (2006) argues that

> [the Orient] is also desired by the West, as having things that 'the West' itself is assumed to be lacking. This fantasy of lack, of what is 'not here' shapes the desire for what is 'there,' such that 'there' becomes visible on the horizon as 'supplying' what is lacking. The Orient becomes what we could call a 'supply point' (p. 114).

While it was not my intention to contribute to Orientalist histories, as a Western neoliberal subject I did turn to an Eastern, Asian philosophy in my effort to turn away from the neoliberal machine and chart a different path centering kindness, process, and connection. To be clear, I did this through my own embodiment of yoga philosophy in the classroom; I did not describe what I was doing with students as "teaching with yoga" nor did I present yoga as a solution to the problems of education. As I worked to embody the philosophy of yoga, I recognized that I was still simultaneously perpetuating neoliberal norms. Thinking with non-modern philosophies (Lugones, 2010) naturally results in tensions and entanglements with the everyday workings of neoliberalism, which can run the risk of resulting in the unintentional commodification of such philosophies. However, when approached with deep intentionality and awareness of these

dangers, efforts to chart new ways of being informed by philosophies that challenge neoliberal practices may offer possibilities that would otherwise be unavailable.

Cherniak and Walker (2020) problematize the "new" in the recent, predominantly Western, research of new materialism. They argue that only referencing contemporary, often White Euro-Western-centric literature delegitimizes and colonizes non-modern (referencing Lugones, 2010) knowledges (Cherniak & Walker, 2020). Like them, I recognize the dangers of incorporating yoga philosophy given my limited knowledge, which has ultimately been acquired in a Western context, and the danger of using this Asian philosophy as a "supply point" (Ahmed, 2006). My use of the philosophy of yoga was therefore not immune to the dangers described, but it was an earnest attempt to connect the concepts of posthumanism, affect theory, and yoga philosophy as a way to think about teaching, learning, and pedagogy differently in art education. This earnest attempt included my commitment to being self-reflective and making an effort to embrace this idea of living yoga (Johnson, 2017) both in and out of my classroom in order to honor the entirety of yoga. Therefore, while I focused on parts of yoga in my classroom, my study and attempt to live yoga went beyond my classroom walls.

In the classroom, my approach to yoga-informed pedagogy was similar to hooks' (2010) engaged pedagogy in that it centered the interactive relationship of educator and student rather than the coverage of information (p. 19). In an engaged pedagogy, curriculum starts with what students bring with them into the classroom, such as prior knowledge, skills, questions, and beliefs, and progresses through shared practice and exploration. The art classroom is a shared space for artists and learners to learn from and with each other. Throughout this study, my teaching practice was guided by the yogic concepts of *abhyasa*, *vairagya,* and *ahimsa* with the aim of creating a space where students could be free from the "judgment" of punitive grading in

order to focus on growth as a result of steady and consistent effort while simultaneously cultivating contentment with their current creative practice. The key here was that each student's effort or practice was to be understood as critical for the sake of the process, not a specific end-goal. I acknowledged that this kind of process-oriented growth might not be linear nor drastic and would likely be different for each individual student as they moved through the entanglement of human and nonhuman, of bodies and space.

One key aspect of engaged pedagogy is fostering the ability of students to live fully and deeply, which has parallels to the practice of yoga. Yoga can be defined as the practice of calming the mind in order to find unity within, specifically "collective consciousness and liberation" (Barkataki, 2020). At its core, yoga is a framework and embodied practice that aims to provide an easeful life of contentment and joy (Barkataki, 2020; DiNardo & Pearce-Hayden, 2018; Iyengar, 1966). Barkataki (2020) states that yoga teaches us again and again the truth of our interconnection, that "we are all interconnected" (p. 5). Specifically, Yoga Sutra 1.12 *Abhyasa vairagyabhyam tan-nirodhah* states that "the mind's fluctuations are stilled through practice and acceptance" (DiNardo & Pearce-Hayden, 2018, p. 25). DiNardo and Pearce-Hayden (2018) describe this sutra as "a reminder to enjoy the journey and not worry about the results" (p. 26). Barkataki (2020) describes this journey as a path to unity that comes by bringing the "mind, body, and heart into harmony" (p. 3). Similar to how, when I hike up mountains or visit the ocean to go somewhere I "feel small," yoga reminds one that everything is interconnected.

Intersections of Yoga, Posthumanism, and Affect Theory

The philosophy of yoga and posthumanism are distinctly different and yet have commonalities that provide new insights and a framework for educational research as the two different ways of thinking about the world intersect and converge, opening new possibilities and

futures. I understand posthumanism and affect theory as complementary to yogic philosophy in that they provide a framework that shifts away from a humanist perspective that views individual actions as solely autonomous and unaffected by the bodies around them. By rejecting the notion that humans are the only species able to produce knowledge, posthumanism "instead creates openings for other forms/things/objects/beings/phenomenon to know" (Ulmer, 2017, p. 834). Further, affects are "the forces that register on/with-in/across bodies to produce and shape personal/emotional experiences" among bodies that are "endlessly entangled with other bodies—human and nonhuman" (Dernikos et al., 2020, p. 3). To put it differently, all bodies are interconnected, part of entangled assemblages. Thus, as with the philosophy of yoga, every body is interconnected.

Yoga-Informed Pedagogy in Practice

Although there are numerous examples of how yoga is being implemented in schools, there is limited information on the intersections of affect and the philosophy of yoga in education. Through my investigation of the literature, I found that the connections between yoga and affect were under theorized due to the fact that yoga was primarily addressed through movement-based, neoliberal studies. The existing studies showed how yoga was being used in schools to further the neoliberal goal of disciplining (Foucault, 1995) students into bodies that obey, respond, and produce test scores. Rather than following this commodification of yoga as a means to better produce students to meet neoliberal goals, my aim was to push back against neoliberalism through yoga-informed pedagogy.

In this culture of accountability, so much of educational dialogue is about achievement, both formal and informal. Praise is often connected to performance, not to the process. Comments intended as compliments in the art classroom often focus on the talent of student

artists, not on the learning and investigations or the process. Alternatively, in yoga, the goal is not to *achieve* a particular body position, or asana; the goal is to show up for attention to your breath. The movements are meant to help one sit with their breath and be mindful. My own study and practice of yoga has led me to feel more contentment, ease, and joy in my life. This contentment and idea of enoughness has carried over into how I approach interactions with students. Throughout this study, I aimed to emphasize the process over the product in artmaking and encourage students to listen to their bodies and what felt right for their art making practice. I complemented them and their learning in order to create a space where they felt genuinely celebrated. Creating was much less about reaching an end goal and assessing that product than having a practice of art making and feeling the joy and contentment that comes along with that. I placed emphasis on students' *enoughness* and the importance of trust, interconnection, and *contentment*, rather than the neoliberal push for more. Furthermore, attuning to the role of affects in the classroom spaces, specifically the physical space, relational space, and curricular space, enabled me to think about art teaching and learning *differently*. Of course, focusing on process and contentment was an imperfect practice within the neoliberal culture of schools.

Acknowledging that my role as a teacher was only one part of the body of affective forces present, the physical space of the classroom was an important part of a yoga-informed pedagogy. I grouped the tables in the art classroom to provide larger work areas (while still fitting within a limited classroom space) and promote the sharing and collaborating of ideas and techniques. The table groupings created a general discursive opening to lively conversations as well as quiet focus. The conversations that circulated in the classroom, among students and with me, were both connected to artistic practice and not. There were no assigned seats; instead, students selected their own seats and could change seats without needing permission. During

studio time, students were able to move about the room, access supplies, work on the floor or standing up—all without needing explicit permission. I typically sat or squatted beside them to provide assistance rather than positioning myself as a superior or isolated from them. Perhaps due to a sense of comfort, students seemed to be able to share lived experiences *as* they created within this space. And, oftentimes, I end up with a student at my desk, taking my seat as a place of honor or a place to decompress.

Yoga-informed pedagogy prioritized an acceptance and contentment with the present moment alongside steady and consistent effort or practice. I sought to pursue yoga's idea of enoughness rather than furthering neoliberalism's never good-enoughness (Pittard 2015; Hughes-Decatur, 2011). Therefore, in my implementation of yoga-informed pedagogy, which I analyze in depth in Chapter 5, I sought to learn more about the affective forces at work as I attempted to embody the philosophy of yoga through the concepts of *abhyasa, vairagya,* and *ahimsa.* Through these theoretical frameworks, I investigated the classroom assemblages to see what affects were produced through this pedagogical shift, what affects remained stuck in the neoliberal culture of accountability, and how these affects impacted my experiences as a teacher.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN

This research study is in response to the current focus on test scores and success in education and the resulting effects that has on students and teachers feeling "not good enough" (Hughes-Decatur, 2011). In Georgia, in particular, educators are under increased scrutiny to demonstrate success through test scores while fitting within the conservative legislation being pushed forward, such as Georgia House Bill 1084, one of several bills in Georgia focused on banning some forms of instruction on racial issues. Neoliberalism, standardization, and accountability have focused much of education and pedagogy on student achievement and outcomes, impacting the overall culture of schools as well (Atkinson, 2015; Baltodano, 2012; Kimelberg et al., 2019; Sabol, 2013). In my own teaching experiences, I have seen how this age of accountability in education, with its emphasis on standardized testing data as a measure of school success in connection with corresponding mandates and policies, is increasingly affecting pedagogy. Through this research, I worked to respond to the current focus in public schools on control and the production of data through the commodification of bodies – through grades, attendance, testing, the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI), and the capitalist narratives of bigger, stronger, greater (Thiel, 2020). As a foundation for this research study, I examined relevant literature to explore the discourses of neoliberalism on schooling, education, and art education, as well as school-based practices of yoga and other contemplative pedagogies.

Neoliberalism operates in United States public schools by predominately focusing on the creation of "college and career ready students" (Georgia Department of Education, 2021) to

productively contribute to the economy. This is supported through standardization and an overall audit culture consisting of testing and ranking performance, which results in a predetermined pedagogy focused on assessment and performance as a streamlined diagnosis of success or failure. The focus on data and use of specific curricula to determine "success" undermines the professional autonomy of educators and focuses schooling on assessment. The binary of success and failure results in students and teachers feeling "not good enough" (Hughes-Decatur, 2011).

I strongly believe that neoliberalism and the resulting discourses of success and failure are causing harm to teachers and students (see Pittard, 2015; Thompson and Jones, 2021). Under neoliberalism, schooling is production and grade-based, with feedback often largely punitive. As a potential way to push back against and disrupt neoliberalism, I turned to mindfulness practices and yoga philosophy, developing what I refer to as yoga-informed pedagogy. Yoga-informed pedagogy is situated at the intersection and convergence of yoga philosophy, affect theory, and efforts to disrupt neoliberalism. It comes from my own experiences and research and the belief that educators should "create pedagogical practices that engage students, providing them with ways of knowing that enhance their capacity to live fully and deeply" (bell hooks, 1994, p. 22). Yoga-informed pedagogy also draws from the yoga concepts of *vairagya* (contentment with where you are), *abhyasa* (a steady and consistent practice), interconnectedness, and *ahimsa* (nonviolence) and aims to create space free from the judgment of punitive forms of assessment. My hope is that yoga-informed pedagogy can push against, disrupt, and/or alter the material discourses of success and failure in schooling that result from neoliberalism.

To conduct this research I utilized my dual and blended role of educator and researcher and took a post-qualitative approach to "think with theory" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) as a process for analyzing my own teaching practice. I worked to embody the theory in yoga-

informed pedagogy through an intentional pedagogical shift from the current outcome-oriented educational discourses and tactics to a focus on process and connection. More specifically, I used post-humanism and affect theory to investigate how classroom experiences are shaped by a yoga-informed teaching practice. I begin by sharing the research questions that guided the study, then describe my approach to qualitative research. I utilized a post-qualitative approach informed by what Jackson and Mazzei (2012) describe as thinking with theory to plug one text into another, and thus allowed theory and process to guide my research. I was most interested in exploring what affective forces I noticed as I worked to embody the theory in yoga-informed pedagogy, and how that impacted my experiences as an educator-researcher. Finally, I share the specific research design and the process of collecting and analyzing data for the study.

Research Questions

- What affects become evident when a yoga-informed pedagogy focused on process, contentment, and connection is implemented within the neoliberal context of a public high school art classroom?
- How do affective forces at work in a public high school, especially those produced by or entangled in neoliberal structures, shape the experiences of an art educator?

Methodology/Unmethods

My approach to research has always been one that is entangled with my work as a high school art educator. While I am continually working to provide a space of mutual respect and shared learning, I am still an outsider to many of my students' lived experiences, as the vast majority of them are students of color and I am a White woman. I recognize the harmful "neoliberal, colonial, heteropatriarchal, and white supremacist ways of knowing, being, and doing" (Thiel & Dernikos, 2020, p. 483) within schooling and that, as an educator-researcher,

my position is still one steeped in power. I also recognize that the student population I work with is historically deprivileged, classed, racialized, and gendered within schooling (Thiel & Dernikos, 2020). I do not wish to further contribute to privileging my discourse over theirs as I will always be in a position of power as their educator, regardless of what pedagogy I use. The positioning and categorization of qualitative data can lead to gaps in the narratives: whether academically-, community-, or school-positioned, these narratives are a result of the power of representation and privilege in research (Staikidis, 2014). I questioned, as Staikidis (2014), "whose discourse is privileged?" (p. 77). Because I occupy a dual role as educator-researcher, the line between researcher and researched is already blurred. I will never be able to untangle myself from my classroom experiences as I learn from and with my students. We are both entangled and connected in the experience of learning/doing in the classroom. For that reason, I sought out research approaches that would enable my work to contribute to the wellbeing of my classroom community, specifically focusing on research *with* rather than *about* my students (Caracciolo & Staikidis, 2009). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) state,

> The genuine coming of age in methodology, we see now, will be the maturing of the field into a new set of practices and purposes—a new praxis that is deeply responsive and accountable to those it serves. (p. 1123).

These practices are what I worked to move towards in my classroom research, using responsive and accountable approaches as I focused on my own classroom perspective. Ultimately, my research was not an attempt to code my students, who were predominantly young adults of color, into conclusive findings for a broader population. To do so, in my view, would have continued to perpetuate the focus on what and how data is produced in the neoliberal academy. Rather, I was interested in focusing on myself as an educator-researcher and what

affects I noticed within my art education classroom as I worked to embody the theory in yoga-informed pedagogy as a potential path to expand the field of art education beyond the harmful neoliberal norms present in schooling. My hope was that if I "push[ed] toward the intensive, barely intelligible variation in living that shocks us and asks us to be worthy of it...something unimaginable might come out that might change the world bit by bit, word by word, sentence by sentence" (St. Pierre, 2018, p. 607). I aimed for my research to lead to more just and equitable classroom spaces, thinking both beyond humanism and traditional research methods.

According to St. Pierre, research has often already begun before problem statements and research questions are formed (Guttorm et al., 2015). As I was already in an active role in my classroom, I was never able to separate myself from the research nor determine a specific beginning moment. Instead, I took a post-qualitative approach to research. Rather than asking questions such as "what is going on here? How did this happen?" and focusing on what already existed, post-qualitative inquiry prompted me to focus on "things in the making" (St. Pierre, 2018, p. 604). Based on questionings, interests, and wonderings about things in the making, when interviewed by Guttorm, Hohti, and Paakkari (2015), St. Pierre described a post-qualitative approach as letting the inquiry guide "the next thing," and then continue to do "the next thing that makes sense and to keep doing the next things and then all that doing is a *methodology* – that is, if they [researchers] still must cling to the idea of methodology" (p. 16). As such, there is no set next step in post-qualitative inquiry. There is no prescribed methodology.

This process of doing the next thing, even when one has no idea what the next thing is, comes back to reading in order to prepare to "think with theory" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). St. Pierre (2018) advises the post-qualitative researcher to read as much theory(ies), to fully

immerse herself in them to the point that she has come to embody and "*live* the theories" (p. 604). St. Pierre (2018) further elaborates on the researcher embodying theory, stating:

> If one has read and read, one cannot not put theory to work – it will happen. The post qualitative inquirer who has prepared herself must trust herself and do the next thing, whatever it is – to experiment – and to keep moving. (p. 605).

Thinking/being with theory leads to a state of companionship "as one opens up to being used by thought" (Lather, 2013, p. 639). Thus, the researcher utilizing a post-qualitative approach cannot separate themselves from the theory or the research. Post-qualitative inquiry rethinks the self/other binary of humanism (Lather & St. Pierre, 2013; St. Pierre, 2018) and the placement of humans as central to established research categories (statement of the problem, questions, literature review, methods, data analysis, etc.) and instead recognizes the researcher not as a separate self but as part of an assemblage, entangled with the world (Cherniak, 2020).

Thinking with Posthumanism in Research

In Chapter 3, I discussed the theoretical framework and key concepts that guided this research. As I prepare to discuss the research design used in this study, I begin by discussing how posthumanism informed my approach to research. This provides the foundation for the study design and analysis utilizing a post qualitative approach.

The posthuman turn provides opportunities to think differently about research and the world we live in (Ulmer, 2017). By expanding beyond the traditional conception of humans being "the only species capable of producing knowledge" posthumanism "creates openings for other forms/things/objects/beings/phenomenon to know" (Ulmer, 2017, p. 834). Traditional data analysis in qualitative research favors the "humanistic, essentialist practices of sorting and grouping data that appear to be similar and building themes from similar data based on

coherence and patterns" (Jackson, 2013, p. 742). To put it differently, posthumanism departs from the humanist tradition of organizing and coding data based on people's experiences to create representations of "the real and true knowledge" (Jackson, 2013, p. 742). Posthuman ontologies instead "emphasize the complexity, or entanglement, of the human and the non-human" (Jackson, 2013, p. 742) and a focus on objects and "materiality and practices of mattering" (Taylor et al., 2022, p. 208). As described by Ulmer (2017) as "posthuman *and* more-than-human *and* non-human" (p. 834) and argued by Taylor et al. (2022) "this is not about thinking after humanity (posthuman)" (p. 208), the posthuman is not departing from humanity. Rather, it is "seeking to displace the legacy of Humanism and its anthropocentric, colonialist, patriarchal imperatives which have positioned white, Euro-American Man as the only one who matters" (Taylor et al., 2022, p. 208).

