DON’T SHORTCHANGE THE SURVEY:
A THEMATIC APPROACH TO UNCOVERING NON-WESTERN ART IN
AP™ ART HISTORY

By

LACEY VAN REETH

A CAPSTONE PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
2013
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my teacher, friend and mentor Ms. Jenny Gifford for inviting me to teach art history at the Alexander W. Dreyfoos School of the Arts back in 2009, and for being part of the editing process of this capstone project; you ignited my career in art education and also consistently set the bar for how to be an involved and selflessly engaged art educator. I would also like to thank Ms. Marsha Russell for her participation in the editing of this project, for unselfishly sharing her expertise and resources for the teaching of AP™ Art History, and for instilling within me the inspiration and confidence to have fun and get creative in the art history classroom. I am also deeply indebted to Ms. Michele Fricke, for it was her contagious enthusiasm for art history that shifted the course of my life back in 2002. Additionally, I would like to send many thanks to Dr. Michelle Tillander and Dr. Craig Roland for serving as my committee members, and for helping me slowly but surely hone in on this project while consistently peppering me with reminders to “keep it doable” over the past year. Lastly, I would like to send a big shout out and thank you to all of the students who I have been fortunate enough to have in my classroom over the past five years; each and every one of you pushed me and continue to develop me in one way or another toward being the best teacher I can, and I would not be where I am today without all of you.
ABSTRACT OF CAPSTONE PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

DON'T SHORTCHANGE THE SURVEY:
A THEMATIC APPROACH TO UNCOVERING NON-WESTERN ART IN
AP™ ART HISTORY

By

Lacey Van Reeth

December 2013

Chair: Michelle Tillander
Committee Member: Craig Roland
Major: Art Education

Abstract

This capstone project explores the value of online art historical teaching and learning resources when put to use in a global Advanced Placement™ (AP™) Art History classroom. By investigating a variety of existing online content-driven and curricular-based resources relevant to AP™ Art History teachers and their students, I examined the components of these resources and using my experience as an AP™ Art History teacher assessed their value to a course that needs to become more cohesively global in its content. The redesigned AP™ Art History course, which will launch in 2015, emphasizes the teaching of art in a global context, yet online curricular resources for integrating global art practices and traditions are lacking. Thematically
teaching course content is a feasible way to merge the teaching of artworks from global traditions and easily manage the expected course content that spans from the art of the Ancient Near East through Global Contemporary traditions. Concise and clear examples of how teachers should implement thematic teaching in their classrooms are hard to find and often times not well developed. Upon the culmination of my research, I created a series of instructional videos for AP™ Art History teachers that demonstrate how to thematically link works of art from global cultures while maintaining a linear chronology that I feel is important for beginning art history students. APAH in Themes © (https://www.youtube.com/user/apahinthemes) is a series of short videos that each compare two diverse works of art that are linked by an overarching, globally present theme; these themes include Sacred Spaces, Power & Authority, Nature and Violence.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page .......................................................................................................................... 1

UF Copyright page .............................................................................................................. 2

Acknowledgements ............................................................................................................. 3

UF Formatted Abstract ...................................................................................................... 4

Table of Contents .............................................................................................................. 6

Introduction ....................................................................................................................... 8

Statement of the Problem .................................................................................................. 9

Purpose of the Study .......................................................................................................... 10

Assumptions of the Study ................................................................................................. 11

Limitations of the Study ................................................................................................... 12

Literature Review ............................................................................................................. 12

Methodology ..................................................................................................................... 17

Area of Focus .................................................................................................................... 18

Data Collection Procedures and Analysis ......................................................................... 18

Limitations ......................................................................................................................... 19

Findings ............................................................................................................................. 20

AP™ Art History: Present and Future ............................................................................... 20

Smarthistory & AHTR: Online Content and Curricular Resources .................................... 22

Proliferation of Content Via Video: Amor Sciendi and 82nd & Fifth .................................. 25

Summary across all Findings .............................................................................................. 28

Conclusion and Recommendations .................................................................................. 29

Significance, Implications and Recommendations .......................................................... 29
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APAH in Themes© Online Video Series</th>
<th>30</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Globalizing AP™ Art History &amp; Reaching Beyond the Exam</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures and Figure Captions</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author Biography</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Globalizing Art History

If you flip through any major art history survey textbook (e.g., Adams, 2011 or Kleiner, 2009), the chapters that cover cultures of people firmly rooted or linked to European history take precedence. If a textbook does contain material from beyond the Eurocentric tradition, the chapters are condensed to a miniscule size that pale in comparison to their Western counterparts (Stokstad, 2008). For example, in Gardner’s Art Through the Ages: A Global History (2009) the entirety of some of the oldest civilizations in the world such as the Indus River Valley and China are compressed into two short chapters each, while the Italian Renaissance alone dominates four.

As a new teacher of AP™ Art History fully embedded in this 21st century digital world, I often wonder what can be done with technology to more cohesively and respectfully integrate global cultures into an art history course that has forever been dominated by Eurocentric superiority. This capstone research project aims to help teachers of AP™ Art History and other secondary art history survey courses easily manage course content by allowing for thematic comparing and contrasting of artworks from global cultures. After coming to the realization that global integration was the major area of AP™ Art History in need of development in the course’s curriculum, I investigated online resources that might assist me in designing and implementing a new global AP™ Art History curriculum set to launch in 2015.

