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Arts and Elite Schooling: The Accumulation of Advantaging Forms of Cultural Capital

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Arts and Elite Schooling:
The Accumulation of Advantaging Forms
of Cultural Capital

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**Arts and Elite Schooling:
The Accumulation of Advantaging Forms
of Cultural Capital**

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Abstract

Very little attention has been given to how schools provide students with opportunities to accumulate advantaging forms of cultural capital through the arts. This project explores the arts as valuable forms of cultural capital and the role the arts play in the production of elites. Because it is widely acknowledged that when researching elites access may be limited, the research for this project was conducted online through publically accessible documents, like curricula, mission statements, facilities, extra-curricular offerings, and additional arts programming on school websites. The eight schools in this study reside in four different, elite towns, and there are both public and private schools in each town. By researching elite schools in elite communities, this project moves beyond the typical binary of public versus private schools and creates a community-centric conversation to better understand how both public and private schools function to produce specific students. The findings of this research reflect that the arts serve the elites and serve to reproduce and reinforce ones elite status. Through these findings, it is seen that all students in American schools should have an increased access to the arts to subsequently increase his or her opportunity to accumulate advantaging forms of cultural capital.

Introduction

Early American schooling aimed to educate and elevate elite individuals of the country through the transmission of knowledge. Those who passed through the educational system were expected to become the nation's future leaders and innovative thinkers: education further created a division between high and low culture in American society (Lewis & Wanner, 1979).

Education was for the development of the upper class: the values of the upper class were the values encouraged, maintained, and perpetuated in schools, one of which is the enjoyment, practice, and knowledge of the arts. These values have remained steadfast in American schooling, and continue to be dictated by those in power; therefore, such values have been perpetuated as standards of knowledge for those belonging to the upper class. Because of this, it has become necessary to accumulate valuable forms of capital in order to achieve upward mobility, and ultimately secure one's self a position among elites or advancing his or her current elite status. It is only through obtaining such a status that an individual would be considered the best in their particular society because of his or her power, talent, wealth, or affluence.

According to Pierre Bourdieu (1986), there are three forms of capital: economic, social, and cultural. Cultural capital, as Bourdieu argues, is forms of knowledge, skills, education, and advantages that a person has; the more valuable capital that a person accumulates gives him or her a higher status (Bourdieu, 1986). Valuable forms of cultural capital have been deeply ingrained in the curricula of elite schools since the emergence of American education, causing such institutions to provide valuable contexts for furthering the advantages of elites. Therefore, American schools have a particular sense of power in that they can shape their students in specific ways to either reproduce or change preexisting social and cultural dynamics. It is this power in American schooling that has inspired this study to analyze how and why schools

function the way that they do in instilling particular values and forms of cultural capital unto their students. By looking at the arts as valuable forms of cultural capital, this study examines the role the arts play in the production of elites. Specifically, what role do the arts play in elite communities through both public and private schooling, and what opportunities does elite schooling provide students in accumulating valuable forms of cultural capital?

In 1985, Peter W. Cookson and Caroline Hodges Persell (1985) conducted research in which they investigated why private boarding schools produce such a disproportionate number of leaders in comparison to other types of educational institutions. In the United States, a private school by definition is a school that is supported by private organizations or individuals instead of by government funding. Because of this, private schools are also termed “independent” and have greater freedom and flexibility in their curricula. In their study, Cookson and Persell (1985) articulate how elite boarding schools prepare their students for success and power beyond schooling. In this study, they collect their data ethnographically. In 2010, Cookson and Persell (2010) revisited their study in “Preparing for Power: Twenty-Five Years Later,” which examined the evolution of elite boarding schools that had occurred over a period of time that spanned more than two decades. Their more recent work inspired my methodological approach to this project. The importance of their results illustrates why the questions within my project are important. Everyone has capital; however, not everyone possesses what the dominant culture establishes as valuable forms of capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Because the accumulation of highly valued forms of cultural capital reinstates the dominant culture’s values and knowledge, private schools stand as the main producer of the elite class in America.

This project is a cross analysis of the curricula, mission statements, facilities, extra-curricular offerings, and additional arts programming at four elite private high schools, which

align with the methods of Cookson and Persell (2010). However, this project also addresses the curricula, mission statements, facilities, extra-curricular offerings, and additional arts programming at four elite public high schools. Instead of obtaining funding from independent individuals or organizations, public schools in the United States are dependent on the government for financial support. The comparative analysis between the data collected from private and public schools shows that while all wealthy institutions provide their students access to the arts, the elite prep schools provide an increased access; the arts play an important role at private schools in insuring the accumulation of the most valuable forms of cultural capital for each student (Cookson & Persell, 1985, 2010; Khan, 2011). Therefore, the students coming from an elite, private school as opposed to an elite, public school graduate with larger amounts and more valuable types of cultural capital. The inclusion of public schools in this study transforms the discussion from a focus on the private versus public institutional binary to a discussion that is community-centric. It is undeniable that private schools produce high performing, high achieving, and elite individuals; however, my interest moves beyond the schools and permeates the elite community. The interest of this project lies in each school within the context of their respective community. Specifically, how does a school, public or private, in the context of an elite community function to impart advantaging forms of cultural capital unto their students? What role do the arts play in this equation?

There are three types of cultural capital that are important to consider in this study; embodied, objectified, and institutionalized (Bourdieu, 1986). While embodied capital consists of consciously obtained and innately inherited characteristics, such as language, objectified cultural capital takes the form of physical objects in the possession of one's person, such as works of art (i.e.: paintings, sculptures, drawings e.). Objectified cultural capital may be

transformed into economic capital by way of selling material things, such as art, for a profit. In fact, all valuable forms of cultural capital can be transformed into economic capital (Bourdieu 1986). In this way, art as objectified cultural capital gives one an opportunity to accumulate more economic capital with which he or she may subsequently achieve upward social mobility. One should note that owning art does not simply increase his or her objectified cultural capital although it may increase their economic capital; he or she may increase their objectified cultural capital at a greater rate only through an understanding of the work's cultural meaning (Bourdieu, 1986). Although the arts serve as a type of objectified capital, for the purpose of this study the arts will be discussed more thoroughly as a form of institutionalized cultural capital.

One gains institutionalized cultural capital through recognition bestowed to him or her by an institution. For the purpose of this study, the institution is a secondary school within an elite community. As Bourdieu (1986) states, “[Institutionalized cultural capital] institutes an essential difference between the officially recognized, guaranteed competence and simple cultural capital . . . one sees clearly the performative magic of the power of instituting, the power to show forth and secure belief or, in a word, to impose recognition” (p. 51). Institutionalized cultural capital is a fast way to qualify and quantify one's achievements to others, and to prove his or her position in a social hierarchy. With more access to the arts from greater economic resources, schools within elite communities automatically present students with the opportunity to obtain more highly valued forms of cultural capital. The arts are seen as a high cultural value: students that have an increased access to the arts are more likely to become elites in American society. This is a sentiment that echoes the reproductive theories that claim that American schools function to reproduce the social and cultural context in which they are situated (c.g., Bowles & Gintis, 1976).

It also raises the question: how do elite schools provide opportunities for their students to accumulate larger amounts and more valuable forms of cultural capital?

This study acknowledges the undoubted difference between courses offered at public schools and private schools, which either limits or grants access to the arts. This causes one to question: how are the elite private schools transmitting the arts to their students differently than the elite public schools? Additionally, what do the private schools do to stand out within an elite community that also houses an elite public school? Through these questions this project aims to further understand what is valued to whom and why.

The schools examined in this project are each located in a small, affluent, New England town: Jefferson Academy and Jefferson High School, Easton Academy and Easton High School, Arbon Academy and Thomas Area High School, and The Kennedy Academy and West Region High School¹. Because these schools are all located in affluent communities—with the exception of The Kennedy Academy and West Region High School—and the majority of the student bodies are from affluent homes, they are all considered to be elite schools (Howard, 2008). As mentioned, The Kennedy Academy and West Region High School are located in a town whose socioeconomic demographics are slightly lower than the other towns in which the other schools included in my study reside. Despite their lower socioeconomic index, I argue that it is important to include The Kennedy Academy and West Region High School because both schools are among the top performing private and public institutions in their respective regions. The inclusion of The Kennedy Academy and West Region High School widen the scope of my study, allowing for speculation beyond the consistent and common comparative relationships inevitably drawn between elite public and private institutions within the same elite community.

¹ All schools mentioned in this study are under pseudonyms to protect their identities and honor anonymity.

Bowles and Gintis (1976) draw a parallel between social class and schooling, stating that schools act to reify one's preexisting status in society. This is to say that students entering schools with an elite status are likely to graduate with an elite status, too. As mentioned earlier, every individual has an innate amount of capital that can be maintained, increased, or decreased in regard to one's position in the context of his or her culture and society. When one accumulates valuable forms of capital, in this case cultural capital, he or she either maintains or increases their elite status. Explicitly put, this study looks at how transmitting valuable forms of cultural capital, like the arts, produces elites.

Students attending elite schools benefit from the cultural forces maintaining social class in America; however, the schools serving this study provide empirical evidence that these forces act differently between elite private schools and elite public schools despite their both being situated within the same elite community. In the case of access to the arts, it is necessary to look beyond the curriculum of each school because the schools inarguably offer different extracurricular activities, and arts programming, providing students with distinctly unique experiences, instances of exposure, and opportunities with the arts. Bourdieu's (1986) theoretical framework around forms of capital will be used to explore the previously stated questions in order to understand why the arts are a valuable form of cultural capital, and how that capital advantages students in elite communities. Looking at course descriptions and the curricula of each elite school within these elite communities will reveal embedded ideologies that each school transmits unto their students through a hidden curriculum (Howard, 2008). A hidden curriculum is inclusive of "implicit demands that are found in every learning institution and which students have to find out and respond to in order to survive within it" (Snyder, 1970, p. 6). Bowles and Gintis (1976) use the concept of a hidden curriculum to explain how schools

maintain larger social, cultural and economical reproductive forces. Because these forces benefit students attending elite schools like the private schools in this study, it is important to examine these schools beyond a surface-level, cross curricular analysis.

Just as schools are reproductive in their nature, Rubén Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) argues that the arts act to reify their contexts. Since the arts are cultural productions they consequently maintain the contexts in which they were created, meaning that the arts perpetuate cultural traditions. Elite schools provide the context by which students learn of and about the arts and subsequently maintain whatever context the elite institutions put them in. This is why this research must push beyond the curriculum of each school to include the mission statements, facilities, extra-curricular offerings, and additional arts programming of each school in order to unveil the role the arts play in each institution, especially when considering the hidden agenda that motivates American schooling.

There are certain limitations that must be acknowledged when researching elite institutions. First and foremost is the issue of access (Gaztambide-Fernández & Howard, 2013). Cookson and Persell (2010) note in their own study that because access to elite boarding schools has been historically difficult, they relied heavily on materials they could access online. More recently, researchers studying elites are devising nontraditional methods, such as “ethnography at a distance” (Forsey, Breidenstein, Roch, & Kruger, 2015) and the use of social media. Like Cookson and Persell (2010), this study uses ethnography at a distance, which is why the focus will be on a cross-analysis of data accumulated from the website of each school. Another issue of access arises when one considers who sets the terms for researching elites. It is noted that “the relationship between researchers and participants in the study of elites is . . . ‘inevitably asymmetrical regardless of the research strategies deployed’” (Desmond, 2004, p. 265). This

means that elite individuals are in control of the overall research process when they are the subjects. The public materials on the Internet are rich and inform this study without the need to contact any individuals directly, which allows me to avoid the possible problem of access.

Bourdieu (1987) prefaces his explanation of the forms of capital by asserting that the distribution of capital among individuals parallels “the immanent structure of the social world, i.e., the set of constraints, inscribed in the very reality of that world, which govern its functioning in a durable way, determining the chances of success for practices” (p. 46). In this way, capital and the amount of valuable capital that one accumulates directly correlates to his or her position in society. This is why the discussions in this study are so important; the arts stand as a form of cultural capital, a form of immaterial knowledge, that reifies the positions held by those in power, which consequently exposes the question: why, as individuals, do we love what we love? What provokes human interest in the arts and why is it important to us?

The arts provide individuals with imagination, connection and community (Noblit & Bettez, 2004). Additionally, they improve academic achievement and maintain the cultural reproduction in schooling (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). This project aims to achieve a firm grasp on cultural reproduction, the forms of capital, hidden curriculum, and the social hierarchy created by these forces in schooling within elite communities. In doing so, I may come to understand more fully why the arts are important in elite communities and what the accumulation of advantaging forms of cultural capital does for students at elite schools.

Research Sites

Jefferson

Located in a suburb near a major city, Jefferson is home to almost 9,000 people, not including the boarding students housed at Jefferson Academy.² Downtown Jefferson has been developed into something quite picturesque—the crosswalks are inlaid with brick, the facades of restaurants and small boutiques lining the road fit together seamlessly, and the street is freshly paved. The historic buildings in the town provide the perfect, old New England feel.

Less than three minutes down the road from the downtown area is a highway that brings residents of Jefferson into the nearest city in less than 40 minutes. The public transportation in Jefferson provides an easy commute to and from work in the closest city. This suburban town benefits from its New England location, enjoying the changing seasons year round.

Jefferson is home to one of the wealthiest, elite, and long-standing private institutions in America. Jefferson Academy's campus contains a public American Art Museum, allowing access to the students, community and visitors alike. Additionally, Jefferson hosts craft fairs for local artisans to sell their creations, and there are several art and design stores in town. Though the focus of the arts likely extends from Jefferson Academy, Jefferson makes an effort to pursue the arts independent from the Academy; however, the town of Jefferson does not shy away from advertising events held on the Academy's campus or in the museum for the community to participate in and attend.

Jefferson is 87.1% White with the largest minority group being Asian American (5%), closely followed by Latino (4.3%). Most people that live in Jefferson have children or are part of a married couple. The town very much caters towards a family-centric lifestyle: there are

² Population and demographics of research sites have been collected from publically accessible census reports online.

museums, parks, fields, a public library, and plenty of shopping. Another large attraction in Jefferson for families is the school system. Jefferson is home to both public and private elementary, middle and secondary schools.

Jefferson Academy At the end of Main Street in downtown Jefferson is the beautiful campus belonging to Jefferson Academy. Atop the hill of the campus, the grass is impeccably green and manicured; the buildings are old and well taken care of. Main Street splits the campus down the middle with the majority of residential buildings on the opposite side of the academic buildings. Because the campus is integrated into the town of Jefferson, there are non-Academy associated individuals walking the sidewalks and enjoying the public spaces. Other local institutions are allowed to utilize the athletic facilities and some performance spaces. Additionally, the American Art Museum at Jefferson Academy is accessible to the public and invites members of the community to engage in their programming. The campus was founded in the 1700s; its structures throughout reflect Georgian architecture styles, and their brick faces almost exude high-class.