It is worth noting that posthumanism is not the first theoretical perspective to critique humanism, and that through these critiques there is not an elimination of the need to support distinctly marginalized human populations seen in critical approaches to qualitative research. For example, Snaza et al. (2014) respond to critiques of posthumanism by suggesting that there is in fact an alignment between posthumanism and feminist and anti-colonialist perspectives (p. 41). Specifically, they suggest "that a wide variety of seemingly disparate critical approaches (feminism, anticolonial and antiracist thought, technology studies, ecology, etc.) have a common ground in directly challenging the ways humanism has restricted politics and education" (Snaza et al., 2014, p. 41). To put it differently, each of these theories, including posthumanism, has a common cause in the problematic "human" (p. 41). Therefore, posthumanism challenges "the humanist positioning of the non-white and non-Western as less than human" while also focusing on "*continuities* between the human and non-human" (Snaza et al., 2014, p. 42). Thus,

posthumanist agency is understood as coming from "an entanglement of researcher-data-participants-theory-analysis, as opposed to an innate attribute of an individual human being" (Mazzei, 2013, p. 743). In other words, there is no one entity that has agency over another; voice or action occurs from all of these beings, human, non-human, more-than-human, intra-acting with each other (Barad, 2007). Posthumanism argues that "we are always already interconnected with our environments" and as a result "methodological thinking" should foster "similar interconnections" (Ulmer, 2017, p. 834).

What does this mean for educational research? Snaza et al. (2014) argue that posthumanism can transform education because it requires us to confront traditionally humanist-centered approaches to educational research. According to Snaza et al. (2014), education can be reframed to reflect the relations of humans, animals, machines, and other things, and can produce new directions for curriculum studies that include an emphasis on "being-together in learning without insisting on human exceptionalism" (p. 50). Ulmer states that "posthumanism presents opportunities for interconnections with the material settings in which we live: with policy, with schools, with each other, and with the environment and all it contains" (Ulmer, 2017, p. 834). Thus, educational research is "an embodied and embedded doing," a "knowing-becoming-doing" (Taylor et al, 2022, p. 217). By moving towards "material ways of thinking and being" posthuman research "produces situated, material, interconnected, processual, and affirmative knowledges" (Ulmer, 2017, p. 836). To put it differently, knowledge does not exist in isolation. Instead, phenomena are "multiple, subjective, and produced from a series of complex relations" (Ulmer, 2017, p. 836). Therefore, because "we are always already interconnected with our environments, methodological thinking should respond in kind by fostering similar interconnections" (Ulmer, 2017, p. 834). It is in these complex relations and interconnections

that I turn to affect theory to make sense of what these human and nonhuman assemblages are producing in the art classroom.

Continuing along that line of thought, affect theory describes "visceral forces beneath, alongside, or generally *other* than conscious knowing" that propel us to movement and/or thought as well as cause stillness or overwhelm us (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, p. 1). These "forces" or "forces of encounter" can be further described as "swells of intensities that pass between 'bodies' (bodies defined not by an outer skin-envelope or other surface boundary but by their potential to reciprocate or co-participate in the passages of affect)" (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, p. 2). These forces can lead bodies to act, feel, connect, respond, and/or be reoriented. Sara Ahmed (2010) describes affect as "sticky," specifically as being "what sticks, or what sustains or preserves the connection between ideas, values, and objects" (p. 24). The fact that affect "sticks" is what results in it compelling humans to act, be affected, and/or to feel.

A Study-in-the-Making

I focused on a post-qualitative approach in order to let my knowledge of posthumanism and affect *guide* me through the course of this research. Thus, I focused on what I noticed and the resulting questions as I attempted to embody the philosophy of yoga in my teaching practice. Rather than completely abandoning qualitative methods, Jackson and Mazzei (2012) describe "thinking with theory" as "working the limits of (qualitative) practices" in an attempt to open up methodology to see how it might be expanded and what might result (viii). This process, or "method of breaking methodological routine" (Lather, 2013, p. 642) involves "making and unmaking the thing," through an "arranging, organizing, fitting together," which Jackson and Mazzei (2012) describe as "plugging in" (p. 1). Their concept of plugging in draws from Deleuze and Guattari (1987): "when one writes, the only question is which other machine the literary

machine can be plugged into, *must* be plugged into in order to work" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 1). To put it another way, post-qualitative inquiry disrupts any settled or stagnant areas of inquiry through the pairing with an additional text or source (Lather, 2013). Jackson and Mazzei (2012) say that "plugging in" requires not only a questioning of how things are connected, but also asking "what new territories are claimed" within the field (p. 1).

As a post-qualitative approach to inquiry rejects the prescribed step-by-step methods, there is much variation in what research studies based on this approach look like. However, they can be characterized as "begin(ing) inquiry *with theory* and let(ing) theory guide it" (Cherniak, 2020, p. 2). This act of thinking with theory or plugging one text into another "opens up a reading of data that is both *within and against interpretivism."* (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. vii). Jackson and Mazzei (2012) describe "plugging in," as requiring a deep level of knowing/being with the theory and practice and thus recognizing "how they *constitute or make one* another" (p. 10). Rather than forcing analytical questions, through plugging in, analytical questions "*emerge in the middle* of plugging in," not before, and importantly, thinking with theory shows "the *suppleness of both theory and data when plugged in*" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 10). In other words, the theory is used to produce knowledge *differently* as one cannot help but think with it.

In my study, I recorded pedagogical happenings through audio and photographic documentation of classroom interconnections: pedagogy, practices, students, spaces, materials, affects, and time. Throughout my efforts to implement yoga-informed pedagogy and during the analytical processes I engaged in, I thought with theory in order to see what I noticed from the events that occurred. What did I notice in the active body of affective forces in my classroom? How did these affective forces impact and shape my experiences as an art educator, especially in relation to the prominent neoliberal forces in the school? As stated by St. Pierre (2018), the

methodless nature of post-qualitative inquiry guides the researcher through reading and living theory and doing the next thing. Therefore, part of my initial analysis of the happenings was through "writing," in the form of written field notes, reflections, and/or recorded voice memos, in which I used theory to think *with* the classroom events. Thus, I attempted to shift from epistemology to ontology, from focusing on knowledge to focusing on being, as I rethought qualitative methods. By thinking with theory, I investigated what I noticed with regard to the affects circulating in my art education classroom as I implemented and worked to embody the theory in yoga-informed pedagogy.

Documenting the Study Events

I conducted the study in my own public high school art classroom from January to May of 2023. I recorded classroom events using both audio recordings and photos, had unstructured interviews with students, and wrote and recorded reflections of my teaching and observations. I began recording in January and recorded each 90-minute classroom session Monday through Friday until the end of the semester in mid-May. The recording was done by recording a voice memo with my phone in my back pocket. I chose this discrete method of recording because I had seen how, as a form of documentation, video recording could cause discomfort for student participants and could change the dynamic of the classroom. By using a phone in my back pocket, I was able to have the audio recording device covertly travel around the classroom with me, capturing the myriad conversations, questions, and experiences of my life as an art educator. I also took photographs of the processes of students' artmaking and the classroom space and recorded self-reflections following each class period. Initially, I set out to designate at least half an hour to write following the dismissal of students; yet I was often tired and ready to go home. The reflections shifted to audio recordings as I drove home, which I also transcribed. I made

notes of what I observed to be significant events so I could revisit the transcriptions during analysis. My initial plan for analysis was to group the documentation based on relevance to the physical, curricular, and relational spaces of the study. However, I soon realized that each of these aspects of experience did not and could not exist without the other. All of these things were simultaneously occurring and entangled within the art classroom and my experiences as an art educator-researcher. Therefore, to represent the sometimes chaotic multitude of simultaneous happenings in the art classroom, I chose to use collage as a supplemental, arts-based approach to analysis. I used the photographs, my transcribed reflections, and the classroom transcriptions to think with theory both with arts-based methods and through writing in the analysis of classroom happenings.

The Analytic Approach

From this collection of documented events and happenings, I produced written narratives based on specific questions and observations that arose as I put affect theory to work in the analysis of classroom happenings. The focus here was not on producing a concrete analysis of some kind, but on "plugging in" or "thinking with" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) affect theory in terms of these texts collected from my classroom space as I wrote from my experience and perspective as an educator-researcher.

I found both pleasure and intimidation in the writing of the narratives, as it felt like a hybrid of sharing research and creative writing. How could I represent the chaos, the energy, the comfort of students in the room? I feared that I would not share enough of their story while simultaneously worrying I would share too much. I continuously questioned what to share about student identities to ensure an understanding of the context for the event without overly divulging personal information that I had come to know because of my relationships with the

students. I also focused on wondering what the reader needed to know to contextualize what I was experiencing as a teacher-researcher. The transcripts presented an additional challenge: while I had photos, notes, and reflections, the transcripts themselves only captured dialogue. And, unlike an interview in a quiet space, this dialogue was often happening simultaneously with other classroom events: students working, laughing, moving around the room, asking questions. Despite in some ways capturing too much, the transcripts also did not capture enough. They did not capture the chaotic multitudes of materials and forces that composed the assemblage of the posthuman art classroom, and I felt stuck.

I stumbled upon the idea for collage as an arts-based approach to analysis in what I can now only describe as my thoughts sifting through. Perhaps the idea was produced as a result of the assemblage I was a part of, including, for example, my own art making practice, academic readings, teaching art and collage to students, and so on. Through collage, I was able to supplement the layer of information that was presented in the transcripts to produce a more visual form (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Collage as an Analysis of an Event

Kuby and Rucker (2016) describe a transcript as "a version, typically written or oral, of material originally presented in another medium" (p. 18). Like me, they struggled with this. I drew from their unconventional presentation of transcripts in which they use different fonts to represent nonhumans, humans, what is produced, and contextual information, with the similar aim of helping readers experience and intra-act with life from my art classroom, Room 1719. Kuby and Rucker (2016) refer to their transcripts as (re)presentations (p. 18), as they were not limited to dialogue but aimed to include the nonhuman with the human: materials, time, space, affects, what was produced in the entangled intra-action, and so on. Creating a posthuman narrative still presented its own challenges, as due to the entanglement of the assemblages, it was "hard to pull humans and nonhumans apart" (Kuby & Rucker, 2016, p.18). Where I had initially struggled with language, I turned to what could be presented visually through a collage, providing contextualized information, actions, space, and materials while acknowledging that it would never be a complete, unfragmented picture. Therefore, I adopted Kuby and Rucker's (2016) term (re)presentation to describe my narratives as they now included both visual and written narratives. The use of the term (re)presentation acknowledges my "writing is an attempt to present what ([I] thought) happened" (Kuby & Rucker, 2016, p. 18) with the knowledge that I cannot represent the past events of Room 1719 exactly as they occurred.

After finding my way to collage as analysis, I revisited the literature to further investigate the possibilities of this analytic approach. I found the work of art educators and researchers that combined both research and creative practices and became curious. Kimberly Powell (2015), an art educator and researcher, describes research as an ongoing relationality, arguing that artists and researchers are a part of the lived experiences brought together in research. Similarly, Maria Carolina Cambre (2013) says research informed by artistic practices "rejects the artificial

separation of research and daily life" (p. 73). Hanawalt (2019a) draws on these "relational qualities" of research to explore the possibilities of research as collage in order to draw out the complex relations of daily events (p. 9). Collage can be defined as bringing two or more unrelated elements together to create a third thing (Lucero, 2016), creating juxtapositions and leading to new possibilities (Garoian & Gaudelius, 2008). Hanawalt (2019a) argues that "the tension between the disparate elements" (p. 15) of a collage can be generative. She describes collage as an opportunity to "rupture the taken for granted" (p. 22) by attuning to aspects of experience "often backgrounded in our instrumental approaches to life and research" (Hanawalt, 2019a, p. 24). Through collage as a practice of attunement, or noticing happenings on a small scale, Hanawalt (2023) explored how the process could be used to "question taken-for-granted practices and procedures in schools, calling attention to areas where change is needed and possible" (p. 10). As I read and thought through these corresponding approaches to collage, I found the work of these researchers to resonate with how my own approach to research was taking shape and including collage as analysis. I found I no longer felt stuck.

By working through stuck places to discern the next step, I was embodying the post-qualitative approach of letting posthumanism and affect theory guide the process. As I previously discussed, St. Pierre (2015, interviewed by Guttorm et al.) argues that rather than utilizing a prescriptive methodology, inquiry is what should guide the next thing. The position of not-knowing in advance and not being bound by one method allows the researcher to "encounter the way concepts produce thought" (Mazzei, 2021). It was through the sifting through of the fragments, the documentation in the form of visual and verbal transcripts, notes, thoughts, academic texts, that I was able to (re)present the classroom assemblages. Breaking apart and recomposing these fragments, and the frustrations that came along with the not-knowing of this

process, reminded me to return to the yoga concepts from my study, *vairagya* (contentment with where we are in the present moment), *abhyasa* (steady and consistent practice), interconnectedness, and *ahimsa* (nonviolence). Inhale. Exhale. My entanglement with these materials, the (re)presentation of these fragments as events came from staying in the present moment. Doing the next thing.

These entangled narratives or events, that I (re)present both visually and verbally, continued to guide my thoughts in the analysis, as different texts became entangled as part of the (re)presentations. As I wrote through these (re)presentations, I asked myself "How does this classroom event work? What "bodies" are connecting or assembling within these moments? What are the affects and effects of such assemblages? What other possibilities might exist?" In the next chapter, I share this analytical process of "thinking with theory" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) by sharing a selection of these (re)presentations, comprised of narratives constructed of recorded dialogue and written notes interwoven with written analysis and collage, aiming to illuminate the classroom happenings that took place when I implemented a yoga-informed pedagogy.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYZING CLASSROOM EVENTS

The events I share in this chapter were produced as a result of the many entangled factors that coalesced within the context in which the study took place. I begin the chapter by describing the community and the high school where I implemented the study and then offer some specifics about my art classroom. These descriptions of the "material and discursive aspects of the classroom space" as well as the school are meant to provide the "backstories" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. xi) for "contextualizing life" and provide my readers with "a window into the happenings of the classroom" (Kuby & Rucker, 2016, p. 53). I then share selected significant events that occurred throughout the semester of the study. These take the form of written narratives and collages, which are interwoven with analyses as I think with theories of affect. In these analyses, I considered both how affective forces shaped the spaces of the classroom and my conversations and experiences with students, and then how those affective forces shaped my experiences as an art educator.

The Community

I have been living and teaching in the community in which this study took place for the majority of my teaching career. My ties to this community go back further than that; my parents met during graduate school at the local university and my father taught United States history for 10 years, including the early years of my life, at another high school in the same school district where I teach. Moving back to The City to teach art at The High School felt a bit like coming home. Being a part of the community I teach in, specifically living in the district, was important

to me both for the artistic community The City affords and because of the relationship I hoped to establish as an educator in the community. I wanted to be a part of the community both in and out of school. I have been a part of The High School community for the past seven years, living within walking distance of the school the entire time.

The study took place my sixth year of teaching at The High School; at that point, as students shared, I had a "reputation" as well as "clout." I had taught several siblings of my study participants, and many of them began the semester already familiar with me even though I had not yet officially taught them prior to the semester of the study. My classroom door was open to students almost daily (with the exception of times when I had meetings before school), and students took advantage of this time to pop in and out, chat with me, and eat breakfast as they enjoyed each other's company in small groups.

The High School

Located in the Southeastern United States, The High School is in the midst of the nearby university's sorority and fraternity houses, public housing, and historic neighborhoods. The county, and also the school district, is characterized by disparities of financial wealth and resources, with people of color being disproportionately socioeconomically marginalized. Within the district, there are families living below the federally defined poverty level as well as those who live in million-dollar homes. The poverty rate in the district is 29.6%, compared to 12.7% for the entire state. Students from both of these populations, and more in between, attend The High School (US Census Bureau, 2020). The High School was built in 1953 and was originally the all-White High School. Following *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 and the initial integration of the school district by five Black students, the White High School and the Black High School were merged to form the desegregated high school in 1970. In the process of

desegregation, the Black community lost the school that was the center of their community (Knight, 2007). Today, many of the educators at The School are White (over 75%), while the majority of students are African-American and Hispanic (44% and 27%, respectively) while 21% are White, 5% are multi-racial, and 1% are Asian (SchoolCharts, 2024). Approximately 3.9% of the student population is enrolled in the English as Second or Other Language (ESOL) program, though there are many more Spanish-speaking families. The history and diversity of the student population is important to acknowledge as I work to build community in the classroom and as I work to understand how schooling is viewed by some in the community.

The High School operates on a 4x4 semester block schedule, with students taking four classes and teachers teaching three classes per day, with one planning period. Class periods are 90 minutes long. Students are required to take only three fine arts, world languages, and/or Career Technical Agricultural Education (CTAE) courses to meet graduation requirements, yet the visual art department has grown significantly in recent years, with courses offered in drawing, painting, sculpture, ceramics, and photography. Of the nearly 1800 students in the school, approximately 420 students take a visual art course each semester. While the information I have offered does not provide the whole picture of The High School nor the district, my hope is that it provides some context for the classroom and school dynamics that I will describe in the narratives and analyses that follow in this chapter.

The High School Art Classroom: Room 1719

The space of Room 1719 was not initially intended to be an art classroom. The limited physical space is one of the reasons I had to be intentional with how I set up and organized the classroom. Other factors included accommodating the number of students in my largest class (up to 36 in the past), fostering an environment of collaboration and community, and providing

storage and accessibility for supplies. The classroom consists of supply cabinets and bookshelves, two sinks, sculpture storage shelves, a teacher desk, and rectangular tables. The tables of the classroom are grouped for both physical space (for larger work areas and to fit within limited classroom space) and the sharing and collaborating of ideas and techniques. The conversations that circulate in the classroom among students and me are both connected to artistic practice and not; my sense is that the comfort that students feel moves them to be able to share lived experiences *as* they create.

During my time as a high school art educator, I have taken steps to express care and cultivate growth as I trouble the testing focused culture I am implicated in as a public school educator. The steps I have taken include but are not limited to learning and remembering names; listening and responding to students respectfully; paying attention to students' feelings, interests, and lives outside of the classroom; giving students the benefit of the doubt as often as possible; and providing bodily autonomy as often as possible (i.e., permission to use the bathroom) (see hooks, 2010). I tell students that they know where to find me if they need me, and that my door is open to them. Yoga-informed pedagogy centers the interactive relationship not only between student and educator but also among the interconnected entanglement of bodies, materials, and spaces. There are no assigned seats and therefore students can fluidly move seats without needing permission – much like they can move about the room, access supplies, etc., without needing explicit permission. Furthermore, while the classroom space does retain some traditional classroom divisions, I am rarely at my desk when students are in the classroom. I prefer to sit or squat beside students to provide assistance (or simply chat with them as they work) rather than position myself as superior or isolated from them. I have placed my desk not at the front of the

classroom but midway along one of the main walls; when I am seated at my desk, I am still in the midst of students at their tables.

