Geopolitics of Artivism
Evaluation of artivism in the art and media domain in cross-national context

Geopolitiek van kunstactivisme
Evaluatie van kunstactivisme in het kunst- en mediadomein in cross-nationale context

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Frank Weij
born in Rotterdam

Erasmus University Rotterdam

Doctoral Committee:

Promotor:	Prof.dr. C.J.M. van Eijck
Other members:	Prof.dr. M.M.S.E. Janssen
	Prof.dr. G.M.M. Kuipers
	Prof.dr. O.J.M. Velthuis
Copromotors:	Dr. P.P.L. Berkers
	Dr. J.M. Engelbert

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Acknowledgements

In a way, this dissertation marks the end of a journey that started when I began studying architecture in Delft. As a first-year bachelor student, I struggled with the way my professors graded architectural designs. Preoccupied perhaps too much with the engineering behind architecture – in the end, a building's structure needs to remain uncompromised – I had a hard time in designing buildings that appealed aesthetically according to the standards of those that graded me. In one week, my professor would applaud my work, while in the other week I received harsh feedback when my presentation of some design assignment wasn't well prepared. After some disappointing grades, it dawned on me: I received mediocre grades not because of the engineering of my designs – I had followed my textbooks and their mathematics closely. Instead, I received mediocre grades primarily because I did not articulate and explain my design choices well enough aesthetically. Even more so, I noticed that junior teachers, who oftentimes were beginning architects, followed the aesthetic evaluations of the more senior teachers, who oftentimes were successful architects with a small, part-time teaching position at the university.

Fascinated with the practice of aesthetic evaluation and the role of someone's background, I dropped out and enrolled for Erasmus University Rotterdam to study arts and culture. Here I attended several courses with great pleasure and without realizing it at the time these courses and the wonderful teachers who taught them paved the way for a potential academic career. In particular, the sociological courses at the Arts and Culture department gave me an amazing understanding of the social world and allowed me to explain things I came across every day that mathematics and physics courses could not. After two bachelors and a research master, I was able to better answer the questions that brought me from Delft to Rotterdam: something is never inherently good or bad, beautiful or ugly, right or wrong. People *attribute* such values to objects and other people and these evaluations are the product of all kinds of dispositions.

Luckily, my thesis supervisor for my research master thesis and now PhD supervisor Pauwke Berkers further extended my interest into sociology of culture by paving the way to look into a new question: if a work of artistic expression – whether it is a painting, a song, a movie or a building – has no clearly inherent meaning or value, why are artistic expressions relevant? Artists oftentimes have a lot to say about society and, sure, they sometimes provide valid critiques. But who cares? Who would listen to an artist for political or moral views? At the same time, some artists have faced and still face repercussions for their societal critiques which suggests that quite a few people do listen and do care.

Particularly this last observation strongly inspired the research proposal from the hands of my current supervisors Koen van Eijck, Pauwke Berkers and Jiska Engelbert and of myself. Through funding from the NWO, I began as a PhD candidate at the Department of Arts and Culture Studies at the start of the academic year in 2015. Over the following five years I have read more literature and collected more data than I could ever have imagined. It is an incredible privilege to conduct a PhD research and so I am infinitely grateful for my supervisors to have given me this opportunity. Likewise, I am thankful of all my colleagues

at the department for maintaining an atmosphere that made me feel at home and that inspired me to keep going.

Admittedly, in the latter half of those five years I became somewhat disenchanted by the way things go in academia and finished my dissertation without the passion and feeling of relevance that I had when I started it. Without this feeling of relevance, it became increasingly hard to critically asses, utilize and contribute theory in my own research. At the same time, however, these last five years of research have been somewhat of a grand tour that sparked a new small fire that got me passionate about data science and presented me with another exciting career opportunity outside of academia. Perhaps, therefore, I am even more grateful to all my supervisors, colleagues, family and friends than I can possibly express in words.

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Next to my colleagues, I want to express my upmost gratitude to my parents for supporting me throughout my journey after high school and to my brother, Niels, and sister-in-law, Jeanie, for their inspiring strength. To my loving Cynthia, thank you for enduring my love/hate relationship with my dissertation day in and day out and for making these last few difficult years worthwhile. I could not have finished it without you and I hope you are as proud of me as I am of you. And Steph and Jo for always

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And last but certainly not least, I would like to greatly thank my close friends. You have always encouraged me to finish my dissertation and, more importantly, you have always remained an unbreakable pillar for my social life during that time and all the years before. Our memories together go back for so many years now, I know they will extend into the future for many more to come. So thank you for the biertjes, our nightly discussions, our unforgettable annual weekend trips and overall for all the childhood, adolescent, current and future adventures, Axel, Bart, Daniel, David, Elmar, Jasper, Michel, Mitchel, Pim, Roman, Roy, Shamy, Sjoerd and Thomas. I hope I have had an impact on your lives as much as you have on mine.

Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 The puzzle of artivism

Throughout (Western) art history, the visual arts have developed into a distinctive and relatively autonomous societal sphere. While in the past centuries the visual arts have often been seen as strongly representational, artists in the nineteenth century moved away from portraying societal elites and important historical events in a more or less realist manner towards exploration and experimentation. Art historians such as Gombrich (1950), for example, elaborate in great detail on how Baroque artworks, supported by the Catholic Church in reaction to the Reformation in Europe, propagated Catholic faith and therefore constituted a powerful tool to speak for those in power. With the emergence of the dealer-critic system (White & White, 1965), however, the more abstract modern and contemporary visual art movements came to define themselves as relatively autonomous (Bürger, 1984). Instead of societal elites, multiple intermediary art institutions and actors, such as art museums, curators, galleries, dealers, critics and others each gained a say in the evaluation of art. Based on artistic and therefore primarily internal rather than external (e.g. economic, political) criteria (Bourdieu, 1993), these actors have an important role in determining what is good

art and this autonomous logic is still visible in contemporary art discourse (Roose, Roose & Daenekindt, 2018).

Recently, however, scholars have pointed to social matters increasingly permeating the sphere of visual arts. Bourriaud (2002) introduced the concept of relational art, to point to the development of artistic practices that produce social situations and derive their value from such practices. Bishop (2012) elaborates on what she refers to as a social turn in the arts and contends that the arts are increasingly evaluated on the basis of social and ethical criteria next to artistic ones. Indicatively, concepts such as artivism, as a portmanteau for art and activism (Danko, 2018), are now commonly used in academic literature to capture socially engaged artistic practices that include modes of political activism. Illustrative examples of art movements and practices that include political activism, next to artivism, are discussed in fairly recent studies that deal with activist art (Felshin, 2006), political art (Yarto, 2017) and protest art (Tunali, 2017). In addition, while art advocates increasingly endeavor to demonstrate the social significance of the arts (McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras & Brooks, 2004), the cultural policies of neoliberal governments are seen to increasingly require an instrumental social role from the arts in order to secure funding (Belfiore & Bennett, 2008). Socially engaged artistic practices therefore take social problems as their canvas (Bishop, 2012) and seek attention beyond the art sphere in order to achieve societal change.

There is no short and easy answer to the question as to how or why modes of social engagement such as artivism have become increasingly visible in the visual arts. Belfiore and Bennett (2008: 183) have argued that the art's very autonomous position came to be seen as a badge of honor during the second half of the twentieth century, allowing artists to take the moral high ground and critically reflect upon society. Art movements such as conceptual art and performance art during the second half of the twentieth century, for which ideas and pressing social topics take preference over aesthetics (Carter, 2009), are perhaps indicative of some of the first art movements for which social engagement constituted

a key characteristic. Particularly in the humanities, scholars have attributed great political power to art exactly because it positions itself autonomously from the constraints and restraints of other societal fields. Rancière (2009), for example, maintains that, through its autonomy, art creates a space from which its audience is able to reconfigure its understanding of the world. He argues that when art becomes indiscernible from social practices, it "eliminates itself as a separate reality" (Rancière, 2009: 44) and merely reproduces the very values and state of affairs it attempts to change.

If artistic status today is indeed still strongly rooted in autonomous artistic evaluation by cultural intermediaries, then socially engaged artistic practices such as artivism present an interesting puzzle: they appear to follow their own logic, yet seek to achieve societal change. This begs the question how practices such as artivism are evaluated and to what extent they have an impact and enjoy some degree of attention beyond the confines of the relatively autonomous sphere of visual art. The growing body of literature that has come to take shape around social engagement in the visual arts, however, remains incapable of fully explaining these questions for two reasons. First, social engagement in general, and notions such as artivism in particular, often remain problematically broad, ranging from artistic practices that are embedded in – and engage local communities to those that raise and fight against pressing global societal inequalities and human rights issues. Beyond conceptual considerations and anecdotal indications that social engagement is progressively pronounced in the arts, however, it remains unclear under which conditions artistic-activist expressions are accepted. Second, current empirical studies (e.g. Roose et al., 2018) are primarily preoccupied with the role of social engagement within the arts and often overlook how and to what extent social engagement from visual artists travels beyond the confines of the art sphere. In the end, any form of social engagement requires two parties: one engaging and one being engaged. Few scholars systematically and empirically address the

questions as to which types of socially engaged artistic practices achieve acceptance not just in the art sphere but in the broader society.

I aim to address both problems by conducting research into the reception of artivism within and beyond the arts through the following overarching research question:

How is artivism evaluated within the fields of art, news media and social media in a cross-national context?

In order to answer this research question, I bring together literature from various disciplines. I draw on art-historical literature to place social engagement in the arts more elaborately and concretely within an art-historical context. Combining this with sociology of culture literature, second, provides insight into how works of art are produced, consumed and distributed. By drawing on Bourdieu (1984, 1993) in particular, I will approach the field of art as a historically developed domain with its own logic and status markers. Furthermore, by drawing on the concept of boundary work, such as the work by Lamont and Fournier (1992), I will address the practices of classifying objects and actors within the art field. This provides theoretical ground on which to study how artistic status is attributed and how distinctions within the arts are made in relation to artivism. Through literature from political sciences, third, I will outline how modes of artistic expression can function as avenues for social and political engagement. In combination with insights from media studies, finally, I will theorize more concretely how news media and social media afford different ways of social and political engagement and how news and social media attention have become important for the question of societal impact with regards to the arts.

Empirically, I conduct four interrelated studies which in the end will be integrated on the level of outcomes. Even though these four studies each have a distinct theoretical approach and research design, which are outlined in more detail in the following chapters, they each have the same theoretical footing. In this chapter, therefore, I will first elaborate on the

theoretical starting position from which to address the central research question. Along the same line, second, I will outline the overarching methodological approach. This is followed by a section on academic and societal relevance and finally an outline of the chapters in this dissertation.

1.2 Theoretical background

Any study into art requires an understanding of what constitutes a work of art, an artist or an art institution. In this dissertation, therefore, I employ multiple approaches and explore findings from several academic disciplines. A considerable part of this is explained in detail in later chapters that represent the empirical studies that have been conducted. It shall start here, however, with an elaboration of the theoretical foundation that runs throughout the entire dissertation. Below, therefore, I will first employ literature in the sociology of culture to develop a framework from which to view the arts as a distinctive sphere with interrelated actors and institutions. I then draw on insights from humanities and art-historical research to address how this sphere developed into a relatively autonomous field with its own distinctive rules and practices. Combining insights from these academic disciplines allows me to contextualize the current prevalence of social engagement in the arts sociologically as well as art-historically and to provide a somewhat chronological overview of how social engagement came to permeate the current-day art field. Thereafter, I employ political science literature and media studies to explore how socially engaged artists achieve some degree of impact in today's media-saturated society. Artistic expressions that are socially engaged, such as artivism, ultimately presuppose impact beyond their own sphere. By employing insights from these different disciplines, I work towards a theoretical framework that details and explains how political activism by artists travels from the relatively autonomous arts to the domain of news and social media.

1.2.1 Field theory

Artworks, artists, art museums and galleries constitute a particular social domain aimed at the production, consumption and distribution of cultural objects. Sociologists of culture often link this understanding of the arts as a separate sphere to field theory, which owes a great deal to the work of Pierre Bourdieu. He considers a field to be a separate social domain within society (e.g. the field of politics, of law, of media, of art, etc.) characterized by its own logic and status markers (Bourdieu, 1993). A field, therefore, can be understood as a relatively autonomous sphere with institutions that are specific to it and actors struggling for status according to the set of rules that govern it. Of course, fields do not emerge out of a vacuum. They are shaped by historical and socio-economic conditions. In the field of art, accordingly, such conditions have shaped the way in which works of art are produced, consumed and distributed and in which artists achieve artistic status. The art field, therefore, can be seen to consist of the actors and organizations involved in the production, distribution and reception of artistic expressions (Bourdieu, 1993; DiMaggio, 1979). More concretely, this entails the artist as art producer, an audience of art consumers and institutions through which artworks are distributed and accorded status, such as art museums and galleries with their art curators and other cultural intermediaries.

Among and between these actors in the art field there is a constant struggle for symbolic capital – or, in this case, recognition – as a legitimate artist and hence to be consecrated as an artist whose work will be canonized (Bourdieu, 1993). Similarly, the reputation of intermediary actors, such as curators, depends strongly on the legitimation of artists they endorse. In general, capital entails a variety of resources, primarily in the form of possessions, attributes and personal qualities (DiMaggio, 1979), often conceived of as economic, cultural or social capital, that can be exchanged for goods and services as well as status (Bourdieu, 1984). Symbolic capital, in particular, is a resource of recognition and represents

the symbolic value that an actor can leverage in advantage to others in the field. According to Bourdieu (1993: 40-43), artistic actors endowed with symbolic capital are able to enforce their own norms of artistic production and hence enforce an autonomous hierarchization and definition of art. With such an autonomous principle of hierarchization, artists are affected less by external hierarchies such as, for example, economic profit or market demand. As a result, the field of art is governed primarily by a hierarchy of artistic criteria and is largely insensitive to criteria unrelated to the arts. Recognized artists, in this example, would enjoy status on the basis of the artistic value of their work rather than of the economic value it represents within a market system. Similarly, recognized curators would enjoy status on the basis of the artistic value of the works they endorse.

An important strength of this field theory approach to art is, first, that it stands in stark contrast to the idea that works of art are purely an act of individual creativity, captured by Bourdieu's (1996) notion of charismatic ideology. Instead, art is almost never the product of isolated production (Wolff, 1981). Curators, for example, bring artists in touch with dominant artistic criteria within the art field and can therefore be seen as co-creators (Janssen & Verboord, 2015). Works of art, in this sense, are inherently a social product and many actors within the field of art are linked to – and mediate the production of artworks in some way or another at any given moment in time. Second, this field theory approach refrains from conceptualizing the notion of aesthetics, which relates to the nature of art and the criteria of artistic judgement (Wolff, 1983). Instead, such criteria, and hence aesthetics in general, are perceived similarly to be socially and historically constructed (Bourdieu, 1984; Wolff, 1983) and therefore change over time. Criteria of aesthetic evaluation, for example, at times have overlapped with criteria of political value (Todd, 1981). Indeed, studying how social engagement has become an important criterion of artistic evaluation and how activism is accepted within the arts, is only possible when we consider aesthetics to be socially and historically constructed.

1.2.2 The emergence of an autonomous art field

Some degree of art-historical context is required at this point. Fortunately, great volumes have been written about (Western) art history, even though this makes it a challenging task to reduce centuries of history to a mere few paragraphs detailing how the art field emerged and developed. The following historical overview of the (Western) art field, therefore, certainly jumps in time and therefore inevitably overlooks relevant developments. Its aim, however, is to highlight those moments in time in which two advancements in particular become apparent. First, changes in the art field's relatively autonomous position will be discussed. As already alluded to, field theory assumes a relational approach, between actors within fields and between fields. According to Bourdieu (1993), fields are never entirely autonomous from each other but are characterized by their *relative autonomy*. Seen from this sociology of culture perspective, we can point out more concretely how the art field has been related to other societal fields throughout art history. Secondly, and strongly related to this process of (relative) autonomization, the following overview details how dominant artistic criteria gradually transitioned from representational – realistic and figurative reflection of reality (Bolt, 2004: 12) – towards abstract, non-representational depiction. This created more space for the visual arts to incorporate and elaborate certain ideas and concepts and hence to critically reflect on societal developments.