Jefferson Academy was one of the first elite, private schools founded in America. With a student body made up of international and U.S. citizens, both males and females, and both boarding and day students, Jefferson Academy's enrollment is just shy of 1,200 students. The average class size of the Academy is 13 students and there is a 5 to 1 student to teacher ratio: the small class sizes are a big selling point of this school. With 46% students of color and 10% international students, Jefferson is a multicultural community. In addition, the majority of the teachers at the Academy also serve as dormitory counselors, coaches or advisors.

The tuition at Jefferson is over \$50,000 for boarding students, whereas day students pay \$39.5k. Jefferson Academy has a large financial aid program: 47% of their students receive

financial assistance. Additionally, JA accepts students on a needs-blind basis. This means that they disregard any need for financial aid in the application process, allowing the school to be accessible to more individuals. In total, they dedicate around \$20 million towards financial assistance. The endowment at JA as of June 2015 is approximately \$1 billion.

Jefferson High School The brick façade of Jefferson High School has modern flare, achieved by the inclusion of large windows, which pour daylight into the entry foyer. The school feels like something out of a 90's movie: an American flag directly beside the front doorway and a carefully laid walkway leading visitors and students alike to a bright yellow entrance. The school is made up of just one building that includes a media center/library, a cafeteria, two gymnasiums and academic wings. There exists an annex to the main school building called the Everett Center, which serves as the school's theatre. The separate facility dedicated to the performing arts shows an emphasis in the performing arts. Additionally, the public may use this space to practice, perform, and host shows and recitals.

Jefferson High School is the public school that shares its community with Jefferson Academy. Jefferson High School's enrollment is approximately 1,700 students. The student body is 80% White, with a minority enrollment of 20%, and all students that attend JHS live in the town of Jefferson. The student to teacher ratio stands at 13:1, offering students a personal experience, though not as personal as Jefferson Academy. JHS offers a number of Advanced Placement classes: participation in AP classes at Jefferson High School is listed at 62%. Only 5% of the student body is recorded as participating in the free-lunch program, while only 1% of the student body is listed as participating in the reduced-lunch program, creating a total of 6% of the student body being listed as economically disadvantaged. This low percentage is a reflection of the affluence found in the elite community of Jefferson.

Easton

Unlike Jefferson, Easton is located in a more rural setting with a population of 9,300 people as of the 2010 census. Easton is largely a White community (94.9%), with the largest minority group being Latino (2.7%), followed by Asian (less than 1%). The majority of Easton residents are families with children, who likely one of the public or private institutions Easton offers.

The downtown is adjacent to a river, providing a picturesque view of the New England terrain. The small shops and boutiques located on the main street of downtown are expensive and specialized. The local businesses in downtown Easton depend on the students attending EA for their success: the summer months in Easton are much quieter than the months when boarding students populate the area. The buildings themselves lack the uniformity of those in Jefferson; however there is something about the miss-matched architecture that provides a unique charm and intimacy to this downtown. There is a gazebo in the town center along with an old inn and the town hall. On top of the town hall is a statue of a woman holding a scale. History is important in Easton. Close to the town center, there is an old, seemingly dilapidated movie theater; however, the sign above its name lists current titles.

Although there are a few art galleries located close to downtown, there is hardly an emphasis made independently by Easton on the arts outside of the schools. There is an Art Association based out of Easton with a gallery space and a mission to promote art appreciation and services; however, the association does not make themselves well known to the community.

Easton is home to Easton Academy and Easton High School, both of which are considered to be elite schools due to the community of Easton. In local shops or eateries where students from both schools visit, one can almost feel the tension between the “townies” and the

prep-school students. The relationship between students at Easton Academy and Easton High School is complicated due to the assumptions and misconceptions made on and by the public and private schools students.

Easton Academy Situated on roughly 670+ acres of land, Easton Academy is in the direct center of Easton. The old, brick buildings feel like a college campus as one drives by them and the grass fields are mowed to perfection. The school breathes history; the buildings are covered in ivy and the students are dressed in classic prep-school fashion with blazers, khakis, and ties, as well as skirts, and tights. Like Jefferson Academy, Easton Academy is one of the oldest private institutions in the United States.

Easton Academy is the private secondary school in the town of Easton; students are just walking distance from the town center. Easton Academy enrolls roughly 1,000 students per year, keeping graduating classes, academic classes, and student to teacher ratios intimate. The Academy has a student population made up of both boarding and day students. The students categorized as day students commute from their local homes to their classes each day. The day-student population makes up roughly 20% of the whole student population. This indicates that students in the surrounding areas, most of which are living in affluent towns, opted to pay tuition to attend Easton Academy instead of attending their local public school.

The facilities at Easton Academy are abundant: their athletic fields are expansive and their arts facilities offer students unique access to works in an on-campus gallery. The gallery is open to the public, inviting the local community to engage with the works on display, too. The strong emphasis on excellence and tradition permeates the campus in student life and academic settings. Many of the classrooms, especially in humanities subjects, have one large, oak table in the center of the room instead of rows of desks and chairs. This arrangement invites the students

to engage in discussion, giving them opportunities to develop their discursive skills.

Furthermore, the teachers often locate themselves in a chair around the table, allowing the traditional student versus teacher hierarchical dynamic to dissipate.

Being that Easton Academy is so integrated with the town of Easton, there exists many opportunities for boarding and day students to interact with the community around them. On one hand, there exists an opportunity for Easton Academy and Easton to symbiotically exist; however, because of the extreme elite air on Easton Academy's campus, one can still feel a physical hierarchy within the community.

Easton High School Only six short miles from Easton Academy is Easton High School, carefully tucked away behind trees and a winding driveway. Coming up to the school, one passes baseball, soccer, and lacrosse fields, and in the distance there are tennis courts. There are two parking lots flanking the building and the building itself is expansive. Easton High School is still new, having seen gentle wear since its construction in 2006, when it was moved from its original location downtown. EHS was previously located less than a mile from Easton Academy.

Easton High School is the public secondary school in Easton with an enrollment of roughly 1,600 students. Students who attend EH live in the six towns surrounding Easton. These towns can be easily distinguished by their socioeconomic break-down, meaning that one may guess which students at Easton High live in which town according to the car they drive, the way they dress, and even the classes they're taking.

EHS takes pride in their standing as one of the top public schools in the state: the driveway is lined with banners and the school colors are incorporated everywhere. Upon entering the high school, it's mandatory to buzz in through a secure entryway, sign in with the main office, obtain a visitor's pass, and then continue through to the front foyer. The foyer is filled

with light coming through the large windows on the front face of the building: the ceilings are high and the hallways are wide. The school song has been painted on the wall near the staircase. Beyond the staircase is the entrance to the school's athletic wing and auditorium. The auditorium acts as a space for town meetings, community discussions, important assemblies and the performing arts. The stage is used for the performing arts by the high school and local dance companies: there are rarely visiting performers that utilize the space. The high schools performances are open to the public; however, the majority of the audience is composed of friends, family members, and peers from Easton High School.

Arbon

The town of Arbon is comprised of roughly 34 square miles of farmland. Brooks and rivers flow through Arbon and in the distance is one of New England's beautiful mountains. As of the 2010 census, the town population was approximately 5,125 people. The town has its own police, fire, and public work departments, which are served by members of the community. Arbon has a small town feel, employing an open town meeting form of government which is lead by a Board of Selectmen.

The buildings in the center of Arbon strongly reflect their history: the shingles are old and worn and the paint is peeling. The character of each structure gives Arbon a picturesque appearance; in fact, the town is within a district that has been designated a National Historic Landmark. Arbon, like the other communities in my study, is largely white (97.24%), with the largest minority population being Latino (1.56%) closely followed by Asian, African American and Native American (all < 1%). It is reported that as of 2010 only 2.2% of families in Arbon were living below the poverty line.

Because of the small size of Arbon, the community depends on its educational institutions for their relationship to the arts. Not only are there arts programs available after school at the public school, Thomas Area High School, there are additional arts programming offered at Arbon Academy, the private secondary institution located in the town.

Arbon Academy Arbon Academy, like Jefferson and Easton Academies, is one of the outstanding, most renowned private secondary institutions in the country. Having been founded around the same time as Easton Academy and Jefferson Academy, Arbon is also rooted in tradition, community, and excellence.

With ivy-draped facades and brick-covered pathways, the campus feels as historic as the town. Expanding over 330 acres, the Academy takes up much of the space in Arbon. The Georgian buildings feel as though they emit high society and tradition: the school's motto insists that those enrolled, "Be worthy of your heritage." The students have incredibly clear expectations inside and outside the classroom. They are expected to be well-dressed in somewhat business-casual attire while attending all classes. Because the enrollment is consistently situated around 650 students, the atmosphere is intimate with a strong focus on community. The student to teacher ratio sits roughly around 5:1 and class sizes remain small.

There are 125 faculty members at Arbon Academy, 70% of whom have obtained an advanced degree in their respective field. Most teachers live on campus, if not incredibly close, and serve as residential advisors and dorm parents. In addition, many teachers are also coaches. The majority of the student body participates in school-sanctioned activities including clubs, athletics, and the arts. In fact, the Academy requires their students to participate in a co-curricular activity each semester, including options such as intramural sports, community

service, yearbook, theatre, and dance, to name a few. Additionally, there are over 50 student-run clubs on campus.

The facilities on campus are impeccable and reflect a strong relationship with alumni and donors. The athletic fields are numerous and expansive and the arts facilities are modern and publically accessible. In addition to numerous studios dedicated to foundation courses as well as specialized mediums in the visual arts and performance spaces and practice rooms for performing arts, Arbon has a gallery space and regularly scheduled arts programming open to the public.

As of 2007, Arbon Academy's endowment was valued at \$415 million, which is roughly \$680,000 per student. The student body is representative of 35 U.S. states and 34 countries around the world. Arbon Academy awards \$8.98 million per year in financial aid to 33% of their student body. Students who graduate from Arbon Academy most often attend Yale, Georgetown, Dartmouth, The University of Virginia, and Harvard. The students at Arbon Academy strive for greatness and excellence in every area of their lives.

Thomas Area High School Thomas Area High School is the public secondary school that shares the town of Arbon with Arbon Academy. Thomas Area, like Easton High, contains students from several surrounding towns. Despite the inclusion of several towns into one school, Thomas Area High School has the lowest enrollment of any other school in my study with just 600 students. This locates the student to teacher ratio at roughly 9:2.

The school is self-contained in one building and has additional athletic facilities located outside and in an athletic wing that flanks the school. The academic classrooms reside on the opposite portion of the school. Thomas Area serves students grade 7-12, which includes a larger

age range than the other schools in my study; however, the curriculum designates which age groups are permitted to register for which courses.

At Thomas Area High School there is an 11% minority enrollment with the largest minority population being Hispanic (4%), closely followed by Asian (2%) and African American (<1%), and the gender makeup of the school is just about 50% male and 50% female. It is reported that 17% of the student body qualifies for the free lunch program, whereas 4% of the student body qualifies for the reduced lunch program. The total percentage of economically disadvantaged students at THS is 21%.

THS gives students the opportunity to take Advanced Placement course work and exams. There is a 45% participation rate in the AP program at Thomas Area. Students at THS are high performers: on average, 92% of the graduating class is proficient in English, and 84% is proficient in Math. Thomas Area High School ranks in the top 100 public secondary schools in its respective state. THS is located near six major colleges and universities all of which have outstanding arts facilities that afford excellent educational and cultural opportunities to students of the high school age.

Pickering

As of the 2010 census the population of Pickering was roughly 43,000 people. The majority of the city is white (91.8%) with the largest minority group being Native American (3.4%), followed African American (2.2%), and Latino (2%). For the period of 2009-2011, the estimated average annual income for a household in Pickering was \$52,695 and the average income for a family was \$73,457. It is listed that about 5.5% of families and just over 10% of the population were below the national poverty line.

As the capital city, Pickering is home to the capital building and other official government offices. In addition, Pickering contains the state's symphony. Most residents hold government positions or work for the state. Another large employer within the city is Pickering hospital, located about equidistant between the two schools from Pickering included in my study, The Kennedy Academy and West Region High School. Beyond The Kennedy Academy and West Region High School, Pickering has three colleges/universities. There are partnerships existing between the secondary and tertiary institutions that allow students to access the facilities on the college/university campuses. This broadens the types of opportunities and experiences that secondary students in Pickering can have. In addition to the colleges and universities that share Pickering with The Kennedy School and West Region High School, there are other elementary and secondary institutions within Pickering.

The Kennedy Academy It wouldn't be too hard to drive right past The Kennedy Academy in Pickering. Its campus is completely isolated from the town of Pickering: the driveway of the Academy is its only entrance and exit. Entering the driveway is like being transplanted into a new environment. The first building to greet students and visitors who arrive on campus is Memorial Hall, built to commemorate members of the school that graduated and joined the armed forces to fight in the Vietnam War. The white columns and brick facing on the Hall are classic in their construction; the immediate feel on the campus is one that comes from tradition, history, excellence, and order.

The campus is self-sustained: once one enters the campus, it is as if he or she is in a town completely apart from Pickering. The Kennedy Academy was founded in 1856 and has a student population of roughly 530 students, keeping the community size small and intimate. The students

and teachers share the same living spaces, facilitating a feeling of trust among authority figures and students alike.

At The Kennedy Academy there are 35 U.S. states represented in the student body and 22 countries. Out of the school population 17% are international students. Though the school is mostly white (61%), the largest minority population is Asian and Asian American (17%), followed by African American (9%). The student body is roughly split 50/50 by gender. The Kennedy Academy campus stretches over 2,000 wooded acres that include expansive athletic fields, beautiful running trails, academic buildings, student residences, teacher residents, and even a personal boathouse and dock.

Like the other elite schools in my study, the faculty is required to fulfill duties beyond the classroom. Aside from regular teaching duties, teachers are also dorm parents, advisors, coaches and supervisors for extracurricular activities. The teaching staff includes 100 full-time teachers, 12 part-time teachers, and 9 teaching fellows. The student to teacher ratio sits close to 5:1.

The arts facilities on campus include four separate spaces for studio arts, music, dance, and theater. Each space is uniquely designed to cater towards a specific type of arts. For example, the studio arts building is equipped with ceramics, drawing, painting, photography and sculpture students as well as a small auditorium and gallery space. Students are required to fulfill classes in the area of the arts and are encouraged to pursue them beyond the requirement.