As a result of my experience teaching the course and discovering the needs of AP™ teachers in the process, I investigated online resources in search of areas in need of development when compared to curricular requirements. Based on these findings, I created a series of instructional videos that help guide AP™ Art History teachers towards thematically weaving global cultures from beyond the European tradition into their chronological curriculums. This capstone paper supports the need for curricular restructuring, digital supplementation, and
thematic teaching in the AP™ Art History classroom based on the present needs of the course, and the curricular components of the recently announced AP™ Art History Curriculum Framework (2013) launching in the fall of 2015.

Statement of the Problem

The art history survey course has long been structured as a linear progression through the history of Western fine art. The information is neatly compartmentalized into chapters in massive textbooks (e.g., see Adams, 2011 or Stokstad, 2008) that do not fully promote the cultural overlaps, influences, trends, themes, and interactions that occur throughout global history. Well known and often used survey textbooks such as Gardner’s (2009) and Stokstad (2008) have until recently minimized the majority of world cultures from beyond the European tradition, such as Islamic, Buddhist, and Japanese Art. As a teacher of AP™ Art History, I am constantly seeking new ways to present information to my students, especially in regards to more cohesively integrating non-Western art into a largely Western curriculum and using digital technology and online resources to help me do it. I am fortunate to be provided with textbooks and other supplementary materials by my school, but many are outdated and lacking in much of the content that the College Board currently asks to be covered in their curriculum. In addition, it is rare to get new textbooks for AP™ Art History, as they can reach upwards of $170.00 per copy, so I have had no choice but to find supplementary material online.

The AP™ Art History curriculum covers innumerable artworks made during a span of more than 4,000 years, which can be intimidating for both students and teachers at the start of the course. While the College Board offers both curricular and methodological suggestions for teachers, they leave it up to the individual educators to ultimately decide on their teaching methods and curricular design; this open-ended curriculum model is likely welcomed by teachers
who have the extra time to be creative and build educational tools, but can become burdensome and overwhelming for those teachers who do not. While there are online content resources available, such as Smarthistory and Art History Teaching Resources¹, many are not organized specifically for the needs of the AP™ Art History course. Teachers can often not afford to devote the extra time that it takes to make new classroom resources, develop a thematic approach to the course, or work on implementing other new teaching methodologies that could help them with more cohesively teaching art history in a truly global context.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of my research was to study the value of existing online art history resources to secondary art history education, particularly the curricular requirements of the AP™ Art History course. I investigated current online resources available to AP™ Art History teachers in order to understand their organization and how they might be either useful or detrimental to AP™ teachers building a global art history curriculum. Specifically, I explored online resources that aimed to organize and associate global works of art from both Western and non-Western civilizations in a thematic way, which allows for strong comparative learning opportunities in the classroom and accommodates the AP™ curriculum’s non-Western requirements.

**Research Questions**

The primary focus of this research began with a question that I myself tackle within my classroom each year, that is “How can AP™ Art History teachers cohesively integrate non-Western art into their curriculums and use digital technology to help enrich their teaching practices in this area?” I then broke down this big question into three smaller research questions that enabled me to investigate the teaching approaches and curricular components needed to

---

¹ Smarthistory can be accessed by going to [http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/](http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/) and Art History Teaching Resources can be accessed by going to [http://arthistoryteachingresources.org/](http://arthistoryteachingresources.org/)
make the AP™ Art History classroom successful. The research questions I answer throughout this study are below.

1. Where is there need for improvement in the AP™ Art History course in terms of both curriculum and teaching practices, according the AP™ Development Committee?

2. What non-Western and thematic digital resources are currently available to AP™ Art History teachers and how can they be blended into their curriculum?

3. How should global course content for an AP™ Art History course that uses overarching themes be structured?

Rationale and Significance of the Study

This study is needed because online resources, such as Smarthistory and Art History Teaching Resources, available for use in the AP™ Art History classroom, do not currently provide the needed resources to properly implement the thematic teaching of global traditions. Additionally, these resources do not engage learners in comparative and contrasting associations of artworks that encourage a deeper understanding of content. I feel that teachers of AP™ Art History need access to resources that allow them to see the possibilities that exist in thematic teaching and also need guidance on what digital resources are most valuable as supplementary course content in the AP™ Art History classroom.

Assumptions of the Study

A major assumption of this study was that global art historical instruction is a necessity in secondary art history classrooms. Additionally, in conducting this study I assumed that current teachers of AP™ Art History see the need for change and adaptation in light of the recently announced redesign of the AP™ Art History course, set to launch in the fall of 2015. In connection with this previous assumption, I also assume that teachers of this course stay current
with College Board announcements and stay tuned with what areas of their course are in need of development. I also assumed that other teachers of AP™ Art History seek information through online resources as much as I do, and aim at deepening their knowledge of subject matter whenever possible.