According to Bourdieu (1984), a field is a specialized sphere of action, in this case of artistic production. We can only speak of an art field, let alone its relationship to other societal fields, therefore, once the concept of art and, perhaps more importantly, the figure of the artist and other key actors who are involved in the arts have emerged. Surely, cultural and artistic expressions through painting, sculpture, architecture, music, poetry and other genres date back to the earliest of human civilizations (Gombrich, 1950). Roughly before the fourteenth century, however, the vast majority of cultural objects were produced in anonymity. During the

Middle Ages, the craftsmen who produced cultural objects such as frescoes, murals, sculptures and works of architecture were restricted by the traditional rules of the professional guilds for which they worked. Wolff (1981: 85) argues that in such highly ritualistic forms of artistic production, there is little room for innovation and new, original or even radical content, restricting the effects or transformative power of cultural objects.

The Renaissance period, however, marks an important moment in time in which the production of such cultural objects is explicitly linked to those who produced them and in which those producers gained some degree of autonomy within their own sphere (Bourdieu, 1993: 113). The anonymous craftsmen become well-known artists endowed with exceptional talent – or, in some cases, with exceptionally talented apprentices. Artists such as Michelangelo and Raphael embody some of the first of such artists. The concept of the artist, and hence the concept of art, therefore, is understood here to emerge roughly during the transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, when cultural objects were increasingly seen as expressions of independent personality (Hauser, 1968).

Yet, these first artists stood at least partly in service of societal and political elites. Church patrons commissioned artists to decorate church buildings, just like craftsmen had done for centuries during the Middle Ages within the capacity of a guild. Increasing trade, first primarily between Italian city-states such as Florence and Venice, soon resulted in an aristocratic class of wealthy merchants and, somewhat later, an absolute monarchy (Wolff, 1981). The Protestant Reformation and its iconoclasm, furthermore, ushered in a wave of arguably more secular artistic themes, particularly in Northern Europe in the sixteenth century. Hence, wealthy aristocrats and courts became, next to the Church, important patrons and commissioners of the arts, which served to represent their wealth and power. In response, the Catholic Church organized a Counter-Reformation by commissioning artworks in which religious values and themes were made more understandable for – and

relatable to the general public (Gombrich, 1950). Works of art, therefore, remained subjugated to aristocratic and religious values. Although artists had emerged and risen out of anonymity and freed themselves from the restrictive rules of communal guilds, they remained in service of and hence represented societal and political elites and the demands over content and form they dictated.

The period of Enlightenment brought about radical political changes as systems of government throughout the Western world transitioned from traditional and absolutist monarchies to republics increasingly legitimized by their citizens (De Tocqueville, 1955 [1856]). After the French Revolution, former kings and their courts were removed or saw their wealth and power significantly diminish. The Industrial Revolution, furthermore, radically changed the living and working conditions of many people in Europe, leading to drastic urbanization and the emergence of new social classes (Ashton, 1997). Although the French Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, already established in the seventeenth century, strongly promoted patriotic history paintings under Napoleon, the traditional system of patronage declined soon after. Instead of patrons and commissioners, artists now relied increasingly on impersonal markets (Bourdieu, 1993: 114), allowing them to experiment with new techniques, materials, styles and depictions. The paradigm of representation, with its aesthetic focus on beauty, harmony and craftmanship, is followed by a modern paradigm, in which notions such as originality, individuality and authenticity become prevalent (Taylor, 1992).

Two art movements emerged in reaction to these societal developments and became indicative of the increased freedom from conventions that artists gained. Romantic artists, on the one hand, sought to escape from the oftentimes harsh conditions of everyday reality in Europe for most people, for example by turning to and romanticizing nature (e.g., Caspar David Friedrich). Realist artists, on the other hand, aimed to realistically depict reality without avoiding its harsh conditions (e.g., Francois Millet). The uncertainties brought about by the market,

however, required mediators who could help artists find the right audience (Wolff, 1981). Gradually, the traditional system of patronage was substituted, particularly for the visual arts, by a dealer-critic system (White & White, 1965). Some artists still produced artworks primarily as material commodities and remained dependent on market forces and economic success. Others relied less on external hierarchies and produced artworks for their symbolic and artistic rather than material value (Bourdieu, 1993: 114), giving way to a more autonomous art field that shied away not only from representation of traditional commissioners but now also from market demands.

At this point in time, the visual arts become increasingly autonomous. Artists had freed themselves from the demands of representation and were no longer primarily guided by external interests, such as those of religious and political elites. The focus of the visual arts, therefore, had shifted from representation to reflection: artists *ideally* should not worry about anything other than art itself. Immanuel Kant (1987 [1790]) had already alluded to this development with his notion of disinterestedness and the arts being purposive without a purpose. Berleant explains this attitude of disinterestedness by referring to "the perception of an object for its own sake without further purposes" (Berleant, 1991: 12) as an aesthetic marker. Autonomous art has its own value and should not be dependent on value unrelated to the arts, such as religious or political value (Wilcox, 1953): art for art's sake. The modern visual arts, therefore, pursue autonomy and avoid any pollution with other social spheres.

Technological and institutional advances in the nineteenth century further catalyzed a break with existing conventions, perhaps even more radical than the decline of the system of patronage. The discovery and development of photography made the need for realistic depiction in the visual arts redundant and portable easels and paint in tubes allowed artists to work *en plein air*, out in the open instead of in their artificially illuminated studios (Gombrich, 1950: 388-396). The conservative academic approach to art, primarily focused on technique and a finished product, required what Bourdieu (1993: 244) called 'learned reading': the

art consumer was expected to have a certain level of knowledge and understanding of an artistic language, with which the viewer could academically and historically interpret works of art. By painting *en plein air* and leaving behind realism, however, Impressionists such as Manet deviated drastically from the conservative academic approach. Rather than providing representations of reality, they provided impressions of it according to their perceptions (Gombrich, 1950). Many artists followed this approach and soon the Royal Academy in Paris lost control over the flow of new art school recruits and the number of paintings being produced (White & White, 1965). In other countries in Europe, such as Germany (Lenman, 1989), the art market began to show similar signs of overcrowding.

The many Modernist avant-garde movements following Impressionism into the twentieth century illustrate this shift. Some of these movements went so far as to introduce manifestos to outline their distinctive approach to art. They advocated, implicitly or explicitly, artistic exploration of complex notions such as subjectivity (e.g. Post-Impressionism), the mental state of making art (e.g. Surrealism), expression (e.g. Expressionism), dimensionality (e.g. Cubism), and others (Gombrich, 1950). As such, the introduction of new approaches to art increasingly came with ideological and self-reflexive explanations as to why these should be considered art (Danto, 1997). These explanations were provided not only by artists but also by curators, critics and other artistic intermediaries, whose role became progressively pronounced. As a result, galleries and similar organizations replaced the former academic system of artist recruitment (White & White, 1965).

Much less idealistic than Kant, Bourdieu therefore defines artistic autonomy by taking into account how works of art are produced. He contrasts the fields of restricted and of large-scale cultural production in his analysis of the French literary field (Bourdieu, 1993). The former pertains to autonomous cultural production as it is aimed at a narrow audience primarily consisting of other cultural producers. The latter, in contrast, pertains to heteronomous cultural production as it is aimed at

larger audiences to accumulate economic capital. Here, artistic autonomy concerns art that seeks its own market and recognition among key actors within the field of art. When artists no longer have to represent societal elites and enjoy a high level of freedom of expression (that is, primarily freedom from conventions), we can argue that the visual arts in the nineteenth and twentieth century have become increasingly autonomous. The field of art became relatively independent from external values and was highly characterized by its own institutions, abstract rather than representational depiction and the preference of form over function or purpose (Bourdieu, 1993). Sociologically, of course, there is much more to be said at this point: who decides the artistic criteria upon which an artist enjoys artistic status and how is art distinguished from non-art? This is the main topic of discussion in the next section.

1.2.3 But what is art

Ultimately, after several avant-garde manifestos it appeared that no single Modernist approach to art (or any other approach for that matter) ultimately holds up to critical reflection without being normative. Baudrillard (1993: 14) argues accordingly that there 'are no more fundamental rules, no more criteria of judgement or of pleasure' with which one can judge or value artworks. Art critics such as Danto (1997), similarly, would argue that there are no longer any ideological narratives from which art movements emerge and hence no constraints to what art could be – anything goes. The result of this development was not that after Modernism art was no longer made or that good art was no longer distinguishable from bad art. There still were and still are, evidently, numerous artists, art schools, galleries and art museums. But then, what is art? Or rather, when is something considered art and how is artistic status achieved?

We have already seen how Bourdieu's (1993) field theory approach allows us to view the arts as a relatively autonomous field in which artistic production is never the product of an isolated individual. Instead, actors within the art field struggle over the symbolic capital to enforce

artistic hierarchies and norms of artistic production. As cultural producers, artists rely on gatekeeping actors within the art field who select and evaluate artists and their works of art (Janssen & Verboord, 2015). In more general terms, these cultural intermediaries – or sometimes referred to as cultural mediators – stand in-between the producer and the consumer of cultural goods. They are curators, critics, gallery- and museum directors and others who distinguish between artworks and artists that are considered good (i.e. original, authentic, legitimate, pioneering or insert any other evaluative term) and those that aren't. Hence, they are perceived to be the experts who are aware of the cultural codes through which artists and artworks achieve artistic value (Bourdieu, 1993) and therefore are in the position to attribute artistic value to cultural goods and producers (Bourdieu, 1984; DiMaggio, 1987). In this role, they provide artists with (their expectations of) artistic standards and conventions and pick out artists and artworks they consider to be worthy of promotion and endorsement through practices of selecting, supporting and evaluating (Janssen & Verboord, 2015).

Within the sociology of culture, the literature on boundary work provides insight into how objects, people and practices are classified (Lamont & Fournier, 1992) and hence also how artworks are differentiated. At the core of their practices, cultural intermediaries draw boundaries to distinguish between good and bad art. These boundaries are of a symbolic nature as they are primarily conceptual and intersubjective distinctions by cultural intermediaries to categorize artistic products, producers and practices (Lamont & Molnár, 2002: 168). The practice of boundary drawing is visible in the cultural intermediary's main gatekeeping practices as professionals. By organizing art events, such as exhibitions, curators in the arts select artworks and artists to be put on display (Balzer, 2014; O'Neill, 2007). Art dealers, in turn, seek artistic talent that corresponds to the aesthetic preferences of collectors and buyers (Velthuis, 2005). In the sphere of art journalism, reviewers and critics attribute artistic qualities to works of art. Since they lack an objective procedure on which to base their evaluations (Van Rees, 1989),

they are often seen to develop legitimating ideologies that substantiate their claims that certain artists and works of art have artistic value and others do not (Bourdieu, 1984). Throughout these practices, therefore, cultural intermediaries constantly draw symbolic boundaries through which artistic value is attributed to some and denied to others.

In practice, this is visible in the way the field of visual art developed towards an increasingly autonomous field. Bourdieu (1993) distinguishes between those who derive their status from field-specific criteria (i.e. an autonomous hierarchy) and those who are responsive to criteria external to the arts such as commercial success and market demand (i.e. a heteronomous hierarchy). The differentiation between highbrow and lowbrow or fine and popular art throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century follows this distinction. Both highbrow and lowbrow art cannot be defined by qualities or characteristics that are inherent to them (DiMaggio, 1992a). Instead, they are differentiated on the basis of externally attributed criteria in line with the boundary work by cultural intermediaries. DiMaggio (1992b) showed how in the US the fine arts came to be defined as separated from and in opposition to popular, commercial culture or that which the populace consumed. Levine (1990) highlighted how this development went hand in hand with the use of an increasingly sacralized language to oppose the sacred highbrow from the profane lowbrow. The fine or highbrow arts, hence, came to be seen as affording an aesthetic experience that requires an understanding of their complexity and depth (Alexander & Bowler, 2014). In practice, these characteristics are primarily attributed.

Because of these externally attributed criteria, cultural intermediaries have a strong say in what type of art is accepted and what is not. Artistic status, therefore, is never fixed. Some cultural genres within the art field can be elevated from lowbrow to highbrow. Baumann (2007a) details how the reception of Hollywood films shifted from mere entertainment to legitimate art through an intellectual discourse in film reviews. In music, similarly, Lopes (2002) demonstrates how the meaning of jazz as a musical genre is transformed over time into high art. Within the visual

arts, more central to this dissertation, Impressionist art was initially met with great resistance, while its acceptance was in part dependent on sympathetic art critics (White & White, 1965). Similarly, the more contemporary genre of street art originates from the cultural practice of graffiti and achieved acknowledgement as an art form when art galleries and art dealers in urban areas became interested (Wells, 2016).

1.2.4 Towards social engagement in the contemporary art field.

An autonomous rather than heteronomous hierarchy in the art field (Bourdieu, 1993), however, isolates the arts from other societal fields. In an art field that is relatively autonomous, a democratic majority or majority of consumers have little say in deciding what is good or bad art. By the same logic, why would anyone outside of the art field listen to artists or other artistic actors with regards to matters of a non-artistic nature? Indeed, save from artists who produced politically conscious artworks (Roussel, 2007) and after the postmodern advances of feminist art and more culturally diverse or post-colonial art (Carter, 2009), few well-recognized artists, at least within Western art-history, become public or political spokespersons and receive attention beyond that of peers and intermediaries within art fields.

Yet, it can be argued that modes of social engagement have become increasingly visible in the more contemporary visual arts. Heinich (2014) points to extra-aesthetic elements becoming increasingly pervasive in contemporary art along with the blurred boundaries between art and everyday life. Indicatively, art movements such as conceptual and performance art emerged in the second half of the twentieth century, for which ideas and pressing social topics take preference over aesthetics (Carter, 2009). More recently, scholars have pointed to a variety of artistic practices that incorporate social engagement in more explicit ways. Felshin (2006) referred to activist art to denote process-oriented rather than object-oriented artistic practices in the shape of interventions in public sites rather than in an art world context of galleries and museums. Other scholars draw on the concept of artivism, as a

portmanteau of art and activism, to further build on the concept of activist art and to emphasize both the artistic *and* political dimension to activist art practices (Danko, 2018). Bishop (2012) refers to participatory art as art in the form of collaborative practices rather than commodities. Such socially engaged art forms employ the symbolic capital of the arts to achieve social change, but as such originate and are disseminated primarily within the art field.

More empirically, renowned arts events, such as Documenta (e.g. Documenta 14 in 2017) and the Venice Biennale (e.g. the Venice Biennale in 2019), eagerly center around a variety of social and political issues (Kompatsiaris, 2014). Artistic practices, furthermore, have been used effectively in visualizing climate change and sustainability issues (Cozen, 2013). They are furthermore often adopted to promote engagement with human rights issues (McPherson & Mazza, 2014). Through artistic practices, people are found to actively challenge issues in relation to gender inequality (Rhoades, 2012). With regards to solving migration issues, artistic practices have been found effective in achieving urban transformation (Mekdjian, 2018). These studies, in other words, indicate more concretely that artistic practices afford engagement with – and are helpful in – solving urgent societal issues.

In the field of cultural policy, similarly, many contemporary Western democracies have increasingly emphasized the instrumental role of arts and culture in tackling pressing societal issues (Belfiore & Bennett, 2008). From a neoliberal point of view, in which the minimalization of state intervention and preservation of free markets are strongly promoted (Harvey, 2005), spending public money on the arts is not easily justified when the arts remain primarily valuable in and of themselves. Instead, by instrumentalizing artistic practices in favor of social ends such as their contribution to society, politicians have been able to legitimate public spending on the arts (Bishop, 2012). Indeed, apart from their increasing focus on creative industries and economic value (Throsby, 2010), instrumentalist notions commonly appear in cultural policies in recent

decades (Belfiore & Bennett, 2008), such as social cohesion (Delhaye, 2018) or urban regeneration (Belfiore, 2012).