West Region High School West Region High School is located towards the center of Pickering. The building has been renovated several times since its original construction and now includes a modern glass-enclosed walkway to bridge two sections of the school. The High School was previously located on different streets due to the original building having burned down in 1888. Since then, WRHS has increased in size, which has caused its relocation that

ultimately placed it where it stands today. There are roughly 1800 students at West Region High School with an average classroom size of 21 students and a student to teacher ratio of around 15:1. The majority of the student body is white (83%) with the largest majority being Asian/Pacific Islander (9%), followed by black (5.5%) and Latino (1.7%).

The schools features a new media center library, a student center and cafeteria, a performing arts area, and four common areas near academic wings that contain lockers and administrative offices. Pickering's local public, educational, and government access cable TV station is also currently located in West Region High School. The building sits on the edge of one of Pickering's busier streets, but has expansive athletic fields behind the school. WRHS' athletics are some of the strongest and most competitive among the public schools in its respective state.

The courses offered at West Region High School range from special education through Advanced Placement programs. WRHS has a myriad of AP courses that cover the sciences, language arts, foreign languages, mathematics, economics, history, and studio arts. The fact that students have access to an Advanced Placement class in studio arts shows an emphasis on creativity and creation at WRHS. Furthermore, West Region High School requires all students to fulfill an art requirement prior to graduation. Additionally, WRHS hosts afterschool programming for students to engage in both the visual and performance arts.

Methods

The methods for this research join others in “the deployment of fresh critical lenses, drawn from new theoretical or methodological frameworks” (Howard & Kenway, 2015, p. 1008). In order to conduct research about a certain group of people, it is necessary to make contact and establish boundaries and constraints of the research with participants in order to maintain relationships with subjects, thereby easing the research process altogether (Howard & Kenway, 2015). To avoid the prolonged process of these negotiations, this project turns to public resources accessible on the Internet. It is important to note that all schools and locations in this study have been listed under pseudonyms in order to maintain their privacy. All information gathered about each town and school came directly from the town websites and school websites as well as census reports.³

Recently, more researchers studying elites have been turning towards unconventional methods of research due to the complications related to access. The methodology pervasive in this study has more recently been discussed as *ethnography at a distance* (Forsey, Breidenstein, Roch, & Kruger, 2015). Instead of going on site to collect data and conduct interviews or surveys, the computer is utilized as the primary, and in this case the only, means of data collection. Cookson and Persell’s (2010) attention to school websites in their study has directly influenced the work in this project. In many instances, a prospective student’s first contact with an institution may be online, especially for those students looking at private, boarding institutions. The way the schools in this study market themselves to others online provides me with particularly interesting insight, especially when considering the existence of the hidden curriculum that, in many instances, subconsciously motivates the pedagogies in schools. This is

³ These websites and reports cannot be directly referenced in order to maintain the privacy of each school used in this study.

why this project analyzes the websites of eight schools within elite communities and uses conventional methods to analyze the data gathered online (Howard & Kenway, 2015).

Each school in this study has their own website that details their mission statement, school-year calendar with special programming, course offerings, clubs, athletic events, contact information, directions, and so on. The project's interest in exploring this information in such a way comes from the benefits gained in recognizing that each school deliberately chooses to market itself to the public, mostly prospective students, parents of said students, and beneficiaries in a very specific way. At first, this work may seem like surface level observation; however, when considering the hidden curriculum inherently present at elite schools within elite communities, the way in which these schools market themselves publically is imperative.⁴ Furthermore, it is what the schools are *not* saying in their self-cultivated, deliberately designed public presentation that informs the research questions in this study.

Data Gathering

The research for this project models a new methodological approach called *ethnography at a distance* (Forsey, Breidenstein, Roch, & Kruger, 2015). For my research, school and town documents were used that are available on the Internet. The relevant web pages from each school and community were then printed out and were usually around five pages in length. This information provided me with a window into the community and into the schools; this window is the one which each community and school allows onlookers to view them through.

Not only are curricula and mission statements of each school publically accessible online, but so are extracurricular offerings, additional arts programming, and arts facilities. Together,

⁴ It is important to acknowledge that a hidden curriculum does not exclusively exist in elite schools within elite communities. All schools inherently have a hidden curriculum embedded in their pedagogies.

this information helps me build a profile for the eight schools. The profiles of each school and town outline demographics, student-body makeup, the endowment, class sizes, student to teacher ratios, and geography of each campus.⁵ Similar to the individual school websites, Jefferson, Easton, Arbon, and Pickering each have their own publically accessible town website. These web pages include general information about town-wide events, meetings, government, local eateries, and athletics. Lastly, census reports were often referenced in order to gather demographic and economic information about the towns.

Data from these websites were collected over a period of three months. Just as Cookson and Persell (2010) note in their study, the importance of using publically accessible documents to build the school and community profiles is that this information is exactly what prospective students and parents of students see for each school. The way the schools and towns choose to market themselves and what the schools choose to emphasize and prioritize tells more to me as a researcher than one might initially think, especially with critical attention paid towards the hidden curriculum of each institution.

Data Analysis

Analysis of the data collected online involved thoroughly reading course catalogues, mission statements, facilities information and more. The analysis process also called for me to navigate each school's website to understand how and why information was organized in specific ways. This all took the form of traditional content analysis. The content of the websites all related to the arts and the amount of access or the number of opportunities to access the arts at each school. Because the schools have both different and similar resources and programming in

⁵ Not all of this information is applicable to both the public and the private institutions in this study. For example, the public schools will not have information on their endowment, whereas the private schools will.

regard to the arts, data analysis required that the information collected be separated into different types of data. For example, all mission statements were collected and read to distinguish whether or not the statements included rhetoric in support of the arts. After categorizing the data into distinct groups based on data type, the data was read over with in order to code the data to help identify emerging themes. By identifying several themes, I was able to re-categorize the data, which helped in making decisions as to what data would be presented under what theme.

Literature Review: Arts Serve the Elites

While properly noting that elite private institutions are grounded and built on tradition, Cookson and Persell's (2010) study expresses the importance of the change that the curricula of elite schools inevitably underwent between 1985 and 2010. As the United States moved through the twentieth century, American society was increasingly classed and stratified and these class differences reflected social, cultural and economic issues nation-wide. In response to and with the aid of a more technologically advanced era, not only did American culture and society change over time, but so did the global landscape. Cookson and Persell (2010) posit that one reason for the change in elite curricula was in response to America's need to maintain its status as an international leader. Because schools have social and cultural reproductive tendencies, the way to effectively produce and maintain an elite population and reputation is to alter the curricula of schools to reflect current social, cultural, and economic trends and needs.

The following sections engage in discussions regarding the reproductive theory, specifically the status culture model, while contextualizing the hidden curriculum underlying the inclusion of arts in schooling. The hidden curriculum will be necessary in understanding the importance of this study because of how it relates to the implicit and dual functions of schools and their reproductive tendencies. Next, social class and social class mobility will be defined, and the ways that art and knowledge of the arts reifies one's position in a social hierarchy will be explicated. The literature review will engage in a discussion surrounding the way one's social class parallels his or her arts consumption. Finally, there will be a discussion of the pedagogical approaches in schools in regards to the inclusion of arts in the curricula focused on what the arts do for students, if anything at all. I will speak to the production of advantaging forms of cultural capital through the arts in secondary schooling, and I conclude that the arts serve elites.

Theory: Arts and the Status Culture Model of Reproduction

Educational institutions across America, whether private or public, all have one thing in common: they function in a way that imitates and supports the culture and/or society surrounding them (Giroux, 1983). Cookson and Persell (2010) explain several models and theories that affirm changes in educational trends within elite curricula, including the *status culture* model. This model argues that elites purposefully look to maintain their cultural distinctions, rituals of belonging, and moral discourses that establish boundaries between themselves and others (Hopper, 1971). This observation led Cookson and Persell (2010) to expect an increase in courses and extracurricular activities, clubs, programming, and experiences in the arts, as well as a strong presence in the humanities with “the continuation of expensive or esoteric sports such as squash or crew, and the perpetuation of distinctive rituals and customs in individual schools” (p. 18). This model of belief is most relevant to this project in that elite schools incorporate the arts into the curricula to perpetuate and elevate the elite status of the already elite students and individuals within society. The same can be said for elite communities, too. Pierre Bourdieu’s (1986) forms of capital help to explain why elite schools have an interest in providing students access to highly valued forms of cultural capital like the arts in that he provides an explanation of the way in which only certain types of capital act to elevate one’s status.

Paul J. Kuttner (2015) believes that “the visual art we create, the music we listen to, and the online media we share can all serve to reinforce and challenge existing social norms” (p. 70). Schools function to reproduce dominant ideologies and dominant beliefs, skills, and forms of knowledge in order to reproduce the society’s preexisting division of labor (Giroux, 1983). In this way, schools have what is called a hidden curriculum, which refers to “those classroom social relations that embody specific messages which legitimize the particular views of work,

authority, social rules, and values that sustain capitalist logic and rationality, particularly as manifested in the workplace” (Giroux, 1983, p. 263). The hidden curriculum imposes certain ideologies on students and, as a result, causes certain students to stand out over others. In the case of elite schools, the visual art and music that is created and learned about serve to reinforce existing social norms. This is because the existing social norms function in favor of those educated at elite institutions, the majority of the student body comes from families that have power due to their cultural, social, and economic capital.

Bourdieu (1986) defines cultural, social, and economic forms of capital. Cultural capital has three subsets within it, one of which is being institutionalized cultural capital. Students accumulate institutionalized cultural capital through exposure to cultural institutions like museums, galleries, theatres, and so forth. This exposure “has the effect of creating ‘cultural consumers’ motivated to acquire new cultural capital” (Kisida, Greene, & Bowen, 2014, p. 281). This suggests that when students have increased access to cultural institutions the opportunity for them to gain knowledge in the context of said institution is also increased. This means that the more access students have to the arts, the more opportunities students have to accumulate cultural capital in the form of the arts, which thereby increases their chances of upward mobility. A cycle is hereby created where the arts inform the students’ status, who then become the elites and subsequently recreate the cultural climate that the arts represent and then informs future students. Elite institutions are not only preparing their students for college, but they are also transmitting to them [the students] the etiquette and attributes of high culture (Lewis & Wanner, 1979).

Lionel Lewis and Richard Wanner (1979) posit that there is a clear relationship between private schooling and the process of status attainment. They hypothesize that students who attend

private schools gain associations that go far beyond their educational experiences. Because of the generally high status of the families that send their children to elite schools, the environment of the schools provide the students with an environment that socializes the students into upper class culture. This allows the students to create connections with their peers that have access to a wide variety of individuals beyond the private school setting. By maintaining these bonds beyond high school, the students from boarding schools are equipped with a network that likely spans across every conceivable field of work that provides employees with high salaries and opportunities to become corporate elites. In other words, students not only absorb high culture values in school, such as the arts, but they also make social ties that build their cultural capital. However, one must note that he or she would not be able to survive in the world of the upper class elite without the language of high-culture that studying the arts provides.

The arts are a way of producing culture (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013, & Kuttner, 2015). Not only do the arts come in “high-culture” forms known as fine arts, but they also come in forms that are more accessible to non-elites known as folk art and pop-art (Kuttner, 2015). The type of arts taught in elite schools are categorized as the fine arts, which reflect the goals and purpose of including such high-culture subject into a school’s curricula. The hope behind incorporating fine arts in schooling is that the students will accumulate high-culture values. Clearly, the distinction between different forms of arts coincides with social stratification that reflects the hierarchical social structure in America: the term “arts” should “always be interpreted as being embedded in larger processes of cultural (re)production” (Kuttner, 2015, p. 71). Furthermore, the inclusion of the fine arts in schooling is just one way that schools reproduce the existing social structure: the arts “operates as a *discursive construct* through which

particular kinds of cultural practices are defined in ways that reflect and reproduce the larger social and cultural context” (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013, p. 215).

As Bowles and Gintis (1976) affirm, education, especially elite education, justifies privilege and subsequently reproduces inequality by legitimizing privilege. They define legitimation as “the fostering of a generalized consciousness among individuals which prevents the formation of the social bonds and critical understanding whereby existing social conditions might be transformed” (p. 104). The increase in the inclusion of the arts in curricula between public and private institutions is no accident. Because the arts have no physical evidence of advantaging students academically, many public schools tend to allocate funding to other departments (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). At private institutions where there are more resources, there are greater opportunities to implement the arts in the curricula to benefit students in ways that move beyond pure academic success. Access to the arts acts as a way to maintain legitimation among elites: the ability for one to talk about the arts and view the arts amongst other elites helps create the exclusive social relationships that legitimation depends on. Furthermore, the ability to talk about and appreciate the arts creates a form of solidarity among individuals in the same class groups (Dimaggio & Useem, 1978).

Dimaggio and Useem (1978) argue that the relationship between social class and culture, like the arts, is that culture consumption is likely just as dependent on class as the distribution of education. As mentioned earlier, the elite private schools have an increase in their arts curricula because they have greater resources. In this way, the arts in education act both inclusively and exclusively to “preserve elite boundaries” (Dimaggio & Useem, 1978, p. 144). Elites see that acquiring highly valued cultural knowledge, like that of the arts, is one way to ensure upward mobility. The higher up a person sits in the social hierarchy, the more access to resources and

fewer limitations he or she has. This is the case for students educated at elite, private institutions where access to cultural productions and knowledge is seemingly unlimited. By accumulating forms of capital unavailable to lower classes, the upper-class elites are able to maintain their elite status and power (Bowles & Gintis, 1976).

Because elite status can be both hidden and visible, and material and subjective, status attainment may also be achieved in a myriad of ways (Gaztambide-Fernández & Howard, 2012). In fact, in attending an elite institution one has increased access to “high-brow” forms of capital, like the arts (Dimaggio & Useem, 1978). In other words, the arts act as a nuanced way to better understand the accumulation of advantaging forms of cultural capital in elite schools. Cookson and Persell (2010) contend that schools implementing more arts courses and arts programming provide their students with increased opportunities to increase his or her status. It is widely acknowledged that elite boarding schools are the grooming grounds for the nation’s future innovative thinkers and leaders; therefore, the argument may be made that schools with more arts curricula are consciously and intently increasing the capital of the students to prepare them to fill leadership positions. This fact thereby verifies the status culture model that Cookson and Persell (2010) present.

Taking Arts to Class: Social Class and the Arts

As displayed through Bourdieu’s (1986) theory and forms of cultural capital, social class is informed by more than just economic possessions. Cookson and Persell (1985) note that “elite domination of the arts parallels elite domination of other major American institutions” (p.201). The arts help to reaffirm and perpetuate class identity. Because of this link, the arts have remained potent in elite schooling and thereby act to perpetuate the cultural capital that helps

identify the higher class in society. Bourdieu's (1986) cultural capital can help in making sense of an unequal scholastic achievement of individuals coming from different social classes.