Yoga-Informed Pedagogy in Room 1719

Yoga-informed pedagogy prioritizes an acceptance and contentment with the present moment alongside steady and consistent effort or practice. Thus, I view the concept of classroom management as a process of working with students rather than disciplining them. In fact, it caught me a bit off guard the first time a student teacher asked me what kind of classroom management plan I had. The truth is, as I gained experience (and simultaneously became further entangled in the space of my classroom and school), I shifted from the use of delineated behaviors and consequences to what could be described as an entanglement of respect: high expectations of respect for both the human and the nonhuman in the room. I cultivate and embody that respect based on how I teach/learn with students, including making materials accessible, centering the role of trust, and apologizing when I make mistakes or forget something. I do not engage in punishments, though that is not to say there are no consequences for certain behaviors. Those are based on doing what I can to ensure there is an understanding of "how choices a/effect the student, [myself], others, and materials" (Kuby and Rucker, 2016, p. 58).

To help create a nonjudgmental classroom that facilitates student art explorations—often guided by and reflective of thoughts, feelings, and being—space must be held within learning for emotional energy. Learning, and art education, requires a level of vulnerability, both in risk-taking and mistake-making and in self-expression. In my experience, this nourishing of hearts and minds through creative exploration cultivates self-esteem.

The 3D art curriculum is grouped into thematic units. These provide students with parameters to begin their art investigations and explorations and set the stage for me to gradually turn more of the artistic decision-making process over to the students. The students begin curricular units by first identifying where they are, not in order to establish what has to be gained, but to have confidence in their abilities and vision. During the semester of this study, I began the course by discussing the artistic process with students, explaining that while I wanted them to have work they were proud of, there was success to be found in the process as well; not everything could be expected to turn out as planned. For example, as we discussed what might go wrong with starting with a balloon armature for papier-mâché (it pops), I pushed students to consider if that was a failure or just an unexpected part of the process.

Ms. Price: Well, could you make it work?

Taylor: I think she could.

Megan: I'll figure it out. I'm pretty artsy.

Ms. Price: Okay, we're gonna go through this quickly. If your balloon pops when you don't want it to, yeah, we'd want to make an adjustment. That doesn't mean that it's a failure.

Megan: I actually think it's better than it was.

Ms. Price: I think it looks cool. So, art is different because there's not like, it's not like we're all working be able to define like,

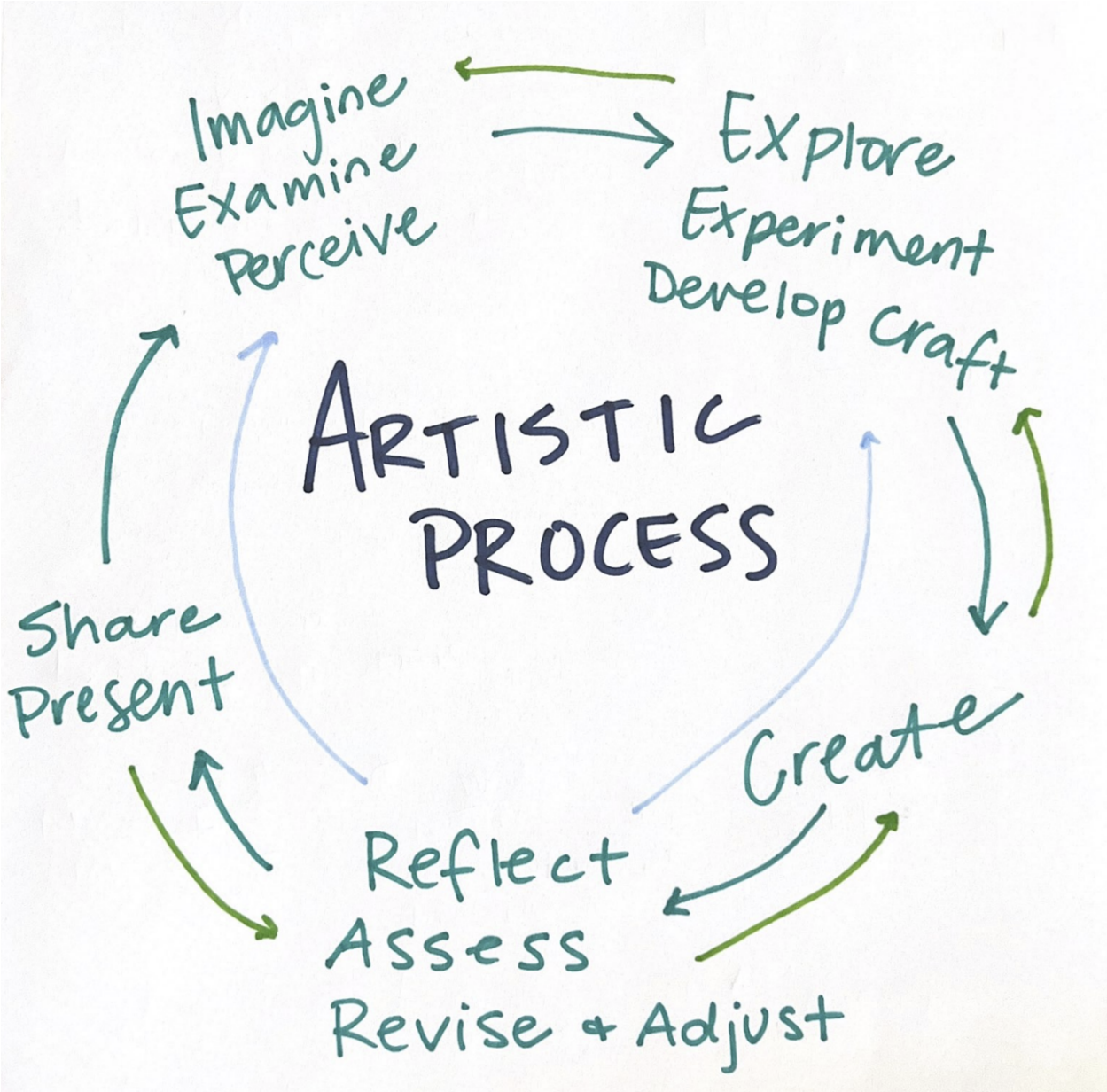
Taylor: Pi.

Ms. Price: Yes. And we're all coming in here with different skills so we're really working on the artistic process or practice of art making. What does the word practice mean? (*pauses for responses)* You keep doing something or trying something over and over again. I combined both of y'all's responses there. And maybe have fun? Yeah. Work to improve a skill. And

that is part of the creative or artistic process or practice (Figure 3). Like, you're working on improving a skill, there are arrows everywhere.

Figure 3

Classroom Resource Showing Cycle of the Artistic Process



Megan: Is everything connected?

Ms. Price: Everything with the artistic or creative process is connected.

Megan: You could have just made it a circle then, it's confusing.

Ms. Price: So, you're creating, you're developing ideas, you're working on the skills, you're experimenting, somethings might go unexpected. I don't want to describe it as going wrong, because the balloon popping doesn't necessarily mean it's wrong.

Megan and Taylor have a short side conversation about Megan's balloon armature popping and distorting her sculpture. Ms. Price redirects the conversation back to the artistic process.

Megan: [expressing her frustration with her sculpture collapsing and wanting to take out her frustration physically on her sculpture]…really pulling/holding back my fists right now.

Taylor: Do it. Yeah, that would really show your stress.

Ms. Price: Reflecting, revising, eventually sharing, but it is all connected. So, there's not like a one path to something. So, then it wouldn't make sense to try to assess it by one path to something. The main thing like what I want y'all to get out of this is you're consistent, like a steady and consistent practice working towards something. Creating, exploring, it doesn't have to always be the same thing. And to know that like effort, it's not going to be wasted. *And*, notice I'm saying *and* here instead of *but*,…

Megan: Butt, hehe

Ms. Price: …all of our results are not going to look the same. So don't compare the results of your effort to somebody else's effort. We all have our different strengths. We all have different things that are up to chance that can and can't go, or do and don't go wrong.

Ms. Price continues explaining how grading is based on the artistic process and not the finished project.

Ms. Price: So, what I'm looking for as far as how that's getting measured, Studio Habits of Mind[2] are just thinking like an artist. I'm not going to spend a lot of time talking about these today. They're gonna keep coming up. But like you're working on your skills, you're problem solving, you're planning, you're envisioning what it's going to look like, you're taking risks, you're observing other artworks, we do that with the artists talks every day. And so your grades are going to come from the final exhibition – when we finish the projects – exhibition labels and artists statements, studio habits checklists that we did…Did we do one at the beginning with this one? I think we did. If we didn't we'll do one after this project.

Taylor: No, we definitely did not.

Ms. Price: And then you'll have check ins with me about how things are going. So like, there'll be times later in the semester, you're setting a focus for yourself. Like today our focus is trying to finish papier-mâché. What questions about this do you have for me?

Taylor: None. Chillin'.

While the transcribed dialogue only shows a portion of the beginning of class, it provides insight into the classroom routines of Room 1719. These routines align with the district expectations for classroom instruction. Each class starts with an artist talk, which begins with students responding on sticky notes to an artwork on the projector. Then, I share and respond to the sticky notes to provide context into the artist's intent and process. This activity leads to a short mini-lesson or transitions into their independent studio work time. Students are given the chance to share questions at the end, as well as during my individual check-ins with them as they explore, create, and investigate.

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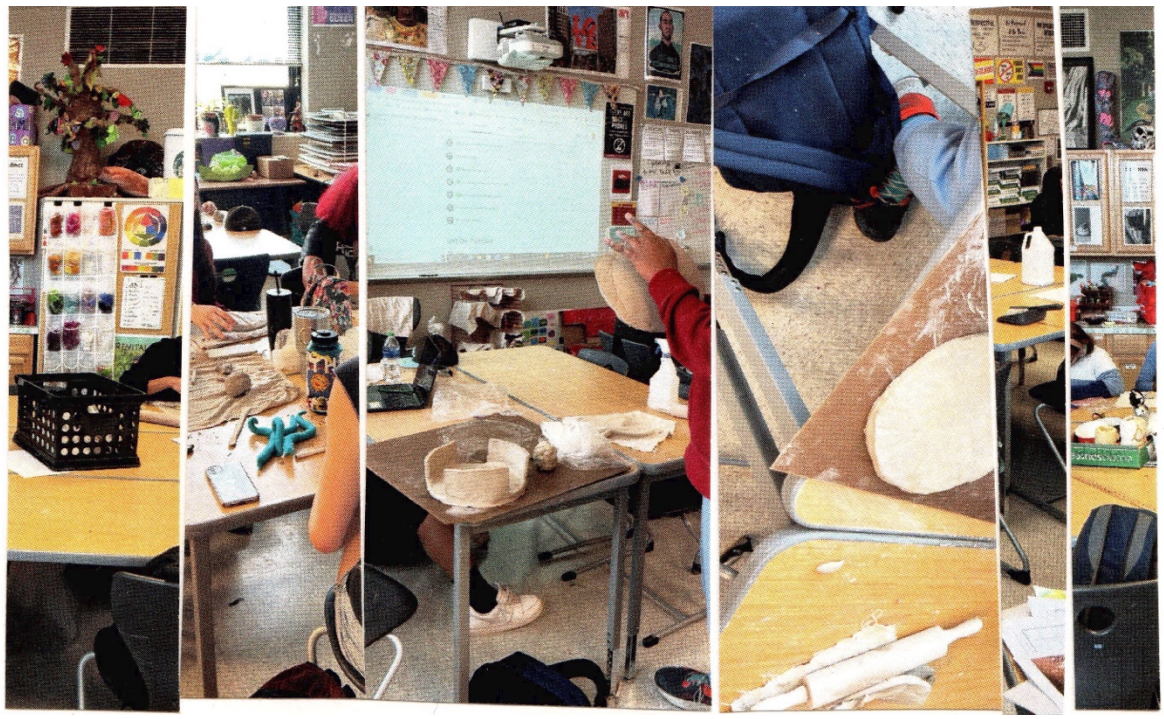
[2] Hetland, L., Winner, E., Veenema, S., & Sheridan, K. M. (2013). *Studio thinking 2: The real benefits of visual arts education. second edition* (2nd ed.). Teachers College Press.

When implementing yoga-informed pedagogy, I was intentional about my approach to assessment. Rather than following a grading process in which students submitted finished work and then received corrections, I focused on providing in-progress assistance while teaching students to self-evaluate. This feedback and assistance focused on what students needed in the moment. I moved toward this approach because, during my time as a teacher, I noticed how high school students often entangled their self-worth with their performance. That entanglement, compounded with art making's entanglement with the self, suggested that a shift from punitive grading to a practice of critical feedback and assistance was a worthwhile goal. It allowed for a focus on process and a consistent, steady, practice. It also encouraged students to be content with their work *as a process* rather than pressuring them to seek an often-unreachable goal for an end product with potential criticisms, which could result in students feeling discouraged with their artmaking.

Classroom (Re)presentations

In the following pages, I share my classroom (re)presentations: specific classroom events analyzed and (re)presented through narratives developed from recorded dialogue and written notes and collages. I developed these (re)presentations by thinking with theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012), looking for specific moments that highlighted how I was embodying the theory, specifically what affective forces were at work and how those forces shaped my experiences in the classroom.

"It's like, do what you need to do[3]"



Barad (2007) states, "the forces at work in the materialization of bodies are not only social and the bodies produced are not all human" (p. 225). The classroom space includes not just physical bodies, but affective forces. In the intra-actions generated by the coming together of space, students, dialogues, materials, norms, and social forces, what bodies were connecting or assembling within these moments? What affects were produced? Students were able to easily and freely move about the room, selecting their seats and accessing supplies, invited and welcomed not just to create but to be. Taylor stated, "I don't feel judged for my brain!" As a result, students often refused the limited norms that can define classrooms ("I can get up and

[3] In the rest of this chapter, the collages are inserted within the narratives as free-standing images, rather than following the standard APA format for figures. Because the collages were a response to my frustrations with the limitation of text and dialogue, my goal is for the collages to exist as a visual form of analysis without titles or notes that might shape how they are interpreted by readers. Additionally, I have chosen not to capitalize the words in the headings when they come from direct participant quotes in order to maintain the casual nature of the dialogue.

move around"), and these refusals in turn produced me differently as a teacher. As Megan described,

> I think in this class we get to have responsibility, I like how we have a lot of freedom to do things ourselves. But also, like, if I mess up, you give us chances to like start something new. And you give us, like, if we want to keep doing the same thing, you could be like, oh this is how you do it, you know? … I feel very welcomed in this class. I think you're, I think your energy and the way you present yourself. And then I think also the people in this class… I feel like nobody's really critical, and there's no like, right or wrong answer, so I feel like it's more like do what you need to do.

These affective forces that stick and enable students to feel welcomed both individually and creatively, are made possible through the consideration of all the bodies of the classroom, not just the human.

The Teacher's Desk

The 'teacher's desk' of the classroom is not just my desk. I found myself unintentionally opening it to students over the years - now it is mine when I need it, but it is also a seat of honor, a refuge, a space to wait when they want to talk.

Inevitably, there are some educators who have more traditional views of classroom hierarchies. I view myself as a facilitator, and the classroom space and supplies are for the students. Thus, while my desk is useful for storing various supplies I may need and also for giving me a space to work, I do not need it to be off limits to students. As I thought specifically about the role of the teacher's desk, I asked myself, "What bodies are connecting and/or assembling with the desk? What are the affects and effects of such an assemblage?"

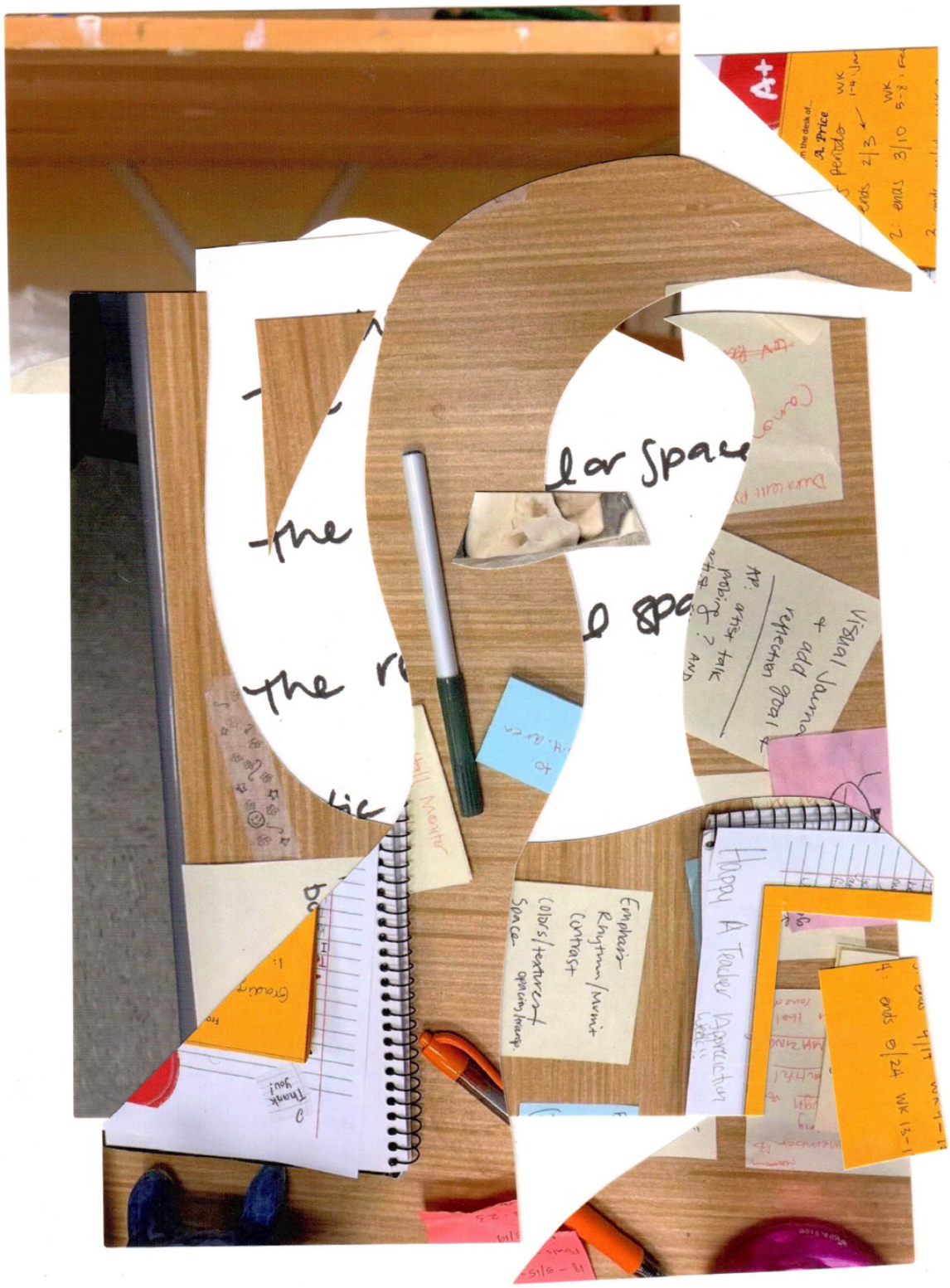
Ahmed (2006) says of spaces: “Spaces are already occupied. They even take the shape of the bodies that occupy them. Bodies also take the shape of the spaces they occupy and of the work they do” (p. 62). To put it another way, spaces and bodies influence and impact one another. Thus, the assemblage of Room 1719 is shaped by the bodies, human and nonhuman, in the room: curriculum, furniture, supplies, classroom norms and routines, students, art making, conversations, and so on. Through the assemblage, “spaces acquire the shape of the bodies that ‘inhabit’ them… spaces can take on the very ‘qualities’ that are given to such bodies” (Ahmed, 2006, p. 129). The physical space of Room 1719 is both a vessel for and a part of the classroom assemblage and the affective forces that stick to bodies and accumulate. The bodies that inhabit the space—the students, curriculum, and so on— are what shape and define the space.