**Limitations of the Study**

The APAH in Themes© video resource I created and the research I conducted along with it revolve around the College Board’s AP™ Art History course and curriculum, which I have taught for the last three years. I realize that it is not a course offered at all high schools and it is not my intention to ostracize non-AP™ Art History teachers in the process of conducting this study. I feel that the research I conducted and the final online videos I created will be useful to all art educators and perhaps even teachers of other humanities courses who wish to work towards developing a global curriculum. My personal attachment with the course and in-class professional experiences with my students also impacted some decisions I made when creating the final products, and I fully acknowledge that this was created from a biased position.

**Literature Review**

**The Expectations of AP Art History**

Since 1955, the College Board’s Advanced Placement (AP™) program has developed and maintained guidelines for teaching a great variety of courses at a college level in a high school setting. The AP program allows students to experience college level academic intensity while they are still in high school. Passing scores can earn students college credits and potentially give them the ability to bypass introductory courses in those subjects once they enroll in college in the future. AP™ Art History is one of approximately 30 courses offered by the
College Board’s AP™ program, and in it students are expected to learn a great deal about the history of global art from ancient civilizations through the contemporary era.

According to the College Board’s AP Art History Course Description (2012), students enrolled in the course are expected to examine and critically analyze many forms of artistic expression from past and present cultures in addition to understanding the function of artworks in context. In order to understand the context of artworks, teachers are expected to help students examine historical factors such as politics, economics, religion, gender and class. Approximately 20% of the current course curriculum is to be devoted to art from beyond the European tradition\(^2\). Based on years of exam data, the course description now emphasizes a growing concern amongst the AP™ Art History development committee that teachers are focusing too heavily on the cultures of Ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt which is proving detrimental to the art of the Islamic, Asian, Mesoamerican, African and Oceanic cultures. In October of 2013, the College Board released a new Curriculum Framework\(^3\) (2013) for a revised version of AP™ Art History that launches in the fall of 2015 and focuses on the truly global contextual teaching of art and increases the non-Western course content to 35%.

\(^2\)According the AP™ Art History Course Description (2012), art from beyond the European tradition (also known as non-Western art) includes the art of the Ancient Near East, Ancient Egypt, Africa, South & Southeast Asia, China, Korea, Japan, Oceania, Islam and the Americas before the arrival of Europeans.

\(^3\) Released on October 10\(^{th}\), 2013, this new course framework lessens the expected content coverage for AP™ Art History teachers to only 250 works of art, but asks that they dig deeper into contextual understandings and removes the labels of Western and non-Western art in an attempt to create a course that is truly global. This new framework is over 200 pages long and divides the entirety of art history into 10 content areas, providing teachers with big ideas, specific learning objectives and examples of evidence teachers should look for to assess student achievement in each content area. The new AP™ Art History Curriculum Framework can be viewed at [http://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/ap/2013advances/ap-art-history-curriculum-framework.pdf](http://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/ap/2013advances/ap-art-history-curriculum-framework.pdf).
The *Course Description* (2012) also encourages AP™ Art History teachers both novice and experienced to consult sources outside of their chosen course textbook in order to strengthen both their collection of visual resources and their knowledge of the material. In the *AP™ Art History Teacher’s Guide*, Darracott (2009) acknowledges the impact that recent and rapid technological change has had on the subject, for it has allowed unprecedented access to information and imagery that has changed the future of the course. Darracott believes that the use of the Internet in classroom instruction can enhance the course by connecting students with current events, issues, and context that can then be compared to art historical issues of the past.

**A Need for Change? What’s Right and Wrong With the Art History Survey**

While art history is only one of many survey courses that exist in education, the subject has forever connected the word survey with a year-long chronological introduction to Western art that focuses on high cultures (Graham, 1995). Little believes that the traditional chronological format should be maintained in the survey in order provide students with a fundamental grounding of context and history, while Costache believes that chronology can be maintained as long as relevant connections are established between the past and present through cross-chronological and cross-cultural comparisons (Phelan, Concannon, Costache, Desmond, Little, & Shipps, 2005). Darrcott (2010) states that a chronological approach to teaching art history provides a comforting sense of coherence, contradicting Graham (1995) who believes that the traditional linear approach is oblivious to cultural interaction and is in complete contradiction with the practices of art history today.

One of the biggest challenges with the AP™ Art History survey course is the more than 4,000 years of artistic production and innumerable artworks that students, mostly without any art or art history background at all, are expected to digest in a small period of time (Phelan et al.,
Finding ways to fit all of the content into a relatively short academic year can be challenging for teachers and Desmond (2005) suggests that teaching through big ideas is more valuable to students and will help them remember information longer versus memorizing facts alone. Darracott (2009) documents that the effective integration of art from beyond the European tradition, the use of primary sources and historical documents, and the study of contemporary art are all areas of needed enrichment for the AP™ Art History course.

Gunnin (2010) suggests that themes are a savvy way for AP™ Art History teachers to infuse non-Western art into a short year, but does not endorse a completely thematic approach because the jumpy nature of a purely thematic curriculum has the potential to confuse students new to the discipline. Graham’s (1995) argument for rejecting the traditional art history narrative and thematizing content fully in order for teachers to free themselves from the constriction of canonicity is in harmony with Halsey-Dutton (2002) who believes as many others do, that as globalization increases so too should the understanding and respect for other cultures. Howard (2013) argues that teachers who opt for a thematic approach to global integration should guard against simplification, and continue to ground art historical pedagogy in the discussion of an artwork’s context, function, and formal elements. Howard warns against reductionism, but believes that through thematic comparisons students develop deeper understandings of artworks by exploring the differences in the contexts and functions of the artworks in question.