Bishop (2012) refers to this development as a social turn in the arts, in which artistic practices are increasingly evaluated and legitimized through ethical and social rather than artistic criteria. Indeed, the surge of various forms of socially engaged art as well as the policy changes that perhaps catalyzed them, imply at least some level of institutionalization of social engagement in the contemporary arts field. Tunali (2017), focusing on the artists and their artworks, however, contends that socially engaged artworks compromise aesthetic value for the sake of social change and only gain artistic status that is removed from its political intent. Mullin (2009) similarly, maintains that some art critics either concede that art should not be produced for political change or they largely ignore the artistic value of political artworks by mainly focusing on their political or activist intent. In the humanities, furthermore, scholars have critically reflected on the political potential of the arts through discussions of notions such as political art (Yarto, 2017) and politics of aesthetics (Rancière, 2004). While the former pertains to artistic practices that highlight societal issues of inequality and social exclusion, such as artistic expressions used during protests (Tunali, 2017), the latter avoids instrumentalization of art and points to how the arts in their very distance from society are able to change our understanding of society.

Socially engaged artistic expressions, therefore, beg the question how social criteria have become relevant in evaluating contemporary art. But then, what do I mean exactly with social engagement? Understood broadly, social engagement encompasses involvement and participation in a wide variety of social activities and associations, indicators of what Putnam (2000) would refer to as social capital. Within an art context, such practices relate closely to Bourriaud's (2002) concept of relational art, which includes artistic practices that derive their meaning from the collective and interactive encounters with and between art consumers. In this dissertation, however, I am interested primarily in those artistic

practices that are somehow intended to achieve change within society rather than those that merely take place within an art field context. Here, therefore, social engagement is understood more narrowly to include politically oriented modes of engagement that are geared towards bringing attention to societal issues (Tunali, 2017) and hence engaging in public debates.

The specific type of social engagement central in this dissertation, therefore, is artivism, as it includes political activism if we understand this to be the practice of dissent to bring excluded views and voices into public debates (Dahlberg, 2007). Artivists, in other words, seek societal change by bringing attention to societal issues through their artistic practices (Danko, 2018). Hence the artivist constitutes somewhat of a hybrid: an artist engaged in political activism. Although oftentimes primarily an artist, as an activist artist the artivist stands with one leg in the political field (Felshin, 2006). In this dissertation, therefore, the concept of artivism functions as a hypernym to encompass similar more concrete modes of politically oriented social engagement within the arts, such as activist art (Felshin, 2006), participatory art (Bishop, 2012), political art (Yarto, 2017) and others.

1.2.5 The question of societal impact

This approach to social engagement in general and artivism in particular takes as its point of departure the intention of the artist as the producer of a mode of expression that is both a form of art and political activism. Whether artivists are heard for their political activism, however, does not simply follow from their activist intentions. After all, anyone can refer to themselves as a political activist, but only some are listened to. We know, at this point, how artistic status is attributed, but to what extent is political activism that originates in the art field heard and accepted within society? The societal impact of artivism, then, is understood here not in terms of concrete societal changes. These remain difficult to measure and the causality between the aim to achieve change and realized change remains problematic (Tunali, 2017). Instead, I approach the societal

impact of artivism along the lines of attention in order to study the extent in which the political activism of artivism is accepted.

Similar to the attribution of artistic status through cultural intermediaries, the mechanism through which the political activism of artivists is acknowledged involves some level of external acceptance rather than internal conviction. Political science literature outlines how acceptance to engage in politics revolves closely around the concept of political legitimacy. Legitimacy in general is often understood in terms of how the unaccepted becomes accepted and is to be achieved through some degree of consensus among a constituency (Zeldtich, 2001). In politics, then, political legitimacy pertains to acceptance of political institutions and actors. Although electoral systems to create governmental representation are of course essential in legally legitimizing governments, Rothstein (2009) considers political legitimacy within the governmental sphere to be dependent more on people's perception of how governments perform (output side) than on the process through which a government is formed (input side). Hence, political legitimacy is not necessarily derived from democratic votes, but rather from the extent to which people perceive of governmental institutions and actors as deserving of support (Gurr, 1971: 185).

The same can be argued for political legitimacy in the sphere of political activism. It is important to note that the field of politics encompasses practices and processes that affect or influence government actions or public policy and therefore include participating in governmental politics as well as acts of political protest and activism (Ekman & Amnå, 2012). Activists help bridge the disconnections between the broader public and the policy makers in government (Cottle, 2008). In order to exert influence over governmental processes, therefore, they too require acceptance from – and representation among – constituencies. This is visible, for example, when looking at how popular culture celebrities who are engaged in activism struggle to claim the representation of others in order to attain political legitimacy (Watts, 2019). In other words, political legitimacy is sought after by political

parties and politicians within the sphere of governmental politics *and* by activists, protesters and social movements within the sphere of political activism. It is therefore a helpful concept to understand how activism comes to be accepted. The question remains by whom they are accepted.

The journalism or media field is particularly important here as political science and cultural sociology literature on political legitimacy increasingly emphasize the role of media. Bourdieu (2005: 41) has argued that the field of journalism exerts an increasingly powerful hold over the political field (and the field of cultural production) due to its symbolic production: media have the power to determine who and what is considered important in society and therefore have crucial influence on public opinion (Champagne, 2005). Indeed, while in the past achieving and maintaining acceptance in the sphere of governmental politics often took place largely within the terrain of political elites and intellectuals, today legitimation in politics is strongly oriented towards media (Simons, 2003). Politicians increasingly rely on access to mass news media and news media audiences (Loader, Vromen & Xenos, 2016; Kriesi, Lavenex, Esser, Matthes, Bühlmann & Bochsler 2013), while social movements (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993), political activists (Cottle, 2008) and popular culture celebrity activists (Watts, 2019) rely on news media coverage to mobilize wider support. As a result, media have come to play an important role in both the sphere of governmental politics (Buchanan, 2002) and the sphere of political activism (Cottle, 2008) to the extent that acceptance of and attention to political activism is increasingly dependent on how it is presented within the realm of media.

If we understand societal impact of artivism along the lines of acceptance beyond the confines of the art field within the broader society, we can empirically study how and to what extent this acceptance is attributed by analyzing media and media audience attention to artivism. I focus on two types of media specifically. News media, first, constitute a principal platform through which information about society is communicated and consumed, to the extent that they determine what is considered societally relevant (Esser & Strömbäck, 2014). Newspapers,

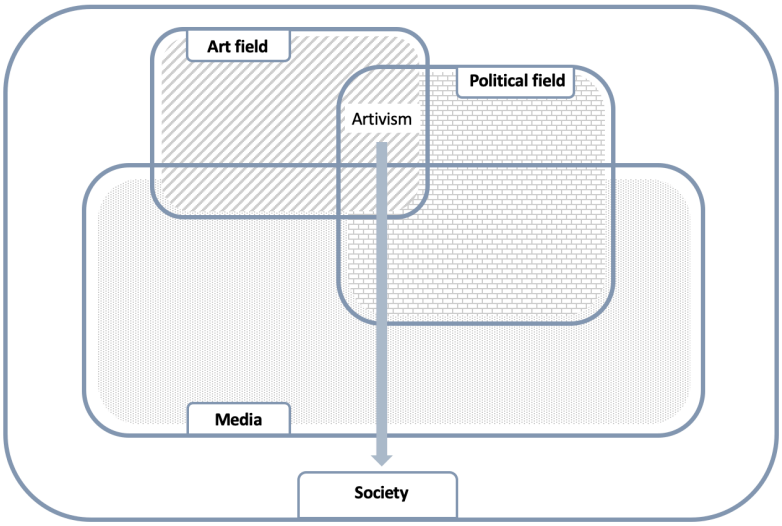
for example, have been seen for a long time to take an intermediary role in the field of politics (Cook, 1998). The way in which newspapers frame events that relate to politics and activism plays an important role in how these are represented in public debates. Furthermore, newspapers have been found to influence the representation of election campaigns (Miller, Peake & Boulton, 2010) and political scandals (Puglisi & Snyder, 2011), political protests (Oliver & Maney, 2000) and pressing societal debates such as climate change (Schmidt, Ivanova & Schäfer, 2013). As such, news media do not simply communicate news, they produce news through the decisions that editors and journalists make over content and framing. As such, they play a key role in attributing societal impact.

Social media, second and similarly, have come to play an important role in politics more recently. Platforms such as Twitter afford everyday political discussions among media audiences, often strongly in relation to news media content (Wilkinson & Thelwall, 2012). They maintain an infrastructure that allows their users to openly exchange ideas and views that are relevant to politics in an everyday fashion (Vromen, Xenos & Loader, 2015). Such everyday communicative processes through which the broader public discuss topics pertaining to politics can be considered a form of latent political participation (Ekman & Amnå, 2012). Indicatively, social media platforms today are actively used during election campaigns (Larsson & Moe, 2011) to the extent that politicians consider social media platforms to be important campaigning tools (Enli & Skogerbø, 2013). Beyond the sphere of governmental politics, social media are commonly used for digital protests through hashtag activism (Bonilla & Rosa, 2015), which in turn gets picked up by news media. Through social media audiences, in other words, political activism gains momentum and recognition, to the extent that these too play a key role in attributing impact.

Just like one achieves artistic status through acceptance among cultural intermediaries, we can understand societal impact to be achieved through acceptance among news media and media audiences. As artists with one foot in political activism, artivists therefore travel through

several spheres, which is visualized more schematically in Figure 1.1. As societal fields are never fully autonomous, they display overlap. Artivists originate from the field of art, engage in political activism as a mode of social engagement and require attention within the media field through news media and social media attention in order to be heard in the broader society. The question then is how the different criteria with which artivists are evaluated within these layers in terms of their artistic status and societal impact overlap and strengthen or contrast each other. In this way, we understand more broadly how artivism is received within society and how the arts can function as an arena for social engagement.

Figure 1.1: Schematic model depicting how artivism relates to several domains.



1.3 Data and methods

Similar to the overarching theoretical framework that has been outlined above, the research in this dissertation is grounded in an overarching methodological framework. I conduct four empirical studies to address the reception of artivism. Throughout each of these interrelated studies, I

focus, in varying degrees, on the reception of six artivist cases in three countries. Before outlining the concrete methodologies behind the empirical studies, therefore, I will first elaborate on the national contexts and artivist cases central in this dissertation.

1.3.1 Artivist cases

Even though we live in an increasingly globalized world, which is particularly true for the field of arts and culture (Quemin, 2006), the art-historical sociological grounding of my theoretical framework is inherently Western. The concept of art and the development of the art field strongly originate from – and relate to Western Europe and North America. Similarly, the role of news media and social media in politics, as outlined earlier, is particularly applicable to contemporary democratic societies. It is important to emphasize this, as the relative autonomy of the art fields in Western societies is not given for artists operating in non-Western societies. Furthermore, Western media audiences have been found to be particularly interested in the cosmopolitan, repressed other (Chouliaraki, 2013).

I have selected, therefore, three Western artivist cases from the three respective countries central in this dissertation and three non-Western artivist cases from non-democratic societies. Even though artistic autonomy is difficult to measure, I have consulted the annual Freedom of the World Report (Freedom House, 2016) to indicate the limited levels of political rights and civil liberties, as a proxy for artistic freedom, that non-Western artivists face in contrast to Western artivists. Furthermore, each case has raised particular societal issues throughout their artistic careers and each has received attention within and beyond the art field sufficient enough to collect data. Finally, to emphasize their political activism, each selected artivist has been met with some degree of (legal) controversy. The six selected cases are provided in Table 1.1 and further introduced below.

Table 1.1: Artivist cases in context.

Artivist	Country	Freedom score
Banksy	United Kingdom	95
Hans Haacke	United States	90
Jonas Staal	Netherlands	99
Ai Weiwei	China	16
Jafar Panahi	Iran	17
Pussy Riot	Russia	22

Banksy, first, is a street artist from the UK who remains anonymous to this day. Presumably originating from Bristol and an exceptionally influential artist in the street art movement, the artist is well-known for using graffiti to provide social commentary on current global human rights issues (Brassett, 2009). For example, the artist has produced art to highlight the Syrian refugee crisis (Ellis-Petersen, 2015), the Palestine conflict (Fisher, 2017) and climate change (Siddique, 2009). Banksy remains controversial, however, as many authorities consider the artist's works to be vandalism, despite some of those works selling for huge sums of money at auction houses (Dalley, 2018).

Hans Haacke, second, is an established German artist living and working most of his life as a professional artist in New York. His polemic work often revolves around the relationship between museums and their corporate sponsors and the social, economic and political aspects to this relationship. He draws on Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Haacke, 1995) to bring to light how these parties exchange capital while his artworks and art installations target how corporations influence the arts. Occasionally, his focus on the role of art institutions in socio-economic injustice led him to address politicians as well (Farago, 2019), such as former New York governor Nelson Rockefeller and current US president Donald Trump.

Jonas Staal, third, is a Dutch visual artist whose work focuses on the role of art in political processes, particularly in relation to democracy and propaganda. In 2005, for example, he produced a series of works in which the death of (still living) Dutch right-wing politician Geert Wilders was mourned (Kranenberg, 2007). As these works were perceived as death threats, Jonas Staal was arrested and brought to trial, only to be acquitted later. His political intentions, furthermore, are visible in his ongoing New World Summit project, in which he brings together political actors and communities excluded from democratic participation (Van Heuven, 2013).

Ai Weiwei, fourth, is a Chinese artist who experiments with different art forms and who actively uses social media to present himself. His artworks often explicitly address human rights issues and are widely acknowledged by renowned arts institutions (Hancox, 2014). For example, he has criticized the Chinese government with his Sunflower Seeds installation at the Tate Museum in London in 2010 (Cumming, 2010) and brought attention to the Syrian refugee crisis through installations with discarded life jackets worn by refugees (Berdan, 2020). Furthermore, he was detained in 2010 by Chinese authorities and what followed was a long dispute over alleged tax evasion (Judkis, 2011).

Jafar Panahi, fifth, is an Iranian film director whose films have been banned in Iran due to their critical depiction of life and women's rights in Iran (Donadio, 2015). He was arrested and sentenced to jail in 2010, and subsequently banned from producing movies. This has sparked attention from various famous artists within the world of cinema, who pleaded for his release (Brooks, 2012). While under house arrest later, he still directed films, some of which were smuggled out of the country to film festivals in Europe where they received several prizes (Brody, 2015).

Pussy Riot, finally is a Russian punk activist group, known for hit-and-run art performances in which they protested against the Russian government and institutions of power. In 2012, some members faced legal prosecution after they staged a performance in a Moscow church (Smyth & Soboleva, 2013) and spent two years in jail. Ever since, the

group has made various appearances on TV, in concerts and in exhibitions throughout the world. They made the cover of Time magazine in their characteristic and colorful ski masks in a series of 100 Women of the Year (Time, 2020).

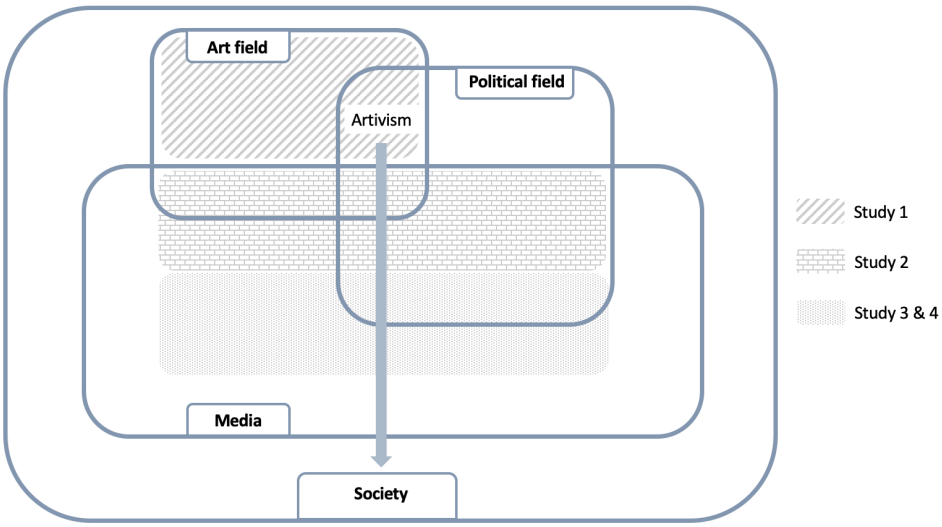
1.3.2 Four studies, four methods

In this dissertation, I conduct four empirical studies to trace the evaluation of artivism within different domains (see Figure 1.2). These studies are interrelated in the sense that they each cover a distinct context in which artivism is evaluated, together covering the reception of artivism more generally. To provide such a comprehensive understanding, however, requires a combination of research methods that take into account both the qualitative and quantitative dimensions to the reception of artivism within the art field, among news media and among social media audiences. Below, therefore, I briefly elaborate on the methodological underpinnings of the interrelated empirical studies in this dissertation.