Snaza (2020) describes the classroom as a situation, with affects circulating among bodies as students see, smell, hear, and feel each other and thus feeding social hierarchies such as class, gender, sexuality, ability, racial politics of classroom encounters. Furthermore, the classroom situation includes the nonhuman as well —the lighting, tables, chairs, windows, cabinets, posters and artwork, air-conditioning, marker boards and projectors —all of the nonhuman bodies “affect the humans and other nonhuman actants” (Snaza, 2020, p. 116). Ultimately, it is through

> students’ affective attunement to the space, to the other human bodies, and to the histories that materialize in the classroom that shapes what they feel in ways that determine how they can listen, how they can respond, and how they can engage. (Snaza, 2020, p. 116)

The space of the teacher’s desk is already occupied whether or not I am seated at it; it acts as a physical assemblage of trust and safety, of comfort, of the objects, photographs, and notes that represent my teaching career and how I approach education. These bodies assemble with the

affective forces to create a space of connection, guidance, and trust. The connecting and assembling of these bodies with the teacher's desk results in a space where students feel seen, supported, and privileged, opening up the possibility for vulnerable learning.


A+
Visual
& add
Emphasis
Rhythm/Movmt
Contrast
Colors/texture/pt
Happy A Teacher Appreciation

“How do you grade?”

Early, before 1st period, I’m working on getting caught up on emails when Betty walks into the dimly lit room. She makes her way over to my desk, positioned in the middle of the space, and hesitates, fidgeting with her hands.

“I just wanted to see… I was thinking about…. How do you grade?”

Betty, usually confident and expressive, was uncertain and almost timid. Her conditions of arrival (Ahmed, 2010) were determined by the affective forces that had stuck and accumulated to grades, specifically the role grading plays in the accountability culture for neoliberal schooling. Freeman’s (2020) explains that a capitalist society has “created demands for a radically different sense of self, one that not only projects a putative love of work, as in the traditional service sectors, but entails a sincere effort to remake the self as an extension of this work” (p. 9). Within a neoliberal school, students are quite similar to the capitalist workers Freeman describes as they are tasked to produce grades as a measure of their success as a student. Betty’s sense of self was entangled in her grades as a result of the accountability culture of neoliberalism. For her to not make a satisfactory or “good” grade would leave Betty feeling “not-enoughness” (Hughes-Decatur, 2011). The affects entangled in the school’s grading system left Betty stuck; unable to move forward without knowing the answer to her question of “how do you grade?.” Interestingly, these same affects that left her stuck also moved her to act, visiting Room 1719 before school in preparation to continue to make “good” grades. Her grade acted as an extension of her worth, and her performance as a student was directly entangled with her sense of self. Even within Room 1719, Betty was shaped by the neoliberal illusion that individuals are responsible for their actions.

The very process of grading as assessment was entangled in the assemblage that shaped Betty's sense of self. "Good grades" result in "good" affects while "bad grades" or "not good enough" grades result in bad affects. The accumulation of affects in relation to grades in the school determined Betty's conditions of arrival. Betty needed to know the grading process for the class in order to move forward with creating, even though I wanted her to work like an artist. I realized that my effort, just a few days before, to explain to students that I would be looking for them to work like artists and would use check-ins and rubrics to determine grades was not enough. Betty had come in early—well before she had to—and, based on her conditions of arrival, I decided to address the grading process that day in class.

Ms. Price: All right. So before I turn you loose on finishing your papier-mâché stress orbs, I have had a couple of people ask me about grades or how things are graded—

Betty: *(to her table)* Oh that was me.

Ms. Price: —or *(laughs)* when I'm going to enter grades for this class.

Another student: Oh no.

Ms. Price: One thing that I do not end up prioritizing, when I should, is entering grades. Sorry. I have written some grades down, but I didn't get them entered because, as I mentioned to some of y'all, I had a really, really bad headache and looking at a computer screen was just not a good idea for me. Y'all's grades would have not been correct had I tried to enter them. But I showed y'all the artistic process slides a few days ago, and I made the visual easier to follow and less confusing with the arrows (*pull up the slide with the artistic process).* So, everything that you do in here is some sort of aspect of this artistic process, like the artists talks we do. You're examining. You're perceiving, you're reflecting on them. And then, as you're making, you're working on skills, you're working on developing techniques,

your craft, exploring this, you reflect on what you're creating, you're like, 'Oh this isn't working, let me change this' or you make it and you're like, 'let me come back and do this some more.' So, it's all interconnected. It's not a linear process. It's not like you're learning something, you're doing it, and then you're done with it. So, it wouldn't make sense for our grades to be like that in here. And if I had my way, we wouldn't have grades at all in here, but you know, they won't let me do that. So the way your grades are going to come is coming from that steady and consistent practice of artmaking, that reflection, knowing that there's not going to be any effort wasted even if it doesn't turn out right. But also, or *and* also know our results aren't all going to look the same." *(pauses, does a quick look around the room to note it at least appears the students are all listening)*

The summative grades are going to be when you spend more time applying skills we've practiced and communicating some kind of idea. And that may or may not turn out how you originally planned it. And that's okay! There have been plenty of times that I've been making artwork, where like, I've spent an entire afternoon sculpting something, and I step back from it and realized this isn't turning out how I want it to. And so, I started over, but that afternoon, the point of this story is that afternoon wasn't a waste… it's more about the process and the reflection and what you're trying to explore communicating than necessarily how it turns out. It is my teaching philosophy that just because you're making something artistically and it doesn't turn out does not mean that it's a failure. And I don't think your grade should reflect that, I don't think it should be lower because something didn't turn out as planned. This class is not supposed to be difficult. Like it's already difficult, okay, you're being vulnerable in making art.

Taylor: So true.

> *I find myself wondering how much of this talk soaked in for students, but I don't have too much time to dwell on it. The class has shifted to creating, and the room is abuzz with the artistic energy and students asking me questions.*

Betty: *(to Ms. Price)* I'm just gonna do like the world and then do like a road. But I kind of messed that up. Is that okay?

Ms. Price: So you messed it up. *(I want her to see that mistakes are part of the process of making art.)* You could always, when the paint dries you could paint over it. You could also just paint it like different blues and greens, let it dry. And then get one of my black Sharpies and draw roads over it and then use like one of my black, or not black, white paint pens or like a skinny little brush to draw stripes.

Based on these kinds of moments, I wonder how one begins to break apart or unstick affects? Is it possible? And if so, how long does it take? How can we move beyond the conditions of arrival that grades are a reflection of an individual's worth, when

> even if teachers' students meet their goals, achieve high scores and pass the test, we – their teachers – will never be *good enough*. Neoliberal capitalism depends on our loss to survive. It is the competitive fight to survive that keeps the system intact, dehumanizing both teachers and students in the process (Thompson & Jones, 2021, p. 92).

"We ready, Ms. Price?"

Every day, Taylor started us off by reading the artist talk sticky notes while I took attendance. This started one day after she offered, and later that class period she commented that "this class period has felt so long. And I really do like that." It was only a matter of several minutes, maybe ten at most, but the perception of having more time for work, as a good thing,

was something the group wanted to keep. The next day, Taylor volunteered to make reading the sticky notes officially her job.

Taylor was in the tenth grade, one of the younger students in the class, and was already a leader. She was a leader in the classroom and hallways, especially when it came to making sure people were treated fairly, and she had a strong sense of right and wrong. She was friendly, empathetic, and well-liked by her peers. That did not mean that Taylor was not also the target of hate, ignorance, and bigotry, whether in the form of a hateful slur directed at her in the hallway by another student or an adult misgendering her on her way into the bathroom. Taylor navigated the world with love and empathy, and as a result she felt both strongly and deeply.

Taylor came into class one day with something clearly bothering her. "What's wrong?" one student asked. Initially Taylor brushed it off, but then decided to open up.

Classmate: *(asking again)* What's wrong?

Taylor: I'm never using the bathroom here again, swear to God. I was going in, and some lady was like 'you can't go in there that's the woman's restroom' and I was like b---- please!

Ms. Price: By who? Where?? What happened?

Taylor: I don't know, I was walking to the bathroom and some woman goes 'the boys bathroom is over *there*.'

Betty: *(referring to the tape she is using)* Ms. Price this is not sticking.

Ms. Price: I know.

Taylor: That tape sucks.

Ms. Price: I know! I experienced it too. I'm sorry! *(replying about the tape)* I'm so sorry Taylor, that's really frustrating. Do you know who it was?

Taylor: I don't know, I didn't pay attention to her.

By Taylor telling me this, I know she was looking both for support and also hope for the world to be made better in some small way.

Ms. Price: It was an adult being rude so like you don't want to remember them, okay. I'm sorry. Ugh. Some of us are just not having great days today, mine's because my head hurts. *(pauses)* All right, shall we artist's talk?

Taylor: Yeah, let's artist talk this b----. Sorry, that was, I love your hair today Ms. Price.

Taylor's affective encounter with misgendering resulted in an othering of her body, preventing her from feeling a sense of belonging in that space of the school (Ahmed, 2006). The affective saturation of the bathroom space actively impacted how Taylor could exist/become/be as a student and person in that area. Due to the stuck feeling and decreased capacity to act, Taylor struggled to fully inhabit that space (Ahmed, 2006; Dernikos, 2018). The moment prior to class, however brief, was so affectively charged that the forces transmitted stuck to Taylor, inflicting trauma through the narrow view of gender in this event. How Taylor arrived in the classroom was shaped by what affective forces stuck to her. This trauma lived on in Room 1719 through these stuck affects. Taylor expressed her frustration and those immediately around her at her classroom table, along with me, witnessed this sharing. We became part of the entanglement of affects as it became entangled with the affects of the classroom. If the classroom assemblage was not one that welcomed Taylor and made her feel safe, would she have shared that experience with us? It is doubtful.

Dernikos (2018) argues the classroom is "an *active body* that is not only alive, mobile, and permeable, but also affectively intertwined with other relational forces (e.g. race, gender) actively assembling in any given moment and space to shape" learning (p. 4). Affect accompanied Taylor as she experienced this specific space and moment; and that affect remained

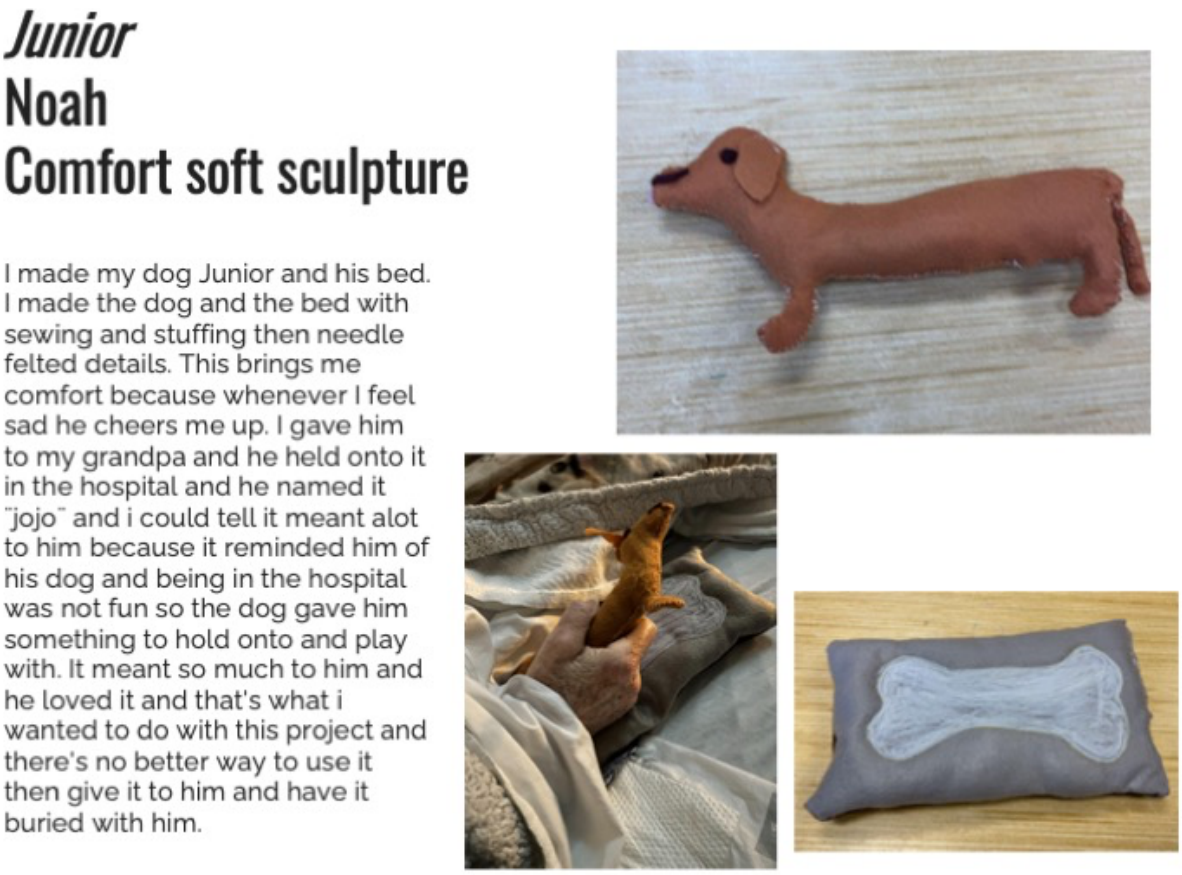
stuck, entangling with Taylor as she entered Room 1719. This event reminded me that the classroom space was not the only active body, other areas of the school impacted the assemblage of human and nonhuman forces that impacted a student's capacity to learn, act, or simply be. The assemblage (people, discourses, spaces, objects) intra-acted with other social bodies, in this case gender, to produce affective forces that shaped Taylor's ability to act. However, these affects held both promise and threat (Stewart, 2007). As I continued my analysis of the happenings in Room 1719, views of race, gender, and sexuality (among other things) continued to shape Taylor's capacities to connect to artistic processes.

Love, Softness, and Grief

Unintentionally, the Sculpture 2 curriculum and classroom space became a space for grieving. Noah had already experienced more death and grief than most his age. Several years earlier, his sister unexpectedly passed away in an accident. I did not personally know his sister, but I taught several students she was close to. I can still remember how the affective forces took the form of tears in my eyes as I read my then first period class the statement from the counselor's office. It turned out that my most recent prompt to create a sculpture that explored comfort or gratitude coincided with the decline of Noah's grandfather's health. Noah had been creating a soft sculpture of their family dog, but it was not until the final artist statement that I knew just how saturated with love and grief his sculpture had become (Figure 4).

Figure 4

Noah's Exhibition Label



Noah carried this grief with him, and rather than keeping it separate from the space of Room 1719, it stayed with him and became part of his learning.

In this way, the space of Room 1719 became oriented around Noah's grief. Ahmed (2006) states that "to be orientated around something means to make that thing central, or as being at the center of one's being of action" (p. 116). Rather than attempting to minimize or hide the love and grief he was experiencing (and remove emotions from the learning environment), Noah allowed it to be central to his learning. How did those affects move Noah to act in such a vulnerable way? What bodies and affective forces in Room 1719 created a space where Noah

could became oriented in such a way as to lean into that vulnerability rather than minimize or hide it? Ahmed (2006) argues that

> familiarity is what is, as it were, given, and which in being given 'gives' the body the capacity to be orientated in this way or in that. The question of orientation becomes, then, a question not only about how we 'find our way' but how we come to 'feel at home' (p. 7).

To put it differently, perhaps the familiarity created in the classroom space is what enabled Noah the comfort to fully express himself. While I cannot know his experiences beyond what he shared with me, I do know how I experienced the affective forces moving with Noah's artmaking. The classroom space and the students were familiar to me, but as Ahmed (2006) states: "The familiar is an effect of inhabitance; we are not simply in the familiar, but rather the familiar is shaped by actions that reach out toward objects that are already within reach" (p. 7). Thus, my actions as a teacher shaped the environment and materials of Room 1719 while shaping and being shaped by Noah's actions, along with the circulating affects, to foster familiarity in Room 1719.

"I was thinking about it."

Betty came in one morning, well before 1st period. She had come in once before to ask about how I graded; I knew she wanted to get things "right." This time, she wanted to make sure she had submitted her work correctly because it was not as much work as she remembered. "I was thinking about it," she said, clearly a bit worried about it. I had also noticed that she was not afraid of expressing when she did not like something. Other students had vented to me about assignments and grading in other classes—that they were overwhelming and stressful just from

the sheer number of grades and assignments. I knew students were emotionally affected by their grades. How much of the idea that no effort was wasted sank in for Betty?

The social constructions of success, failure, and grading expectations (all of which were produced by neoliberalism) still permeated the assemblage of the yoga-inspired pedagogy of Room 1719. Betty, perhaps due to these pervasive discourses of success and failure, was moved to double check on her work, coming in before the 1st period class had even begun.

A few days earlier, another intra-action with these neoliberal forces occurred. Betty and I were chatting about her guided practice soft sculpture, a mouse.

Betty: This rat looks weird. I literally have like stitches all over it. I hate it. It's awful.

Ms. Price: No it's not. Let me see.

We look at her work together, me turning it over slowly in my hands.

Ms. Price: Okay, so what do you feel like your strengths were?

Betty: I like the ears, but not how I attached them. And the feet were just like…

Ms. Price: Okay, so you think the pattern was too small? That it needed to be bigger to attach those things? *(Betty nods)* So bigger, I'm just helping think about like what you want to change, because it doesn't have to be a figure for the other one either.

Betty: I need a bigger pattern and I kind of got, I got rushed.