Finally, keeping the survey lively, engaging and contemporary with teaching practices is another challenge that the teachers of the survey must take on. Desmond states that it is imperative to define the audience we teach and establish how they learn, while Costache adds that a fundamental objective of the survey is to ensure that content is interesting and meaningful to a 21st century audience (Phelan et al., 2005). Implementing the use of the digital culture that
students engage in daily within the survey classroom is a welcome addition, allowing for virtual field trips to far away places and into the past. There is a need amongst teachers of the survey to find an effective pedagogy that takes full advantage of new technologies that are available to them (Cohen, 1997).

**Digital Resources in the Art History Classroom**

As digital technologies have evolved, so too have the explorations of technology’s place in the classroom. Baca and Tranzo (2006) believe in the potential power that technology has to enrich traditional art history scholarship, but emphasize that resources need to be controlled, reliable and authentic in an era of quick Google® searches and Wikipedia page skimming. Since the lack of access to a multitude of online art history resources is no longer a limitation, creatively fusing technology into teaching practices is a wise decision in an era when budgets for additional resources are often tight (Halsey-Dutton, 2002). Cohen (1997) emphasizes that there are still trade-offs when using digital technologies in teaching, for as teachers we continue to have the primary task of enabling students to analyze, understand and discuss works of art as they encounter them in the real world.

Fisher (2013) notes that the big-name art history survey textbooks devote twice as much space to the Western world than any other cultures, which limited her ability to teach a truly global art history survey using only the book her institution provided. She argues for the end of the compulsory art history survey textbooks and the integration of freely accessible global online resources that can be adapted to many learning styles. The various ways in which to do this remain open to each individual educator, but the curricular goals of the AP™ Art History survey should be kept in mind when deciding what types of digital elements are valuable enough to integrate into the curriculum.
Conclusion

Due to the areas of the art history course currently in need of development and the availability of quality course supplements, the AP™ Art History teacher needs to continually adapt. Additionally, the AP™ Art History course redesign that shifts its focus to a truly global curriculum looms in the future, and teachers need to prepare. The traditional art historical survey is outdated, and the use of thematic comparative teaching can greatly help teachers manage the consuming course content that currently spans over 4,000 years of art production across the globe. Digital resources should not be taken for granted and should be used to supplement course textbook content whenever possible in the art history classroom.

Research Methodology

The primary method of research for this capstone was practice-led research as I investigated ways to thematically integrate non-Western art into the AP™ Art History curriculum while also looking to enhance digital pedagogical practices at the same time. Candy (2006) describes practice-led research as research that intends to advance knowledge within a practice, which is what I intended on doing for AP™ Art History and other art history survey instructors with this research and project. While practice-led research is most closely associated with action research, my end product was not implemented in a classroom setting officially for the sake of this study and its effectiveness and was not analyzed and observed in practice with teacher or student participants. McNamara (2012) warns against the subjectivity that can become quite apparent with practice-led research and reminds us that the goal of the research should be to explain something of significance to a larger community of people, not simply yourself. Nimkulrat (2007) describes practice-led research as recent and unique because the researcher will engage in the study of his or her personal artistic practice. While my practice as a teacher is
not an art form, per se, my end product is a reflection of my professional experiences and knowledge of the practices and needs of an AP™ Art History teacher.

**Area of Focus**

I focused on the curricular components of the art history survey, specifically AP™ Art History, in order to investigate areas of the course in need of development. I also investigated existing online resources relevant to the AP™ Art History curriculum in order to study their strengths and weaknesses for possible inclusion in the course. I then formulated an online video resource\(^4\) that allows teachers to discover new teaching methods for thematic, cross-chronological and cross-cultural comparisons.

**Data Collection Procedures and Analysis**

Data was collected by investigating four existing online art historical resources that were in some way relevant to the study of AP™ Art History. Since this research is primarily practice-led and my study was without human subjects, my personal experiences and knowledge gained as an AP™ Art History instructor became my guide through this research. Using my professional knowledge in regards to the expectations and teaching of this course, I investigated these websites and analyzed ways in which they presented, organized and associated works of art. I then assessed how valuable the resource would be as a content or curricular supplement to AP™ teachers attempting to more cohesively implement non-Western art into their course.

I first analyzed and then compared the content and features of these existing online resources in order to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of each based on the curricular requirements of AP™ Art History and areas recognized as being in need of development. From these findings I formulated a thematic approach to presenting course content that I felt was a

---

\(^4\) APAH in Themes\(^©\) videos can be accessed at [https://www.youtube.com/user/apahinthemes](https://www.youtube.com/user/apahinthemes)
desirable, cohesive, and manageable way to structure artworks from Western and non-Western cultures together for my online video resource. In order to ensure that these videos remained relevant and accessible to AP™ teachers, I requested the help of two additional AP™ Art History instructors with more than 20 years of experience combined to review the videos as I completed them and asked them to provide me with detailed feedback in regards to their strengths and weaknesses. I sought the guidance of teachers actively engaged the course in order to ensure that the videos delivered quality content that was relevant to the course and reflected the expectations of the AP™ curriculum.