The surge of – and attention to social engagement in the arts as well as the policy changes that perhaps catalyzed it, imply at least some level of institutionalization of social engagement in the contemporary arts field. In the first study (Chapter 2), therefore, I analyzed the evaluation of social engagement in general and artivism in particular within the art field. More concretely, I conducted fifteen in-depth qualitative interviews with curators in the Netherlands, UK and US. The interviews are semi-structured and analyzed through a grounded theory approach to tap into the gatekeeping and evaluative practices and decisions of curators. As most practices of cultural intermediaries are perceived to be based on particular motives and explanations (Baumann, 2007b; Janssen & Verboord, 2015), grounded theory helps to shed light on curators' professional views on – and experiences with different forms and modes of social engagement within the arts. If indeed social engagement has come to permeate the art field, it can be expected that curators include

matters of a social rather than strictly artistic nature in their evaluation of socially engaged art.

Figure 1.2: Schematic model depicting the three interrelated studies.



In the second study (Chapter 3), I looked at the newspaper coverage of artivists in terms of both content and magnitude. On the one hand, newspaper coverage plays an important role within the arts as art journalists and art critics, like curators, function as cultural intermediaries who select, evaluate and hence shape the perception of art (Janssen, Kuipers & Verboord, 2008). On the other hand, newspaper coverage plays an important role in politics as newspapers constitute a principal platform through which information about society is communicated and consumed (Esser & Strömbäck, 2014). As such, newspapers play a key role in the legitimation of art and in shaping public opinion (Purhonen, Heikkilä & Hazir, 2017), both of which are relevant for research into social engagement in the arts. Newspaper coverage therefore constitutes a good measure of societal relevance in the broader society. More concretely, in this study I conducted a computerized content analysis of over 2,000 newspaper articles from both quality and popular newspapers

from the Netherlands, the UK and the US. The analysis focuses specifically on the newspaper sections in which newspaper coverage on artivists is published and the context in which they are presented content-wise. The computerized content analysis therefore borders between a qualitative and quantitative approach and sheds light on how both the art and activism of artivism are received within and beyond the art field.

Beyond the confines of the art field, in the third study (Chapter 4), I analyzed the reception of artivists among the broader public. For the last few years, social media platforms have come to constitute empirical windows to study audience reception on a relatively large scale. These platforms constitute communicative spaces that afford ordinary people in society to engage in politics through everyday political talk (Vromen, Xenos & Loader, 2015). The content on social media platforms, therefore, provides insight into how people talk about social issues, such as politics and activism. This is particularly true for Twitter, which people in mainstream society have come to use for sharing their views and opinions (Hogan, 2010). Furthermore, even though connective social media platforms such as Twitter are highly characterized by their users reproducing and repurposing meaning (Mortensen, 2017), the Twittersphere constitutes a communicative space where a fairly large proportion of ordinary people in society openly exchange ideas that are relevant to politics in an everyday fashion (Larsson & Moe, 2011). In this study, therefore, I collected over two million tweets in order to analyze the media audience reception of the artivist cases on a relatively large scale. I employed the method of topic modelling to uncover the most dominant meaningful latent themes (DiMaggio, Nag & Blei, 2013) within this large dataset of short texts. Furthermore, I combined this topic modelling analysis with semantic network analysis to help visualize and interpret the results. While topic modelling bridges the quantitative and the qualitative – preserving hermeneutic meaning, the interpretation of the results remains challenging. By combining topic modelling with semantic network analysis, I aim to "provide a systematic method of

focusing qualitative microscopes within the increasingly overwhelming world of big data" (Bail, 2014: 474).

Finally, in the fourth study of this dissertation (Chapter 5), I further zoom in on a subset of the Twitter data that was collected in the previous, third study. Many of the tweets that were collected (but omitted) as part of the third study originate from popular culture celebrities. This is not surprising as social engagement has found its way to popular culture as well and as some of the artist cases in this dissertation receive elaborate news and social media attention. Indeed, popular culture celebrities easily pick up those issues that guarantee further media attention to the extent that celebrity advocacy has come to play an important role in politics (Thrall et al., 2008). It is interesting, therefore, to further investigate the extent in which popular culture celebrities engaged with the artivist cases that are central to this dissertation, including their causes. The fourth study, therefore, consists of a computerized content analysis of close to a thousand tweets by over three hundred popular culture celebrities. Similar to the second study, I conducted a computerized content analysis to analyze how celebrities talk about artivists, while differentiating between different types and degrees of celebrity.

1.4 Academic and societal contribution

With this dissertation, I provide several contributions, both academically and societally. As I already alluded to above, first, research into the increasing prevalence of social engagement in the arts remains largely anecdotal, primarily conceptual and oftentimes monodisciplinary. Systematic and comparative studies into the reception of artivism, then, remain rare, even though this is a prerequisite for understanding how social engagement has come to permeate the art field. Many scholars engage in conceptual discussions to explain how art and social engagement are combined, whether the latter pertains to community work or activism, and illustrate their arguments on the basis of anecdotal examples. Although this is valuable in and of itself, most work overlooks

how those who produce works of art become accepted artists and how those who engage in political activism become accepted political actors. In this dissertation, therefore, I take a more interdisciplinary approach in order to provide a more comprehensive and systematic analysis of the extent to which social engagement in general and artivism in particular travel from the art sphere to the broader society. Theoretically, therefore, I draw on literature from the humanities, sociology of culture, political science and media studies. In this way, I attempt to provide a model that takes into account the art field and the political field, as well as the role of media. This model thereby explains how an artist who engages in political activism becomes an artivist through the attribution of artistic status and societal impact rather than through merely their artivism itself.

Empirically, third, this dissertation provides important contributions to the study of arts and culture, particularly in the field of sociology of culture. As Roose, Roose and Daenekindt (2018) noted, more attention is needed for the everyday cultural practices of meaning-making by artistic actors. By interviewing curators and analyzing newspaper coverage of artivism, meaning-making processes in the arts are central in this dissertation. In addition, cultural sociology research into newspaper coverage of the arts often focuses primarily on quality newspapers (e.g. Berkers, Verboord & Weij, 2014; Janssen, Kuipers & Verboord, 2008; Purhonen, Heikkilä & Hazir, 2017). In this dissertation, however, I contrast quality newspapers to popular newspapers. Even though the former are still often understood to play an important role in shaping public opinion (Champagne, 2005), the latter often enjoy a much higher circulation and therefore reach much more people in society.

Methodologically, fourth, this dissertation employs computational methods to further develop the formal study of culture "to capture, analyze, and understand cultural patterns" (Edelman & Mohr, 2018: 1). With the emergence of the digital humanities, it became evident that innovative computational methods have much to offer. Yet, these methods have only recently found their way into the sociology of culture, which remains "theory-rich and methods poor" (DiMaggio, Nag & Blei,

2013: 571). They offer new ways to analyze data that is commonly collected by sociologists, such as how symbolic boundaries can be studied through automated text-classification methods (Bail, 2014) or, more empirically, the analysis of literary fiction into the relationship between author gender and literary themes (Jockers & Mimno, 2013). In this light, this dissertation aims to contribute to demonstrating the value of computational methods in the study of arts and culture by showing how these can be employed on what kind of data and, epistemologically, by demonstrating the type of knowledge that they can tap into.

In relation to this, fifth, I aim to contribute to bridging the traditional divide between qualitative and quantitative approaches within sociology of culture, through my choice of both methods and data. I combine both qualitative and quantitative methods and employ computational methods that go beyond the mere surface level analysis of traditional quantitative methods. Topic modelling, for example, allows for the analysis of the relationality of meaning by analyzing latent themes within large bodies of textual data (DiMaggio, Nag & Blei, 2013). The collected textual data, furthermore, except from the interview data, constitute a population rather than a sample: all tweets and newspaper articles in which the artivist cases are mentioned were collected. In such datasets, the researcher can easily navigate, in a meaningful way, back and forth between the individual and the collective – the individual data points and their aggregate (Latour, 2010). Converging quality and quantity in this way, allows the researcher to retrieve meaningful findings from distant reading (Burdick et al., 2012). In other words, throughout this dissertation I contribute to demonstrating how large textual corpora are available to and useful for social scientists.

In terms of societal relevance, sixth, public opinion towards the arts too often seems to be strongly rooted in the idea that the arts, and hence everyone involved in the arts, serve no other purpose than themselves. Political science studies, indicatively, have extensively analyzed the role of news media in activism (e.g. Cottle, 2008) but often overlook the political value of arts and culture. More anecdotally, this disregard for the

arts became visible recently during the global crisis following the COVID-19 outbreak. Many governments were quick to respond by reserving considerable budgets with the sole purpose to ameliorate the economic damage that lockdown policies caused. In the Netherlands, the arts and culture sector was one of the first to be severely damaged, which caused a strong increase in unemployment. Yet, when the Dutch government announced financial support to the arts and culture sector, public debate quickly revolved around whether this sector was valuable enough to receive such support vis-à-vis other economic sectors (Burghoorn, 2020). In other countries in Europe, where the art field relies relatively strongly on governmental funding, similar discussions emerged (Dickson, 2020). By conducting research into how political engagement from the art field travels to the broader society, I contribute to demonstrating that this view of the art field as primarily preoccupied with itself and lacking value outside of this alleged confinement is outdated and harmful.

CHAPTER 2
CURATORIAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE ARTS

2.1 Introduction

The surge of various forms of socially engaged art implies at least some level of institutionalization of social engagement in the contemporary arts field. As mentioned before, renowned arts events, such as Documenta and the Venice Biennale, eagerly put the spotlight on a variety of social and political issues (Kompatsiaris, 2014). Furthermore, cultural policies in Western democracies increasingly emphasize social and instrumental value (see for example Belfiore & Bennett, 2008). Focusing on the artists and their artworks, however, Tunali (2017) contends that socially engaged artworks compromise aesthetic value for the sake of social change and only gain artistic status when they take on an exchange value that is removed from its political intent. Mullin (2009) similarly maintains that some art critics either concede that art should not be produced for political change or they largely ignore the artistic value of political artworks by mainly focusing on their political or activist intent.

Such disagreements beg the question how different types of criteria are employed to evaluate artworks. Are aesthetic criteria still predominant over the assessment of social impact or relevance? And are

these evaluative spheres seen as conflicting or can they strengthen one another? The body of literature on contemporary socially engaged art lacks systematic empirical analysis of legitimating processes of social engagement within the art sphere. If contemporary artists are indeed increasingly evaluated on the bases of social rather than – or in addition to – artistic criteria, this should be visible among cultural intermediaries, particularly because they signal and classify what is good or bad art (Verboord, 2010). Little empirical work has been done with regards to the evaluation of socially engaged art by cultural intermediaries, however, while the latter have become increasingly important in the legitimation of artworks and artists (O'Neill, 2007). More knowledge is needed, therefore, about the criteria employed and boundaries drawn by those actors within the art field who work in galleries, museums, art shows and other art institutions. As Hagberg (2008: XI) states: "[…] ethics and aesthetics aren't in any generic sense one - but nor are they two."

This chapter, therefore, applies insights from cultural sociology on boundary work and from current debates in the humanities on the topic of social engagement in the arts. More specifically, this entails a study into how curators in the arts use social engagement as a criterion in their evaluative practices and how such evaluations have come to replace or supplement aesthetic evaluation. I attempt to answer this question through in-depth qualitative interviews.

2.2 Curators and boundary work

Very generally speaking, curators can be considered cultural intermediaries who connect, like brokers, artists to other actors in the art field (Velthuis, 2005) and to the consumer of cultural goods. As such, they are perceived to be experts who are aware of the cultural codes that determine whether artists and artworks are granted artistic value (Bourdieu, 1993). They are therefore in the position to attribute artistic value to cultural goods and producers (Bourdieu, 1984; DiMaggio, 1987). Through boundary work (Lamont & Fournier, 1992) curators

therefore classify artists and their artistic expressions in their main professional practices, involving the organization of exhibitions and displaying expert knowledge on the basis of which they select artworks and artists for exhibitions (Balzer, 2014).

Throughout the twentieth century, curators attained autonomy as professional experts with training in art history and museology, making them particularly qualified to decide which artworks and artists should be selected for display and whose work deserved serious interpretation (Lachmann, Pain & Gauna, 2014). They provide these services for a wide range of art institutions, primarily art museums, galleries and biennials. Since art exhibitions and events have become key platforms through which contemporary art and artists are presented, curatorial practices have become particularly important in the distribution and evaluation of art (O'Neill, 2007). Even more so, with the increased popularity of biennales and their focus on social engagement through art exhibitions (Acord, 2010), it can be argued that the role of curators has become so prominent that they sometimes transcend the cultural organization for - or artist with whom they work (Balzer, 2014). Indeed, in the ever-changing art field, curatorial practices have come to include the role of creator and even political activist in relation to organizing and maintaining exhibitions (Arnold, 2014).

The role of curators, therefore, has become so prevalent throughout the art field that artists today need them to get their work presented to the world and give meaning to it. This is particularly interesting for socially engaged art and artists, as curators are expected to draw boundaries between the extent and type of social engagement that they accept within the arts. Since social engagement in the arts can range from more community-based projects (Bishop, 2012) to activist work (Danko, 2018), there will undoubtedly be boundaries visible among curators in which forms and degrees of social engagement are accepted in the arts and which are not. Whether they perceive of socially engaged art as compromising artistic value in favor of the aim for social change (Tunali, 2017) or ignore its artistic value (Mullin, 2009), curators draw explicit

and implicit symbolic boundaries by including and excluding different modes of social engagement in their professional curatorial work.

2.2.1 Art beyond aesthetics

In their classification and evaluation of socially engaged art, curators base their curatorial practices on particular motives and explanations (Baumann, 2007; Janssen & Verboord, 2015). They are therefore expected to draw boundaries to denote what they consider to be art and what they perhaps consider to a form of social engagement or activism that they no longer see as art.

If we accept that social engagement is in itself more of an ethical than an aesthetic stance, we can start to explain how ethics have come to re-enter art. In outlining the shift from modernist idealism to postmodern criticism, Bourriaud (2002, 13) argues that "the role of artworks is no longer to form imaginary and utopian realities, but to actually be ways of living and models of action within the existing real". While Bourriaud stresses the role of urbanization in this development, it does bring back the idea that "[a]rt is the place that produces a specific sociability" (Bourriaud 2002: 16). Exploring alternative forms of sociability rather than fostering sustained community building, Bourriaud clearly signals that art is increasingly dealing with social issues and derives part of its value from doing so.

In the wake of Bourriaud, others recently engaged with the idea that art enables social engagement. Rancière (2009) problematizes the type of art that is geared towards social change through societally ameliorative practices, such as art projects that substitute or complement social work. This type of art becomes indiscernible from social practices and for Rancière (2009: 44) "eliminates itself as a separate reality" by reproducing the values and state of affairs they initially tend to ameliorate or change. Instead, he defines the concept of aesthetics as constituting an autonomous realm of experience, without any privileged medium, in which art achieves its political potential by creating a space from where its audience is able to reconfigure its understanding of the

world. Even though he shies away from the type of art that socially engages directly, he maintains that art today primarily creates situations rather than objects. Bishop departs in the same way by emphasizing that the artist produces situations and through art's autonomy artists are able to initiate models for social change in their artistic practices (Bishop, 2012: 27). She therefore defines participatory art as the type of art that activates its audience, rather than merely demanding passive spectatorship, and hence as constituting a "collective space of shared social engagement" (Bishop, 2012: 275).

The question to be addressed here is whether ethical considerations should play a role in aesthetic evaluations of works of art. Today we find decreasing support for the modernist or formalist viewpoint that ethical assessment is irrelevant to aesthetic assessment. Artworks often deliberately elicit moral responses, making their ethics part and parcel of the art itself and therefore relevant in the evaluation of such works (Gaut 2013). That does not mean that ethical and aesthetic valuations need to align: it is also conceivable that our moral disapproval is needed to achieve a certain aesthetic or dramatic effect. In any case, ethical engagement in art cannot be seen as existing independently of aesthetics. It should be considered as integral to the work, but according to Bishop one can also carry this too far whenever "discourse […] has focused mainly on the artist's process and intentions, or the project's socially ameliorative effects, to the neglect of the work's aesthetic impact" (Roche 2006: 202).