Dimaggio and Useem (1978) similarly state that there is a strong correlation between social class and aesthetic taste as well as social class and the level and quality of formal education. The higher social class one obtains, the higher education he or she achieves. With higher education comes an increased opportunity to achieve upward mobility, which coincides with an elevation in aesthetic taste. Dimaggio and Useem (1978) express that

Schooling, particularly higher education, by virtue of both the opportunities it affords for introduction to "high culture" and its diffuse emphasis on aesthetic experience, is likely to be an important determinant of artistic taste. Since exposure to education is, to a considerable extent, a function of social class origins, education is therefore also likely to contribute to the class differentiation of arts consumption. (p. 142)

Cookson and Persell (1985) suggest that the educational resources available at prep schools and the facilities on their campuses both carry and compliment subliminal messages about aesthetics and affluence within the schools' cultures. Here, one can see that social class both limits and expands one's access the arts. Not only does a higher social class give a person an opportunity to attend an expensive, elite, boarding institution like the ones in this study where he or she may then access the arts, but also this access moves beyond the context of schooling. Outside the context of education, access to the arts is heavily dependent on social class: the more money one has, the more arts programming he or she can attend, the more shows he or she can attend, the more art supplies he or she can buy, and the more recreational arts classes he or she can enroll in.

Dimaggio and Useem (1978) also suggest that the high arts, including things such as ballet, fine art, opera, theater, and classical music, are consumed at greater rates by individuals in

higher classes than individuals in lower classes. The lower the social class, the less arts consumed, and the less arts consumed, the less cultural capital that is obtained. Additionally, it has been reported that one's occupation beyond schooling can be a high indicator of high-arts exposure (Dimaggio & Useem, 1978). This makes sense if one considers the fact that individuals graduating from elite secondary institutions are more likely to move on to elite institutions to obtain a higher education (Bowles & Gintis, 1976). What is also evident is that students who obtain degrees from elite institutions are more likely to have higher-paying, executive-elite jobs.

Bowles and Gintis (1976) posit that social class is perpetuated intergenerationally. They found that the social class one enters school with is likely the social class he or she graduates with. To this, Dimaggio and Useem (1978) believe that one should expect that intergenerational cultural or social mobility is not likely to occur to great extents. That is to say, individuals coming from a family in poverty are not likely to move far beyond poverty themselves. Bourdieu's (1977) work with forms of capital also engages in the cultural reproductive theory that states inequalities in one's possession of cultural capital perpetuate inequalities in his or her social class (Kisida, Greene, & Bowen, 2014, p. 281). Therefore, the production of cultural capital and the possession or consumption of cultural capital is intertwined (Dimaggio & Useem, 1978). Cookson and Persell (1985) posit that although the affects of aesthetics (the arts) on the consciousness are unknown, it seems reasonable to hypothesize that the attendance at elite institutions impacts an individual's taste and cultural preferences.

In a study on social class and arts consumption, Dimaggio and Useem (1978) assert that once a social class has developed cultural preferences, it is up to individual socialization for one to collect higher cultural preferences. This acknowledges the fact that one's own taste and preferences do, in fact, have a part to play in his or her accumulation of cultural capital in the

form of the arts. Furthermore, the “adoption of artistic interests, tastes, standards, and activities associated with a social class helps establish an individual’s membership in that class” (Dimaggio & Useem, 1978, p. 143). One way in which this may be achieved is through educational exposure to high culture aesthetics; however, this only occurs in environments where the arts are valued in a students’ educative experience.

Here, the myth of merit (Oakes & Lipton, 1999) must be explored to better understand the way in which different students accumulate and consume cultural capital at different rates, thus creating the inequality in social classes that Bourdieu and others describe. The myth of merit suggests that if one works hard he or she will achieve what they aspire to; however, many years of research and empirical studies have refuted this fact. For example, Bowles and Gintis (1976) contend that education’s supposed purpose to give every individual an equal opportunity to achieve upward mobility through the attainment of knowledge is not accurate. In fact, the idea of meritocracy ignores and reduces a complicated system of social relationships that America’s capitalist society depends upon. These relationships are maintained through both the visible and hidden ways one may accumulate valuable forms of cultural capital.

Public schools are known to “track” their students: a system in which students are tested at an early age to determine what level courses they will precede with (Oakes, 1985). More often than not, students are not re-tracked at later stages in their educational careers, which perpetuates the concept that the social class in which one enters school is likely the social class in which he or she will graduate with (Bowles & Gintis, 1976). This is certainly the case with public schools where the more elite students are theoretically enrolled in the more difficult classes (Brantlinger, 2003). This causes the question: do private boarding schools also track their students? Because a student has to apply to attend a boarding school, one can assume that boarding schools only

accept the students who would dominate the higher tracks found in public institutions. This means that private schools need not implement formal conceptions of tracking because their student body has already been hand picked.

Despite the presence of tracking, students from both public and private schools benefit from the inclusion of arts in their curricula. Dimaggio and Useem (1978) suggest that disadvantaged students from lower social classes still benefit from the accumulation of cultural capital. A disadvantaged student and an advantaged student exposed to the same amount of institutionalized cultural capital will accumulate more capital at different rates because of their initial inequalities. It may be suggested that the inclusion of arts in school curricula serves to benefit elite students and perpetuates the reproductive tendencies in schooling, and this is why elite schools maintain the arts as essential to one's educative experience.

Pedagogical Approaches to the Production of Cultural Capital Through the Arts

Cookson and Persell (2010) claim a school's curriculum "is the nursery of culture" (p. 270). Bowles and Gintis (1976) support this sentiment:

The organization of education . . . has taken distinct characteristic forms in different periods of U.S. history, and has evolved in response to political and economic struggles associated with the process of capital accumulation, the extension of the wage-labor system, and the transition from an entrepreneurial to a corporate economy (p. 13).

Schools change to adapt to current social and cultural trends. Because of this, curricula include what the dominant culture deems valuable and important for students to learn. Dominant, hegemonic ideologies are the systems of beliefs that are maintained by the upper class of a society, put in place to manipulate the rest of the society. In America, hegemonic ideologies govern a persons' way of living. Because the dominant group in America is the rich, white

people, these are the people that maintain the systems of belief to manipulate those without power. In order to uphold their ideologies, the dominant group depends on the marginalization of those outside the dominant group. This means that those in power purposefully maintain distance between themselves and others. One way this occurs is through schooling.

Private schools in particular have been categorized as a *total institution* (Goffman, 1961). This is defined as a place that is “purportedly established the better to pursue some technical task and justifying themselves only on these instrumental grounds” (Goffman, 1961, p. 313). This means that all aspects of a student’s life are conducted in one place and under one authority, which creates a hyper-controlled environment. Another component of a total institution is that daily activities are often conducted in the company of large groups of people. In a boarding school, this means eating in dining halls, studying in libraries, going to class, and even pursuing extracurricular interests like clubs or sports. All the members of a boarding school are treated similar and held to the same standards despite each student being a person independent of those around them. In this way, boarding schools function to strip away large markers of personal uniqueness and identity in order to transmit unto individuals specific sets of values and beliefs.

Total institutions also strictly control every aspect of each member’s day: schedules are deliberately created and members must follow them punctually in order to succeed in said institution (Goffman, 1961). Furthermore, these institutions strictly manage each member’s days for a very specific purpose to “bring together parts of a single over-all rational plan purportedly designed to fulfill the official aims of the institution” (Goffman, 1961, p. 314). This means that boarding schools do everything with an acute awareness and extreme purpose.

By critically analyzing a mission statement from Groton School, Cookson and Persell (2010) were able to better understand how the abundant courses of a private, boarding school

contrast the traditionally lean course offerings of public institutions. The difference in curriculum in what classes, how many classes, and how often classes in the arts are offered in public versus private schools illustrates how the dichotomy between the classes plays out in schools through the attainment of valued cultural capital in the form of the arts. Cookson and Persell (2010) paid close attention to the fact that the differences in curricula between elite private institutions and the majority of U.S. schools is important to how the schools prepare students to “assume particular social roles” (Howard & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2010, p. 204). These differences in course content expand into the differences in how students are taught and also mirror the social order that exceeds schooling (Anyon, 1981).

The differences between public and private schooling despite them both being situated within elite communities and therefore being defined as elite schools are inarguable. By definition, public institutions have more restrictions on curriculum standards whereas private institutions have more freedom. This means that teachers at private institutions and private institutions themselves may choose to allocate their time and funds towards the arts to an extent that public schools cannot; however, it must be acknowledged that an individual’s own experience with cultural production such as the arts has the potential to open new perspectives on the world.

A school’s general purpose should be “to achieve some grasp of the full human experience,” which includes gaining the knowledge of cultural practices such as the arts (Barkan, 1962, p. 457). When schools leave out the arts from their curriculum, they create a void in the experience of their students. Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) observes the “cultural complexity within which artistic practices are situated and how particular conceptions of the arts often produce and justify unequal access and differential outcomes” (p. 214). This surfaces the

question: whom do the arts serve? If two students from two families, one upper-middle class and one lower class, attending the same school are exposed to cultural institutions simultaneously for the same amount of time, their accumulation of cultural capital will inevitably be unequal.

Interestingly, the curricula at boarding schools does not differ significantly from school to school, which solidifies the idea that private institutions have very distinct goals for their students (Cookson & Persell, 1985). While considering this notion, one may question how the arts are utilized in schools to enhance their goals.

Manuel Barkan (1968) questions what forces have impeded on arts instruction in schooling. As mentioned previously, the school system in America exists within reproductive forces to reinstate the social hierarchy of the context within which it is situated. This means that schools in rural areas have little interest in providing students with an arts curriculum because the culture within which the school exists does not call for such knowledge. If those in power of curriculum content are unaware of what the arts can do for students beyond cognitive functions, then the importance of the arts in schooling can easily be overlooked.

Arts have generally been perceived as unimportant in public school settings, where the money necessary to maintain a substantial arts curriculum may better serve the school and the students in other departments (Eisner, 1965). Additionally, it has been noted that art is seen as more emotionally beneficial than intellectually (Eisner, 1965). In general, thinking is cognitive and feeling is non-cognitive, which means subjects like the arts, which help with self expression, seem to have little to no place in the classroom (Efland, 2004). A traditional belief is that schools should produce students who can show the cognitive growth they've achieved through education. This is why public schools administer state-mandated, standardized tests to maintain necessary funding. If students cannot show via their test scores that their school has properly served them,

schools could potentially lose funding; however, one cannot test the arts in the same standardized way that math, science, and even English can be evaluated. This is why Elliot W. Eisner (1965) contends that the arts are not central to education because of “our pragmatic expectations for education” (p. 240).

Subjects like mathematics and the sciences can be proven to have a pragmatic function whereas the arts cannot. This is why there are several questions that are appropriate to be asked when thinking about what it is that the arts really *do* for students. Does this force us to ask if the arts are impractical? Do the arts do anything? While inconclusive studies have been conducted to see whether or not the arts do anything for students cognitively, it has been discovered that the arts help students improve social status through the attainment of advantaging forms of cultural capital (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). The arts have the ability to “transform the consciousness of an individual...and enhance individual experiences and perceptions of the world” (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013, p. 212). Are the arts in schooling about the process or are they about the product? Do students have to succeed in the arts in school or do they just need to be exposed?

The appreciation for the arts is trained (Dimaggio & Useem, 1978). This means that the pedagogical approaches that elite institutions undertake in emphasizing the arts are done with great purpose, to train their students to appreciate the arts and thereby accumulate more cultural capital. This calls into question, who has the access to said training? Who has the resources of time and money to properly obtain the training necessary to appreciate the arts? Although the answer is seemingly obvious, there are hidden aspects of curriculum functions that require attention. For example, in order to properly appreciate the arts, one must be able to think about

and talk about the arts, too. In order to obtain these skills students must learn what Dimaggio and Useem (1978) refer to as culture codes:

Individuals must learn to “read” a painting or a piece of music just as they must learn to read the printed word. Indeed, as Pierre Bourdieu notes, a work of art “only exists as such for a person who has the means to appropriate it, or in other words, to decipher it.” And, as with the printed word, individuals born or raised in visually or musically sophisticated families are greatly advantaged. (p. 149)

It becomes extremely clear that the training required to appreciate the arts is unequally distributed among social classes (Dimaggio & Useem, 1978).

The private school curriculum has an interest in providing students with a well-rounded education that extends beyond the classroom into electives, volunteer opportunities, independent study, and travel (Cookson & Persell, 1985). In expanding the scope of one’s education, elite schools “pass on culture [but also] increase their students’ competitive edge” (Cookson & Persell, 1985, p. 78). The facilities are better, classes have more breadth to them, and more likely than not the teachers have more training. All of these factors enhance the educational experiences of students, which increase the value of capital accumulated. Once the students at elite institutions have had high culture values instilled in them, they then have the capacity to pass on those values to their families in the future.

Another barrier that exists between social class and the ability to appreciate and understand the arts is in the context within which appreciation and understanding must be learned. The context in which the high arts are presented relates to the appreciation and understanding of the arts, and the context is most commonly familiar to those from high-class families (Dimaggio & Useem, 1978, p. 150). If students cannot afford to attend the elite

institutions that provide the proper context within which to accumulate cultural capital in the form of arts, then those students lose access and ability to attain upward mobility. Dimaggio and Useem (1978) explicitly state that the boundaries between social class and art appreciation exist beyond the relationship between the actual artwork and the viewer. In fact, there is somewhat of a triangular relationship between the artist, the art, and the audience (Sheridan-Rabideau, 2010). This triangular relationship depends on the artist's ability to communicate through art, the work of art's ability to display the artist's message, and the audience's ability to interpret and understand the work of art and/or the artist's message given the work's particular social and cultural context.

Appreciating and understanding the arts creates solidarity between classes. Those that appreciate and understand high culture art come from high status families, and their common knowledge and interest in the arts enhance their relationships. Dimaggio and Useem (1978) argue that there are two different types of class solidarity that occur: social and ideological cohesion. They define social cohesion as when members of the same class are brought together based on their common interests, as mentioned, and are able to form bonds and relationships that create networks. They define ideological cohesion as when members of the same class exhibit similar perspectives and values on social and political issues.

The solidarity that thereby exists between high status elites is both inclusive and exclusive. The relationships formed around common interests and values act to maintain social power and status, which legitimizes the privilege of elites. In this way, the relationships are inclusive to reach others of the same likeness; however, the solidarity fostered based on common interests in things such as the arts also excludes others. As discussed, not all individuals have equal access to the context in which one would learn how to appreciate and understand the arts.