The feedback received by the two instructors included both praise and criticisms regarding the accuracy of contextual content, the clarity of narration, the relationship of images to the narration, in addition to the pacing of the videos. Each video was edited as a result of their feedback in order to ensure that their content was relevant to the course expectations and that they presented the artworks from both civilizations equally. These videos not only present a clear and concise thematic comparison of one Western and one non-Western work, but they also organize valuable online course content relevant to the featured artworks and provide methodological strategies for teachers to implement thematic teaching and the use of online resources within the traditional art history survey.

Limitations

A limitation of this practice-led method of research was that I only explored online resources used in my practice in search of content and curricular support that could benefit the AP™ Art History course, specifically. I limited the online resources I explored to four, and chose resources I knew to be heavily relied upon by AP™ Art History teachers based on communication and networking I have established with other educators in the AP™ community.
Additionally, the exploration and analysis of these online resources was limited by focusing only on offerings within them that emphasize or outline thematic approaches to art history or that cover art from beyond the European tradition.

**Findings**

The following three sections will focus on my findings within the current and future AP™ Art History course description and prospective. First, I share my findings while investigating the online content and curricular resources of Smarthistory and Art History Teaching Resources. Lastly, I discuss the discoveries I made while researching the online video resources on the Amor Sciendi YouTube Channel and the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s 82nd & Fifth video collection.

**AP™ Art History: Present and Future**

According to the most current AP™ Art History Teacher’s Guide (2009), one of the most pressing concerns for the course development committee was the observation that students relied too heavily on artworks made by the Ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian civilizations when answering 30-minute essay questions. In 2010, the course development committee decided to eliminate the study of Prehistoric Art from the course due to its lack of contextual evidence, while also amending their discussion of cultures from beyond the European tradition in the course description. While the committee did not completely forbid the use of Ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian examples on exam essay questions, they did emphasize that the intent of the non-Western 30-minute essay question was to “draw from areas such as Africa (beyond Ancient Egypt), the Americas, Islamic cultures, and Oceania” (p.34). More so than a message to students, this reads as a message to teachers to go beyond teaching only the art of the Ancient Near East and Egypt and delve into other global artistic traditions as well.
On October 10th 2013, the College Board released a new course prospective for AP™ Art History that has been in development for many years. This new AP™ Art History Curriculum Framework (2013) emphasizes the teaching of art history on a global scale. Instead of emphasizing that 20% of the course curriculum be devoted to art from beyond the European tradition, the redesigned course framework attempts to abandon those words altogether, ceasing the use of the words non-Western throughout the text. Instead, the 250 artworks are divided into ten content areas that are organized by regions on a global timeline (see Figure 1). The redesign addresses the major challenges AP™ Art History teachers face, such as balancing course content while also developing deep conceptual and contextual understandings with their students by “specifying learning objectives, defining course content, and limiting the number of works of art

5 The AP™ Art History development committee has minimized the expect course coverage to is 250 works. This is the first time the College Board has established a set number of works that AP™ Art History students are required to have knowledge of.
students are required to understand in order to support their in-depth learning, critical analysis skills, and discovery of connections among global traditions” (p. 1).

**Smarthistory & AHTR: Online Content and Curricular Resources**

Choosing next to focus on online resources that were prolific in their ability to offer both excellent content additions and curricular suggestions for AP™ Art History teachers, I investigated *Smarthistory.org* for both quality non-Western content offerings and curricular suggestions, as well as *ArtHistoryTeachingResources.org* for curriculum suggestions offered by colleagues internationally. *Smarthistory* is more content driven, nicely designed and cleanly organized. It allows for easy navigation by either searching through time period (dates), style (periods or movements), or artist. *Smarthistory* offers over 500 videos and nearly 300 essays about works of art from many different periods and civilizations.

*Smarthistory* offers some healthy non-Western content, especially for the civilizations of the Ancient Near East, Ancient Egypt, South Asia and Islam. The website offers minimal content for the art of China, Japan, and the Americas, while it offers none on Africa (beyond Ancient Egypt), Southeast Asia, or Oceania. Altogether, this led me to the conclusion that *Smarthistory* is in need of the same development as the AP™ Art History course, for the Ancient Near East and Egyptian offerings are bountiful while the other non-Western cultures fall by the wayside. Additionally, *Smarthistory* offers a tab that enables you to search by theme, but this tab does not offer themes that deal with overarching big ideas found globally. Instead it offers options like

---

6 *Smarthistory.org* merged with the free online education resource Khan Academy in late 2011. The online art history textbook featuring both text and video resources can be viewed by going to [http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/](http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/).