Ms. Price: Okay, gotcha. And now it's just to thinking about like, what brings you comfort or like what you are grateful for, what might you come up with for a sculpture for that.

I hope to guide her forward so she can learn from her first sewing attempt of the semester.

Martha: Oh, the monster!

Betty: No, that was in Sculpture 1. Actually, my monster in Sculpture 1 was like kinda good.

Martha: So it's about what we're grateful for?

Ms. Price: Mmhmm, what you're grateful for, what brings you comfort, and that could be a figurative sculpture, it could be like abstract, it could be a cushion, it could be a relief sculpture, it could be in-the-round, something like a small *pillow (trying to leave them with possibilities).*

As they continued on and the conversation shifted, I found myself thinking about how Betty brought up how "bad" her mouse was, but she did not get upset about it. She said it as a matter-of-fact statement. Thankfully, in my approaching it objectively to point out all of the improvements in stitching, I was able to show her I could see the effort and time she had put into it, and I could see what she had learned and what had been challenging. I found myself wishing that having these kinds of check-ins with every student were possible. There were so many students and only so much time. Also, some did not want my input or reassurance. Some did not want to be wrong.

Betty's experiences were one example of how affects stuck to grades and led to feelings of being "good enough" or "not good enough." However, this interaction represented a shift. Although in neoliberal terms the product or outcomes were not a "success," Betty was learning and experiencing growth. This (re)presentation shows how Betty maintained a steady focus and nonattachment to the outcome, embodying the concepts of *abhyasa* and *vairagya*. Even if just for this moment, Betty moved beyond the affects entangled with neoliberal grading.


Craft
I can learn to use tools & materials and the practices of an art form.
Opening: Artist Talk
Mmmm... Sticky note
Why do you think the artist made this?
What do you notice about it?
His work is inspiring because he's gay.
How do you think this was made?
Any questions about it....

Assistance, Mistakes, and Failures

A few days pass by, and students are working on their various projects. I'm circulating around the room, checking in with students.

Taylor: *(about the petals for the felt flowers she is making)* How do I put them on?

We had just recently talked about options other than having to sew them.

Ms. Price: I would get like a disc of felt, like a base, a little circle for a base and then start gluing them to that.

Megan: Ms. Price, do you have a string that I can use to engrave things on this with?

Ms. Price: Embroider?

Megan: Embroider.

Ms. Price: Yeah, there's a bag—

Megan: And can you teach me how to embroider as well?

Taylor: And also, I don't know how to embroider *(playfully teasing Megan).*

Ms. Price: I think you do. I'll refresh your brain on it. Pick out your color and get a needle that's got a pretty big eye to it.

Taylor: *(back to her flower)* And then just start hot gluing those things to it?

I continue to move around the room, checking in with the other students. As I circle back towards their table, Martha turns to me.

Martha: *(quietly)* that pattern… didn't work out.

Ms. Price: Where'd it go?

Martha: In the trash.

I attempt to explain that we need the first attempt at the pattern to make sure she will not repeat the same mistake.

Martha: I remember what I did.

She was working on creating a doll and had been working on the head when she threw away her first attempt.

Martha: I don't like the little, like how it dips in like that. I don't like the shape of the pieces at all. It looks like a pumpkin.

I suggest she work on the body, and then shift to help Megan work on the backstitch.

Martha: I think I'm gonna change subjects. I'm not doing a doll anymore.

Ms. Price: Okay.

I could tell Martha was discouraged and chose not to push her to stay with it. Betty, however, asked Martha why she was pouting.

Betty: You are pouting… You know my last project was ugly, and I didn't pout about it. I went "Oh, it's ugly, haha," and submitted my photo.

This is a conversation that I would not have attempted with Martha but, given the two girls' dynamic from playing sports together, Betty knew how to respond to Martha being upset and a bit defeated. The playful jabbing from Betty while pointing out that she was not the only one who failed, however, did not break Martha out of the pout. She used the remaining half hour or so of class to work on an internship application.

I was left wondering what this demonstrated about affects and perfectionism. Ahmed (2010) states, "we judge something to be good or bad according to how it affects us, whether it gives us pleasure or pain" (p 31). She goes on, "we move toward and away from objects through how we are affected by them" (Ahmed, 2010, p. 32). In this instance, affective forces influenced

students' next steps, their ability to continue creating with and exploring materials (like Megan and Taylor) or moving away from the process of creating with materials (like Martha). Martha's stuck feelings, deciding her work wasn't "good," were entangled in how she was becoming—it was important to her to be successful, according to her idea of success, and that was what she arrived in this room with. Martha and Betty's different views of success, and of artmaking, reflected not just the human, but the more than human conditions of arrival and how they shaped their classroom experiences that day. Ahmed (2010) describes "what we feel when we walk into a room depends on in what state we arrive, what angle" (p. 14). Further, Snaza (2020) argues that "the situation is never simply human; it happens largely outside of any human's conscious attention, and it is precisely where each participant is 'primed' by historical forces that stick to and shape bodyminds" (p. 116).

Martha's history of being a successful, high-achieving student within school spaces influenced her ability to stay with an artistic encounter she considered bad, or not good enough. As stated by Snaza (2020), the differences in the bodies in the classroom and how they responded to other bodies had "everything to do with the ways those bodies moved through other spaces (institutional, intellectual, geographic, and psychic) before they walked in or were brought in" (p. 116). How could I, as an educator, respond to this assemblage, including the affective forces and histories that led to this moment? If this moment had been viewed by an evaluating administrator, Martha would have been considered disengaged and off-task. My consideration and acknowledgement of the affective assemblage and conditions of arrival shaped how I responded to each student, as it necessitated that I consider the students' differences and what affective forces were present as I individually taught each of them.

This IS a Drill

A common feature of public schools is safety drills. Once a month, we had a fire drill, usually unannounced. Thankfully, when we had an intruder drill, we are notified in advance of the drill. Severe weather drills were less common, and it just so happened that we had one scheduled during 4th block. I reminded the class of it, explaining we would need to go down to the first floor to sit along the interior hallway away from the doors and windows. One of the students asked, "do we have to go? Could we skip it?" They were hard at work, and the class chimed in with their collective agreement. "Okay, okay, they'll have to reschedule it. Sorry folks, Ms. Price's 4th block didn't want to stop working and leave class, so we'll have to have it on another day," I joked.

When does a high schooler actually groan about having class interrupted? What does this say about the affective forces at work in the space? Ahmed (2006) describes the "spatial relations between subjects and others" as produced through actions, and thus reachable (or not) (p. 52). Thus, action is influenced and shaped by how objects and bodies inhabit space. "Space is not a container for the body," Ahmed (2006, p. 53) states. "Rather, bodies are submerged, such that they become the space they inhabit; in taking up space, bodies move through space and are affected by the 'where' of that movement. It is through this movement that the surface of spaces as well as bodies takes shape." To put it another way, the intra-action of the bodies in and with the space led to a certain familiarity, to students not wanting to be interrupted or forced to leave the space. However, the drill functioned as a rigid structure in the school space. The affective forces produced by the presence of drills throughout the school year stuck to and entangled with the classroom happenings of Room 1719. Amid the familiarity of the classroom routines and

comforting affects being generated within the space, the routine of the drill became a piercing intrusion that controlled students' bodies though aimed at keeping them safe.

"I'm not the biggest fan, but you know what, I'm going to keep doing it."

Reductive carving was a different approach to creating than many students were used to. Rather than adding to a work with something like clay, for example, with reductive carving the artist begins with a solid block of wood, stone, soap, wax, or, in this case, floral foam. The challenge is to envision the form *within* the existing material. I introduced reductive carving to students with foam because it was soft and easy to carve with a variety of tools, and unexpected breaks could be repaired with liquid glue and wire. Students used fettling knives, ceramic loop and ribbon tools, emery boards, and their fingers to gradually carve the material away from the block. During our carving unit, I found myself easily open to students fulfilling the prompt in the way they needed and resisting the need to have specific ideas of what "enough" was, in terms of skill, especially. This was an artistic exploration in every sense of the word, and I was happy with the persistence from the students and with how the carvings turned out. It did get me thinking, if we had not kept any of the carvings, would I have still considered the project successful? As a teacher, could I get away from the call for production in school—students producing "successful" artwork, producing data through graded products? I found myself questioning how much of my sense of success and satisfaction with regard to these moments came from the art that was produced and how much came from the affects in the room during these class periods. I found myself truly redefining my conception of student success.

In schooling, can we ever really get away from students producing? How much did the unfamiliar material and technique play a role in my apparent rethinking of success? Noah commented that he liked that he was able to "free-style" it, while for Isaiah this open-endedness

made things more challenging. As a teacher, seeing how students were exploring materials and techniques, and even more so how they were responding to the materials and using their own unique approach (using specific tools, using fingers for smoothing), made these days thoroughly enjoyable. I felt satisfied as I was starting and leaving these class periods. I was excited to share the student work. How did my affective responses shape their experiences with the floral foam? Was I categorizing this exploration as “successful” based on the artwork made or the affects produced? Could it be both?

I started the reductive carving unit by sharing work by artists such as Henry Moore and Isamu Noguchi. Students described the forms made by these artists as “loosey goosey” or more specifically, “I don’t know what it is, but it’s something. It is a body” (about Moore’s work) and

"not just a specific form, just kind of work, whatever, however, whatever." My goal with the introduction was to show students examples of stylized and abstract sculptures and begin our exploration into reductive carving. Next, I shared how to use different tools for carving and how to map things out and work organically, responding to the changes in the sculpture. Since the first day was dedicated to working on a mini sculpture to explore the techniques, there was no prompt other than the sculpture had to be abstract, in the round, and explore positive and negative space. I've found that visualizing a reductive form was one of the hardest parts of the process for students, more challenging than the actual carving techniques.

Betty: This is really hard, harder than I thought.

Ms. Price: What if this piece is still very sideways. Where are you going to fit a hole in it?

Betty: Great question.

Ms. Price: Why don't we just start here and just like *(demonstrating carving)* you can get, we can get you one of the fettling knives, one of these beauties, and you can start going at an angle and scooping it out and then you can round this part out and maybe curve in like that.

Betty: Okay, oh wait. I like that. Okay.

A quick demonstration prevents unnecessary frustration, helping Betty see the next steps in her carving. I continue circulating around the room to check in with students, giving assistance and reassurance where needed, and compliments all around.

Ms. Price: You're making real quick progress, Alexandra. Do you have a plan or are you just going for it?

Alexandra: I have a plan. I made a sketch and want like a flame. Um, yeah, I kinda did it on my *(laughs)* work for World History. I got a 100 on this… it was an exam, but I already finished it *(a bit sheepishly).*

Alexandra was one of the few students who went into the first attempt at reductive carving with a distinct vision and a plan. She explained that, as I was going over techniques, safety, and parameters, she had sketched her idea on the paper that was right there, not wanting to wait any longer. She knew exactly what she wanted to create and needed little to no help from me. I cheered her on, feeling excited for her. Afterwards, I wondered how I could have helped more students to have a distinct vision early on, or if it was possible or even needed?

I shifted to talk to Mia, who was sitting next to Alexandra. Mia was soft spoken and was not one to volunteer to speak out in front of the whole group.

Mia: *(softly)* I don't think this is for me.

I reply that, given her love for needle-felting—a technique that could not be more different—I am not surprised. I could sense she wanted to abandon her carvings, but I made a few suggestions for her to "see what happens."

Ms. Price: Carving isn't for everybody. My brain does not think in carving forms, but I do like teaching it… it's a different way of making sculpture. And I think with people they might either like it, it might make more sense to make forms with carving or to do additive stuff.

Again, I encourage her see what happens and not to abandon it yet.

Megan: I'm not the biggest fan, but you know what, I'm going to keep doing it. Is it okay if there is a loop that just exists, like a loop here. Like the whole thing is a loop?

Ms. Price: Remember, there's not a particular way your sculpture is supposed to look. Even if you mess up it's not the end of the world.

The students continue working.

Megan: UGH! It broke.

Ms. Price: We can put some wire to attach them back together.

Megan: I guess.. *(not sounding convinced)*

Megan ended up having several more unexpected breaks, and, despite her initial reactions, she handled it very well, working to visually adapt the piece as she kept working.

Ms. Price: *(to Martha)* Did you smoosh it? You smooshed it, didn't you?

Martha: Yeah, I got a little mad at it.

Ms. Price: It's okay, it happens to the best of us.

I don't scold her for giving up, instead I reassure her.

Martha: Are there more of the green pieces?

Ms. Price: Yep!

I walk over to show her where, and then pause to check in with Aiden.

Ms. Price: Are you planning on having those stacks like to stack them together? Cool! And what, so what I can show you tomorrow, just remind me, is we can get like a piece of wire and thread it through like to support it, and then you can glue them together too, like when you coat them with the glue.

I work hard to make suggestions (rather than demands) when students ask for help, encouraging them to make their own decisions for their next steps.

Ms. Price: *(to Betty)* Do you have an idea of what you want the top to be?

Betty: Maybe this way?

Ms. Price: You could do like that or you could do it like this.

Betty: Oh wait, that's kinda cool.

Ms. Price: And then maybe you could do like another hole over here. It's very symmetrical and it's hard to make symmetrical sculptures, so you want to do something drastic on this, like one of these curves. Maybe put another hole in it, maybe curve and more like this. It's interesting to think about now.

I leave Betty to decide what comes next, choosing how to adapt my suggestions, as I continue to make my way around the classroom and check in with students. I noticed that Isaiah's practice carving got very, very small while he was working. It took a bit of convincing to get him to try another attempt with a new piece of foam, making sure he knew we had plenty of foam and encouraging him to see what happened if he tried again. There was a similar reaction from Jackson after his broke.

Jackson: Nah, I'd feel more like I'm just wasting another whole block.

Ms. Price: I mean, you're not wasting it if you learn something from it.

Jackson: We might need those on like our actual projects.

While this might seem selfless and considerate at first, what does that say about how Jackson felt about his work? Did his work count as a project, or a worthwhile use of materials? His hesitance to take more materials revealed this conflict, in spite of his cheerful, easygoing attitude.

I found myself wondering if creating a learning environment removed from outcomes that instead focused on exploration (or at least attempted to), could remove the attachments, those affective forces bound up with student success and failure? In some ways, the learning environment I had created through yoga-informed pedagogy did challenge these forces. However, just as I had recognized that I was not the sole entity in control of the classroom, I also realized that I could not control students' conditions of arrival or the affects that remained stuck for them. And yet, through the artmaking investigation of foam carving, I found myself truly

redefining *my* conception of student success. Rather than students gaining control of their media, the foam itself was fragile, requiring a working-with that other media may not have required. The push to consider the nonhuman (floral foam, carving tools, classroom space, time, affects) and the human (language, prompts, and bodies) as "mutually constitutive agents in teaching and learning" (Kuby & Rucker, 2016, p. 40) produced a new learning experience for both myself and students, one of "interconnections with the material settings and assemblages in which we live" (Ulmer, 2017, p. 834). The attachments of the affects were beyond the scope of my control as an educator. The students were not just creating with the floral foam, they were learning with the material. They were not just shaping the material, the material was shaping them.

Self-Reflections and After-Hours Doubts

My definition of success has evolved over my teaching career. I had plenty of moments of doubt in my success as an educator, wondering if what I was doing was "good enough" (Pittard, 2015) and if the output of work from my students was "good enough." Even as I was thinking through teaching with a yoga-inspired pedagogy, neoliberal norms were so entangled in teaching that these doubts never fully went away.

I found myself wondering how much of the students' focus and engagement with the foam carving was due to the low-pressure stakes of the task and how much was due to the open-ended prompt? Did I think the activity would have been as successful earlier in the semester? No, not really. I had developed a positive relationship with the students and a sense of respect and trust, so they could truly just go for it. With the implementation of yoga-inspired pedagogy, I viewed myself as part of the classroom assemblage rather than the sole facilitator. Furthermore, the implementation of yoga-inspired pedagogy had contributed to the affects in the room, leading to what felt like a safe environment and curriculum. That earned trust, the physical classroom

space, the diverse curriculum and the artists in it, the constructive and celebratory feedback, the suggestions rather than required corrections to their work—all of this led the students of Room 1719 to have an increased sense of security in their art practice and an acceptance with taking risks. The affective forces entangled with the support in the classroom and the act of creating made it possible for students to push their artmaking beyond their comfort zone, beyond the familiar.

I live in the community of the school. My teacher brain is not something I can turn off. The identity follows me, and I have found that the only way this can work for my personal and professional well-being is to have a sense of enoughness and contentment. If my role as a teacher was completely wrapped up in scores and accountability—equating data points with being a good teacher or defining who I am—I do not think I could do it. I think it would eat me alive. Even with the yoga-inspired pedagogy, I found myself with moments of doubt. I am all for healthy work-life boundaries, and I believe that work can also shape who you are and how you exist in and feel things for the world. The point is this is not a profession that can truly be left at the door. Furthermore, I do not think I would care about it like I do if it was. I used to think that distancing my identity and emotions was a sign of professionalism, but I think teachers need to acknowledge the role emotions and affects have in their lives and the lives of their students. There is a vulnerability that comes from learning. Seeing that empathy and connection entangled with art education, especially when students are creating artwork connected to their lived experiences and navigating what it means to live in the world, helps encourage this vulnerability and can help both feel seen and supported in the world or, at the very least, the space of Room 1719.

A Change They Wanted for The Future

I wanted students to make a portrait bust sculpture. I had it in my head that they needed to learn 3D portraiture, and I knew from past experience that sculpting someone they knew was

intimidating. I came up with the idea for them to sculpt a portrait of a change-maker, someone working to make the world a more inclusive, safe, and better place, but this proved to also be a challenge. Students did not have knowledge of individual historical figures or activists. So, based on their feedback (and struggles), the prompt evolved to just being a representation of a change that they wanted to see for the future.

For her topic, Taylor chose trans rights, specifically drawing inspiration from actor Elliott Page. A longtime advocate for LGBTQ+ rights, in 2020 Page announced his transgender identity in a letter celebrating living as his authentic self and advocating for transgender equality (Aguilera, 2020). In an interview with Oprah Winfrey, Page described his top surgery as "life-saving" and that it "allowed him to 'feel comfortable in [his] body for probably the first time'" (*Elliot Page on Oprah Winfrey: Transition surgery 'life-saving'.* 2021).

Taylor knew right away who she wanted for her changemaker portrait, but she wasn't sure how or what she wanted to create.

Taylor: Ms. Price I don't know what I wanna do! Okay, um, I want to do Elliott Page as my person. I don't know how I'm gonna.. how I'm gonna… *(thinking in the pauses)*

Ms. Price: What do you want to make it out of?