Thus, socially engaged art must find a balance between the different domains (ethics and aesthetics) it navigates. These coincide with what Bishop (2012) refers to as an artistic and social discourse. For some, the utter autonomy of art is still paramount, implying that only its aesthetics matter in judging works of art. Curators who maintain this discourse would shy away from ethics and instead advocate the type of art that questions established systems of value through its very autonomy. For others, art without a socially relevant 'message' is less valuable, if not decadent for refusing to address social injustice. Those who maintain this

social discourse advocate the type of art that is ameliorative to society through its socially engaged artistic practices. In fact, "the significant increase of socially engaged practices in late twentieth-century art […] foregrounds art as a social/cultural encounter" (Hjorth & Sharp 2014: 128) and "the arrival of artivism took a new look at the old concepts by fighting the mercantilist and elitist status of artistic activity" (Aladro-Vico, Jivkova-Semova & Bailey, 2018).

This contrast between aesthetics and ethics, however, is not a matter of one or the other. Empirically there are indications of both discourses in art criticism, where a more social discourse is found to be particularly present fairly recently (Roose, Roose & Daenekindt, 2018). For some, then, social engagement is a crucial element of contemporary art, while for others it is not. The position one takes here obviously depends on how people conceptualize the role and meaning of art, which in turn will be affected by societal conditions.

2.2.2 Curators in cross-national context

The art field today reaches beyond national contexts and has a much more globalized appeal (Quemin, 2006). I therefore study the role of social engagement in the arts in three countries: the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States. Since cultural policies are seen to catalyze social engagement in the arts (Bishop, 2012) but differ per country, I will briefly elaborate on how the three countries differ in terms of the position of the arts in each. More concretely, each country can be placed on a continuum from extensive to limited cultural policies to support arts and culture.

The Netherlands, first, has a history of cultural policy and funding to support arts and culture. The Dutch government spends a relatively large amount of money[1] and recognizes the important role of arts and culture, particularly for matters of social cohesion and inclusion (Delhaye, 2008, 2018; Van Eijck, 2018). Cultural policy measures are implemented and funding is distributed through a variety of funding bodies and art councils and through a central governmental department. Even though the funding

bodies operate largely independently from the state, the Netherlands can be characterized as an architect state (Chartrand & McCaughey, 1989) with regards to arts and culture: the Dutch government is able to exert some level of influence on artistic standards and what is expected from artists and cultural organizations in return for public funding.

Cultural policy in the UK, second, is implemented primarily through arm's length bodies such as the Arts Council England. In the UK, however, public funding for arts and culture is less than in the Netherlands[2]. Furthermore, UK cultural policy primarily emphasizes the instrumental role of arts and culture (Belfiore, 2004). This instrumental role, however, is often understood narrowly in primarily economic terms (Belfiore, 2012), for example in its focus on urban regeneration rather than modes of social engagement. As such, the UK can be characterized more as a patron state (Chartrand & McCaughey, 1989) with regards to arts and culture in that the UK government acknowledges the importance of support to arts and culture but leaves the decision as to which artists and organizations receive support primarily to arm's length arts and culture councils.

The US, third, has a history of primarily incentivizing private support to the arts. There is a long but strong belief that the arts should be both created and enjoyed privately (McWilliams, 1985) rather than supported by the government. Public spending on arts and culture is therefore much less than it is in the Netherlands and UK[3]. Indicatively, the only prominent arts council in the US – the National Endowment for the Arts – has seen severe cuts in its budget while the US government primarily stimulates private funding to the arts by foundations, organizations and individuals (Strom, 2010). Governmental cultural policy in the US is therefore often considered relatively uncoordinated as it is decentralized among several national and local agencies (Schuster, 2010). This makes the US primarily a facilitator of the arts (Chartrand & McCaughey, 1989), with little state intervention in the US arts and culture sector on both a national and more local level and with much emphasis and a more elaborate infrastructure for private support.

It is important to emphasize that these three state characterizations are ideal-typical. In recent years, Dutch and UK state funding for the arts has seen drastic cuts. There are, furthermore, differences in the way the Dutch, UK and US governments define arts and culture in their cultural policies. For example, the budget for arts and culture in the Netherlands includes funding for heritage while that of the UK includes funding for public libraries. Nevertheless, if we take the historical context into account and if funding for heritage and public libraries were taken out of the equation, it is safe to assume that the relative difference between the three countries would still exist.

2.3 Research design

Acord (2010), in her research on curators, emphasizes the importance of studying how and why people do what they do over what people do. This research, therefore, draws on qualitative, semi-structured interviews as these allow the researcher to access individuals' attitudes and values in relation to particular subjects (Silverman, 2013). Interviews work particularly well in tapping into the lived world of participants (Kvale, 1994). As such, they allow us to better understand how curators experience contemporary artistic developments, how they give meaning to social engagement in the arts and how this plays a role in their day-to-day professional practices. In other words, through qualitative in-depth interviews I aim to bring to light the criteria curators apply and the concomitant boundaries they draw when it comes to the acceptability, or perhaps desirability, of social engagement in the arts.

The sample for the semi-structured interviews will consist of fifteen curators, who have been selected based on their professional (self-)identification as curator within art organizations for which they work or have worked. They have been selected in three relatively large but non-capital cities – five curators in each – from the Netherlands, the UK and the US respectively. Although these differ in important respects, as all cities ultimately do, they have in common that they harbor an arts

and culture sector that (1) has both a national and international appeal, (2) is strongly characterized by contemporary art and (3) is closely related to the overall identity of the city. First, a list of potential candidates was composed, based on information available from websites of well-known and accessible cultural institutions from each city. These involve galleries, museums, exhibition spaces and similar arts institutions and venues. The potential candidates have been asked to participate in an interview and, if needed, each participant was asked to suggest other cultural intermediaries who might be willing to participate in the study. Participants were selected in such a way as to maintain balance in curators' diversity in relation to art genres and artistic practices, until the sample snowballed to five interviewees of each city.

Interviews were held both face-to-face and over Skype and Google Hangouts in 2019[4]. Although face-to-face interviews are often seen as the uncontested standard for interviews, online synchronous video interviews, such as over Skype, are by no means a secondary choice. Not only do Skype interviews minimize costs and overcome geographical distance, Deakin and Wakefield (2014) show how participants themselves often preferred the flexibility of being interviewed online over face-to-face interviews. The latter requires much stricter scheduling and often leads to the exclusion of the more introverted or less loose-tongued participants (Iacono, Symonds & Brown, 2016). Furthermore, establishing rapport, which is key in conducting interviews, is not perceived to be more difficult or more problematic for synchronous video interviews than it is for face-to-face interviews (Iacono, Symonds & Brown, 2016). The recruitment of participants has been the same for both interview methods. On average the interviews lasted just over an hour at 71 minutes.

The interviews were semi-structured, focusing primarily on the curators' own experiences and views in relation to the type of art and artists they have worked with, cultural policy and funding for the arts and questions of value and impact. For the purpose of anonymization, a self-chosen pseudonym or randomly generated name was used in the process

of analyzing the interviews. Each interview was transcribed verbatim and analyzed through a grounded theory approach. As such, the verbatim interviews will be analyzed through a process of open and focused coding (Charmaz, 2006) to tap into the gatekeeping and evaluative practices and decisions of curators. As most practices of cultural intermediaries are perceived to be based on particular motives and explanations (Baumann, 2007; Janssen & Verboord, 2015), grounded theory helps to shed light on curators' professional views on - and experiences with different forms and modes of social engagement within the arts.

2.4 Results

I have discerned three attitudes among the interviewed curators, which signify their approach to social engagement in the arts as professional art curators. These attitudes differ from each other primarily in relation to their views on and experiences with (1) curatorial practices, (2) evaluation of art, (3) the value of art, (4) the impact of (socially engaged) art and (5) funding for the arts. These attitudes form a continuum from aesthetic, to acquiescent, to political in relation to social engagement in art. Some curators appear to sometimes switch between attitudes, but this only happens from one attitude to a neighboring attitude (i.e. from aesthetic to acquiescent or from acquiescent to political, but never from aesthetic to political). Cross-national differences, in turn, are somewhat thin but appear throughout the three attitudes. An aesthetic attitude is primarily visible among UK curators, while a political attitude is predominantly visible among US curators. Dutch curators, in turn, primarily display both acquiescent and political attitudes.

2.4.1 The aesthetics-first attitude

The first curatorial attitude I distinguish is the aesthetics-first curator. Curators who display this attitude would acknowledge different forms and examples of social engagement throughout the arts around them, but

remain somewhat at a distance themselves. As such, they do not necessarily verbalize a clear and explicit preference or rejection with regards to social engagement in any form, but give preference to aesthetic over social and ethical considerations in their own evaluation of art and therefore maintain, in Bishop's (2012) terms, an artistic discourse. Matters of social engagement and activism are not important criteria in their professional curatorial practices to the extent that aesthetics-first curators consider an aesthetic element to be crucial for something to be considered art.

The curatorial practices of aesthetics-first curators, indeed, do not seem to revolve predominantly around socially engaged or activist artists, artworks or art practices, although they would not necessarily exclude these in their professional work. They would oftentimes not describe themselves as clearly politically involved or engaged, even though they stress that the organizations they curate for will sometimes include socially engaged works. Kathy, a UK-based curator working with graffiti and street art, frames any kind of social engagement present in her organization as something that is rather inherent to their practices rather than something that is intentionally done: 'I mean we do a lot of shows for the local community, so for us that's quite normal, graffiti really lends itself quite well to connect with the local community, particularly with like the younger generations.' Tim, a freelance curator and a part-time curator for an established cultural organization in the Netherlands where he primarily arranges interactive events such as workshops and symposia in relation to running exhibitions, does recognize the growing importance of social engagement in the arts when stating:

You know, of course in the last few years a lot has been done with postcolonialism, decolonizing, with heritage, with responsibility, you know, Western responsibility in that, with gender, quite a few artistic research projects […].

Although he might be interested in these topics, he himself remains at a distance and does not see himself as being 'busy with politics.' Instead, for him 'everything is already about function and utility […] it is also interesting that there is art that doesn't do that.' Strongly reminiscent of Rancière's (2009) notion of aesthetics, art for Tim has value particularly as a separate domain.

This way of positioning oneself within the contemporary arts appears among others as well. Nathalie, who has worked as a freelance curator for roughly twenty years in the UK already, points to similar socially engaged topics and emphasizes that art exhibitions about such topic are 'all over the place.' In her own work, however, she sees it as a 'challenge' to find and work with artists who remain 'neutral.' This might lead to 'opening up' certain conversations but the artwork and 'how it looks' remains central in her curatorial work. For Emma, who has run a non-profit space for emerging artists and has now been a gallery director and curator for almost four years in the US, refers to her own practices as 'the total opposite of like everything that's happening currently' and distances herself from the increasingly visible socially engaged artists and art organizations. Her comment does suggest that socially engaged art is rather ubiquitous in the contemporary US.

Indicatively, in their evaluation and description of artworks and artists they have recently worked with or particularly liked, these curators primarily address artistic rather than social or political elements, such as artistic autonomy, artistic value or artistic approaches. In this way, they draw boundaries by addressing elements and contexts which for them are important characteristics of art. For Kathy, artworks need to have something special and she provides an example of a street artist who created 3D street art based on a popular videogame that actively engaged children to take photos and play with different angles and perspectives. It was 'nothing political, but it added something and did afford this level of engagement that you wouldn't normally see that often.' Engagement here, however, relates primarily to the production of social interactive

situations among an audience rather than social engagement in relation to social or societal issues.

Similarly, Janet, who works predominantly with architecture in the UK to encourage better design, emphasizes artistic criteria when discussing the evaluation of art. She describes that the type of architecture she finds most 'captivating' is 'when you hear the architect speak there is what I would consider an artistic way that they have approached, yeah that is inspiring in itself.' Even when the aesthetics-first curator would talk more specifically about socially engaged or activist art, they would stress the symbolic and artistic value of art as a separate domain quite explicitly. Tim draws such a boundary when describing why something is no longer art for him:

I work in an art organization and that's where my heart lies, you know, so if it becomes purely a political discussion then it also becomes a question of what, why would we do that here? Then you can also do that in [debate center], you know. But I think it is about, you know, about imagination, or the symbolic space and also the possibilities that this gives, you know, […], to have this conversation through imagination.

Robert, who is a US-based curator experienced in working with local, young and upcoming artists, similarly points to predominantly artistic elements in describing the kind of art that might 'move' him, such as different 'layers of colors and shapes' and an artwork's ability to 'draw ' him in to 'stop and look more closely.'

Whenever the value of art becomes a topic of discussion, the aesthetics-first curators remain quite reserved in attributing any kind of function or utility to art. Emma is prepared to agree with the description of art as a tool to address social issues when this comes up during the interviews, but soon adds that this is 'not an area of interest' to her. For Tim, in turn, the value of art is not necessarily visible 'at the most intellectual level' but at the level of stimulating people to think critically. He mentions, for example, how art teaches children and youths to

question the world and makes them realize that they are 'allowed' to think for themselves. For both Janet and Nathalie, the value of art seems to lie most clearly in the idea of artists being able to view things differently. Nathalie explains:

What I love about artists is that they really, they are capable of looking at the world through different glasses than others. It's like they see something, they contemplate it and then they translate it into something that appeals to the eye but also to the mind.

In the end, such views remain rather general and not specifically aimed at social engagement or to a particular affordance or utility. This is especially characteristic for aesthetics-first curators because for them the arts obviously have a high value but they refrain from either clearly defining that value or reducing it to some concrete utility.

This somewhat reserved attitude is also strongly visible whenever the curators talk about the (potential) impact that art can have in society. Tim considers a lot of art unfinished, of which it is hard to determine what the impact is other than in 'art-historical value, or artistic or creative value.' He's not really 'busy' with societal impact and critically reflects on the concept of impact as something that is hard to determine. For Janet the question of impact is an interesting one seeing that she works with architecture. She emphasizes the 'environmental and sustainability edge' as being more important than something just being 'a pretty building' but quickly adds that 'it does help when it looks good.' She sees her organization as operating primarily as a 'broker' in 'bringing people together' but maintains that impact otherwise is really hard to measure. Overall, indeed, none of the curators who primarily display this aesthetics-first attitude elaborately discuss the matter of impact. Indicative of their reserved approach, it seems as though impactful art would make it instrumental at the expense of its artistic value.

Finally, the aesthetics-first curator's views on the role of funding in the arts highlight responsibility without infringing too much upon artistic

autonomy. Tim acknowledges that publicly funded arts organizations are required to act responsibly, but quickly adds that he doesn't think that 'every art project then has to be societally engaged' and that 'there is beauty in art that dares to be autonomous.' Emma similarly stresses the importance of acknowledging that funding oftentimes comes with certain requirements, in her case primarily involving attracting a wider audience. She doesn't feel, however, that her 'hands are really tied' and highlights that appeal to a wider audience is part of the mission statement of her organization. It's her aim to give a platform to creative youths who are engaged in graffiti to 'further develop that creativity' in a more 'constructive' way 'for the community.' Janet would talk about how funding often requires some form of impact but emphasizes that this is often 'just incidental and not necessarily funded.' The aesthetics-first curators, then, often refer to the reoccurring demand from funding institutions to engage with particular issues, such as attracting a wider audience, but connect this more often to artistic goals rather than to specific and pressing social issues.

2.4.2 The political attitude

Political curators, on the opposite side of the spectrum, are much more vocal and pronounced in that they would maintain that art and social engagement are inseparable from each other and that art can bring change to society. They are political in a somewhat normative sense by expressing the conviction that social engagement should be a core element of the arts. Political curators, therefore, express highly critical views of both the current art field and society in general. Because of this, they also tend to give less attention to artistic matters and to works of art as static objects. Instead, the arts for the political curator are much more about projects and processes through which social engagement can occur.