7 *ArtHistoryTeachingResources.org* is a peer-populated site that began as a project by the graduate Art History department at The City University of New York in early 2011 and was intended to be a resource that enabled new art history teachers to hit the ground running. The website can be viewed by going to [http://arthistoryteachingresources.org/](http://arthistoryteachingresources.org/).
Understanding Basics and Media, which I found to be misleading, oddly organized, and offering no support for the global course components I was searching for (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. The odd offerings of the Smarthistory.KhanAcademy.org Themes tab

Lastly, I explored the Teach with Smarthistory link found at the top of the website’s homepage. This page offers two sample syllabi that utilize only Smarthistory content in teaching; neither of these syllabi feature non-Western components of any kind. While the quality of the content that Smarthistory offers is excellent, it provides only minimal non-Western content and gives no suggestions or curricular samples for how to cohesively blend the teaching of truly

---

8 Teach with Smarthistory can be accessed by going to http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/create-your-own-content1.html.
global cultures together in the classroom. *Smarthistory* is a Western-centric website that does not adequately meet the needs of the AP™ Art History teacher and classroom.

I also investigated the peer-populated online resources found on the website *ArtHistoryTeachingResources.org* (AHTR), which is more curriculum than content driven. This website offers a space for teachers to share their resources, and for those in need to reach out and borrow ideas, suggestions, or creations that teachers have made for the art history classroom. While this website is not specifically devoted to the needs of AP™ Art History, most of the content proves very valuable for the needs of the AP™ course, as many of the contributing educators are currently or have at one time been AP™ Art History teachers.

*Art History Teaching Resources* (AHTR) offers sample assignments, books suggestions, video links, sample syllabi, suggestions for art history writing, and extensive lecture notes provided by professionals in the field. These lecture notes include an extraordinary amount of content from all non-Western cultures, in addition to art from the Western world. The sample syllabi provided by AHTR are all traditionally chronological, and the thematic syllabi mentioned is attributed to *Smarthistory.org*, but the link provided to that thematic syllabus no longer exists. Recently published articles⁹ on the AHTR website by Dell’Aria (2013) and Fisher (2013) tackle the issue of how teachers should go about approaching such diverse cultures in one class, for which they endorse teaching the art history survey in a thematic way. Nonetheless, there are no sample syllabi or specific examples for teachers to follow in order to begin a thematic approach within their classroom located on *Art History Teaching Resources* (see Figure 3).

---

Figure 3. The peer-populated Art History Teaching Resources homepage

Proliferation of Content Via Video: Amor Sciendi and 82nd & Fifth

Lastly, I investigated two online art historical video resources aside from the videos provided on Smarthistory in order to discover whether or not they provided valuable Non-Western content, or methodological and curricular suggestions for thematic teaching art history. I studied both the Amor Sciendi YouTube\textsuperscript{10} series of videos produced by New York based educator

\textsuperscript{10} Amor Sciendi YouTube Channel and videos can be viewed by going to http://www.youtube.com/user/AmorSciendi/videos.
James Earle and his students, along with many of the videos produced by the Metropolitan Museum of Art and made available for viewing via their 82nd & Fifth\textsuperscript{11} online video collection. 

\textit{Amor Sciendi} has 43 videos that highlight one significant work of art each, but quickly and thoroughly dive into rich contextual and conceptual information in regards to the civilization or culture during which the art was made. Only two of the 43 videos deal with a work of art that is considered non-Western, and all of the videos are purely content driven (see Figure 4). While these videos did not offer curricular suggestions that would benefit the AP\textsuperscript{TM} Art History

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{video-thumbnails}
\caption{A screen shot of some of \textit{Amor Sciendi}’s video offerings}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{11} 82nd and Fifth (which is the address of the Metropolitan Museum) is a collection of 100 videos that is in-progress but will eventually showcase 100 great works of art from global cultures that are part of the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s collection. Each of the 100 videos will be narrated by a different curator, and all of the videos that are currently completed (93 as of November 30, 2013) can be viewed by going to \url{http://82nd-and-fifth.metmuseum.org/#/new/}.
classroom, I did value them for their relatively short length and plentiful contextual information, which makes them an excellent resource for use in class. While I did not discover any substantial non-Western content or thematic suggestions, the quick-paced and loaded video format the channel uses in video production make for an appealing in-class resource.

82nd & Fifth’s collection of videos is much richer in terms of its offering of global content, but is also purely content driven. One work from the museum’s collection is focused on in each video, with a different curator from the museum researching and narrating each episode. A variety of non-Western artworks are featured, and the curators provide in-depth contextual information about the artworks. One particularly strong characteristic of the 82nd & Fifth collection of videos is that it allows you to search for the videos via a global map on Google Earth® (see Figure 5). This global search allows the true global scale of this project to be visually evident on the map.

![Figure 5: The Google Earth global search tool on the 82nd & Fifth website](image-url)
Summary Across All Findings

Upon the conclusion of my research, it is clear that the College Board resources for AP™ Art History such as the Course Description (2012) and the recently released Curriculum Framework (2013) reveal that one of the most pressing areas in need of development for the course and its teachers is the cohesive and respectful integration of art in context on a global scale. In comparison to their Western counterparts, artworks from non-Western global cultures have substantially less online content available to help bolster the professional knowledge of teachers and supplement in-class learning for students; this is particularly true with global cultures beyond the Ancient Near East, Egypt, and Islam. Curricular support, guidance, or examples that support a thematic approach in the art history classroom are sparse, and still leave much to be desired by teachers. While there are a plethora of online resources that exist for AP™ Art History teachers, there is little guidance in regards to ways they should be used in combination with a traditional lecture-style art history course. Sample syllabi are available and the use of a thematic approach is suggested, but there is a lack of examples on these websites that show teachers how to implement these approaches in their classrooms. While the College Board and other proponents support and endorse thematic teaching as a way to help teachers reign in and more cohesively link the expected content of the AP™ Art History curriculum, there is a lack of clearly and concisely organized thematic curriculum, unit, or lesson examples for the art history teacher and classroom. This too leads me to believe that it is up to each teacher to emphasize themes and structure content to correspond with those themes as they see fit in their own teaching practice.
Conclusion and Recommendations