Taylor: I really liked papier-mâché. I do like papier-mâché. I would like to do either papier-mâché or clay.

Ms. Price: Okay, do you want it to be like a realistic portrait of Elliott Page?

Taylor: I don't think I could do it.

There were a few more "I don't knows" as we talked through her thought process, me helping guide her to solidifying them.

Ms. Price: So, what if you, maybe instead of focusing on appearance, start by making a list of like, what he represents, how he's impacted the world for the better?

Taylor: Okay, I need a piece of paper please.

A few moments later Taylor shares her thoughts with me.

Taylor: I was thinking about doing his scars.

I suggested then she make a torso instead of his face since she wanted to make a torso with his top surgery scars.

Ms. Price: You could do the scars in gold—

Taylor: *(interjecting)* Or I was gonna do stars for the Taylor Swift song.

Ms. Price: Ooh do you want to do the stars in different colors?

Taylor: *(excitedly)* Yeah, yeah. I got it then, I'll start tomorrow.

We have this conversation at the last possible moment in class, during the afternoon announcements. I can still hear my excitement in the "Yay!" that I shared with Taylor.

Taylor was embarking on a deeply personal and affective artmaking exploration. These affective forces were "casting illumination upon the 'not yet' of a body's doing," "emergent futures, and infinite potential connections and belonging to the world" (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010, p. 4). Just how personal this journey would be, I would not realize until after she began working on the next, final project. I would not realize just what affects were stuck, what affects were entangled in her becoming, until later.

"It's important you feel comfortable in your body."

It was the last month of the semester, and Taylor was at my desk, in my chair. We were talking through ideas to help her decide on her final project.

Ms. Price: How could you represent empathy, energy, multifacetedness...? You want it to be an animal?

Taylor: I mean, I'll make an animal.

Ms. Price: If you don't feel like an animal is meaningful, don't make an animal.

Taylor stays at my desk, and I get up to move around and help her classmates.

Ms. Price: Do you want to do something you feel like could represent your life now?

We keep talking through possibilities, ruling out sports and sculpting hands. The conversation ebbs and flows, going away from the project and to things like concert tickets, therapy, her sibling.

Taylor: *(slowly at first and then all at once)* I was gonna do, if I hadn't done it... the top surgery because I'm getting top surgery when I'm 18. But not yet.

Ms. Price: Well, your body's still changing, even if it doesn't feel like it. Your mom knows?

Taylor: Mmhmm.

Ms. Price: You feeling comfortable in your own body is important. So… do you want to, because I know you're not happy with how that one [the first sculpture] turned out, do you want to try to do another one?

Taylor: I could.

Ms. Price: Why don't you do that then?

Taylor: Can you help me with this one more, because I don't know…

Ms. Price: Yes.

Taylor: Okay, I'll do that then.

It's decided. Taylor will remake the torso bust, continuing her initial inspiration from Elliott Page's top surgery and his openness about his scars and identity as a trans man.

This time, she will make a representation of herself, using her skin tone and then adding stars around the scars.

I can only speculate on the affects stuck to and entangled with Taylor's body. The vulnerability even caused its own set of affective forces to stick to and become entangled with me. I felt proud of Taylor for being vulnerable and knew that same vulnerability was entangled in the creation of the torso bust. As Taylor moved to work at her desk now, I kept an awareness of the space and conversations as I circulated through the room.

Megan: *(to Taylor)* What are you making?

Taylor: *(with a laugh)* The same thing I did last time.

Megan: The same torso?

Taylor: My torso, so no abs.

The conversation was still lighthearted, casual even, without hesitation or second thoughts. The conversations at their table continued about their various projects, working through how to execute ideas.

Martha was in a very bossy, silly, sassy mood following the AP test she had taken in the morning. She asked Taylor why she was making another torso. I did not say anything because I was waiting to hear what Taylor shared; I had always gotten the impression that they were not particularly close friends.

Taylor: Oh Ms. Price told me to, she wanted me to, so I'm going to redo it.

She said it but did not say it in a confident way. This was different from when she said it to me, when it was very much like a passing, normal conversation. This time it sounded more hesitant.

Taylor spent the class period working on the torso bust. We moved it up onto a platform so it would be more at eyesight. That class period, I could tell she was enjoying herself more,

commenting that “Oh this one looks so much better.” She and Megan had even been a little bit silly, jokingly making spiral nipples. As she was cleaning up and I was saying goodbye to other students, I heard a loud groan.

Taylor: *(more to herself than to me)* Ugh that’s so f----ing annoying.

I look over, and her clay sculpture had slipped off the work stand, falling and smooshing the neck and upper chest area.

Taylor: And my f----ing mouse broke too!

I could feel the distress and frustration, even anger, radiate from her. It was devastating. I didn’t dismiss how she was feeling or try to calm her down. I instead recognized how significant the event was.

Ms. Price: It’s fixable, but it’s really frustrating.

As she talked about it, more emotions began to come out.

Taylor: Then my f---ing mouse broke too! Somebody broke my goddamn mouse!

Ms. Price: Was that one.. that didn’t break when it fell on it?”

Taylor: That was not me! No, because I walked over, that’s why I dropped it, because I saw that was chipped.

She is still clearly angry and frustrated, but no longer exploding from the surface.

Ms. Price: You saw that it was broken. I wonder if that got broken this morning then?

Taylor: *(softly, almost under her breath)* I’m gonna hit somebody.

Ms. Price: I’m already fussing at the beginning of the day classes because they told the substitute that they either didn’t have any work to do or weren’t going to do any work.

I was out the first half of the day and I reassured Taylor that I would address it with them, and also that I would change project storage to help prevent future accidents.

I did not tell Taylor to not feel a certain way; I acknowledged her feelings. Usually, when students cursed in Room 1719, they contributed to the "class swear jar" by giving me a compliment. I could tell this time was different. Her words were the best expression she had available for the affects and emotions that simply *had* to come out of her. I also knew I could help her fix it, and, as personal as the project was, I knew it was an important lesson to know accidents can always happen, especially with ceramic work. So much of her identity and vulnerability were entangled in that sculpture. I knew it was a highly visceral reaction, but I did not realize quite to what extent until she told me afterwards she was holding back tears. So much of a student can become entangled in artmaking, and I cannot emphasize enough the importance of making space in a curriculum to make students feel seen. But with that, so much is entangled in their work that when it does not turn out as planned or an accident happens, it can be a challenge to balance the meaningful creation of work with acceptance that sometimes things go drastically wrong when making art. Regardless, we would figure it out. I would support her (and the rest of my students) however they needed.

Taylor's sculpture *was* her, not just in the symbolic sense but in the affective sense. Her bodily relations with the world extended beyond her physical body to the space around her—the conversations, the material art making, the environment of the room. Her becoming in the space, with the space, is what led to her symbolic expression. Seigworth and Gregg (2010) write,

> Cast forward by its open-ended in-between-ness, affect is integral to a body's perpetual *becoming* (always becoming otherwise, however subtly, than what it already is), pulled beyond its seeming surface-boundedness by way of its relation to, indeed its composition through, the forces of encounter. With affect, a body is as much outside itself—webbed in its relations—until ultimately such firm distinctions cease to matter. (p. 3)

The materials, ideas, conversations, mixing paint, shaping clay—all of these shaped Taylor's becoming. Furthermore, this event and the entangled bodies shaped my own becoming.

The entanglement of the students, spaces, artmaking, and other bodies inextricably included me. I found myself becoming with the classroom entanglement, specifically becoming with the students, the space of process, connection, and contentment with the present moment. In this becoming, I found my stress as a teacher lessened. The semester was by no means easy. I still had the same responsibilities and experienced the same pressures of the job, but I felt myself becoming differently as the classroom space, affects, students, and other bodies shaped me in a way that led to more of a sense of contentment rather than the "not enoughness" (Pittard, 2015) characteristic of neoliberalism.


as an artist with
other artists.
My brain didn't
got too much
stimuli left.

“If I mess up on my idea, I just kind of flow.”

Aiden had a quiet ambition to his work — his ideas were rich and complex. He was not deterred by a time-consuming idea; for his foam carving he created an assemblage of carvings, for his soft sculpture character he created a figure using both sewing and needle felting techniques. During class he was quiet and reserved, focused on his ideas and engrossed in his work.

One of the later project prompts in the semester was for students to create a mixed media sculpture representing a safe space for them. Aiden created a multiple-floor home celebrating the role of his mother and the other women in his life. His mother worked hard to provide for Aiden and he worked toward the goal of attending college. It was clear he valued the strong women in his life and his education.

During class one day, as he was working, Aiden and I discussed his experience in Room 1719.

Ms. Price: How would you describe your art making process and experience in this class?

Aiden: Imagining a feature but not like the whole thing. Sometimes plans helped me, but like sometimes you know if I mess up on my idea, I just kind of flow.

Ms. Price: You seem like you have, tend to have a pretty clear vision of how you want your project to turn out, and that’s not always the case?

Aiden: Yeah.

Ms. Price: (*laughing)* That doesn’t show because like I guess because you’re so into it with making it, figuring out what’s right for it. What would you say helps you figure it out as you go along?

Aiden: (*softly*) I don’t know.

Ms. Price: It's okay not to know!

Aiden: (*normal voice*) I know when I was doing this, I had to start over. That's just because I didn't like the way I um, I was keeping the same animals, I just switched different parts [for his creature pair].

Ms. Price: Okay. Yeah. One of my teachers used to say like to ask the artwork what it needs you to do to finish it, like it's hard to describe like how you know, you just kind of like, it's like an artist intuition type thing, you just know. How would you say this class is different from your other classes, art or non-art?

Aiden: this kind of calms, it's more calm than my other classes.

Ms. Price: what about it specifically is calming?

Aiden: I really like doing what I want, like it's not a specific standard you have to follow.

Ms. Price: Well there are, but I know what you mean.

Aiden: More creative.

Ms. Price: Yeah. Like one of the art standards is like explore a variety of sculptural materials. That's literally what the standard says and then it lists some of them, so, you definitely have more freedom there. I'm excited to see how this turns out. And you like how it's turning out now? Good, awesome.

Aiden: How can I do legs?

I show Aiden how he can support the body as the legs are drying with a lump of clay as a brace/support, so the clay of the legs is not weight-bearing yet.

Just as emotions and affects cannot be translated into an outcome, wonder opens up possibilities that cannot be known in advance (Ahmed, 2015). Perhaps wonder is what enables Aiden to experience creating with the materials and ideas, rather than forcing what is in front of

him into a preconceived form. Ahmed (2015) says that wonder, in terms of affects, “is about seeing the world that one faces and is faced with ‘as if’ for the first time (p. 179). Rather than attempting to control the materials, wonder opens up the possibility for exploration and seeing bodies and spaces anew.

The same affective force of wonder also applied to my experiences as an educator. Rather than viewing things as being right or wrong, wonder enabled me to have a curiosity for multiple possibilities. What *could* students do instead of what *should* students do? Ahmed (2015) suggests we think of feminist pedagogy “in terms of the affective opening up of the world through the act of wonder, not as a private act, but as an opening up of what is possible through working together” (p. 181). Watching Aiden explore his ideas and materials without being bound by what the end product was, to, as he put it, “be more free” in his creativity and creating prompted me to view wonder as an affective relation to the world that opens up possibilities.

Forming Understandings

As I was thinking with the classroom events and affect theory, several persistent thoughts began to take shape. Affects are both carried into and develop as a part of the art classroom. Like Taylor's experience in the hallway and Betty's entanglement with the discourse of being a "good" student, no one ever truly arrives to a space in neutral. The neoliberal norms of the

school entered into the space of Room 1719 through the greater school culture of neoliberalism; yet, the classroom assemblage had the capacity to impact how this affect or another became stuck, further shaping the educational experiences of both teacher and students in the space. The body of Room 1719 was composed of the class curriculum, the pedagogy, the classroom space, supplies and their accessibility to students, the students, affects, conversations, and other social forces like race, class, and gender—all of which impacted the experiences of students and educators. Fostering a classroom assemblage that supported connection, vulnerability, and trust was crucial for creating a place where students could, as much as possible, shed or disrupt the affects produced by the neoliberal norms of the school, as evident in the collages and events I have shared.

In the next chapter, I continue to thread the analysis started in this chapter through the (re)presentation of events with a discussion of the findings. I aim to contribute insights to visual art pedagogies that can be useful to both researchers and educators, especially within the current data-driven educational climate. Rather than trying to discern explanations or themes, I embrace my subjectivities and address them as part of the assemblage of the classroom. This research exists because of my own lived experiences, and I recognize I cannot remove my subjectivities and biases, so instead write through them as part of the discussion.

CHAPTER 6

FURTHER UNDERSTANDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ART EDUCATION

My work thinking with affect theory provided a way for me to investigate what was produced in the art education classroom when I implemented a yoga-informed pedagogy. As I worked to embody the theory in yoga-informed pedagogy, I was most interested in what affective forces I noticed in my high school art classroom and how those forces impacted my experiences as an educator-researcher. Thinking of classroom spaces and events with affect theory and through Barad's (2007) intra-action necessitated a shift in how I viewed pedagogy. Recognizing pedagogy as part of the posthuman educational assemblage created openings for recognizing the agencies of nonhuman bodies such as things, beings, and affects (Ulmer, 2017). Therefore, as I have previously described, this research did not follow a humanist tradition of organizing and coding data to create representations of "real and true knowledge" (Jackson, 2013, p. 742) from a strictly human perspective. Humans are not the only bodies with agency. My goal in this final chapter, then, is to think differently about the space of the classroom and emphasize how the human and nonhuman are entangled together (Ulmer, 2017) to consider how an understanding of that entanglement can benefit art education.

Affects are everywhere: they stick to bodies and enter the art classroom, affecting bodies within the classroom environment. Based on this understanding, I suggest it is vital for art educators to shift from the domination of the mind and logic in educational pedagogy to a view that recognizes the individual as entangled and interconnected. Affects shape what and how students learn and create, and affects shape the experiences of educators. The body of Room

1719, of any classroom for that matter, is composed of numerous bodies— the class curriculum, the pedagogy, the physical space, arrangement of furniture, supplies and their accessibility to students, students, affects, conversations, and social forces such as race, class, and gender—all of which shape and influence the experiences of students and educators. As evidenced by the collages and events (re)presented in Chapter 5, students can potentially shed or disrupt the affects produced within the neoliberal norms of the school when the classroom becomes a space of connection, vulnerability, and trust.

Through my discussion of what emerged through this research, I work to provide insight into how, through my teaching with a yoga-informed pedagogy, my understanding of the role of affect theory in art education pedagogy has evolved. Through this dissertation study, I investigated what and how affective forces impacted the happenings of a public high school art education classroom. My goal was to respond to the material discourses of success and failure in school that resulted from neoliberalism and that, based on my experiences as an educator and my investigation of relevant literature, were harming teachers and students. I implemented my yoga-informed pedagogy as a possible way to push against and disrupt neoliberalism and these harmful discourses. With my first research question, I wondered what affects would become evident when a yoga-informed pedagogy was implemented. Through my analytical collages and writings, I considered how affective forces were part of the entangled assemblage of the classroom. I found that affective forces shaped the experiences of both students and teachers, and I specifically investigated the impact on my own teaching experiences in connection with my second research question. I used these questions as a guide for the analysis I shared in Chapter 5 and, based on this analysis, I gained new understandings which led to the following implications and possibilities for future research.

Affect, Yoga-Informed Pedagogy, and Neoliberalism

In the previous chapter, I (re)presented classroom events in order to investigate what affective forces were at work. By thinking with affect theory as I analyzed the classroom events, I began to understand the role of affective forces in a classroom assemblage. Tensions with neoliberalism were present, yet teaching with a yoga-informed pedagogy and thinking with affect led to new understandings of the role of the classroom assemblage and the nonhuman in art education. Throughout my research, I observed and analyzed how affective forces shaped the experiences of students and educators, working as part of the assemblage through moments of connection, vulnerability, trust, grief, frustration, anger, sadness, and other everyday traumas.

Affects were carried into and either developed or were released as part of the art classroom. Affects led to shifts and influences on students' self-perceptions and influenced action/inaction. In the classroom (re)presentations, I noticed how Taylor's encounter in the school hallway, Noah's experiences with grief, and Betty's entanglement with the discourse of being a "good" student impacted their conditions of arrival (Ahmed, 2010) in the classroom. The affects entangled in the school's grading system left Betty stuck with the potential of being "not-enough" if she did not make a "good grade," prompting her to visit my classroom before school to ask the question of "how do you grade?" Noah carried his grief with him into Room 1719 and, by orienting the space of the classroom around it (Ahmed, 2006), he allowed grief, love, and other emotions to be central to his learning. Taylor also entered Room 1719 entangled with traumatic affects from her hallway experience, demonstrating that the classroom body was not the only active body of the school that impacted learning.

There were also several instances of grades producing affective responses related to how students viewed themselves within the school space, wanting to be "good enough" and not to be

judged for what they did or did not know. Relatedly, Jackson seemed to associate the worth of a project with grades; if something was not graded it was not a worthwhile pursuit, operating under the neoliberal norm of worth being entangled in the production of, in this case, "good enough" grades. He was hesitant to use foam carving materials for material explorations, for example, stating that he did not want to take the materials away from any of "our actual projects."

As discussed in Chapter 5, yoga-informed pedagogy enabled the possibility for students to shed or disrupt neoliberal affects and norms. In some cases, the traumatic affects students arrived with seemed to become a bit less stuck. For example, some students persisted in their explorations with the foam carving materials in spite of things not going as planned, and Betty responded to my acknowledgement of the improvements in her sewing techniques by recognizing what new skills she was developing. In other cases, however, the affective forces that stuck to students detrimentally impacted their next steps, as in when Martha moved away from the artmaking and literally became stuck based on things not going as planned. Ahmed (2010) describes how "feelings can get stuck to certain bodies in the very way we describe spaces, situations, dramas. And bodies can get stuck depending on what feelings they get associated with" (p. 39). Martha's stuck feelings were likely generated from the affects entangled with her becoming, resulting in the view that not only was her art exploration "not good" but her entire becoming in the classroom that day was "not good." The way her sense of self was entangled with these affects offers one example of how neoliberalism continued to shape classroom experiences. Martha felt solely responsible for her success or her failure. Even with the shift to teaching with a yoga-informed pedagogy, neoliberal norms still influenced the classroom space and practices. These neoliberal affects stuck and were brought into the classroom space of 1719 through the greater school assemblage.