In terms of the role of the curator, political curators see it as their job to address social and political matters and to seek social change. Isabel, who has ten years of experience as an independent curator in the Netherlands and recently got a position as a curator at an established art

organization, points to social engagement as a core element of her curatorial practices:

Yeah I, that is actually something that I continuously, like a sort of curator who is occupied with political topics, that has always been, that is a sort of bridge that influences my work in a certain way and my thoughts on what it means to organize exhibitions […], how I want to talk about what kind of society it is and how art reflects on that […].

Isabel considers herself to be an activist and has 'one foot' in the field of academia, which functions for her as a 'connection of several worlds' so that she knows what is going on in the 'wider cultural field'. In a rather similar manner, Alice describes herself as a curator of contemporary art, specifically interested in living artists and 'black art' by focusing on 'black communities' and African-American culture as something that she finds 'underrepresented' in the arts in the US. She says: 'I wouldn't necessarily refer to myself as an activist, but my work does border on activism.' Social engagement, furthermore, can also be part of their job description. This is the case for Angela, for example, who has recently graduated from an art school and is now hired as a curator at an established art institution in the Netherlands. She describes how in her new job she has the responsibility to make the organization 'more accessible, make it more inclusive, make it more diverse' by focusing specifically on a 'diverse target group' and by moving 'away from the standard arts and culture people.' As such, political curators do not seem to draw clear boundaries between art and social engagement, including activism.

In their evaluation of art, artistic criteria do not appear to be dominant. Angela describes herself during her art school education as 'anything but aesthetic' and isn't interested in the aesthetics in her current position as a curator, saying that activism for her is 'more valuable' than aesthetics. At one point she says: 'It doesn't interest me one bit how it looks' and sighs when she recalls how colleagues would be 'stressed out' about the

aesthetic justification of her projects. Instead, she primarily addresses non-artistic matters such as 'the connections that you make along the way' and 'the exchange of knowledge and skills and interests'. US based curators tend to display a similar distance to matters of artistic concern. For US curator Justin, who is primarily concerned with artists that address climate change and sustainability issues, the most 'interesting' artworks are those that result in 'ongoing discussions' and employ novel ways to:

depict these very serious issues of how our lifestyle harms animals, or forests and the ocean and people living in poorer areas with a lot of woods and wildlife, in very captivating ways, right. I think artists are capable of addressing those issues in very creative ways, you know, if they are not too abstract of course, but through all kinds of projects.

Indeed, artistic expressions addressing climate change in an activist manner are found to be effective in both addressing and imagining new ways of living to counter the issue at stake (Cozen, 2013). By evaluating artistic practices along these lines, political curators strongly emphasize ethical rather than artistic criteria in their aesthetic evaluations. Isabel, similarly, takes some distance from static art objects and instead focuses strongly on the artist. She repeatedly expresses her concern that activism in the arts seems to be primarily in 'fashion' without mentioning artworks or art projects. For her, a key element to social engagement and activism in the arts is a level of sincerity in terms of lived experiences. She praises an artist who speaks out of 'a lived feminist and queer approach' and wants to put such lived experiences 'on the map' while criticizing other artists for 'ethno-queer marketing' or 'self-exoticizing marketing' when they merely brand themselves with such experiences.

For the political curator, then, the value of art lies in the way it reflects on society and serves as an important space to address contemporary political and social questions. For them, artistic practices create a space for social engagement and activism. Along the lines of Bishop's (2012)

notions of participatory art and social discourse, political curators seek out the type of artistic practice that activates its audience and invites a response beyond the aesthetics of it. Angela elaborates on how art offers a space to 'break through' societal 'restraint,' which she describes as 'micro-aggression things' within society that implicitly keep people from speaking out against, for example, the government. This is similarly expressed by Rachel, a young curator in the US who refers to herself as a 'curator in diversity,' when she states:

We now have a government that slams anyone who voices even just a tiny bit of critique. But it's more difficult in the arts. As an artist, and I think also as a curator, you want to invite others to, you don't want to convince others of a certain point of view necessarily, like for example newspaper journalists, but you want to invite others to critically reflect on something. You can't slam that.

For Justin, the arts offer a 'space' to promote change when he states that through art you can 'show people in much more appealing ways' what the consequences of our 'consumerist lifestyles' are and to 'promote' other ways to 'relate to and take care of our planet.' Angela expresses a similar point of view in stating that in arts organizations there is a 'space' to 'imagine, not just the world we live in but also to offer an alternative' and to 'put things on the map' that were 'invisible' before. More generally, therefore, the value of art for the political curator is found in how the arts offer a space for social commentary on multiple of levels. Beyond mere passive enjoyment, political curators evaluate artistic practices at times based on the extent in which they offer models for social and societal change.

The political curators' ideas of impact are closely linked to their perception of the value of art and how they stay at a distance from aesthetics and art objects. In their view, the arts have impact when they operate as a space for social commentary. What seems to be implied in their ideas about value and impact is a conviction that change that occurs

in the field of art will seep through to the broader society. This is strongly expressed by Alice when she calls out to 'collaborate more with black artists' and to 'hire more black artists' in 'galleries, exhibitions, museums, the big events.' She adds:

It would be great if, you know I always say that the art of today is tomorrow's art history, so we're writing that right now and it would be great if black artists and artists from all kinds of minority backgrounds are part of that tomorrow's art history.

Rachel displays a similar conviction when stating that if change, particularly in terms of diversity, is possible in the art scene she expects the rest of society to 'catch on.' Dutch political curators, however, speak less explicitly about the question of impact. Isabel, in talking about the issue of diversity as an example, emphasizes that for her diversity is not a 'project' but something that is 'continuous.' She expresses the view that diversity is not achieved when one social group temporarily receives a 'platform.' Instead, she wants people to 'continuously think about the world we live in and continuously think about how little we think about this problem.' Along these lines too, impact is perceived similarly as a type of change that expands in time and space beyond just the arts.

Similar to their criticism of the art field in general, political curators are critical of the way cultural policy is implemented by cultural organizations and how funding is attributed. Angela, for example, is overall quite positive about cultural policy and how it initiates certain changes. In practice, however, she emphasizes how cultural organizations are primarily preoccupied with 'ticking boxes' and adhering to subsidy requirements. Instead, what she would like to see is not only change applied to artists and exhibitions, but to cultural organizations internally 'to make room for other people.' For US political curators, the criticism to arts funding is primarily aimed at corporate sponsorship. Justin pessimistically stresses that in the US, in his experience, companies often provide funding for arts organizations to 'piggyback' on the status of

such organizations. He would rather see that funding is aimed at 'stimulating radical and innovative ideas' because companies could really 'benefit' from what artists can 'bring to the table.' He remains undecided and somewhat unclear, however, in how such a funding scheme should be organized. For the political curator, then, cultural policy and arts funding revolve predominantly around intended outcomes and potential rather than artistic elements and objects.

2.4.3 The acquiescent attitude

Finally, the acquiescent curator expresses an optimistic attitude and willingness towards social engagement in the arts, while remaining reserved in their curatorial practices. As such, the acquiescent curator takes position in between the aesthetics-first and political curator. For this type of curator, social engagement is not a necessary condition of contemporary artworks, artists and artistic practices. Acquiescent curators and the organizations they work for, however, work much more often with matters of a social and political nature than aesthetics-first curators do but simultaneously refrain from the high level of socio-political engagement that political curators display.

Acquiescent curators see themselves and curators in general as being in the position to promote social engagement but are often quick to downplay their role. Emily, a UK-based curator who has worked a lot with both historic and contemporary art and has an interest particularly in British and American art, sees it as 'the role of the curator' to look at how artworks are 'framed' and how these can 'address' certain social issues. She remains somewhat reserved, however, by stating:

I think when you're working in an institution, I think you have an opportunity to push that institution to be more diverse or to engage more […]. But also you have to take into account that you are programming for an institution and they have their own set of guidelines and their exhibition policies and their own focus as well in terms of where they might sit.

Similarly, Kim, who has worked as a curator in the Netherlands up until recently and works primarily with media art, states that she indeed has worked with 'activist artists' for exhibitions, but is quick to add that those were artists who worked more 'implicitly' not necessarily to achieve change but to put 'social movements in motion.' As such, acquiescent curators primarily want to create the conditions for change to happen rather than aim for change themselves. Lindsay, who refers to herself as an arts programmer and producer curating projects and organizing exhibitions for a large cultural organization in the UK, elaborates on how all of her work is 'rooted' in 'social need' and it 'motivates' her that the work is 'socially, politically relevant' while still describing the way they do things very much as a 'creative act.'

In their evaluation of artworks and artists, the acquiescent curators would argue that art and social engagement can go together. Emily states this explicitly when she says that 'you can be an artist and an activist, I don't think these things have to be mutually exclusive.' Lindsay almost uses the same words in stating that she doesn't believe that art and activism 'need to be exclusive' and adds that 'some people have been calling themselves art activists or artivists.' Because of this, artistic criteria sometimes seem to become less important. This is expressed by Cindy, an experienced Dutch curator who was involved in initiating various cultural organizations, when she discusses a known Dutch activist artist who does not 'work with aesthetics.' Although she would have been very 'critical' about this before, she now has a lot of 'respect' for what the artist has achieved. Interestingly, however, she questions whether this artist would reach more people if his work contained more of a 'visual or aesthetic component.'

Acquiescent curators, furthermore, are less reserved in their views on the value of art than aesthetics-first curators and less explicit than political curators. For Lindsay, the arts seem to function as a space to address societal issues when she argues that the arts have a lot of 'power or potential' to think about 'big issues' in 'divergent or fresh ways.' She

points to politics becoming increasingly 'divisive' and the arts functioning as 'spaces where change can happen.' Kim seems to share this view when she describes art as a 'communication tool, to tell a story from a certain experience or perspective.' Cindy and Emily give more concrete substance to their views on the value of arts, primarily by referring to the embeddedness in underprivileged communities. Cindy refers to setting up a school program and a community editorial through which the community of the organization she initiated and curated for is more engaged and can 'react to the program.' Emily, similarly, stresses the importance of reaching 'audiences who maybe aren't accessing their institutions already'. Kim, Cindy and Lindsay all emphasize, however, that working in the arts is not a substitute for 'social work'. Kim says:

Of course you can be a socially engaged organization, but, yeah I don't know, because of course you're not a youth center, it's not a community home. There has to be art on the table, you know, you also want to show something good.

Similarly, Cindy maintains that curators and artists are not 'trained' for social work and questions whether cultural organizations are responsible for taking on societal issues such as 'cohesion, safety and that kind of stuff.' Lindsay sees a 'danger' in viewing the arts as 'replacement for things like social work.' They therefore draw a clear boundary: socially engaged art may address social issues, primarily on a more local scale, but acting on them would be a matter of social work in most cases and this is not a requirement or expectation of curators and artists. This strongly resembles Rancière's (2009) argument of artistic practices that eliminate themselves as separate artistic domain when they become indiscernible from other social practices. Acquiescent curators, therefore, particularly struggle in connecting a social and artistic discourse with regards to their evaluations of art in general and socially engaged art in particular. They applaud some level of social engagement in artistic practices and recognize the power of artistic practices to induce social

change, but for them such social criteria risk turning art into a mere social practice when they are acted upon.

This somewhat reserved attitude also translates into what acquiescent curators think of the impact of art. Kim, quite similarly, openly wonders whether something like diversity is an 'aim that you can achieve' in smaller organizations and remains conflicted about activist art on the art market. She provides an example of an experience at the home of an art collector who had a work by a known activist artist in his kitchen:

[…] and then it just hangs in the kitchen as a status symbol where everybody is sipping champagne and acting cool […], I really think that's, well maybe it's not painful, maybe it's just incredibly ironic or something. Because it's also not as if [the artist] made a lot of money of it, you know.

Kim is less critical about artists being commercially inclined, however, when she describes it being like 'blaming the vegan for wearing leather shoes, while he already does a lot more than the average person,' Even though she isn't sure about the scope of societal change that can be achieved by socially engaged or activist art, she maintains that at least it is not a 'sham'. For Cindy, impact is visible in the way art reflects society, which she explains by pointing to how art gives 'expression' to what happens in society. When the question of impact came up during the interview with Emily, however, she referred to attention most prominently, first by pointing to 'press and publicity' and 'what attracts more audiences' in general and soon after by pointing to works 'being discussed in a sort of critical sphere.'

With regards to funding, finally, acquiescent curators position themselves somewhere between approving of the influence that funding bodies can have through their funding schemes on the one hand and resisting the funding criteria that come along with those schemes on the other hand. Kim implies this when she states that as an arts organization you need to 'professionalize' if you want to secure funding, while

pointing to how her organization started out as a bottom-up initiative and puts effort into maintaining that approach. Emily, in turn, says:

It can be tricky because sometimes you feel that you are developing an application in order to fit that criteria and sometimes maybe that's not always possible as well as you like to. But I think ultimately it's actually really good to have that sort of influence and that pressure […] because […] personally I think ultimately if you're not engaging your audiences and not engaging a broad audience or wide audience then as a curator working in a gallery you're not doing your job.

Cindy elaborates on how the organization she initiated quickly became part of city-level cultural policy and how this resulted in a transition towards an audience increasingly from the community with 'bicultural backgrounds' and characterized by 'social inequality.' At the same time, she stresses that such an audience is 'hard to reach' and that a considerable part of the audience is 'already interested in arts and culture.' Like political curators, then, acquiescent curators often link cultural policy and arts funding to social matters such as attracting specific social groups. That is, however, a different way of dealing with art's social relevance than activist art is. Both have social goals, but where the former is primarily about trying to make any art accessible to the broadest possible audience, which is also generally recognized a main goal of national cultural policies, the latter is about more specific criteria pertaining to the desired social impact of critical works of art. At the same time, like aesthetics-first curators, the acquiescent ones rarely lose track of the artistic element in art.

2.5 Discussion

The aim of this paper has been to provide an important empirical contribution to the growing body of literature surrounding the topic of social engagement in the arts, by studying how curators use social

engagement as a criterion in their evaluative practices. By distinguishing between three curator attitudes, the analysis shows that there are different approaches towards social engagement in the arts among cultural intermediaries. Aesthetics-first curators, first, acknowledge an increased visibility of social engagement in the arts but question whether the art field is a suitable space to address specific social or political matters. For them to still consider socially engaged art as indeed art, any form or mode of social engagement should ultimately stand in service of aesthetic criteria. Political curators take on an opposite approach. They maintain that art should be about social engagement and tend to subjugate aesthetics to the social and political intent of artworks and artists. Political curators, therefore, draw a very different boundary and leave a lot of room for typically non-artistic matters in the arts, such as community work, activism or societal critique. Acquiescent curators, finally, position themselves somewhat in-between. They are open to some level and degree of social engagement in the arts, but do not clearly prefer or prioritize one over the other. With regards to social engagement in the arts, therefore, different degrees of acceptance exist next to each other among cultural intermediaries. Although on the one hand a strict dichotomy between a more artistic and a more social discourse in art evaluation (e.g. Bishop, 2012) is visible among some curators, others maintain a more nuanced and acquiescent attitude towards social engagement in the arts.

There is an important cross-national element here. Dutch curators, first, primarily displayed an acquiescent and political curatorial approach. This can be explained in part by looking at Dutch cultural policy, which has come to include social issues (Delhaye, 2008, 2018). Furthermore, seeing that the budget for arts funding in the Netherlands is relatively large, many of the cultural institutions that curators work for receive funding and hence are instrumental in implementing cultural policy. Interestingly enough, however, such an explanation would lead us to expect US curators to primarily display an acquiescent curatorial approach to social engagement in the arts. Although indeed two out of

five interviewed US curators are considered acquiescent, three display a political approach. In the US, however, identity politics are particularly pervasive in the arts and for its proponents political and ideological criteria are often found more decisive than aesthetic ones (De Duve, 2019; Selz, 2006). Indeed, identity politics constitutes an important theme among political curators in their discussions of the role of the arts in matters of (gender and ethnic) inequality. For political curators and particularly for the US art can no longer be neutral and requires an ideological, normative position. UK curators remain predominantly acquiescent. The UK is less of an architect and more of a patron state (Chartrand & McCaughey, 1989) and, seeing its more recent cultural policies and budget for public arts funding, perhaps today still (Belfiore, 2004, 2012). Because of this, the UK government is less capable of imposing social measures through its cultural policies than the Dutch government, while still maintaining some level of influence in comparison to the US.