When beginning this research project it was my goal to discover the area or areas of AP™ Art History in greatest need of development, to investigate the potential that online resources have to perhaps accommodate areas in need, along with developing a structure for delivering course content using a thematic approach in order to more efficiently and cohesively integrate global art historical traditions into the teaching of the course. Literature supported the bolstering of non-Western content in the AP™ Art History classroom via a partially or fully thematic curriculum that manages content by teaching through big ideas. Additionally, scholarly sources provided a strong foundation for the use of digital components in the art history classroom, which have the ability when used properly to virtually take students on global field trips and more easily explore diverse ideas and content from global traditions and perspectives.

By exploring and analyzing a sampling of online art historical resources that contained both content and curricular support relevant for the AP™ Art History classroom, I determined that the greatest need for teachers of this subject was to have more specific and relevant guidance and examples to help them implement a thematic approach to non-Western integration in their classrooms. In the following section, I will discuss the significance of my findings and my subsequent video series project, and the implications that it has for the present and future teaching of this course.

Significance, Implications, and Recommendations

The past months of studying the value of online art historical resources has allowed me to see that despite the recent push for more diversity and global emphasis in American classrooms, the subject of art history still remains to be substantially Western in nature. While I understand the firm and long-standing roots of the subject may take a while to fully change, it was surprising
to me to discover that so many new and developing online sources created by 21st century minds continue to fall short in adequately representing many of these global cultures in comparison to their Western counterparts. Elkins (2006) claims that art history as a discipline avoided losing canonical works of art in textbooks by simply continuing to enlarge and add the content of global traditions, in turn making the discipline extensive versus intensive in nature. These large textbooks skim the surface of global traditions because they feel obligated to offer them, but don’t dig as deep as they do in chapters containing European and American male painters, sculptors and architects. I observed through my investigation of online resources that this practice has largely continued in the digital kin of the art history survey textbooks, namely Smarthistory. It is obvious to me through my research of online art historical sources and the clear statements made in the College Board’s AP™ Art History Course Description (2012) and the new Curriculum Framework (2013) that time and effort must be put towards establishing teaching methods that allow for a global AP™ Art History classroom.

**APAH in Themes© Online Video Series**

The creation of my online video series APAH in Themes© videos and YouTube channel ([https://www.youtube.com/user/apahinthemes](https://www.youtube.com/user/apahinthemes)) was created with teachers of AP™ Art History and secondary art history survey classes in mind. It took me a substantial amount of time and effort to get on my feet when first teaching this course, which can be a staggering challenge when a teacher sees just how much content they are required to cover with their students. While these thematic videos will most certainly aid AP™ teachers currently, this project has the potential to keep growing, as teachers will need to fortify and expand their knowledge of global cultures and traditions in order to be successful with the new course that is set to launch in the fall of 2015. Now is the time for AP™ teachers to begin their pursuit of additional knowledge
and skills that will enable them to teach art history in a global context. It took me a substantial amount of time and effort to get on my feet when first teaching this course, which can be a staggering challenge when a teacher sees just how much content they are required to cover with their students. While these thematic videos will most certainly aid AP™ teachers currently, this project has the potential to keep growing, as teachers will need to fortify and expand their knowledge of global cultures and traditions in order to be successful with the new course that is set to launch in the fall of 2015 (see Figure 6). Now is the time for AP™ teachers to begin their pursuit of additional knowledge and skills that will enable them to teach art history in a global context.

When developing the APAH in Themes© video series, I made a list of what I felt were the four most prevalent and important themes found globally throughout my current AP™ Art History curriculum; Sacred Spaces, Power & Authority, Nature and Violence. In order to ensure this project was relevant for not only the present AP™ curriculum, but also for the redesigned course launching in 2015, I chose the works to comparatively present within each thematic video.

Figure 6: APAH in Themes© Video series on YouTube
from the newly released list of 250 core artworks created for the redesigned course\textsuperscript{12}. By analyzing the format of past AP\textsuperscript{TM} exams, I have come to an understanding that most often the artworks students are questioned on in a comparative fashion side by side are not only thematically linked, but also made with similar mediums or with the same technique. Therefore, both artworks I chose for each video were made with similar materials or techniques. Lastly, before the production of these videos commenced I wanted to make sure the relatively small quantity of episodes I was creating would reflect many global cultures. Each video compares one Western and one non-Western artwork, but no two artworks in any of the videos were made by the same civilization, during the same era or by the same artist. The civilizations and eras represented throughout the videos in chronological order are Ancient Greece, Ancient Rome, Byzantium, Islam, Gothic, Aztec, Benin, Japanese Edo, and British Romanticism.