Because of this, not everyone can accumulate and maintain an elite status. The line that is drawn between upper and lower classes must be constantly maintained and reaffirmed (Dimaggio & Useem, 1978).

As earlier noted, an individual's own taste and preference play roles in determining his or her rate of art consumption to a certain extent (Dimaggio & Useem, 1978). Although there are limitations to the ways in which those outside the upper class can accumulate cultural capital by way of the arts, it is possible for those in lower classes to seek out the arts as a way to assimilate into higher classes. What this means is that different forms of capital can be used to compensate for a lack of other forms. For example, if one lacks economic capital but wishes to gain acceptance into elite circles, he or she can accumulate enough social or cultural capital to do so (Dimaggio & Useem, 1978). A student attending a public school that allocates less funding to the arts than a private school can seek alternative means to acquire acceptance into elite circles, like taking classes to supplement school courses or going to museums or theatre shows.

Narrative Findings: The Purposeful Production of Cultural Consumers

The literature and findings in this project illuminate that the arts are for elites. Through access and exposure to the arts a student gains the ability to increase his or her position in society by accumulating valuable forms of cultural capital. This means that elite institutions do not solely care if their students can produce arts; rather, their interest lies in instilling the knowledge of the arts unto their students. What becomes important is not the ability of an individual to create the arts, but the accumulation of the knowledge, understanding, and value of aesthetics. Throughout this section the data presented will be used to emphasize three central themes that were discovered during research: *Not Just for Art's Sake, It Pays to Know*, and *Exposure Creates Consumers*. These themes organize the data in a way that illustrates how the inclusion of arts in elite curricula is done with purpose, and almost in excess, at private schools to help transmit high-culture values to their students to provide them with opportunities to accumulate valuable forms of cultural capital. What this reveals is that private schools can afford to give students access to the arts in ways that public schools cannot, which ultimately depends on the amount of money at private schools versus public schools. Ultimately, the data shows that an increase in exposure to the arts allows opportunities for students to consume highly valuable forms of cultural capital through the arts. This opportunity is one that students at public schools cannot access.

Each theme highlights the arts in regard to the cultural context of elite secondary schooling.⁶ Though the private schools and public schools in this study have many

⁶ Although each theme is equally as applicable to one school as it is to all of them, the narrative findings will not utilize data from **every** school under each theme. Much of the data is repetitive (i.e., the curriculum/course offerings are similar between all the private schools and between all of the public schools). Therefore, the findings from said data are already reflected in what will be

commonalities in how they provide access to the arts to their students, the schools in this project have different missions, facilities, curricular and extracurricular offerings, and special programming made available to their students.⁷ These differences ultimately impact the experience and exposure that students have with the arts in private schools and public schools; however, despite the commonalities and differences found, it is abundantly clear that private institutions are perceived to *have more*. Not only do private institutions have more, but what they have is thought of as *better*. This begins to beg the question: why?

Not Just for Art's Sake

Founded at the end of the 18th century during the height of the American Revolutionary War, Jefferson Academy is often considered to be the model for many elite institutions that emerged thereafter. Notable alumni include U.S. presidents, Olympians, bishops, scientists, actors, philanthropists, artists, CEOs, diplomats, Nobel Laureates, poets, and more. As Jefferson Academy's website states, "the fields of endeavor [pursued by graduates] are legion, the accomplishments endless." The liberal arts tradition that exists at the foundation of Jefferson Academy has allowed students and teachers alike to expand their understanding of community and the world around them.

Jefferson Academy has 300 courses, over 150 electives, and even opportunities for their students to pursue independent study projects. The depth and breadth of activities and experiences at Jefferson Academy appear endless due to its small, intimate community size.

Their motto, forged by Paul Revere, preaches *Non sibi*, which translates to "not for self." The

provided from either the private or public institution depicted under each theme. Each school will be included throughout the breadth of the narrative findings and represented as equally and as fairly as possible.

⁷ All data quoted and summarized in these sections was collected from the various schools' websites and documents that are publically accessible on each website. In order to uphold anonymity these websites cannot be cited directly.

hope of the Academy is that students will leave the school as global citizens, fully prepared to help and engage in communities around the world. The school's statement of purpose reflects their core values, which concentrate on the proper development of character:

The Academy is committed to establishing a community that encourages people of diverse backgrounds and beliefs to understand and respect one another... In its programs, the school seeks to promote a balance of leadership, cooperation, and service, together with a deeper awareness of the global community and the natural world.

The focus on character shows the school's desire to create well-rounded individuals that are challenged mentally, spiritually, and physically to "see beyond themselves and go beyond the familiar."

Upon the first encounter with Jefferson Academy's school website, visitors are greeted by a slideshow of photos in the center of the page. The photos are bright, sharp, and engaging. The students depicted are diverse in race and ethnicity, athletic-looking, and appear to be overjoyed with their respective activities. This slideshow currently features students engaged in civic service, an advertisement of the campus magazine, an article that highlights the school's "need-blind admission", successful student athletes, a promotion for this semester's student-theater performance, and lastly, an advertisement of works currently on show at the school's Museum of Art. Jefferson Academy's website is purposefully designed to reflect their statement of purpose, which preaches community involvement, academic excellence, creative engagement, leadership, and global awareness. The advertisements and features on rotation in the middle of the homepage touch on every aspect of student life on campus: civic service, admissions, athletics, and the arts.

Visitors can easily navigate the homepage of Jefferson Academy, which is clad in school colors and an elegantly scripted *Jefferson* lying transparently overtop of the school's seal. The top of the page divides the school's information into tabs, one of which is specifically designated for "The Arts." Once on this page, the welcoming paragraph proclaims: "the arts in all their forms are at the heart of Jefferson life." Not only does Jefferson Academy have various classes in different studio disciplines, but they also have theatre, dance, music, and art history. It becomes clear immediately that an abundant amount of resources have been allocated towards the arts at Jefferson Academy. The students have an opportunity to learn about art history, whether it be Egyptian tomb painting, Greek idealism, Byzantine mosaic, the Renaissance and the rebirth of classical culture, Fauvism, Expressionism, Cubism, or Contemporary. While the options here are abundant, this is only a partial list of what seems to be an endless selection of topics in art history. This is not an opportunity available at Jefferson High School, which is the public school just down the road. The students at the Academy are provided with the chance to contextualize art in the larger world in order to understand the ways the arts tie into culture, religion, community, communication, global affairs, and more.

Additionally, Jefferson Academy is home to a "world-class center for American art, [which] serves as an invaluable resource for students and teachers alike." As portrayed by their website, the arts at Jefferson Academy are clearly of great value and significance. The school's world-class art center gives the students physical, easy, and immediate access to a personal collection of art, which includes notable works from both American and international artists. The museum on campus is only a small portion of the arts facilities offered at Jefferson Academy. Students take courses in studios designated for specific mediums: ceramics, oil painting, drawing, photography, and computer labs outfitted with Mac products for graphic design. The

music and theatre departments have their own facilities that include practice rooms and performance halls. There are smaller exhibit spaces and places to conduct performances that also support the various clubs on campus. As stated on the school's website, Jefferson Academy has "made a commitment to the arts, providing the tools and facilities for students to thrive and explore their passion."

The school believes in creating well-rounded individuals and the insistence on the arts—from the inclusion of the museum and theatre on the homepage to the mention of the arts as the "heart" of Jefferson—illuminates the belief that in order to be a well-rounded citizen, a person must have knowledge of the arts. In contrast to Jefferson Academy, Jefferson High School seems to have less of an emphasis on the arts. Jefferson High School's website is simple and easy enough to navigate. When looking at the homepage of Jefferson High School, visitors are immediately confronted with a summary of the school's values and beliefs:

Jefferson High School is a nationally recognized school, committed to providing students with the knowledge, skills, and qualities necessary to be successful in a diverse society.

We provide an endless array of academic and extracurricular programs designed to meet the needs of every student and to prepare them for life in the 21st Century.

While Jefferson High School, similar to Jefferson Academy, focuses on the development of a student's character, the same emphasis on leadership, cooperation, and service that Jefferson Academy carefully includes in their mission lacks in that of the high school.

The website for Jefferson High School also organizes information into different tabs, and includes a specific one for "Jefferson Theatre Arts." Unlike Jefferson Academy, the Jefferson High School website does not designate a tab for the arts as whole. It may be that Jefferson High School chooses to provide the theatre arts with their own tab because that is the art form through

which the school has seen the most success from their students. This portion of Jefferson High School's website alludes to these successes by emphasizing that their program for theatre arts supports those students who wish to pursue the theatre arts beyond the high school level. Aside from the auditorium for performances, there is no special mention of arts facilities on the Jefferson High School webpage. The only clear indication that allows visitors to safely assume that the high school has arts facilities beyond the auditorium is through the offerings in the course catalogue. According to courses listed in the catalogue, visitors may infer that the school has the essentials when it comes to visual arts spaces: a multi-purpose studio, and a practice room for music and chorus. Additionally, because the course catalogue mentions ceramics classes, visitors that access this information can assume that Jefferson High School also has facilities and resources for this subject matter.

The core beliefs and values of Jefferson High School are outlined in depth on a page designated to the school's mission. These values and beliefs are not only geared towards academic prowess but also social and civic expectations; however, nowhere on this page does the school include a statement about the arts similar to that made on Jefferson Academy's website. While both Jefferson Academy and Jefferson High School ultimately hope to create students who are informed citizens, Jefferson Academy puts a particular emphasis on how this can be achieved through the arts.

Easton Academy, like Jefferson Academy, welcomes visitors to their website with a slideshow, which currently features a classroom of students as an advertisement for courses, students fulfilling civic duties while learning about social justice, and three student profiles that highlight a day in the life of different students around campus. Below this slide show, an announcement reads: "Easton Gallery hosts 'Graphic Advocacy: International Posters for the

Digital Age 2001-2012’.” This advertisement shows how Easton Academy seeks to find intersections between the arts, daily life, and education. In this case, the website communicates that Easton’s own gallery will be hosting a show dedicated to social justice as displayed through graphic posters. The choice to conduct important conversations about issues of social justice in consortium with the gallery’s show instead of independently in a classroom setting was done so deliberately.

The founder of Easton Academy and the founder of Jefferson Academy were related. It is believed that this familial relationship accounts for many of the similarities between the pedagogies of the two schools. Often, these two institutions are thought of as brother schools with similar, if not seemingly identical values, beliefs, and traditions. Easton Academy is diverse in its student body, like Jefferson Academy, and advertises this on their website by including students from different racial backgrounds in almost every photo. The school is credited for creating a particular method of teaching and learning through a discussion-based, student-run classroom setting: students and teachers sit together around an oval-shaped table to engage in discussion without the more typical student-teacher hierarchical experience often associated with traditional classroom setups. This style of teaching and learning places the focus on the students: the hope is that students will be motivated intrinsically to start, continue, and engage in discussions with their peers.

Easton Academy features the school’s mission underneath their “About” tab, which was “defined more than two centuries ago.” This statement proves that Easton Academy thrives on the long-standing traditions at their foundation. Most recently edited in 1991, the mission says that

Easton seeks to graduate young people **whose creativity and independence of thought** [emphasis added] sustain their continuing inquiry and reflection, whose interest in others and the world around them surpasses their self-concern, and whose passion for learning impels them beyond what they already know.

Easton Academy explicitly prioritizes the creativity of their students as imperative for their success beyond graduation. The Academy acknowledges how they challenge their students, and believes that the challenges they present to their students push them to engage more deeply with the world around them. In order to create a well-rounded student, the Academy aims to present students with challenges that will test their students academically and personally. The idea at the heart of Easton Academy is “to link goodness with knowledge, [develop] the consciences and [train] the minds of students so that they may usefully serve society.”

The top of Easton Academy’s home page features a tab specifically for the “Arts.” The first thing that confronts visitors on this page is an image that reads, “Insight and Inspiration.” The Academy advertises current exhibitions in their gallery, recent works from students in the visual arts, as well as upcoming performances from the theater and dance department. The photos featured in this rotating slide show are crisp, active, engaging, and colorful. Further down on the page is a list of past visiting artists and arts programming conducted by Easton Academy. The Academy is proud to provide a list of the kinds of people who come to speak specifically to their students. Not only does Easton Academy highlight their esteemed visitors, but they also feature student artists and performers to acknowledge their talents and successes. A carefully crafted slogan flashes across the page: “Lose yourself in the Arts. Find yourself at Easton.”

This slogan implies that while allowing students to experiment and create in the arts, Easton may have an alternative plan for their student artists and performers. Easton Academy

also emphasizes that the faculty in the arts department are practicing artists themselves. The Academy's website reflects the belief that students learning from true practitioners is a "paradigm [that] cultivates a creative environment where students make personal discoveries that are pivotal in their **intellectual development**" [emphasis added]. Visitors to this webpage have learned to associate practicing the arts with increasing one's intellect and his or her opportunity to succeed.

There is a stark contrast between the accessibility of Easton Academy's website and that of Easton High School. Easton High School's site is rigid and seems outdated. Though Easton High School organizes the information on their home page into tabs similar to the schools already mentioned, the tabs are minimal and serve more for functional purposes than for eye-catching advertising purposes. For example, one tab provides bus schedules and health forms while another provides the bell schedule and links for parents to gain access to student grades. There is no tab designated to the arts. In fact, finding information on the arts on the Easton High School web page is rather difficult. Under "Student Life," the school includes a tab for "Drama"; however, aside from this there is no explicit mention of the arts at Easton High School on their website. Under the "Drama" tab there is a photo of a production that took place in October of 2014: the page has not been updated since and there is no additional information beyond the photo, the year and the title of the production.

The course catalogue from Easton High School incorporates several studio arts, music, and drama courses. Although the school's website does not specifically mention any sort of arts-based facilities, one can assume that the school has the essential spaces needed to conduct the courses in their catalogue. These spaces may include a multi-purpose studio arts room, a ceramics room, and practice rooms for chorus and band. Because Easton High School

specifically mentions drama productions, one can assume that the school has a performance space, too.

Easton High School's core values include teaching students how to be respectful and responsible citizens that engage with the community and are active learners who reach for their highest potential. Their mission incorporates academic, social, and civic aspects. Easton High School pushes their students to "work independently and collaboratively; listen, read, and write effectively and critically; employ critical thinking, and problem solving; and develop and maintain the skills, competencies, and qualities to succeed interpersonally and professionally."