These findings have two important implications. First, it could be argued that socially engaged art constitutes a distinct art movement or perhaps genre, roughly defined along the symbolic boundaries that especially the aesthetic and political curators draw. Particularly interesting, the curators interviewed here are all accepting of socially engaged art regardless of their attitude towards it in their own practices, albeit to different degrees. The pervasiveness of social and ethical considerations in their evaluative practices, particularly for political curators, indicates perhaps that curators increasingly apply heteronomous criteria in evaluating contemporary works of art. De Duve (2019: 68) has argued that the current focus on ideological content and form in the arts turns artists into "standard-bearers for a group and their works into tokens of whatever identity that group wished to project." This suggests that when social engagement is increasingly accepted within the arts, artists return to representation. Without general consensus, however, this development entails a struggle over classification. Artistic classification requires continuous enactment within the art field (Becker, 1982). What

seems to be the case and what perhaps plays out differently between different national contexts, therefore, is that curators still strongly differ in their classification of socially engaged art, be it explicit cases of activism or art that is socially embedded within a community. Although this is beyond the scope of this paper, this difference in classification could be a struggle for the symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1993) to decide on what is and what is not art. Although the findings in this paper suggest empirically that social engagement as a criterion to evaluate art is present among cultural intermediaries, more research is needed specifically into the nuanced boundaries that different cultural intermediaries draw in relation to social engagement in the arts.

Second, the type of socially engaged art that is often discussed by aesthetics-first, acquiescent and political curators, pertains to art in the form of projects more so than in the form of static objects. This resonates with Felshin (2006), for whom examples of activist art primarily take the shape of processes rather than objects or products and take place outside of the context of art world venues. The general artistic criteria that are often applied to artworks, however, often imply an art object that is characterized by aspects such as form, shape, color and depiction. These criteria cannot be applied easily to art that is process oriented. Indicatively, aesthetics-first curators tend to focus on aesthetic criteria and refer to non-art contexts specifically for artists or art projects that address social, societal or political matters. Political curators, in turn, tend to focus on how social, societal and political questions and issues can be addressed through and within the arts while general artistic criteria for them seem to be of lesser importance. This fits the approach of sociability (Bourriaud, 2002) and participation (Bishop, 2012), while Rancière's (2009) attempt to reconsider aesthetics as politically powerful through its autonomy finds little resonance with the political curatorial attitude that is most explicitly focused on achieving social change. Conceptually, Rancière (2009) makes a strong argument. In practice, however, curators are less likely to attribute political potential to artistic expressions that are geared towards social change through societally

ameliorative practices. Perhaps, therefore, social engagement is more readily associated with artistic genres such as performance art and conceptual art (Carter, 2009), which are less object-oriented and already enjoy some level of institutionalization. Furthermore, although others have differentiated between art that incorporates social content and art that is social in its form (Roose, Roose & Daenekindt, 2018), the two are still often used interchangeably. To avoid a vague and overly general definition of social engagement in the arts, research should take into account this differentiation more critically.

Footnotes

1 In 2018, the Dutch government, on a national and local level, spent roughly 0.28% (777 million euro) of total spending (277 billion) on arts and culture related institutions, organizations, events and projects (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, 2018).
2 In 2018, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport in the UK spent approximately 0.19% (1.5 billion pond) of total expenditure (813 billion pond) on arts and culture (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, 2018).
3 In 2018, total US government funding for the arts amounted to an estimated 0.03% (1.368 billion dollar) of total government spending (4.1 trillion dollar) on the federal, state and local level (Stubbs & Mullaney-Loss, 2019).
4 See Appendix A for the informed consent form used for each interview.

CHAPTER 3
NO NEWS NO USE? NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF ARTIVISM IN THE NETHERLANDS, UNITED KINGDOM AND UNITED STATES

3.1 Introduction

News media have become increasingly dominant within the fields of both art (Kuipers, Janssen & Verboord, 2008) and politics (Cook, 1998) by determining what is important (Champagne, 2005). Like curators, art journalists can be considered cultural intermediaries. They shape the perception of artists by selecting, evaluating and writing about artists and their artistic practices. When a newspaper devotes a lengthy article to a particular artist in a section devoted to arts and culture, its journalists and editors signal that the artist in question is worthy of receiving attention. This is for example visible in the following illustrative headline: *Ai Weiwei retrospective at the Hirshhorn*[1].

As such, the art journalists writing for newspapers act as cultural intermediaries by selecting and evaluating particular artists, artworks or art events (Janssen & Verboord, 2015). At the same time, newspaper coverage encompasses more than just art journalism. News media in general are often seen as determinant for the political field as well as the art field (Bourdieu, 2005). They contribute in the creation of public

opinion (Champagne, 2005) and by producing news and framing events, news journalists determine what is societally relevant (Esser & Strömbäck, 2014). For example, in the same newspaper as from the example above, in the same year, an article with the following headlines signals that the same artist is worthy of receiving attention for political rather than artistic matters: *Chinese dissident artist ends year of probation, but is still under scrutiny*[2].

This chapter, therefore, involves an analysis of how newspaper coverage of artivism differs between the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States and between quality and popular newspapers, to provide insight into the mechanisms through which artivists achieve artistic status and societal impact and what the role of their art and activism is in this.

3.2 The field of newspaper journalism

Newspaper coverage constitutes a particularly good measure for societal relevance. First, from a cultural sociology perspective, among the several media outlets that people use to consume news and that together constitute their media repertoires (Hasebrink & Popp, 2006), newspapers play a particularly important role in legitimating artists and artworks (Purhonen, Heikkilä & Hazir, 2017). Particularly in the case of elite newspapers, art journalists are perceived as cultural intermediaries whose selective and evaluative practices shape the perception of both artists and artworks (Kuipers, Janssen & Verboord, 2008). Hence, by studying newspaper coverage on art, for example, scholars have analyzed the artistic legitimacy of popular music (Van Venrooij & Schmutz, 2010), ethnic boundaries within literature (Berkers, Janssen & Verboord, 2013), the globalization of arts and culture (Janssen, Kuipers & Verboord, 2008) and changes in newspaper art reviews (Heikkilä & Gronow, 2017). Cultural journalists are driven less by audience demand than journalists from other news areas (Hovden & Kristensen, 2018) and therefore have a strong say in deciding what is and what is not art.

Second, from a political science perspective, information about society is communicated and consumed primarily through news media to the extent that they determine to a considerable degree what news is considered societally relevant (Esser & Strömbäck, 2014). As key actors in the realm of news media, newspapers and newspaper journalists take an intermediary role in the field of politics (Cook, 1998). The way in which newspapers frame events that relate to politics and activism plays an important role in how these are represented in national debates and public discourse. As such, newspapers have been found to influence the representation of election campaigns (Miller, Peake & Boulton, 2010), political scandals (Puglisi & Snyder, 2011), political protests (Oliver & Maney, 2000) and pressing societal debates such as climate change (Schmidt, Ivanova & Schäfer, 2013). Even though most newspaper outlets have seen considerable declines in the number of subscriptions due to new digital media (Thurman, 2013), online news consumption is perceived to revolve closely around the webpages of the typical mainstream news outlets that people also fall back on for their offline news consumption (Flaxman, Goel & Rao, 2016).

There are, however, important differences between newspaper outlets. Similar to the distinction that Bourdieu (1993) made in his field theory between restricted and large-scale cultural production, Bourdieu (2005) distinguishes between restricted and large-scale news media production in the field of journalism. Along the same lines, I distinguish between quality and popular newspapers. Quality newspapers primarily target the policy-making and intellectual elite and strongly influence the standards for news production and opinion making (Verboord & Janssen, 2015). Particularly relevant for arts and culture, they are important in legitimizing cultural forms (Janssen, Kuipers & Verboord, 2008). Popular or tabloid newspapers, on the other hand, primarily include entertainment content to attract a wide sensation-seeking audience (Boukes & Vliegenthart, 2017). Popular newspapers therefore often publish articles revolving around popular culture entertainment and sensation. Artivism, in its very combination of art and activism, has little affinity with such

entertainment. Hence the first hypothesis states that *quality newspapers cover artivists more often than popular newspapers (1).*

At the same time, quality newspapers have historically devoted considerably more space to the arts than popular newspapers have and often maintain elaborate cultural supplements in contrast to popular newspapers (Purvonen, Heikkilä & Hazir, 2017). As such, quality newspapers have separate sections devoted exclusively to the arts and are likely to primarily publish their coverage of artivism in arts and culture sections. In contrast to popular newspapers, then, quality newspapers are likely to over artivist more strongly within in separated, artistic context. In other words, although I expect quality newspapers to pay more attention to artivism, their attention is reserved for their cultural, rather than political, news or other non-arts sections: *quality newspapers cover artivists primarily in arts and culture sections (2a) while popular newspapers cover artivists primarily in non-arts and culture sections (2b).*

In a similar line of reasoning, when newspaper coverage of the arts is placed separately in cultural sections, this can be expected to result, content-wise, in a larger emphasis on artistic rather than political content. Indeed, the cultural journalists employed by quality newspapers to cover arts and culture are considered as gatekeepers and tastemakers in relation to the arts (Purvonen, Heikkilä & Hazir, 2017) and I therefore expect them to cover artivism primarily within an artistic context. In contrast, popular newspapers would focus less on the art of artivism due to their lack of arts and culture overage in general*: in their coverage of artivism, quality newspapers display more artistic content than popular newspapers (3).*

3.2.1 Newspaper coverage in cross-national context

Bishop (2012) tries to explain the prevalence of various forms of societally engaged art by arguing that the justification for spending public money on art is accepted more easily by neoliberal governments and their constituencies when art's societal value is emphasized. This argument

reappears often and draws attention to the societal position of artists. After the Second World War, existing systems of classification such as between fine and popular art (Alexander, 2014) or highbrow and lowbrow art (DiMaggio, 1987) eroded, slowly breaking down the autonomous position of the arts and its art for art's sake principle (Bourdieu, 1993). The art market generated increased attention (Thompson, 2008) with record-breaking prices for artworks by both old masters and contemporary living artists, even though art dealers often deny commercial interests (Velthuis, 2005). Furthermore, and more importantly, the state in many Western democracies becomes increasingly interested in the transformative power and ideological content of artistic expressions towards the 21st century. Indicatively, Belfiore (2004, 2012), García (2004) and Gray (2007) each refer to the instrumentalist approach in recent cultural policies of various Western democracies in which public funding of arts and culture is expected to result in measurable returns, mostly in economic terms.

National policies on arts and culture, therefore, indicate the role of art within a national context. Their effect on newspaper coverage of artivism is difficult to measure. However, a cross-national comparison can be drawn between the Netherlands, UK and US and although national policies will not predict how newspapers cover artivism, they do provide direction.

As already mentioned before, the Netherlands can be considered an architect state (Chartrand and McCaughey, 1989), as the Dutch government spends relatively much on arts and culture and recognizes the important role of arts and culture for social cohesion (Delhaye 2008, 2018). The UK, next, functions as a patron state (Chartrand and McCaughey, 1989). The UK budget for arts and culture funding is considerable, but less than is the case in the Netherlands and its cultural policies strongly emphasize the instrumental role of arts and culture in terms of inclusion and urban regeneration (Belfiore, 2004, 2012). The US, in contrast, can be characterized as a facilitator of the arts according to the Chartrand and McCaughey (1989) model. Little public money is

spent on arts and culture at the national level in comparison to the Netherlands and the UK. Instead, the US has a history of stimulating private arts funding by incentivizing foundations, corporations and individuals with tax benefits (Strom, 2010).

Because of these differences, it is likely to expect that social engagement plays a relatively important role in the arts in the Netherlands and the UK and much less so in the US. Cross-nationally, I expect these differences to be reflected in the content of the newspaper coverage of artivism in each country. Hence the last hypothesis: *newspaper coverage of artivism displays the least political content in the US, followed by the UK and the Netherlands respectively (4).*

3.3 Research design

3.3.1 Data

The empirical analysis focuses on newspaper coverage of six cases of artivists in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States. For each country two quality and two popular daily newspapers were selected to retrieve a sample that is somewhat representative of newspaper coverage in all three countries. Popular newspapers are perceived as focusing primarily on covering news in relation to entertainment whereas quality newspapers focus primarily on covering in-depth news stories and opinion pieces (Purhonen, Heikkilä & Hazir, 2017). Furthermore, popular newspapers often come in the form of (red top) tabloids, whereas quality newspapers often still come as broadsheets. For each country, newspapers were selected on the basis of a combination of circulation and availability on LexisNexis. They are displayed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Selected newspapers per country with estimated circulation.

Country	Quality	Circulation	Popular	Circulation
NL[3]	NRC	210,000	Algemeen Dagblad	380,000
	De Volkskrant	300,000	De Telegraaf	475,000
UK[4]	The Evening Standard	796,640	The Daily Mirror	488,829
	The Daily Telegraph	315,270	The Daily Star	310,246
US[5]	The Washington Post	431,000	USA Today	1,424,000
	The New Work Times	731,000	The Daily News	360,000

LexisNexis was used to collect all newspaper articles for the twelve selected newspapers in which the names of one or more of the selected artivist cases were mentioned within the time frame of 2010 until 2015 to ensure data could be collected on each artivist case. Articles that were less than 50 words in length were omitted, as these often included short notifications and one-sentence reviews rather than meaningful and in-depth coverage of an artivist. Furthermore, articles that mentioned an artivist only once *and* were longer than 1,000 words were omitted, as many of these did not have an artivist as their principal topic. The resulting dataset contains 2,010 newspaper articles (out of 2,351 initially collected in total).

3.3.2 Measures

Through a computerized content analysis, assisted by Python and RStudio[6], the articles were coded for several variables. First, article content was conceptualized in two directions, *artistic content* and *political content*. All unique words of the remaining articles in the dataset, except for stopwords, were coded manually for being related to either arts, politics or neither, of which a small excerpt is visible in Table 3.2. No inter-coder reliability was calculated due to only one coder being involved. Intra-coder reliability, however was calculated with a three-month interval (Cohen's kappa equals to .083). The resulting arts and politics dictionaries[7] were fed into a Python code to count the presence of artistically and politically oriented words for each article text, providing two scores for each article.

Table 3.2: Example artistic and political words.

Artistic content	**Political content**	**Neither**
macbeth	magistrate	macchiato
madonna	majesty	machine
margritte	manslaughter	macro
mannerism	marxist	mad
masterpiece	mayor	madam
…	…	…

Second, for *article section*, the section mentioned with each article was coded and then recoded for each article in one of seven sections based on the largest visible sections within the data: culture (pertaining to arts, culture, leisure, lifestyle and tourism sections), economy (pertaining to economy, business and finance sections), entertainment (pertaining to gossip, media and television sections), news (pertaining to news, breaking and front page sections), opinion (pertaining to opinion and

editorial sections), politics (pertaining to politics and foreign affairs sections) and unused (pertaining to sports, obituary, science and remaining sections).

Article length was calculated on the basis of word count and used as a control variable for article content. The longer an article, the more diffused its focus on either artistic or political content could be.

3.3.3 Method of analysis

As the measures for article content are based on counts, the dataset exhibits very skewed distributions. A non-parametric Wilcoxon rank-sum test and a Kruskal-Wallis test were therefore employed for statistical testing to compare between quality and popular newspapers on the one hand and between Dutch, UK and US newspapers on the other hand. Furthermore, several descriptive statistics are reported for the remaining hypotheses when analysis of variance is not needed and, more inductively, when initial expectations or hypotheses could not easily be formulated.

3.4 Results

The results are discussed in several steps. First, I elaborate on the main differences between quality and popular newspapers in terms of general distributions. Second, I zoom in on the content of the newspaper articles in the dataset. Third, I report on the cross-national comparison and finally discuss this in a geopolitical context.

3.3.1 Quality newspapers versus popular newspapers

Out of the total number of newspaper articles in the dataset, 1,584 newspaper articles were published by quality newspapers while popular newspapers account for only 426 newspaper articles about artivists. This already confirms our first hypothesis that quality newspapers cover artivists, at least in the case of the selected artivists, more often than popular newspapers. As is visible in Table 3.3, for every popular

newspaper article on one of the six artivist cases in this study, there are 3.72 quality newspaper articles overall.