Cultivating Affect toward a Culture of Connection, Vulnerability, and Trust

While there are areas and bodies of a classroom assemblage beyond the control of one person, I argue that certain affects can be cultivated within a classroom space. While neoliberal affects persisted in Room 1719, connection, vulnerability, and trust were also produced as part of the classroom assemblage through yoga-informed pedagogy. Students connected and assembled within the space of Room 1719 through the intra-action of the space, including students, dialogues, materials, norms, and social and affective forces. By teaching with a yoga-informed pedagogy, these bodies materialized in a way that contributed to students feeling invited and welcomed, in many cases moving beyond and refusing other limited norms in school spaces. The combination of *abhyasa* (consistent and steady practice) and *vairagya* (contentment with the present moment) created a consistent art making routine that celebrated students' abilities and ideas. The materials and space of the classroom were not viewed as something separate from the student that should thus be controlled; instead, the nonhuman bodies of the classroom were interconnected with the human bodies as the school space was viewed as an active, entangled assemblage. For example, students had the responsibility and ability to access and select materials, easily and freely moving around the room to get supplies or work in a different area. Betty stated, "I can get up and move around" about the room, while Taylor's statement about Room 1719, "I don't feel judged for my brain!" implied that in other spaces of the school she *did* feel judgment for what she knew or did not know yet. Megan described how

> I feel very welcomed in this class… I think your energy and the way you present yourself, and then I think also the people in this class… I feel like nobody's really critical, and there's no like, right or wrong answer, so I feel like it's more like do what you need to do (personal communication, March 23, 2023).

Yoga-informed pedagogy responded to the needs of individual students in each moment. This responsiveness facilitated a sense of connection and trust in which students seemed to feel supported, respected, and celebrated.

On many occasions, students were able to create artwork that was personal, emotional, and deeply meaningful. In part, this may have been possible due to the emphasis on *ahimsa* (nonviolence) and to the environment cultivated by yoga-informed pedagogy that emphasized an openness to making and learning from mistakes. With ahimsa, students were able to feel a sense of balance and contentment in how they viewed themselves; they were not acting rash out of judgment or shame. Mia's simultaneous reluctance and persistence in foam carving was one example of this. Additionally, Aiden described his working through art making problems and ideas as a creative flow, frequently trying new ideas and techniques and by necessity having to make adjustments when things did not go according to plan. Throughout their artmaking process, students were able to seek out and apply feedback and assistance that further demonstrated a level of trust and vulnerability in classroom relationships. Based on this, I suggest that cultivating a sense of belonging, considering affective forces, and creating a welcoming classroom space leads to learning possibilities.

By the end of the semester, many students were creating work that was intensely personal and exploring what techniques would be best suited to the concept, something that I would argue would not have been possible had common accountability practices continued in Room 1719. The climate of the space, the availability and accessibility of supplies to students, consistent practice of the artistic process, and supporting and celebrating of ideas seem to lead to an openness and sense of security in students. Thus, the consideration of *all* bodies allowed creativity to truly be explored as it worked to prevent students from being affectively stuck

(Ahmed, 2010). Cultivating a classroom space where students felt celebrated, supported, and had a sense of autonomy helped to encourage more experimentation, risk-taking, and vulnerability in art investigations. As a result, hearts, minds, and bodies were nourished.

Rethinking Success through Affect

The affective forces at work as I implemented a yoga-informed pedagogy led me to realize that my own identity as an educator was entangled with the classroom assemblage. I experienced a shift in how I viewed success in the classroom, particularly in terms of process versus outcome. As described in Chapter 5, the experience exploring reductive carving led students to not just use the floral foam to create a product but to *learn with* the material. Furthermore, by considering the nonhuman and human bodies as mutually constitutive, the learning experience shifted from one of mastering control of a material to recognizing how both the students and the materials were interconnected and becoming together.

As I navigated the concept of student success, I also navigated neoliberal norms that lingered in Room 1719, particularly doubting if what I was doing as a teacher was "good enough" (Pittard, 2015). I felt these doubts, but I also felt the affective forces at work when a student had a moment of vulnerability, frustration, or satisfaction. In addition to the shifts that resulted from the affective forces stuck to students, I also experienced affective responses of my own. In the case of Noah and Taylor, their work was deeply emotional and led to my own affective response, leading to tears after the bell rang and students had gone. This vulnerability and the resulting affective moments led to a deeper connection with students; even if not directly stated, there was a knowledge that this affective experience was witnessed, and as a result led to an increased level of trust and more possibilities for vulnerability in the classroom. In this instance, success was characterized by a deeper teacher-student relationship rather than a "good"

finished product. For me, the impact of the affective forces in 1719 contributed to a new understanding of how bodies influence teaching as well as the identity of an educator.

Support for the Significance of Affect in [Art] Education

The study of affect in education is a growing field. According to Dernikos et al. (2020), "affective pedagogies happen outside of teachers' conscious intentions with learning sparking in the becomings encountered when bodies (human and nonhuman) meet. Pedagogy, then, is not a vehicle for exchanging information from one being to another; rather, teaching has immanence" (p. 15). To put it differently, teaching is imbued with unknown possibilities, connections, and ways of thinking and seeing (Colebrook, 2005, p. 4). Anna Hickey-Moody (2009) writes that affect is "a taking on of something, of changing in relation to an experience or an encounter" (p. 274). She argues that "learning is always an affective experience" (Hickey Moody, 2020, p. 144), whether through how curriculum is shared with students or other means such as popular culture. Additionally, Dernikos et al. (2020) state,

> affect in teaching—associated with the coming together of ideas, differences, and intensities across students, teachers, and knowledge—can slow down or speed up events or make moments more or less impactful; it can capacitate and incapacitate bodies differently. (p. 15)

Considering how different teaching practices can accelerate or slow down affect in classroom spaces has the potential to shape how educators view and approach pedagogy. Kathleen Stewart (2020) describes how, for her, teaching affectively resulted in a subtle but powerful shift; that "the room's qualities changed from those of a holding tank for a cleared ground to those of a threshold, or an energetic edge" (p. 31) as "teaching became the exercising of acts of response" (p. 32-33). She describes how she taught affectively for both undergraduate and graduate

seminars using a writer's workshop approach, having her students use the process of writing to learn concepts rather than assessing the finished writing piece. Stewart (2020) elaborates, stating that "before we could begin the semester, anxieties had to be relieved…Grades had to be eliminated…I wrote a rubric in which students started with 100 percent and lost points for not completing assignments or not participating in seminar" (p. 34, 2020). Continuing research on affect in educational spaces creates the possibility for both teachers and students to move toward a changing of the relations in the classroom bodies, shifting toward a focus on how the bodies are interconnected.

Considering affect in relation to teaching and pedagogy opens possibilities for what affect can *do* in the classroom. Mulcahy (2012, 2019) demonstrates how affect is significant to classes in school settings and museums. Through case studies of geography, Mulcahy (2012) emphasizes that "affect is not a personal property of the teacher. It is assembled—a complex and uncertain *gathering* of energies, words, gestures, commitments, affections, artifacts, bodily feelings, routines, and habits" (p. 21). She argues that "thinking pedagogy as an assemblage affords a sense of *collective responsibility*," rather than something "personal" (Mulcahy, 2012, p. 21). Mulcahy's research also demonstrates the significance of affect and emotion in the teacher and student relationship moving beyond measured outcomes (2012). This creates conditions for what she describes as "lively learning" (Mulcahy, 2012, p. 22) through connection making. There is potential for further knowledges and understandings of affective forces in the educational spaces, as trusting these "emergent connections" as "'good' teaching is in contact with the *moving* dimensions of experience that allow for affective connection" (Mulcahy, 2012, p. 23). Mulcahy (2019) argues that affect "incites learning and ethical action…coupling learning with 'affect' serves as an ethical and political counter to the constructivism of education" (p. 104). Likewise,

Zembylas (2012) argues that "there needs to be an explicit *pedagogic* attention to students' emotional response during classroom discussions of racism, social justice, and critical pedagogy" (p. 113) because, like Snaza, he writes that "pedagogies of mere critique are perhaps not adequate to address the varied emotional manifestations of this resistance" (p. 114). Snaza (2020) states, "when the situation is saturated with love, bewilderment enables an attentive and affective shift from analyzing Man's horrors to affirming ways of becoming otherwise together" (p. 118).

In part, these emergent connections are characterized by the specific educational spaces in which learning happens. As learning is an affective experience (Hickey Moody, 2020), Snaza (2020) argues for equal importance afforded to feelings as to thinking. He specifies that

> classrooms are not just spaces where ideas are aired, shared, critiqued, and debated; they are sites where affects emerge, circulate, and enter into conflict. Pedagogy is therefore at least as much a matter of affect modulation as it is a question of theories, evidence, argument, and genealogies (Snaza, 2020, p. 113).

Because these spaces have specific affects circulating and brought in by students, teachers, and other bodies, school spaces can take on specific "atmospheres" (Dernikos et al. referencing Stewart, 2007). Dernikos et al. (2020) connect how research in geography has investigated how affects and emotions saturate certain places with "specialness," producing the "recognizable atmospheres" of schools "that affect staff, students, and visitors" (p. 16-17). They write, "schools offer different affective atmospheres for different groups of children and youth. As with other public spaces, historical expectations for proper behavior contribute to school atmospheres" (Dernikos et al., 2020, p. 18).

Similarly, Thomson and Hall (2021) investigated atmospheres specific to art classrooms. The structure of the art room already provides students with many affordances and responsibilities, with students feeling “more relaxed, at ease, and less stressed in their art classrooms than in other school spaces" based on “different and more open relationships with teachers, greater control over what they did, and feeling more like themselves” (Thomson & Hall, 2021, p. 1). Thomson and Hall (2021) argue this is due in part to a specific “art room atmosphere” (p. 5) based on the physical space, teacher actions, and creative endeavors over extended blocks of time, which provide a way for art education to “usefully and critically consider the affective dimensions of their disciplinary pedagogical repertoire” (Thomson & Hall, 2021, p. 14). However, there is still room for improvement to consider affect in art educational classrooms.

Through exploring Daoism and New Materialism, Shin and Yang (2021) suggest art educators revisit their curricula to consider “how nonhuman materials and objects can be agents affecting and being affected by the web of human and nonhuman entities” (p. 246). More specifically, Shin and Yang (2021) call for art educators to move away from trying to capture and understand art teaching practices through the art language they are used to, and argue they “need to hear what materials, objects, and things need us to see, hear, and feel” (p. 246). For teachers and teacher educators to know and understand more about affective forces in the art room could, as discussed earlier, have significant impacts on art education experiences as feelings and affects are involved in the process of learning. For that to happen, research on affect in art education classrooms needs to not only continue, but to move away from the neoliberal focus on outcomes, products, and testing.

A Shift Towards Process and Affect

As a result of my research, I see a need to consider the role of affect in connection with process-oriented approaches to teaching and assessment that resist the neoliberal emphasis on products. Rather than focusing on the finished product, I propose a shift to a process-driven approach that centers the artistic process as an act of inquiry. What are students investigating, exploring, or responding to through their investigation? Focusing on the artistic process would help students to think and work like contemporary artists. Students can develop their capacities to have a consistent and steady art making practice while simultaneously finding contentment with the present moment when there is not an impending judgment of a final product assessed against a pre-determined final goal. Artmaking is not something that is limited to the mind – it includes the entanglement of bodies (human and nonhuman) which include materials, spaces, and affects. Artists and artmaking are entangled with affect; the emotions and stuck affects entangled with an artist inform and shape their process just as the affects stuck to other bodies in the studio classroom shape the students. Of the affective nature of artmaking, Hickey Moody (2020) states, "art can be a way of reimagining the world" as "art creates its own kind of affect" (p. 145). Thus, I argue that insights gained from yoga-informed pedagogy, particularly *ahimsa*, *abhyasa*, and *vairagya* need to be incorporated into the process of artmaking. The process of artmaking itself can be the goal, without becoming entangled with neoliberal norms and affects; to do this, there needs to be a contentment (*vairagya*) and celebration of student abilities and ideas through steady and consistent practice (*abhyasa*), with love and kindness (*ahimsa*), more than just nonviolence, guiding teaching and learning.

In addition to process-based approaches to assessment specific to art education, I previously identified a process-based approach to assessment in higher education settings.

Ungrading is a growing approach to feedback and assessment in higher education that focuses on self-assessment and feedback instead of the production of grades (Blum, 2022; Gorichanaz, 2022). Based on the belief that providing feedback in ways other than traditional grades affords an increased focus on learning, supporters of ungrading argue that it enables students to experiment and take creative risks without the fear of their grade being negatively impacted (Blum, 2022). The focus on learning rather than assessment has the potential to foster student experiences that are less competitive and more collaborative (Schinske & Tanner, 2014) with "time for reflection and space to think" (Gorichanaz, 2022, p. 8) along with "attending to the emotional quality of the classroom" (Gorichanaz, 2022, p. 10-11). Thus, the field of ungrading is one that is disrupting neoliberal norms focusing on outputs, grades, and testing. Additionally, student ownership of learning helps meet feminist goals of reducing the power gap present in traditional classroom hierarchies (Eggleston & Kimmel, 2023). Critiques of ungrading question if eliminating grades or guaranteeing a specific grade does in fact promote engaged learning for all students (Brook, 2022). However, including affect in future research on ungrading opens up possibilities to consider how all of the bodies in a classroom shape the process of learning, including student motivation.

Based on my previous analysis and my investigation of the literature, I recommend pedagogy draw from the yogic concepts of *abhyasa, vairagya, ahimsa,* and interconnectedness to focus on process and the role of affects in learning. A focus on affects affords possibilities for both learning and growth rather than students "being stuck." Furthermore, incorporating yoga philosophy's *abhyasa* and *vairagya* reinforces this process-based approach in a way that emphasizes not just an acceptance, but a celebration of student learning.

Despite these potentially positive effects of a more process-oriented pedagogy informed by affect and yogic concepts, it is important to remember that educators in the United States are all a part of the neoliberal machine; therefore, attempts to push back and disrupt neoliberal norms through Asian philosophies like yoga will likely always result in unintentional commodification. Unfortunately, there is no straightforward answer as to how to reference theories and philosophies outside the neoliberal US without commodifying those theories and using Asian and non-modern philosophies as a "supply point" (Ahmed, 2006). In order to incorporate yoga-informed pedagogy into classroom spaces, self-reflection and care must be taken to acknowledge these tensions and explore new, different possibilities. I recommend approaches to pedagogy that consider how affect circulates in classroom spaces: specifically, educators should consider the role of affect in classroom spaces in terms of how different pedagogies and spaces can impact learning in affective ways. This is not to say I recommend a prescriptive approach to teaching. Rather, I recommend educators become aware of affect and reflectively consider the impacts of affect, both positive and negative, in their own classrooms. However, simply learning about affects is not enough; emphasizing a process-based approach which centers *ahimsa*, or nonviolence, is equally critical. Without these vital yogic philosophies guiding pedagogy, a focus on affect risks being commodified as just another tool to support neoliberal goals.

Disrupting Neoliberalism through Artistic Practices that Account for Affect

In addition to process-based methods for classroom pedagogy, artistic practices that account for affect afford the possibility for disrupting neoliberalism. Hanawalt's (2023) research with preservice teachers provides insight into the use of collage as a method to think on and push back on neoliberalism for teacher candidates. Hanawalt (2023) describes how, although teacher educators work to guide teacher candidates to push back against and challenge product-focused

school art (Efland, 1976; Gude, 2013) which is still common in schools, the school art method supports the data-oriented accountability culture of neoliberalism. She suggests that "good art teachers" may be those who demonstrate "quantifiable learning achievements through carefully planned art products that function as data" within the accountability culture of schools (p. 11). With this reality in mind, she used collage with preservice art teachers as a means of attunement to "call attention to areas where change is needed and possible (2023, p. 10). Like Hanawalt (2019b), I suggest collage as "a critical research practice" that "offers opportunities to map the relations generated by the assemblages of school spaces and carries the potential for new imaginings within the in-between spaces a collage affords" (p. 136). Collage as a method of reflection for preservice and practicing teachers affords affective learning opportunities that may otherwise be unavailable.

Franklin-Phipps (2020) describes artmaking as "a way to process, to slow down–resting temporarily to take a breath, often to a destabilizing and dizzying stopping point" (p. 125) in making sense (first affectively, then later with words) of the ongoing racial violence in the United States. Artmaking enables a shift away from the self and toward an opportunity to reimagine "the self in relation to the broader world and the people and things that make up that world" (Franklin-Phipps, 2020, p. 128-129). In her work with preservice teachers, Maddamsetti (2024) found "that the affective aspects of teachers' bodies are intricately intertwined with the process of teacher candidates' learning to care" (p. 20) and as a result "embodying critically oriented caring work is affectively embodied within and against material-discursive systems of power" (p. 22). This research focused on the role of affective, process-oriented approaches of teaching and learning with teacher candidates indicates the possibilities for how affect can guide

the process of becoming a teacher and holds potential to shift how both beginning and experienced educators approach education.

Implications for Educators and Art Education

When I began this research study, I was focused on what I noticed in the classroom space as I implemented a yoga-informed pedagogy. I had experienced the harm caused to students and educators as a result of neoliberalism in schools. As I progressed through the research study, I found myself thinking more about the different bodies within a classroom space and how affect impacts them, leading individuals to act or be stuck. As I thought through the (re)presentations of events, I recognized how the affects in and out of the classroom shaped learning. Snaza (2020) argues that educators need to attune to affects in order to cultivate space for students to listen, respond, and engage authentically. A teacher can facilitate but cannot fully control the conditions or events of a space (see Jones & Spector, 2016). Thus, art educators need to be responsive to affects and cultivate a space of connection, vulnerability, and trust, especially with the tendency of neoliberal norms to shape and impact affects. Educators should attend to what a student needs in the present moment, and act with the flexibility to provide that for the student based on what affective forces are at work. Educators should also recognize that they cannot fully control a space and should account for that in their pedagogical approach.

Through this study, I came to realize the significance of recognizing and understanding how neoliberalism affects bodies in a classroom. As a result of neoliberalism, responsibility for success has shifted from the collective society to the individual or family, both in society and in schools (Hursh & Martina, 2003). Therefore, students and teachers both affectively *feel* neoliberalism through an attachment of self-worth to grades and assessment, which can block their ability to feel contentment with the present moment. Educators should consider the intra-

action of teachers, curriculum, the learning environment, and other social forces such as race, class, and gender to analyze the role of affects that stick to the elements of the assemblage and impact classroom experiences (Shin & Yang, 2021). Students, teachers, spaces, supplies—all of these bodies have their own histories and expectations, emotions, and impact. There will always be an unpredictability when that many agential bodies are involved. Further, by recognizing the active bodies within the classroom, educators might be better prepared to establish an environment of connection and trust in the art classroom, especially as a potential disruption to the forces of neoliberalism. Students and educators each bring in their own stress in the form of accumulated affects. Without building and cultivating relationships, specifically to open up possibilities of connection and the ability to learn *with* their mistakes in artmaking, both students and educators could potentially become stuck, as a

> student's affective attunement to the space, to the other human bodies, and to the histories that materialize in the classroom shapes what they *feel* in ways that determine how they can listen, how they can respond, and how they can engage (Snaza, 2020, p. 116).