It Pays to Know

Arbon Academy is situated on a beautiful plot of New England land. The school's emphasis on tradition and excellence permeates through its 18th century buildings. Arbon Academy, founded in 1797, is a place where U.S. Congressmen, historians, bishops, screenwriters, novelists, actors, Ambassadors, and Kings have been shaped. Like those mentioned from Jefferson Academy, the prestige of individuals who graduate from Arbon Academy is spread across all walks of people with a myriad of interests: the alumni network spans around the world. Arbon Academy's school motto, "Be Worthy of Your Heritage," encourages students and alumni to take pride in and act in a way that reflects where he or she has come from, and the cultural traditions he or she has gained while at the school. The elite status of many graduates who have upheld Arbon Academy's motto in their life pursuits have found ample amounts of success and wealth. This, in part, contributes to the school's current endowment of \$532 million.

The homepage of Arbon Academy, like that of Jefferson Academy and Easton Academy, catches the eye with the use of vibrant school colors. Arbon Academy also features a crisp,

captivating slideshow depicting current students and various activities on their home page. The photos rotate from dance performances, soccer games, round discussion tables, and students walking through a snowy quad, talking, and laughing with one another. To the right of the slideshow is a bright down-bar directing individuals to the Arts, Humanities, and STEM. The school values these areas as necessary pillars of knowledge for all students that pass through the Academy.

Beneath the “Arts” tab, the website states, “Students find energy and inspiration in our studios, galleries, and classrooms.” Right away it becomes clear that Arbon Academy’s resources are abundantly available to and for the students. The Arts page makes it known that the arts at the Academy are of deep, purposeful emphasis:

The arts contribute greatly to campus life. From studio art classes, to photography, film & video, and advanced acting tutorials, **every Arbon student participates in the arts.**

Whether it’s music, dance, or design, **students gain energy and essential skills from the arts at Arbon.** [emphasis added]

Immediately, visitors to this site can assume the multitude of courses that must be offered in the arts at Arbon Academy. Additionally, the website proudly states that “art classes are taught by artists, [and] acting classes are taught by actors; the faculty is devoted to spreading their craft.” It is a unique experience offered by Arbon Academy and schools of its likeness to be a student learning from a practicing professional in his or her respective art form.

The course offerings do not stop at those listed in the snapshot advertisement on the arts page. Upon further inspection it is revealed that Arbon offers 50 different classes in the visual and performing arts—“each taught by a true practitioner.” These courses range from introductory levels to advanced classes designed for students who excel in the arts. Not only does Arbon

Academy's course catalogue for the arts match the average incorporation of the arts in schooling, but their abundance of resources has allowed them to expand their offerings to include courses like architectural design, studio production, music theory, improv, and advanced placement studio art.

One of the magnetic characteristics of Arbon Academy and the other private institutions in this study is that the opportunities for students as listed in the course catalogue are seemingly endless. Students have the chance to study beyond the basics of the studio. In contrast to Arbon Academy, Thomas Area High School has less course offerings and the facilities are inferior to the Academy's, providing students with a multi-purpose studio for painting, drawing, and mixed media, a ceramics studio, an auditorium, and music practice rooms. The facilities at Arbon Academy for the arts were renovated this past year: these changes and improvements cost the school \$24 million to complete.

The Arts Center at Arbon Academy houses teaching, practice, performance, and studio spaces. The existing auditorium expanded by 150 seats, which now allows the theatre to seat 800 people in the audience. This space not only acts as a stage for performance but also as a meeting place for the entire student body and faculty at Arbon Academy. Also included in the \$24 million renovation was a black box theatre, dance studios, and a fully outfitted, digital recording studio. With funding like this, students can virtually pursue the arts to whatever extent they choose and expect to be fully supported through the necessary resources, which include spaces, supplies, and faculty.

The Academy outlines the goals and expectations of classes in their course catalogue. Visitors can find the details for their Introduction to Studio Arts course online. They are as follows:

This course is intended to be a first experience in the visual arts. It prepares students for AP Studio Art by introducing the fundamentals of drawing and painting—line, form, composition, and color—through a variety of assignments involving the still life, perspective, and interior spaces. **A brief survey into 19th and 20th century art is included.** [emphasis added]

Even in a standard introduction to studio art, students at Arbon Academy gain knowledge beyond the creative aspect and process of the arts. The school provides students enrolled in studio arts courses an opportunity to learn about the historical context and tradition of creative expression. The importance of the arts to Arbon Academy beyond the practice of creative processes and an opportunity for self-expression is clear. Arbon Academy spends the money necessary to fund human and material resources in the arts to give their students the opportunity to explore personal creation while simultaneously accumulating cultural capital. This appears to be the circumstances that students find themselves in at the public schools previously mentioned as well as at Thomas Area High School, the public school that shares its quaint New England location with Arbon Academy.

Thomas Area High School provides students with some access to the arts; however, as formerly mentioned, the resources at the High School are inferior to those at Arbon Academy. The facilities at Thomas Area High School are similar to those at the other public schools in this study: there are music practice rooms as well as performance spaces, which include an auditorium that may also function as a theatre for the performing arts. Although a multi-purpose studio space is not specifically referenced on Thomas Area High School's website, just like with the other public schools, one can assume that some studio space for the visual arts exists due to the inclusion of studio arts courses in the school's course catalogue. Interestingly enough, the

course catalogue gives more insights as to what the school's arts facilities may be than any other materials on the website or materials that can be accessed through the website. For example, Thomas Area High School lists ceramics as a course offering; however, aside from the course catalogue there exists no indication that the High School includes a ceramics studio in its facilities.

Currently, the school's webpage includes an advertisement for their 7th Annual Music Telethon to help raise money for Thomas Area High School's music department. Though the home page for the school features this activity now this information was absent upon previous visits. Based on the photos chosen to advertise this event, it seems as though this activity receives participation and attendance from the whole community. What is important to note about the school's Music Telethon is its fundraising identity. Since that Thomas Area High School is not a private school, they do not have an endowment like Arbon Academy or the other private schools previously mentioned. Instead, their funding comes from state and local governments. As one might assume, the limitation of funding causes the school to cut the resources of certain programs. Often times, when this occurs, the arts are the first programs to be sacrificed because of their reliance on expensive materials.

Similar to Arbon Academy, Kennedy Academy allocates much of their endowment, time, and energy into their arts curriculum. In fact, Kennedy Academy is in the midst of renovating their arts center. The performance spaces and the visual arts spaces were previously separated on Kennedy Academy's campus; however, a recent donation of nearly \$10 million was given to put towards the improvement of several buildings on campus, including the Center for Arts. The art gallery currently standing at Kennedy Academy is outdated: the arts program at the Academy has outgrown the smaller spaces within the building, which include small-sized studios in the

basement. The current Center for Arts at Kennedy Academy began renovation in July of 2015 to be transformed into a state-of-the-art student community center. The art gallery and studio spaces will be moved to a separate building on campus. This move and renovation will enhance the conditions that the school's current collection of art exists in. Not only will the new space have climate-controlled storage areas to preserve the archival integrity of the school's permanent collection, but it will also include academic spaces for the arts. As explained on the Kennedy Academy webpage, the studios will expand beyond their current size and their new location will "provide proximity to nearby facilities, including the woodshop and 3-D printer located in the Center for Mathematics and Science. Ultimately, an arts walk will connect the School's visual arts, theatre, dance, and music programs within the academic quad." Without the donations gifted to the school by several different donor families, the Kennedy Academy would not be able to renovate the center for the arts, which would consequently render them unable to provide students with a community center and a new, better-suited, larger building for the arts.

As implied by the expansion of the arts center, Kennedy Academy deeply values the arts. Founded in the mid 19th century, the Academy has maintained intimate class sizes within a small community that serves less than 600 students. Like the other private schools mentioned, Kennedy Academy has graduated notable alumni who have chased fulfilling careers in professional athletics, government, crime, medicine, writing, entrepreneurship, theatre, and many other areas. The resources made available to the students, historically and currently by the school's \$573 million endowment, have allowed and continue to allow the students to satiate their curiosities and creative needs to the fullest extent.

The homepage of the Kennedy Academy welcomes visitors exactly like that of Jefferson, Easton, and Arbon Academies. The page contains a slideshow, which currently rotates between

campus photos, students conducting service projects in foreign countries, proud athletes, and laughing students in the library. The homepage also features specific students engaged in activities like spinning a basketball, shooting a camera, and playing the violin. The photos of these students are accompanied by quotes. A young girl holding a violin says, “Kennedy Academy is a place where you can find who you truly are. There are so many opportunities available and supportive teachers who can help find what you love.” As implied by her not-so-candid photo, this student has found part of herself and something she loves through music.

Just as the other schools in this study, the Kennedy Academy organizes their website with tabs at the top of the homepage. When a visitor chooses to explore the tab designated for the arts, the arts webpage notes that the arts curriculum at the Academy will “push students to their boundaries and challenge them holistically.” This emphasizes the school’s belief that the arts are not just for creative production, but also work to create a whole, well-rounded student. The teachers conducting courses in the arts are listed as accomplished performers, artists, and scholars, and are expected to continue their own creative pursuits while teaching. In addition to the offerings listed, students who feel the need to study beyond the distinguished classes can enroll in independent study projects to fulfill their desires. Kennedy Academy makes a strong commitment to the arts, which can be seen in their willingness and choice to allocate significant funds towards the arts.

The resources made available to students at Kennedy Academy give them the option to study studio arts, dance, theatre, and music. In the arts curricula, students may also pursue art history, though most lower-level arts courses are supplemented with art history throughout the duration of the class. The Kennedy Academy identifies the power that knowledge of the arts can provide an individual and they instill that power unto their students with purpose. The courses

and opportunities offered in the arts at the Academy range from introductory courses in fine arts, dance, and theatre, to furniture design, stained glass, web design, architectural concepts, modern dance, music theory, and stage makeup and design. The breadth and depth of these courses are a reflection of the resources the school has allocated towards developing their programs for the arts. According to their arts page, while selecting to study courses in the studio arts students are urged to supplement their classes with art history courses to gain a broader understanding of art. Additionally, all students at Kennedy Academy are encouraged and expected to continue studying the arts beyond their graduation requirement of one year worth of credits in the arts.

The local high school only five miles away from Kennedy Academy is West Region High School. Founded in the mid 19th century, West Region High School has maintained their school motto of “*Scientia, Concordia, Sapientia*,” which translates to “Knowledge, Harmony, and Wisdom” over time. As an institution, West Region High School has relocated several times within their city, and although their relocation gave them an opportunity to recreate the school from the beginning, the school’s website does not note any significant or special features added to their arts facilities upon their most recent relocation. Though, one should note that upon a further investigation into the course catalogue it appears that West Region High School provides students with more opportunities to engage with the visual arts than the other public schools previously mentioned.

The school is outfitted with multi-purpose studios for the visual arts such as painting, basic print-making, drawing, and other two-dimensional art-forms. The course description for the introductory level visual art course titled “color and design” reads as follows:

Color and Design is an introductory level course designed to develop visual problem-solving skills and an understanding of the elements and principles of design. This course

provides the foundation of vocabulary and concepts for further studies in art. A variety of media and processes will be explored, such as drawing, painting, ceramics, printmaking, sculpture, and metals. **Art and design history are incorporated into course assignments.** [emphasis added]

This course description of an introductory level class is the only one of its kind from the public schools already mentioned. West Region High School has been the only public school in this study to specifically note the inclusion of art history in an introductory level visual arts course. Despite the opportunity the school gives students to understand the visual arts in the context of history and the fact that West Region High School encourages students to engage in the arts, the students are still only required to take a half-year worth of credit hours in the arts. While West Region High School can be seen as an example of a public school that recognizes the importance and value in the arts, they may not have the resources to provide the same type of seemingly unlimited access to the arts as the private schools do.

As mentioned before, the private schools have the resources necessary to support students in their artistic pursuits to the fullest extent. As if the preexisting course offerings are not plentiful enough, all of the private schools in this study offer their students the option to create an independent study in the arts. This is an opportunity exclusively allotted to the students at the private schools. Public schools do not have the type of resources in terms of teachers as well as material resources to put towards the desires of individual students. While West Region High School gives their students the option to enroll in unique classes like metal-working and jewelry making I & II, housing & interior design. This is not the general opportunity accessible to all students attending the other public schools in this study. Another important factor to consider may be the fact that not all courses in the course catalogue are offered at once, so while the

options may seem varied based on the course catalogue, this may not be an accurate representation of the courses conducted throughout the year. This can be said for both the private schools and the public schools. Ultimately, each school only has so many teachers in the art department, and the courses that run from semester to semester are thereby largely dependent on how many students enroll in which courses.

All eight schools included in this study offer extracurricular activities to the students. At each school the extracurricular offerings range from athletics, volunteer work, and language clubs, to video game clubs, a cappella groups, and art clubs. At West Region High School, students are strongly encouraged to participate in after school activities; however, access to such activities is limited to students at West Region High School and the other public high schools in this study in more than one way. At the boarding schools, many of the students live on campus, allowing them to easily navigate to and from buildings, which gives them the opportunity to commit to multiple responsibilities, without worrying whether or not they can get to or from the campus to participate in whichever activities they choose. Moreover, teachers at the private boarding schools in this study are required in their contracts to participate on campus as a “triple threat.”⁸ This means that it is mandatory for faculty to be dorm parents, teachers, and coach two seasons of athletics or the equivalent of. The equivalent of coaching two seasons of athletics includes supervising extracurricular activities, like clubs. At the public schools, this is not the expectation, nor is it required of teachers. Not only are clubs limited at the public school based on the funding allocated towards or independently raised by clubs, but student participation is also limited and restricted based on whether or not students, specifically underclassmen without their own car or license, can get a ride to the school or home to participate in afterschool

⁸ The term “triple threat” is used on every private school website to describe the type of involvement the schools expect from their faculty members on campus.

activities. For example: if an art club wanted to visit a museum together after school they would have to figure out transportation. Do they fund raise for a bus? Do they rely on parents being available to drive them? Furthermore, as already briefly mentioned, teachers at public schools are not required to dedicate any of their after school time to additional activities at the school, which means many clubs have to rely on the availability of a faculty supervisor or find supervision elsewhere.

Exposure Creates Consumers

Ultimately, the private schools in this study choose to allocate an abundant amount of their fiscal resources towards the arts. This is not without reason. As Arbon Academy states, the arts help students “unlock a new way of thinking.” This is why the Arbon, Jefferson, Easton and Kennedy Academies each have their own permanent collections of art made accessible primarily to students, but also to the public. Having one’s own collection of esteemed American and international art not only allows students direct access to the items in the school’s permanent collection, but also provides them with firsthand engagement with artifacts and works. This opportunity allows students to experience the art up close and personal: although students are still able to analyze art from photographs online and in textbooks, nothing can imitate the impact of the physical presence of art that was created well before one’s own time and within various different social, political, and cultural contexts. This physical contact with the art motivates and permits students to draw connections from the works of art to larger social, political, cultural, and economic ideas that affect and inform human experiences around the world.