The cohesive teaching of art from beyond the European tradition was the major concern of the AP\textsuperscript{TM} Art History development committee that I chose to focus on exclusively for this project, because I felt it is the most pressing for the present and future direction of this course. However, the College Board also expressed concern that global contemporary art was lacking in coverage as well. I intend on continuing the production of APAH in Themes\textsuperscript{©} videos beyond the scope of this capstone project; I would like to expand the content coverage and produce videos that thematically weave together both historical and contemporary global art. I would also like to create a video channel aimed at student viewers, while maintaining the production of this video series geared towards a teacher audience. I intend to explore how to best organize videos that would be most valuable to students who will be participants of the new, truly global AP\textsuperscript{TM} Art History course set to launch in 2015.

\textsuperscript{12} The complete list of 250 required artworks for the redesigned AP\textsuperscript{TM} Art History course is available at \url{http://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/ap/2013advances/appendixes.pdf}.
Globalizing AP™ Art History & Reaching Beyond the Exam

The conversation of global art history seems to have only just begun, and as both an eternal student and art educator who pushes for a diverse classroom experience, I will continue to remain an active participant in that conversation. An interesting argument and conversation put forth by Elkins (2006) is that art historical traditions in non-Western global cultures beyond Europe and America do not really exist. The tradition of art history as a discipline is a thoroughly Western one, so it makes me wonder what that means for the future of the global art history argument. If we continue to travel down the path of globalizing the discipline of art history, which seems likely, will it be truly global if it is being written from a Western perspective? It is an interesting consideration to make as we begin to travel further down this path in the AP™ Art History classroom.

To conclude this section, I would also like to address the way in which this project has focused on the curricular requirements of the AP™ Art History course. I feel this project may come across as one that places emphasis on the course components that are necessary to ensure students can pass the cumulative AP exam that is administered at the beginning of May and nothing else. It cannot be denied that earning a high score on the AP exam is a good goal for students to have; higher AP scores earn the high schools that administer them money and have the potential to result in more college credit for the student. However beneficial high scores may be to both the school and the student, I would like to make it clear that often times the more fruitful outcomes of teaching this course are not reflected in the results of the AP exams.

Hearing from my colleagues that a student uses new vocabulary he or she learned in my class during critiques, or observing students make connections, comparisons or exciting insights on their own are often more rewarding to me in regards to my efforts in the classroom than AP™
scores. While I am still young, I have already received emails and phone calls or had chance run-ins with former students, in which they have expressed to me how much they appreciated my class and tell me that I have made an impact on their lives. Often times, these haven’t been the star students but instead have been the students who struggled with the material or who had attitudes and behaviors that caused me to struggle teaching them. It is in these instances that the true benefits of teaching become apparent, and while I will always strive for success in every way possible as an educator, in the end it is often the intangibles of teaching this course that reap the greatest rewards.

Conclusion

The research I have done for this capstone paper and the time I have put into the development of the APAH in Themes© video series has led me to a have a deeper appreciation for the educational community and their unselfish willingness to share resources and insights. Throughout this process, I discovered both content and curriculum oriented resources that educators spent substantial amounts of time on, yet selflessly share with others who they know could use their hard work to help better prepare their students. The Internet is an invaluable tool that allows educators to network and share resources and information, and the possibilities it offers to the future of art education are endless. The countless hours that went into this project do not matter in the end, because I know that in some way it will benefit my colleagues and their students, and that is what choosing a career in education is all about.
References


http://arthistoryteachingresources.org/2013/10/15/the-thematic-survey-a-comparative-approach/


http://arthistoryteachingresources.org/2013/03/15/bye-bye-survey-textbook/


http://arthistoryteachingresources.org/2013/08/30/thematic-approaches-six-degrees-of-separation-in-art-history/


List of Figures with Captions

Figure 1. The 10 content areas outline by the new AP™ Curriculum Framework (2013)

Figure 2. The odd offerings of the [Smarthistory.KhanAcademy.org](http://Smarthistory.KhanAcademy.org) Themes tab

Figure 3. The peer-populated Art History Teaching Resources homepage

Figure 4: A screen shot of some of Amor Sciendi’s video offerings

Figure 5. The Google Earth global search tool on the 82nd & Fifth website

Figure 6: APAH in Themes© Video series on YouTube
Author Biography

Lacey was born and raised in West Palm Beach, Florida, making her one of the few native Floridians out there. After graduating from the Alexander W. Dreyfoos School of the Arts’ Visual Arts department in 2002, Lacey attended the Kansas City Art Institute for two years where her focus shifted from fine arts to art history because of an inspirational professor. Lacey transferred to Florida Atlantic University to complete her Bachelor of Arts in Art History, which she earned in 2007. In 2009 Lacey began teaching Art History as an Artist-In-Residence at the same high school she graduated from; she has been teaching AP Art History with a digital twist since 2010 and began teaching studio art in addition to art history in August 2013. Lacey likes to have fun in the classroom and find creative ways to engage her 21st century, smartphone obsessed students with digital ways to discover the awesomeness of the history of art. Lacey is also a working artist, creating works in a variety of media that often deal with the issues of body image and flesh manipulation and distortion.