Off the Wall:
Using Street Art to Explore Social Justice Issues in the Classroom
- Instructional designer in the Teaching Commons
- Completed my PhD in education at York
- Taught at a community college for 12 years
- Worked in TV News/freelance writing for 15 years

Anna
-researching urban communication for over six years

-explored street art as a form of informal learning and literacy practice
Six years collecting examples of urban communication - over 2000 images
Possibilities of using street art to engage students through social justice issues
Street Artist: LMNOPI
Montreal, 2015
Ta’Kaiya Blaney

-social activist from British Columbia

-Indigenous

-involved in several environmental causes in Canada

-singer/songwriter
The Need to Communicate

Kiosk, Ontario
2016

Pinery Provincial Park, Ontario
2017
Communication on walls and other objects

Graffiti in Pompeii

Gaius was here
Mazinaw Pictographs
17th Century
Bon Echo Provincial Park
Wartime Graffiti
1915

Wartime Graffiti
1944
London
1970s

New York City
1980s
1990s and beyond

Banksy
What is street art?
Tagging

- signature of tagger
- one colour
- may also indicate crew (group) tagger belongs to and territorial reach
- literacy practice (Weinstein, 2002)
Graffiti

- uses more than one colour
- more elaborate designs
- becomes a way for crews to communicate with each other (Christen, 2010)
Legal Public Art

Toronto, 2017

Oshawa, 2012
Street Art

• usually has a message meant for the public

• wants to make you think

• sometimes wants you to take action

(Augusto Rodrigues, 2018)
But…isn’t it illegal?

In Canada, people can be charged with “Mischief” under the Canadian Criminal Code.
THE GRAFFITI KIDS WHO SPARKED THE SYRIAN WAR

It started as simple teenage rebellion but ended up tearing Syria apart, setting in motion events that continue to rock the Middle East — and the world. The boys behind the graffiti would become unlikely revolutionaries and reluctant refugees. Not all of them would survive the upheaval they helped unleash. This is their story.
Moving beyond Banksy
Conversations in the classroom
Street Artist: Javid
Toronto, 2012

"a story of what we can afford to tolerate as art on the streets of Toronto."

(Javid, 2011, para. 1)
Street Artist: Unknown
Toronto, 2014
Mr. Trudeau, why are my people still thirsty?

Street Artist: Windigo
Oshawa, 2017
Not Your Babe

Street Artist: Starchild Stella
Montreal, 2015
“A response to radio silence on missing and murdered indigenous women here in Canada at a time when much kerfuffle was made over the disappearance of young girls a continent away.”

(Red Bandit, 2014, para.3)
Artist: Adore Subtract
Toronto, 2017

Ati:ron - raccoon (Mohawk)

Atu’tuej - squirrel (Mi’kmaq)
Two of the best ways to understand a place is by learning the local language and checking out the street art, but it can be challenging to take the time to master both. But if you’re in Tel Aviv, Guy Sharet can take you on a tour of graffiti in Florentine, one of Tel Aviv’s hippest and most colourful neighbourhoods, and explain the plays on words in stencils, poetic texts in window fronts, and municipal signs.
Outside of the Classroom

Images: Decolonizing Street Art Facebook page
Outside of the Classroom

Sao Paulo, Brazil, 2017
Future Projects

- creating an online database with my images
- creating a guide to using street art in the classroom
- organizing educational walking tours of areas with street art

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Thank you for watching this presentation

Questions?

Banksy