Jefferson Academy and the other private schools in this study make specific, deliberate efforts to intertwine classroom experiences with ones in their museums and galleries. These efforts are even made in classes outside of the art department. The private schools mentioned

encourage professors from all disciplines to make trips to the schools' permanent collections of art so that students can see how art is more than a creative process, but that it also carries greater implications. Of their personal collection and museum of art, Jefferson Academy's website notes that they are "dedicated to educating and enriching its student community while also serving as a resource to the general public." Here, it is seen that the private schools open their doors to the arts for members of their respective communities, giving community members access to the arts where there otherwise may have been none.

Like the art departments at the other private schools, Jefferson Academy advertises online that they bring visiting artists and scholars to campus to speak to students and the community. This gives the community and the students an opportunity to hear firsthand from the artists and scholars about the importance and relevance of art to other subjects. For example, the gallery currently hosts a show titled "Walls and Beams, Rooms and Dreams: Images of Home," which features pieces centered around a common theme of "Home." The gallery has pulled from their own collection of both historic and contemporary photographs, prints, paintings, and drawings to present the various ways humans construct the concept of a "house" and a "home" in America. The exhibition explores how the "house" and "home" are inhabited and how Americans connect and relate to these ideas given their own experiences and identities.

Inspired by this theme of house and home, Jefferson Academy was motivated by their museum to invite members of Getaway to discuss their work concerned with building rentable, environmentally conscious, tiny houses.⁹ This is an example of how Jefferson utilizes their permanent collection to presents students and community members with the opportunity to

⁹ A startup dedicated to providing customers with anything and everything he or she may need to take a break from daily routines. The central concerns of this service are inner-balance and environmental awareness. Learn more about Getaway by visiting www.getaway.house.

attend lectures that serve to create a link between contemporary concerns (e.g., environmentally conscious living and building) and both historical and contemporary art. In doing so, the Academy manages to instill in its students that the arts serve a greater purpose for them beyond personal, creative expression.

Similarly, Arbon Academy takes pride in their gallery space, which is “used by the school community to foster **multidisciplinary collaboration** [emphasis added] and to be a place of active learning.” The school expects classes outside of the arts to utilize the gallery as a learning resource where there can be a “dynamic interaction between the works of art exhibited and themes in [Arbon’s] curriculum.” The gallery is thereby seen as a learning, educational space, where the access and exposure to art works contributes to a student’s multifaceted learning experience at Arbon Academy. Similar to the museum at Jefferson Academy, the gallery at Arbon Academy serves the students on campus as well as the surrounding community and general public. Currently, Arbon Academy’s gallery recently hosted an exhibition called *Question Bridge: Black Males*. This exhibition included a “five-channel video installation that aims to represent and redefine black male identity in America.” The school presented this video to students in conjunction with their celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day. By including the screening of this video artwork, Arbon Academy shows one way that they create avenues through the arts where students and the community can learn about concepts and topics culturally relevant in today’s society. Additionally, the school advertises that

Question Bridge has embarked on a campaign of getting 200,000 black males to add their voices through the *Question Bridge* website and mobile app by summer 2016. Arbon Academy will contribute to this by hosting sessions during which anyone can come to

sign up on the *Question Bridge* app to have voices from our communities become a part of the national dialogue on questions raised in the video exhibition.

In generation involvement in the *Question Bridge* campaign from students and the community, Arbon Academy shows an effort to increase the arts knowledge of the people of Arbon by giving community members a special opportunity to engage with works so personally that they may even contribute.

Easton Academy awards their students and community with the same type of exposure to the arts. The gallery at Easton Academy also sees their space as “an exhibition and teaching space, which through exhibitions and programs, seeks to create an appreciation for the visual arts and to **integrate the visual arts into the curriculum of Easton Academy**,” [emphasis added].

The idea and sentiment behind fusing an exhibition and teaching space is common amongst all of the private schools in this study. An upcoming event at Easton Academy will provide students with the unique opportunity to eat lunch with a famed, contemporary artist. The school’s gallery currently shows a digital documentary project titled *The Geography of Poverty*, in which the artist “combines geotagged photographs with census data to create a modern portrait of poverty in the US.” The same idea is echoed at the Kennedy Academy, whose collection, though smaller than the other three schools, serves the same, interdisciplinary and educational purpose. Jefferson Academy’s webpage says it best: “the buildings and facilities are here, but it's the students that make them come to life:” the private schools provide their students with an incredibly amount of resources and put faith on the intellect, interest, and motivation of their students to draw the necessary connections between obtaining a knowledge of the arts and obtaining an elite status.

West Region High School is the only public school that specifically mentioned the additional opportunity for students to engage in and gain exposure to the arts outside of school

and within the community. The school's homepage is aesthetically pleasing and easy enough to navigate. Just like the other schools, the top of the page is split up into several tabs. Under a tab titled "Student Life," West Region High School gives visitors the option to click on a sub-heading for the "Arts." The arts page for West Region High School redirects visitors to a general arts page for the entire Pickering school district.¹⁰

The general district arts page welcomes visitors with a slide show of student work. If a visitor were to sit and watch the slide show long enough, he or she would notice that student work ranges from kindergarten all the way through high school projects. The page says, "The art department faculty is committed to ensuring that students have access to a varied and rich curriculum that fosters creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving skills." The district's commitment to exposing students to the arts can be seen on this page in their efforts to create a website dedicated to faculty introductions, extracurricular activities, additional arts programming schedules, and the organization of district-wide projects. For the Pickering School District, the arts appear to be something that the community congregates around, which is emphasized on the website: "as a district we have come together to create art pieces that the community can enjoy." Some of these projects have included murals on mall wall faces, and painting the underside of a canopy at a local farm. While these types of pursuits are not as esteemed as those that occur at the private schools, West Region High School still acknowledges the importance of these projects to the community.

All four private schools in this study require their students to complete a year worth of credit hours in the arts. This is in contrast with the public schools that only require students to complete half a year worth of credit hours in the arts. As described earlier, the private schools

¹⁰ West Region High School (as well as Kennedy Academy) are located in Pickering

not only offer students more classes in the arts, but they offer classes that are specialized and unique. For example, Kennedy Academy offers stained glass, and Arbon Academy has a recording studio for their extremely advanced music composition courses. Access to resources such as these is extremely restricted at public schools because public schools do not have the types of funds necessary to purchase similar facilities and afford similar human resources as those at the private institutions. Because of this lack of wealth, public schools experience a lack of resources, which consequently causes a lack of access and exposure to the arts.

It is additionally important to note that Jefferson, Easton, Arbon and Kennedy Academies each display rhetoric on their website in support of students continuing their pursuit of the arts beyond graduation requirements. Furthermore, the students that do not choose to continue the arts during their time at the private schools still gain exposure to art history themes and ideas from the introductory visual arts courses, which provide them with larger social and cultural contexts for the arts as well as a sense of tradition. This means that these private, elite institutions acknowledge that the arts are for more than expressing one's own creativity. These schools have been motivated by decades of successful, elite alumni who have given great fiscal support back to their alma maters to help maintain and increase access, exposure, and experiences for the students with the arts.

Discussion: The Arts and Reproduction

The excess in arts resources at the private schools in this study displays each school's intention to provide their students access to an exorbitant amount of opportunities to accumulate highly valued forms of cultural capital. As defined earlier in this project, cultural capital exists in three forms: embodied, objectified, and institutionalized (Bourdieu, 1986). While embodied cultural capital certainly impacts one's accumulation of advantaging forms of cultural capital through the preexistence of his or her inherent cultural capital, institutionalized and objectified forms of cultural capital propel this research further and motivate this discussion.¹¹

The implementation of the arts at the schools in this study—especially the private schools—shows the high value of institutionalized cultural capital; however, the value is either lesser or greater depending on whether or not one cultural capital is accumulated in the context of a public or private school. Institutionalized cultural capital can be gained by obtaining a degree, or another form of official recognition from an institution that reflects an individual's academic credentials or qualifications (Bourdieu, 1986). For example, if a student were to obtain a high school degree from Easton Academy or Easton High School he or she would possess institutionalized cultural capital; however, the value of said capital at a public institution is not equal to that obtained at a private school (Lewis & Wanner, 1979). In order to graduate from high school students have to accumulate a certain amount of capital through the process of learning; however, this form of cultural capital can be increased at greater rates through more exposure to institutions like galleries and museums. Lewis and Wanner (1979) refer to this relationship as the process of *status attainment*. Students who graduate from an elite private

¹¹ Embodied cultural capital is cultural capital that is both consciously acquired and passively inherited properties of the self. To learn more in depth about this concept refer to Pierre Bourdieu's *The Forms of Cultural Capital*, 1986.

school like Easton Academy have an opportunity to obtain a greater and more valuable form of institutionalized cultural capital than students who graduate with a diploma from a public school like Easton High School. This gives students at private schools an increased opportunity to attain a higher status. This begs the question: why?

There are several factors that have been displayed throughout the course of this study that illuminate why the difference between the values of institutionalized cultural capital between Easton Academy and Easton High School exists.¹² First and foremost is the sense of tradition inherent in Easton Academy and the other private schools previously discussed. Easton Academy was founded in 1781, whereas Easton High School was founded in 1954. The fact that Easton Academy was founded less than a decade after America itself in 1776 speaks towards the Puritan heritage that runs through the roots of the school. From the moment of its creation, Easton Academy's founding principals, beliefs, and values were derived from a distinct tradition. In contrast, Easton High School was founded in relatively contemporary times, which means the school does not have the same deeply defined conventions that guide their philosophies and methods of teaching. This is an illustration of the ways traditions are perpetuated in society by those in power. In America, power has always belonged to rich, white males. Since power dynamics have not shifted over time, neither have the hegemonic ideologies that defined the arts as a highly valuable form of cultural capital over 300 years ago. Because of Easton Academy's long-standing existence as one of the first boarding schools to be cultivated in America, it is

¹² It must be noted that the difference between the values of institutionalized cultural capital obtained from Easton Academy and Easton High School can be applied to all of the private and public school relationships in this study. For the sake of brevity, not all schools will be used to make each point; however, the concepts discussed will be applicable across all private schools and all public schools in this study unless otherwise addressed.

widely known and acknowledged as one of the most premier places to earn one's high school diploma.

Easton High School does not have this same reputation; however, the public school does benefit from sharing the name "Easton" with the academy. Similar to Easton Academy and Easton High School in their shared name, Jefferson High School benefits from sharing "Jefferson" with Jefferson Academy. When someone shortens the Academy's name or the High School's name, he or she may shorten it to just "Jefferson." In daily conversation the utterance of the name "Jefferson" (and "Easton") often triggers an immediate association to Jefferson Academy. This speaks towards the difference in the value between the institutionalized cultural capital students accumulate at a well-known private school versus a little-known public school. This is important to this study because it shows the reputation that private schools must uphold. Therefore, this difference in value reflects one reason why private school's must allocate their funds towards resources that can provide students an opportunity to accumulate valuable forms of cultural capital: in order to maintain the gap between the upper and lower classes of society, private schools must give their students opportunities that others do not have (Dimaggio & Useem, 1978).

Another example of the institutionalized capital accumulated at a private school versus a public school is reflected in the types of positions held in the labor market by alumni. As previously noted, Jefferson Academy has graduated many students who have moved on to become national leaders, professional athletes, Nobel Prize winners, famous philanthropists, influential activists, and more.¹³ Just the pure fact that an individual has graduated from Jefferson Academy earns him or her an assumed elite status from others. Is this all because of a name?

¹³ Refer to p.47 of this project for a more extensive list of examples.

Perhaps. The name Jefferson Academy cannot be said without an immediate association with prestige, talent, academic rigor, athletic excellence, and artistic knowledge. The success of alumni from Jefferson Academy has reified the school's reputation as one of the most, if not the most, outstanding high schools in the nation. This is because of the access allotted to students to pursue almost any opportunity available. As illustrated by the findings, the increased access to opportunity in private schools is particularly heightened when it comes to the arts.

Cookson and Persell (2010) note that in order to maintain the extreme social stratification in American culture and society, elite schools are expected to increase student access to clubs, extracurricular activities, special programming, and experiences with the arts. This is exactly what Jefferson Academy has done with their ability to offer students over 150 electives. This exists as just one more specific example of the increased value of institutionalized cultural capital to be accumulated at private schools versus public schools. The limitations that occur for public school students in regard to one's ability to participate in certain after school programs go beyond a student's ability to get to and from the school once regularly scheduled bus has departed at the end of the day. In some instances, like at Thomas Area High School, students have to pay a certain amount of money to participate in certain extracurricular activities. For example, Thomas Area High School has a jazz band; however, in order to participate in this band, students have to pay a fee for the semester.

It is important to emphasize that not all public schools have the ability to offer students the same types of after school experiences. Easton High School lists "Clubs" as a subsection under their "Student Life" tab on their home page. After clicking on "Clubs" a new page loads warning the visitors that "not all clubs are offered each year." Just like classes depend on the availability of and access to various resources, so do the clubs. The factors and limitations in

regard to accessing the arts in extracurricular environments as a way to supplement a student's experience and exposure to the arts in a classroom setting are deeply affected by whether he or she is enrolled in a public or private school.

Just as with institutionalized cultural capital at private versus public schools, the same is true of objectified cultural capital: at private schools, students have the opportunity to accumulate more valuable forms of this type of cultural capital. This opportunity relied on how much access a student has to certain resources—in this case, the arts. Objectified cultural capital, as previously defined in this project is accumulated through the possession of physical objects (Bourdieu, 1986). While objectified cultural capital can be physically possessed, it can also be symbolically consumed. As discussed in depth earlier, the private schools in this project each have their own private collections of prominent works of art. This is not a coincidence, but instead it is a conscious, deliberate decision made by the private schools to purchase art and build world-class facilities. This comes at no small cost. The private institutions have to compete with one another to attract high-achieving and highly motivated students to attend their schools. This means that these institutions need to have, at the very least, similar if not the same types of features on their campus in terms of course offerings, athletics, extracurricular activities, and access to the arts.

As Dimaggio and Useem (1978) assert, the arts in education serve to maintain distance between the elites and lower classes. Research has suggested that increasing the inclusion of the arts in curricula provides private schools with a way to maintain legitimacy among elites (Bowles and Gintis, 1976). Because public schools lack the funding required to allocate money towards disciplines that do not display cognitive output and serve obviously pragmatic purposes, they cannot work towards shrinking the gap between elites and non-elites in the context of

American schooling. The private institutions acknowledge that acquiring culture through the arts is a way to ensure elite upward mobility and one's continued elite status. For example, as revealed in the findings, the private schools spend time deliberately advertising their arts resources. Without equitable resources to those at private institutions, public schools do not even have the option to provide students with the same opportunities.