Yoga-informed pedagogy provided an alternative to the accountability practices in school. By making space in the classroom for emotions and affects, it was possible to authentically foster connection and trust between student and teacher. This shared connection and ability to embrace vulnerability opened the opportunity for personal exploration in artmaking. Further, yoga-informed pedagogy fostered a safe classroom environment for students and educators to begin to shed the affects produced by the neoliberal norms present in schooling. Yoga-informed pedagogy opened up possibilities to disrupt neoliberalism and enabled students to engage in artmaking deeply and vulnerably in a way that fostered both learning and well-being. These positive affects stuck and accumulated, enabling students to feel welcomed both

individually and creatively. Rather than students feeling “judged for their brains" based on their academic performance, yoga-informed pedagogy supported learners’ hearts, minds, and bodies so they could feel both supported and encouraged to learn, create, and grow.

Possibilities for Being Otherwise

What does this research tell educators, administrators, and teacher educators about teaching and art education? Teachers, students, and other bodies in educational spaces are continually becoming otherwise (Dernikos et al., 2020, p. 20). The understanding that affects can be both brought into and cultivated in a space has several implications.

Neoliberalism has created systems of schooling and education that, although situated as objective and fair (Hurst & Martina, 2003), are more accurately described as organized to “promote the survival of the fittest and triumph of the most advantaged” (Ravitch, 2014) and cause trauma to both students and educators (Pittard, 2015; Thompson & Jones, 2021). As Ravitch (2014) explains, the causes of “low academic performance” are “concentrated where poverty and racial segregation are concentrated.” Yet, neoliberal school reformers argue that the fault is on education, ignoring the fact that “schools and society are intertwined” (Ravitch, 2014, p. 6-7). While it would be unrealistic to suggest that art education and yoga-informed pedagogy can solve the problems of society and education, art educators have the opportunity to push back against and disrupt neoliberalism through an understanding of affects and emotions.

Neoliberalism argues that competition and individualism lead to success, using the production of grades to measure this success through surveillance, assessment, and evaluation. Yet, under this market system students and teachers alike can never be “good enough” (Pittard, 2015), and they often internalize feelings of shame and inferiority (de Saxe et al., 2020, p. 55) as neoliberalism is an “everyday, ordinary trauma” (Thompson & Jones, 2021, p. 90).

Understanding affects, both positive and negative, provides the possibility for being "otherwise" (Dernikos, 2020) in the classroom, for moving from the trauma of neoliberalism to consider how affect can result in "a change in the body's capacity to act" (Hickey-Moody, 2020, p. 145). Education, under neoliberalism, "humanizes (some) students" while simultaneously dehumanizing others (Snaza, 2020, p. 117). Shifting education from rational to affective provides the possibility to move away from this and the attached traumas of neoliberalism and towards a contentment with the present moment, or *vairagya*, through yoga-informed pedagogy.

Art classrooms should be created for and with student learners, with easy-to-access, readily available art-making materials and a sense of belonging and ownership. As demonstrated through the (re)presentations in Chapter 5, "the spaces where young people live, work, and play have a profound impact on their lived experiences and subjectivities" (Jones et al., 2016, p. 1153). Making space for and with students is a political act (Jones et al., 2016; Kraftl, 2015) and, by attending to the role of the material, space, and discursive in teaching and learning, educators can work against neoliberalism rather than perpetuating norms of obedience, control, and regulation. Rather than perpetuating these normative educational policies such as "classroom management" and "assessment," educators can reimagine and reconfigure these policies to positively influence how students are affected in the classroom space. In neoliberal spaces, classroom management operates as practices of discipline and control for students to produce assessment results as an indication of learning. When standardization and "correct" or "right" answers do not define success—as in yoga-informed pedagogy's focus on the process and a contentment with the present moment—there can be an emphasis on inquiry, expression, critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, creativity, and an acceptance of differences in ideas and abilities. Through this understanding of how students and teachers are connected to the

classroom space, there is the potential for education to move away from control and toward possibilities for learning.

In addition to planning for the unexpected in how materials, affects, and bodies all shape the classroom happenings, educators should also emphasize the process in the sharing of artistic work. Educators and administrators can focus on the process of learning and artmaking rather than measuring student success by the end product (piece of art, writing, etc.). Art educators can seek a balance between celebrating and presenting finished student artwork and sharing the artistic process. One suggestion for how educators might do this is to have students individually select what work will be on display and write a short exhibition label to be displayed with it. Additionally, educators could have students create process portfolios to share their learning with others – families, other educators, and administrators, for example. In the process portfolios, students would share the process of their learning and artmaking and reflect on it for each artmaking prompt or investigation, rather than being assessed for their finished art pieces. Yet, both of these options have the capacity to perpetuate a sense of "not good enough" if the yoga-informed pedagogical tenant of *vairagya*, or contentment or satisfaction with the present moment or action, is not emphasized. Without the guidance of *vairagya,* students will likely be compelled to self-critique their own work in comparison to that of other artists, both student and professional. Thus, project exemplars that define a pre-determined end result should be eliminated and students should focus on the process, or how they work through their idea with materials, and not feel any sort of judgment or comparison attached to the finished art piece. This is an imperfect practice, but one I found to have moments of disrupting the neoliberal norms of comparison and competition.

Considering how to plan for the unexpected, both with regard to artmaking and affective forces, opens up possibilities for art education to be both expressive and restorative. Incorporating yoga-informed pedagogy and considering the emotions and affects of a classroom space can result in an art education experience that celebrates and challenges students. By supporting students' hearts, minds, and, bodies, art education has the potential to embrace the fact that "learning is always already as much about feelings as it is about thinking" (Snaza, 2020, p. 113).

Thinking with affect theory provided a way to investigate what was produced in the art education classroom with a yoga-informed teaching practice in place. My goal was not to provide an approach to teaching that could be universally adoptable; rather, I sought to think differently and "feel and become otherwise" (Dernikos et al., 2020, p. 20) for the potential future of a more kind and just education. This research provided insights into how the human and nonhuman were entangled together (Ulmer, 2017) in the art education classroom. Affects, part of this entanglement, were both carried into the space and cultivated within the classroom. Thinking with affect theory and posthumanism showed the complex entanglements of classroom events: that the pedagogy, affects, spaces, materials, and more all impacted the experiences of the educator and students.

It is the task of educators to cultivate and be in tune to the affective forces in a classroom space, and the task of researchers, teacher educators, and administrators along with the educators to share and apply that research. It is my sincere hope that this research will inspire other educators, administrators, researchers, and educator-researchers like me to consider the classroom space as an active assemblage and to consider the role of affects in educational spaces in order to push back against neoliberalism. Educators will need to recognize, however, that

despite the potential to disrupt neoliberalism, complex affects can also perpetuate neoliberal norms within schools. I hope this research leads to *more* conversations about the role of affect and emotion for both educators and students. Learning and artmaking should be a challenging, vulnerable process full of experimentation, support, trust, and connection. As I mentioned before, I do not expect this research to be a solution to the problems of education, but perhaps it can inspire at least one additional classroom to be more affect-centered and yoga-informed. Ideally, educators will curate and facilitate spaces that cultivate connection and trust, and nurture hearts, bodies, and minds to consider how affects impact student learning and teacher experiences, thereby beginning to move beyond the harmful discourses of neoliberalism.

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APPENDIX A

IRB Approval Letter

Notification of Approval

To:	Christina Hanawalt
Link:	PROJECT00006338
P.I.:	Christina Hanawalt
Title:	Exploring the affective impacts of yoga informed pedagogy on public high school art educational experiences
ACTIONS TO TAKE:	This submission has been approved. You can access the correspondence letter using the following link: Correspondence_for_PROJECT00006338.pdf(0.01) To review additional details, click the link above to access the project workspace. For Non-Exempt research and if required, date-stamped consent documents can be found in the Documents section under "Final" in PDF form.

APPENDIX B

External Site Approval

Wed 11/9/2022 4:35 PM

To: Amanda ELIZABETH Price <amandaprice@uga.edu>;Grace M Thornton <gthorn@uga.edu>

[EXTERNAL SENDER - PROCEED CAUTIOUSLY]

Good afternoon Ms. Price,

Your research request has been approved by **The School District**. Please proceed with your work at **The High School** as soon as we receive your UGA IRB documentation.

Thanks so much, ---------

On Wed, Sep 28, 2022 at 6:31 PM Amanda ELIZABETH Price <amandaprice@uga.edu> wrote:
Good evening ----------,

I recently submitted my **The School District Research Proposal** for **district** review. I have attached the PDF of all addition179al documents to accompany my proposal.

Thanks,

Amanda Price (she/her)

PhD Candidate, Art Education Lamar Dodd School of Art University of Georgia

Athens, GA

APPENDIX C

Recruitment Script

I'm a doctoral candidate in art education at The University and visual art teacher at The High School and am studying how yoga-informed teaching practices can impact classroom experiences. The yoga-informed teaching practice that I will be implementing will not be engaging the students in a religious practice of any kind. It is based on the philosophic tenets of yoga: a stead and consistent practice and contentment with current moments or abilities.

Your student is invited to be in this research study because they are in a class where the teacher will be exploring how a yoga-informed teaching practice shapes classroom experiences. I want to learn more about how approaching teaching with a focus on a steady and consistent art making practice and cultivating student contentment can expand what we know about art education. I am particularly interested in how art educators can express care and cultivate student growth.

Please see the attached parental/guardian permission form for further information and to determine if you agree for your student to participate. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to reach out to me via email at **price@theschooldistrict** or amandaprice@uga.edu

Thank you!

APPENDIX D

UGA Parental Permission & Student Consent Form

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
PARENTAL PERMISSION & STUDENT CONSENT FORM
Exploring the affective impacts of yoga-informed pedagogy on public high school art educational experiences

You are being asked to allow your child/student to take part in a research study. The information in this form will help you decide if you want your child/student to be in the study. Please ask the researcher(s) below if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

Principal Investigator: Christina Hanawalt, PhD
Associate Professor and
Area Chair of Art Education
hanawalt@uga.edu

Co-Investigator: Amanda Price
Art Education
amandaprice@uga.edu

Your student is invited to be in this research study because they are in a class where the teacher will be exploring how a yoga-informed teaching practice shapes classroom experiences. I want to learn more about how approaching teaching with a focus on a steady and consistent art making practice and cultivating student contentment can expand what we know about art education. I am particularly interested in how art educators can express care and cultivate student growth. The yoga-informed teaching practice that I will be implementing will not be engaging the students in a religious practice of any kind. It is based on the philosophic tenets of yoga: a steady and consistent practice and contentment with current moments or abilities.

I will be implementing my yoga-informed pedagogy to see what impacts it has on classroom experiences. Data collection will occur from January to May 2023. Participation is voluntary. If you agree to allow your student to be in the research study, your student may be asked to complete a short, unstructured interview with me in the classroom environment in order to learn more about their individual experiences. Unless selected for an interview, your student will not be asked to do anything outside of the normal classroom activities of investigating, responding to, and creating and sharing artwork.

With your permission, I will be collecting audio and video recordings of students creating and investigating, myself teaching, one-on-one conversations between myself and students, and group conversations between myself and students. I will take photos of the processes of students' artmaking. Any audio will be transcribed, and the audio and photos will be used in order to analyze the classroom experiences. I will use the online transcription tool Otter.ai to transcribe any audio. While all efforts will be made to ensure transcribed data remains private, there are limits to data security and confidentiality.

I will take steps to protect your student's privacy, but there is a small risk that your student's information could be accidentally disclosed to people not connected to the research. To reduce this risk, I will replace your student's name with a pseudonym. I will keep the list that links the pseudonym in a separate, password protected file. Any information that could publicly identify the student (school name, student name, any faces in photos or videos) will be removed. This research will be used for my doctoral dissertation, and I may publish articles, present the research at conferences, share this research with other researchers, and use/share this research for future studies but I will not publicly identify your student. I do not plan to share identifiable information with anyone who is not connected to this research study. In the case of future research there will not be additional consent needed from the participant. I will keep the list with names long enough to make sure I have all of the right records. Once the list with names is destroyed, I will not use or share the de-identified data for future research.

If you have any questions about this study, contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Hanawalt, at hanawalt@uga.edu or Amanda Price, amandaprice@uga.edu. If you have any complaints or questions about your rights as a research volunteer, contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at IRB@uga.edu or 706-542-3199.

For Parent/Guardian:
If you agree to allow your student to participate in this research study, please sign below:

_____	_____	_____
Name of Researcher	Signature	Date

_____
Name of minor participant

_____	_____	_____
Name of Parent/Guardian	Signature	Date

For Student Participant:
If you agree to participate in this research study, please sign below:

_____	_____	_____
Name of minor participant	Signature	Date

Please keep one copy and return the signed copy to the researcher.

APPENDIX E

Assent Form for Participation in Research

Assent Form for Participation in Research
Exploring the affective impacts of yoga informed pedagogy on public high school art educational experiences

I am doing a research study to learn more about how yoga-informed teaching practices. I want to learn more about how approaching teaching with a focus on a steady and consistent art making practice and cultivating student contentment can expand what we know about art education. I am particularly interested in how art educators can express care and cultivate student growth. The yoga-informed teaching practice that I will be implementing will not be engaging you in a religious practice of any kind. It is based on the philosophic tenets of yoga: a steady and consistent practice and contentment with current moments or abilities. I am asking you to be in the study because you are in a class are in a class where the teacher will be exploring how a yoga-informed teaching practice shapes classroom experiences. If you agree to be in the study, you will allow me to collect audio and video recordings while you are at work in the classroom. You may be asked to complete a short, unstructured interview with me in the classroom environment in order to learn more about their individual experiences. Unless selected for an interview, you will not be asked to do anything outside of the normal classroom activities of investigating, responding to, and creating and sharing artwork. Being in the study may help you find growth and artistic achievements. I also hope to learn something about teaching art that will help other students in the future.

Participation is voluntary. You do not have to say "yes" if you don't want to. No one, including your parents/guardians, will be mad at you if you say "no" now or if you change your mind later. We have also asked your parent/guardian's permission to do this. Even if your parent/guardian says "yes," you can still say "no." Remember, you can ask us to stop at any time. Your grades in school will not be affected whether you say "yes" or "no."

I will use the information from you to complete my doctoral dissertation, and I may publish articles and present the research at academic conferences, but I will not publicly identify you. I will not use your name on any papers I write about this project. I will replace your name with a pseudonym and remove any information that could publicly identify you (school name, your name, any faces in photos or videos). I will use the online transcription tool Otter.ai to transcribe any audio conversations. While all efforts will be made to ensure transcribed data remains private, there are limits to data security and confidentiality. Information from this research may be used or shared with other researchers and/or for future students without additional consent from the participant.

You can ask any questions that you have about this study. If you have a question later that you didn't think of now, you can contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Hanawalt, at hanawalt@uga.edu or Amanda Price, amandaprice@uga.edu

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Name of Minor: _____ **Parental Permission on File:** ☐ Yes ☐ No

(For Written Assent) **Signing here means that you have read this paper or had it read to you and that you are willing to be in this study. If you don't want to be in the study, don't sign.**

Signature of Minor: _____ **Date:** _____

(For Verbal Assent) **Indicate Child's Voluntary Response to Participation:** ☐ Yes ☐ No

Signature of Researcher: _____ **Date:** _____

APPENDIX F

UGA Consent Form for 18+ Students

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
CONSENT FORM
Exploring the affective impacts of yoga-informed pedagogy on public high school art educational experiences

You are being asked to take part in a research study. The information in this form will help you decide if you want to be in the study. Please ask the researcher(s) below if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

Principal Investigator: Christina Hanawalt, PhD
Associate Professor and
Area Chair of Art Education
hanawalt@uga.edu

Co-Investigator: Amanda Price
Art Education
amandaprice@uga.edu

We are doing this research study to learn more about how approaching teaching with a focus on a steady and consistent art making practice and cultivating student contentment can expand what we know about art education. I am particularly interested in how art educators can express care and cultivate student growth. The yoga-informed teaching practice that I will be implementing will not be engaging you in a religious practice of any kind. It is based on the philosophic tenets of yoga: a steady and consistent practice and contentment with current moments or abilities.

You are being invited to be in this research study because you are currently a high school visual art student and you are in a class where the teacher will be exploring how a yoga-informed teaching practice shapes classroom experiences.

From January to May 2023, I will be implementing my yoga-informed pedagogy in your visual art classroom to see what impacts it has on classroom experiences.
If you agree to participate in this study:

- We will collect audio and video of you creating and investigating, myself teaching, and one-on-one and group conversations with students. I will take photos of the processes of your artmaking.
- We may ask you to complete a short, unstructured interview with me. me in the classroom environment in order to learn more about their individual experiences.

Participation is voluntary. You can refuse to take part or stop at any time without penalty. Your grades in school will not be affected whether you choose "yes" or "no Your decision to participate will have no impact in your participation in your visual art class.

Unless selected for an interview, you will not be asked to do anything outside of the normal classroom activities of investigating, responding to, and creating and sharing artwork. There are questions that may make you uncomfortable. You can skip these questions if you do not wish to answer them.

Your responses may help us learn more about teaching art that will help other students in the future. Being in this study may also help you find growth and artistic achievements..

I will take steps to protect your privacy, but there is a small risk that your information could be accidentally disclosed to people not connected to the research. To reduce this risk, I will replace your name with a pseudonym. I will keep the list that links the pseudonym in a separate, password protected file. Any information that could publicly identify you (school name, student name, any faces in photos or videos) will be removed. I will use the online transcription tool Otter.ai to transcribe any audio. While all efforts will be made to ensure transcribed data remains private, there are limits to data security and confidentiality. This research will be used for my doctoral dissertation, and I may publish articles and present the research at conferences but I will not publicly identify you. I do not plan to share identifiable information with anyone who is not connected to this research study. In the case of future research there will not be additional consent needed from the participant. I will keep the list with names long enough to make sure I have all of the right records. Once the list with names is destroyed, I will not use or share the de-identified data for future research. In the case of future research there will not be additional consent needed from the participant.

If you have any questions about this study, contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Hanawalt, at hanawalt@uga.edu or Amanda Price, amandaprice@uga.edu. If you have any complaints or questions about your rights as a research volunteer, contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at IRB@uga.edu or 706-542-3199.

If you agree to participate in this research study, please sign below:

_____	_____	_____
Name of Researcher	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Signature	Date

Please keep one copy and return the signed copy to the researcher.