This project has revealed that the accumulation of advantaging forms of cultural capital through the arts depends on access, and access depends on resources, which depend on money. The rate at which private schools consume the arts—physical access to the arts, receiving knowledge of the arts, and gaining the ability to talk about the arts—has reified the arts as essential towards achieving an elite status. Even the private schools in this study with smaller galleries and collections, like Arbon Academy and Kennedy Academy, have recognized the value of investing in notable works of art. Beyond their own physical possession of works created by famous artists, Arbon Academy and Kennedy Academy list the museums closest to their schools, which are claimed as frequently visited and utilized on school trips. From their inclusion of this information, it can be assumed that even if these Academies did not have their own permanent collections, then they would still make the effort to provide their students with as much exposure to the arts as possible. Why might this be so? As previously discussed the arts are not seen as intellectually beneficial because there is not clear way to measure whether or not the arts increase a student's cognitive output (Eisner, 1965). Because public schools often have to perform to high standards to maintain funding, funds are allocated to those subjects that can prove the high achievement of students. Since an appreciation for the arts is trained, students at public schools that have a decreased opportunity to access such training will presumably lack an appreciation for the arts (Dimaggio & Useem, 1978).

While all of the private schools in this study share the commonality of owning works of art—which contributes to their possession and value of their objectified cultural capital and consequently allows them to impart said value of owning and understanding artwork unto their students—the private schools additionally provide students with the opportunity to symbolically consume objectified cultural capital. The concept of the symbolic consumption of objectified cultural capital exemplifies the way that the accumulation of elite status can take on an invisible nature (Gaztambide-Fernández & Howard, 2012). This can be illustrated in the private institutions' efforts to integrate their permanent collections with ideas and concepts being taught inside classrooms. In order to consume objectified cultural capital, a student (or school) must do more than own a painting: he or she (or the school) must understand the art in its social and cultural context and be able to apply this knowledge to larger concepts and themes that are learned in the classrooms. Art is not just for aesthetic pleasure: it tells viewers something particular about the cultural and social contexts within which the work was created.

An interesting example of this effort comes from the Kennedy Academy and Arbon Academy where the students take humanities courses instead of English courses. On the school's website, information is given about the humanities requirement. The school identifies the humanities curriculum as interdisciplinary with the purpose to challenge students to make connections “across traditional boundaries.” The school's humanities webpage emphasizes that students may achieve this pursuit in a number of ways, one of which could be delving into the arts. The interdisciplinary aspect of the humanities curriculum—as well as the general hope for all curricula at private schools to be interdisciplinary—may be a nuanced way for the private institutions to administer a hidden curriculum with very specific goals and purposes in mind.

The agenda of the hidden curriculum is illustrated in several places on the school websites and within the materials accessible through the websites. Most prominently displayed on the private school websites are language and rhetoric that almost over emphasizes the inclusion of the arts at these schools. In support of participation in the arts, Kennedy Academy includes the following passage on their site:

Initially solitary and ultimately public, the arts involve the whole person and address the whole community **Recognizing that a regular exposure to the arts has always had a powerful and liberating influence in the world** [emphasis added], the Fine Arts, Theatre, Dance and Music Programs offer students a variety of studio and performance-based classes, courses in the history and theory of the arts, and **frequent exposure** [emphasis added] to a diverse group of visiting artists and performers.

Kennedy Academy, just like Jefferson, Easton, and Arbon Academies, had an undeniable awareness of the need to expose students to the arts as often as possible. All of the private schools included in this study display this awareness through their choice to allocate funding towards providing students with an incredible amount of resources in the arts. Not only do these schools spend exorbitant amounts of money to grow their personal collections of famed artworks, but they also build extravagant, expensive arts centers fit with facilities that public schools could only dream of.

The types of facilities and physical works of arts that students at private schools are exposed to inevitably have an unconscious affect on students. Furthermore, as previously mentioned, the private schools in this study require at least a whole year of arts courses in order for students to graduate. Once a student has completed these courses, the private schools urge them to continue pursuing the arts. To re-emphasize, this is in contrast with the half-year

requirement from the public schools. Through a student's exposure to the arts, these academies are creating what has been referred to as "cultural consumers" (Kisida, Greene, & Bowen, 2014). It has been acknowledged that the more frequently students are exposed to the arts, the more likely they are to seek out the arts on their own and consequently become a very active, self-motivated cultural consumer. The increased access to the arts as a highly valuable form of cultural capital provided by elite, private institutions gives students the opportunity to become consumers and acquire capital.

This capital and how private schools bestow it unto students occurs in very particular environments that are entirely dictated and controlled by the institutions (Goffman, 1961). The schools decide the graduation requirements, the course offerings, which clubs to approve, the facilities to add to or renovate on campus, and much more. The environment in which young adults grow and learn in during their high school years is controlled to such an extent that the students may not even realize it (Cookson & Persell, 2010). One of the most important aspects of a total institution is that the environment of these institutions is controlled to such a severe extend in order to maintain and achieve specific goals (Goffman, 1961). This allows the implication to be made that each thing incorporated into the daily lives of students at boarding schools is done so to accomplish certain goals and to have their students attain specific knowledge. As included earlier, Easton Academy had a particularly illuminating quote included on their Arts webpage that read "Lose yourself in the Arts. Find yourself at Easton." This quote suggests that the two actions are interdependent: in order for a student to find his or her self at Easton Academy, they must also sacrifice a piece of themselves in the arts. Through the abundant courses offered in the arts within the course catalogue at Easton Academy, we can

assume that students can achieve this goal through gaining knowledge of the arts or through physical creation.

Since all of the data collected in this project was accessed online, it is clear that the school websites provide information on the Internet with the anticipation of viewers. How does this change the way one should view the information provided on the web pages? This is an example of a way in which private schools control how others perceive them. The schools have created their websites mindfully. Is it a coincidence that the private school websites were noticeably more elaborate and eye-catching than those from the public schools? What the schools are putting online indicates how the schools may wish to be viewed by those who visit their websites. It is just happenstance that the arts information included by the public schools is almost solely included in the course catalogue, while the private schools flaunt their million dollar renovations to art facilities and their possession of famed works? The private school sites are colorful, active with photos of student life and academic engagement, and filled with abundant amounts of information. Website visitors have the opportunity to go through absolutely everything in regard to these private schools. It is not until students choose to survey application materials that they are confronted with fees and projected tuition costs. Because the private schools cost money for students to attend the schools must market themselves to prospective students and the parents of prospective students in such a way that makes others believe that the experience offered at schools like Jefferson, Easton, Arbon and Kennedy Academies is one that they would otherwise not have access to.

As illustrated in several of the mission statements and statements of purposes included in the findings of this project, the schools share the common interest in creating well-prepared, successful, global citizens; however, what does this mean? As Lewis and Wanner (1979)

propose, elite institutions are preparing their students in such a way that purposefully transmits the accepted behaviors and qualities of the high culture. This function of secondary, elite, private institutions continues to echo the sentiments, beliefs, and values from the foundation of American culture and society. Being that education in the United States was first developed for elites and that some of the first institutions in the country were founded shortly thereafter, one may say that the Puritan conventions so cherished by the country's forefathers became ingrained in the foundation of such schools and have remained as tradition. On their statement of purpose page, Easton Academy acknowledges that the school's mission and core values have not altered drastically since the initial cultivation of the Academy, though they have been most recently updated in the 1990s. This is just one piece of evidence in regard to the unwavering priorities of the elite schools in this study. Another way in which this is seen is through the consistency in the previously noted successes that alumni achieve later in life. This illustrates how private institutions work to reinforce society's preexisting division of labor (Giroux, 1983).

Conclusion: Elites Serve the Arts

Findings of this study suggest that the arts primarily serve the elites; however, I argue that a symbiotic relationship exists between the arts and elite culture and individuals. While the arts serve the elites to aid high-status individuals in the accumulation of advantaging forms of cultural capital, which aid in maintaining preexisting social and cultural hierarchies, the elites serve the arts as a vehicle through which tradition is perpetuated. The arts also serve individuals who wish to acquire an elite status through gaining cultural knowledge that helps them achieve some degree of upward social mobility.

The rate at which elite cultures consume the arts is incredibly high; therefore, the arts are able to preserve their own significance and reputation as a high-status form of valuable cultural capital while simultaneously permitting the elites to feed off their institutionalization and objectification. This is seen at each private school with their explicit inclusion of information in regards to their arts programming, facilities, extracurricular opportunities, and preexisting student pursuits in the arts. Additionally, private schools consciously take advantage of their fiscal resources by purchasing notable works of art. Because it is known that art is an expensive commodity, the specific mention of a private school's possession of famed works implicitly asks others to draw a link between the private institution, their wealth, and an elite status.

As noted, the reproductive forces of American schools acts to reify preexisting social hierarchies (Bowles & Gintis, 1976). This is exactly why private schools provide students with access to opportunities that public school students do not and cannot. If private schools are able to widen the gap between their elite selves and non-elite others by spending money on resources inaccessible to non-elite others, then they will. In fact, elite, private institutions *must* allocate their funds towards recourses that others cannot access because it allows them to claim a sense of

superiority over non-elites. In doing so, private schools teach students the thoughts, beliefs, and values of the elite. While these teachings may not be immediately visible to the students, the consumption of the thoughts and ideas affiliated with highly valued forms of cultural capital provides them with an avenue through which they may justify and legitimize the gap between themselves and lower classes (Bowles & Gintis, 1976).

As Dimaggio and Useem (1978) suggest, the rate at which one is able to consume the arts parallels his or her social class standing. The faster and more frequent rate at which one consumes the arts allows an individual to achieve a higher status at an increasingly rapid pace. This means that just by being exposed to the arts, an individual has that much more of an opportunity to achieve upward mobility. The institutionalization of such accumulation of capital through the arts shows how cultural consumption is an active process. As Giroux (1983) has argued, the practice of cultural consumption is not inherited, but instead must be learned over time and re-learned by each successive generation.

This stands to support the fact that schools play an important role in shaping society. Since this is the case, it would also make sense to assert that because schools are so important in the production and reproduction of culture and society, it is in schools where the opportunity to close the gap between elites and non-elite others exists. It is inarguable that schools, especially elite schools, have immense amounts of power: is there a way for elite schools to use their power in a productive way? Giroux (1983) suggests that schools are “about the complexity with which power works and the multilayered and contradictory identities that are taken up [as a result of the possession of power]” (p. 153). Furthermore, he urges others to consider the ways in which American schools produce particular ways of life, not just how they reproduce the passive workers that are necessary in the country’s capitalist labor market. This point brings rise to the

question: how do students make meaning of what they are taught in schools? Private institutions are incredibly controlled environments that specifically restrain how students perceive their lived experiences. These schools do so to maintain governance over the ways students make sense of what they learn inside and outside of the classrooms and how that sense-making can transform into cultural understandings.

Elite institutions produce a disproportional number of individuals that are among the United State's ruling elites (Cookson & Persell, 1985). This means that there must be an extreme social significance in the ways private schools control their students. For the purpose of this study, the arts have been used to discuss one way that private schools control the values, and beliefs instilled unto their students. Although this project focuses specifically on how the arts act as a means through which elite students are made to accumulate advantaging forms of cultural capital, the arts are not the only way that students may do so. In fact, private schools are highly ritualized environments whose traditions have been maintained despite the major passing of time since their foundation. This is because the traditions and values of elite, private schools like those in this study have been successful in producing elite individuals. Subsequently, these elite individuals then grow to continue perpetuating the cycle of the production of elites by sending their own children to a similar institution with a similar hidden curriculum to produce a very specific individual.

The schools in this study have all deliberately included the arts (to an almost extreme extent) on their school websites. As noted, this has been done with intense care. Elite institutions purposefully show that they can offer things that public institutions cannot. In this study, the elite public schools provide arts information only when website visitors really look for it, and even so such information does not always exist. This contrasts greatly to the existence of arts information

that, in most cases, immediately confronts a website visitor upon their first glance at the webpages of the elite private institutions. The data in this project proves that elites depend on their access to the arts to set themselves apart from non-elite others. In displaying their increased access to exclusive resources, the elites appear to emit a sense of superiority that is seemingly unreachable to non-elite others unless they somehow manage to access equitable resources to those of the elites. In this case, elites rely on the arts to physically illustrate what they have and what others do not; however, as mentioned, the arts rely on the elites to use them in this way. If elites depend on the arts and continue their high rate of art consumption, then the arts will be able to continue maintaining their status as a highly valued commodity.

Are elite, private schools aware of the symbiotic relationship between themselves and exclusive, valuable forms of cultural capital? Although the answer to this question must, in this study, remain only speculative, it is an important one to ask; however, one might be inclined to answer yes. If elite institutions do not believe and understand that the arts function beyond creative expression, why would they put such an emphasis on them as imperative to student life at their schools? The simple way to address this question would be to suggest that it might not matter whether elite schools are aware of the cultural benefits of art or whether they see art as purely serving aesthetic purposes. What matters is that elite, private schools can afford the arts (Eisner, 1964).

The data collected in this project from public schools and private schools suggests that what can be seen on the websites and what information is provided is just as important as what cannot be seen and what information is not provided. The concept of visibility and invisibility informs the analysis drawn from the data in this project: the invisibility of arts information on the public school websites is just as important as the excess of arts information on private school

websites. As Eisner (1964) suggests, art is for emotional purposes, not intellectual. His argument further asserts that there are pragmatic expectations for education, and since the arts are not historically categorized as practical, “the pragmatic or utilitarian function we expect education to perform renders the arts impractical” (Eisner, 1964, p. 240). Since public schools receive most of their funding from local taxes, they do not have excess funds to spend on impracticalities such as the arts. Although, this observation may suggest that public schools are unaware of the benefits beyond an increase in cognitive output that the arts can provide students with. While this may be a possibility, it may also be true that public schools serve one purpose and are structured in such a way that produces a very particular type of student, and private schools function to produce a very particular *other* type of student.

The distinction, then, must be made between which type of student is thought of as *better*: which type of student is thought of as more valuable to American society? When considering this, it cannot be ignored that society’s elites are the individuals who set the standards by which all other individuals are judged by: elites dictate the definition of what it means to be elite and they purposefully act in ways to maintain this definition (Hopper, 1971). Furthermore, elites purposefully display what they have so those that do not have the same exclusive resources can materially make sense of the gap between themselves and elites. The larger social and cultural forces that compel schools to reify their social and cultural contexts stand as a barrier between the ability of private schools and public schools to offer students the same type of resources and, subsequently, the same access to opportunities to achieve an elite status.

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