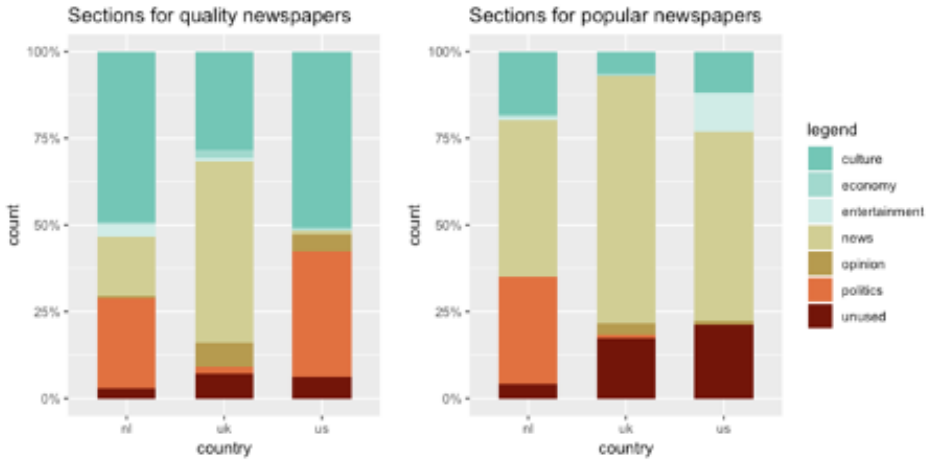
Table 3.3: Quality and popular newspaper coverage on artivism.

	Quality	**Popular**	**Ratio quality to popular**
All	1,584	426	3.72
NL	425	166	2.56
UK	477	143	3.34
US	682	117	5.83

Broken down by country, the differences between Dutch, UK and US quality and popular newspapers are similar. The ratio scores of quality newspaper articles to popular newspaper articles is relatively highest for the US, where a market logic within the realm of newspaper outlets is most dominant, and lowest for the Netherlands. The explanation that popular newspapers are much more incentivized by economic profit (Boukes & Vliegenthart, 2017) and therefore cover arts and culture less overall, indeed points to the expectation that US popular newspapers cover artivism much less than their quality counterparts and less than is the case for the Netherlands and the UK.

The large difference between quality and popular newspaper attention to artivism says something about the attention of artivism in the broader society. In the Netherlands, this attention is relatively high, as Dutch popular newspapers seem to have a larger circulation than Dutch quality newspapers (Table 3.1), which means that the former reach more people. Overall, however, quality newspapers are often aimed at the intellectual elites (Janssen, Kuipers & Verboord, 2008) and focus much more explicitly on arts and culture than popular newspapers do. Engagement with artivism within the broader society, to that extent, remains somewhat limited in light of the low coverage numbers among popular newspapers.

Figure 3.1: Distribution of newspaper articles over newspaper sections.



This is still a very preliminary conclusion however. When looking more closely into how newspaper cover artivism, it quickly becomes visible that quality newspapers cover artivism much more often in cultural sections than is the case for popular newspapers (Figure 3.1). This confirms our second hypothesis (both 2a and 2b). Again, popular newspapers are known to focus strongly on entertainment (Boukes & Vliegenthart, 2017) and are likely to have no or very few sections specifically devoted to arts and culture, while quality newspapers shy away from entertainment and cover art forms which are traditionally characterized as highbrow more often and more elaborately (Purvonen, Heikkilä & Hazir, 2017). Compared to quality newspapers, popular newspapers cover artivism much less, and their coverage is found primarily in news sections. It could be argued, therefore, that when artivists generate attention in the broader society through coverage in popular newspapers, they are seen much less in an arts and culture context than is the case for quality newspapers.

A similar explanation can be given when the sectional distributions of newspaper coverage are compared on a national level (Figure 3.1).

Popular newspapers are likely to have very few sections specifically devoted to arts and culture, which means that coverage of artivism in popular newspapers will be in other sections. Yet, on this level there are interesting differences between countries. For Dutch newspapers the lower level of artivism coverage in cultural sections for popular newspapers comes with an increase in news sections. Both Dutch quality and popular newspapers cover artivism considerably in cultural and political sections. This suggests that artvism for Dutch newspapers is as much about politics as it is about art, at least more so than is the case for the UK and US. This comes as no surprise considering the Netherlands to be an architect state with regards to arts and culture (Chartrand & McCaughey, 1989) and in light of its strong focus on the social role of art in its cultural policies (Delhaye, 2008, 2018).

US quality newspapers show a strikingly similar distribution of cultural (both roughly 50%) and political (both over 25%) sections, which is interesting with regards to its oppositional position on arts funding to the Netherlands. US quality newspapers, particularly the New York Times, have much more international status. This could easily influence Dutch newspapers. US popular newspapers, however, cover artivism less in cultural sections, virtually not in political sections and much more often in news and entertainment sections. Furthermore, the large proportion of coverage in entertainment sections among US popular newspapers especially is indicative of popular newspapers covering entertainment (Boukes & Vliegenthart, 2017).

In contrast to both Dutch and US newspapers, UK quality and popular newspapers cover artivism primarily in news sections. In UK quality newspapers, just over 25% of artivism coverage is found in cultural sections and less than 5% in political sections. The lower percentage of cultural sections for UK popular newspapers seems to be replaced almost entirely by news sections. Newspaper coverage of artivism by UK newspapers, therefore, revolves primarily around news value rather than artistic or political value. This makes the UK a particularly interesting country, as it seems to be the case that artivists make the mainstream

news in UK newspapers much more often than in the Netherlands or in the US, albeit much less in political sections. This begs the question whether such a sectional distribution is also reflected in the content of the newspaper articles.

3.4.2 Artistic versus political content between newspaper types

The third hypothesis implies that one group (quality newspapers) displays more artistic content than another group (popular newspapers). To test this, a non-parametric Wilcoxon rank-sum test was employed to compare the two groups (see Table 3.4).

Table 3.4: Wilcoxon rank-sum tests for newspaper content.

	Artistic content median	**Political content median**	**Average length in words**
Popular newspapers (n=426)	4***	8***	328
Quality newspapers (n=1,584)	8***	11***	570

Adjusted p-values: p < .1: *; p < .05: **; p < .01: ***

The Wilcoxon rank-sum test indicates a statistically significant difference between popular and quality newspapers in terms of their focus on both artistic and political content in newspaper articles, on the basis of which the null-hypothesis that there is no difference between the two groups of newspapers can be rejected.

How the two differ becomes apparent when looking at the median scores. When ranked, the top half of both quality and popular newspapers contain more than 8 and 11 politically oriented words respectively[8]. For both quality and popular newspapers, this is higher than the median scores for artistic content, which the Wilcoxon rank-sum test indicates to

be statistically significant. Both quality and popular newspapers, in other words, appear to be more interested in the politics than they are in the art of artivism, although this is true particularly for the latter. The two excerpts below exemplify this: while in quality newspapers, coverage of artivists often combines attention to both the art (underlined in italic) and activism (underlined) of an artivist, in popular newspapers the art of artivism receives much less attention.

Early in her talk, Ms. Ross showed a photo of Pussy Riot, the Russian feminist protest group. "Before there was Pussy Riot, there was Yakobson," she said. She presented Yakobson as an *artist* who used *ballet* to challenge authoritarian rule. Under the threat of censorship (and potentially much worse), he resisted in covert ways, she said, "claiming *ballet* was innocuous while making it a weapon." (New York Times; October 23, 2015; the Arts/Cultural Desk; 438 words)

Pussy Riot gained international notoriety after a series of Moscow protests in which the women wore brightly *colored* mini-dresses and balaclavas covering their faces while chanting anti-government slogans in public spaces for mass-media appeal. (USA Today; November 20, 2014; News; 255 words)

Quality newspapers display higher median scores for artistic and political content than popular newspapers do. This means that quality newspaper can be consider both more artistically and more politically oriented than popular newspapers when it comes to their coverage of artivism. The difference in article length is relatively large, but taking word count into account, quality newspapers can still be seen to have a stronger focus on both arts and politics than popular newspapers. By displaying more artistic and political words in and devoting more words to their coverage of artivism, quality newspapers seem to discuss both the art and activism of artivism more elaborately than popular newspapers do. These findings, therefore, largely confirm our third hypothesis.

As legitimizers of arts and culture and representatives of elite and public opinion (Janssen, Kuipers & Verboord, 2008), however, quality newspapers cover artivism in an art context primarily on the level of sections and in a political context primarily on the level of content. These differences therefore beg the question how both newspaper types differ when taking into account the section in which articles about artivism are published. A non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test, having met the assumption of homogeneity of variance, indicates that quality newspaper articles published in cultural sections are focused very strongly on artistic content with a median score of 14, while quality newspaper articles published in non-cultural sections are focused very strongly on political content with a median score of 17 (Table 3.5). The same differences are visible for popular newspapers, although here the difference in median scores is much smaller.

To compare more specifically between the four resulting groups of articles, a post-hoc Dunn test was employed (Table 3.5). Overall, quality newspaper articles in non-cultural sections constitute the largest group and display the strongest focus on political content. They differ significantly from the other groups except for popular newspaper articles in non-cultural sections for artistic content. This means that a very large proportion of all newspaper articles is published in a non-cultural context and content-wise primarily covers the political context of artivism.

In the case of artivism, therefore, artists are seemingly discussed and evaluated to a considerable extent in a political rather than artistic context in terms of both section and content. Interestingly, however, this conclusion primarily extends to quality newspapers. Although popular newspaper articles in cultural sections constitute a strikingly small group, popular newspaper articles in general appear to be much less interested in the politics of artivism in comparison to quality newspapers.

Table 3.5: Kruskal-Wallis rank-sum tests for differences in artistic content (top) and political content (bottom) between newspapers.

	Kruskal-Wallis test	**Post-hoc Dunn test**			**Average length in words**
	Median	Quality newspaper n.-cult. sections	Popular newspaper cult. sections	Popular newspaper n.-cult. sections	
Quality newspaper cult. sections (n=699)	14***	***	*	***	654
	6***	***	ns	*	
Quality newspaper n.-cult. sections (n=885)	5***		***	ns	503
	17***		***	***	
Popular newspaper cult. sections (n=66)	10***			***	460
	4***			ns	
Popular newspaper n.-cult. sections (n=360)	4***				304
	9***				

Adjusted p-values: p < .1: *; p < .05: **; p < .01: ***

Whenever newspapers are theorized as important legitimizers of arts and culture (Janssen, Kuipers & Verboord, 2008), the empirical research often points primarily to quality newspapers and their cultural sections and cultural supplements. On this level, quality newspapers show an interesting split, more clearly than is visible for popular newspapers. Content-wise, the artistic reception and evaluation of artivism seems to be reserved for newspaper articles published in sections that are related to arts and culture. In contrast, the political reception of artivism is found primarily in those newspaper articles published in other sections, primarily in relation to politics and mainstream news. In their role of cultural intermediary by writing for the arts and culture sections of quality newspapers (Purhonen, Heikkilä & Hazir, 2017), cultural journalists still appear to be interested much more in the art of artivism than in the activism of it, even though one would expect them to cover the latter more strongly if one follows Bishop's (2012) notion of the social turn and assume that social engagement has become increasingly prevalent throughout the arts.

3.4.3 Strong cross-national differences

For the statistical comparison between the three countries, which allows us to test Hypothesis 4, a Kruskal Wallis non-parametric test was employed (see Table 3.6). The assumption of homogeneity of variance is met, meaning that indeed the variances between the three countries are more or less equal. The Kruskal-Wallis test indicates statistically significant differences between countries for both artistic and political content. The post-hoc Dunn test provides insight into which of the groups differ and how.

Table 3.6: Kruskal-Wallis rank-sum tests for differences in artistic content (top) and political content (bottom) between countries.

	Kruskal-Wallis test	**Post-hoc Dunn test**		**Average length in words**
	Median	UK newspapers	US newspapers	
Dutch newspapers (n=591)	5*** 9***	ns **	*** ***	472
UK newspapers (n=620)	6*** 7***		*** ***	351
US newspapers (n=799)	9*** 16***			683

Adjusted p-values: p < .1: *; p < .05: **; p < .01: ***

For artistic content, there appears to be no strongly significant difference between Dutch and UK newspapers, while both countries differ significantly from the US. Indeed, Dutch and UK newspapers display a median for artistic content of 5 and 6 respectively, while US newspapers display a much stronger focus on artistic content with a median score of 9. Although there is a significant difference between US and UK newspapers, this difference is less strong.

For political content, all countries differ significantly from each other. UK newspapers display the least political content with a median score of 7, while this is 9 for Dutch newspapers and a much higher 16 for US newspapers. Hypothesis 4 is therefore rejected. Instead, our findings suggest that that US newspapers are most strongly politically orientated and UK newspapers the least. This is supported by the large proportion of political sections as was visible in Figure 3.1 for US quality newspaper

articles, which in turn outnumber US popular newspaper articles by far. Some nuance should be added in terms of average article length. Overall, US newspaper articles are considerably longer than both Dutch and UK newspapers. This average length, in combination with the content scores, suggests that US newspapers overall discuss the artivist cases much more elaborately, both for artistic and political content.

As such, the differences between countries are strong. Although Bishop (2012) emphasizes public arts and culture funding developments as an explanation for the social turn in the arts, the findings in this study do not point in that direction. While indeed public funding for the arts in both the Netherlands and UK comes increasingly with social requirements, the very existence of public arts funding can perhaps be seen to provide artists with some level of autonomy, at least from the commercial market. In the US, in contrast, such public arts funding schemes are rare, which could mean that the arts in the US are expected to engage on a social level much more than is the case in the Netherlands and the UK. Hence, in newspaper coverage of the arts in the US political matters are much more pronounced than is the case in the Netherlands and the UK.

3.4.4 The geopolitics of artivist newspaper coverage

Table 3.7 outlines the distribution of the artivist cases over countries, to analyze how the distribution of cases compares across the newspapers from each country. This allows us to somewhat contextualize our findings for cases that possibly peaked interest of newspapers within certain countries.

Table 3.7: Distribution of cases per country compared (vertically within parentheses); median scores for artistic and political content (top) and sectional distribution in between (below).*

	Dutch newspapers	**UK newspapers**	**US newspapers**	
Ai Weiwei	29.9% (31.8%)	25.1% (25.3%)	45.0% (35.3%)	100%
art - political cult. - n.-cult.	7 - 9 89 - 99	7 - 10 44 - 113	9 - 15 131 - 150	(626)
Banksy	13.6% (11.7%)	52.8% (43.2%)	33.7% (21.4%)	100%
	12 - 2 52 - 17	7 - 3 78 - 189	12 - 5 121 - 51	(508)
Hans Haacke	11.1% (.5%)	55.6% (2.6%)	33.3% (1.4%)	100%
	32 - 6 3 - 0	6 - 2 10 - 5	20 - 4 8 - 1	(27)
Jonas Staal	92.2% (7.4%)	2.6% (.0%)	5.2% (.0%)	100%
	13 - 8 40 - 4	— 1 - 0	— 2 - 0	(47)
Jafar Panahi	46.9% (7.8%)	8.2% (1.3%)	44.9% (5.5%)	100%
	8 - 10 34 - 12	6 - 9 6 - 2	7 - 18 31 - 13	(98)
Pussy Riot	34.4% (40.8%)	24.3% (27.6%)	41.3% (36.4%)	100%
	3 - 15 27 - 214	4 - 16 18 - 154	6 - 32 74 - 217	(704)
	(100%) (591)	(100%) (620)	(100%) (799)	

*No significance tests included, due to large differences in size between groups. Median scores must therefore be interpreted with caution.

It becomes apparent immediately that Ai Weiwei, Banksy and Pussy Riot are responsible for almost all newspaper coverage overall and per country. Although this could be in part the result of case selection, it suggests that newspaper coverage of artivists is very unevenly distributed; some artivists enjoy a lot of coverage while others receive very little newspaper attention.

Of these three, Pussy Riot stands out particularly by receiving little artistic recognition in each country in terms of discussing the Russian punk music collective within an artistic context content-wise and section-wise. Indeed, in each country most of the newspaper coverage on Pussy Riot is published in non-cultural sections and the median score for political content is considerably higher in each country than for artistic content. The same can be said about Ai Weiwei, although to a much lesser extent. Banksy, in contrast, enjoys much more artistic attention and only appears often in non-cultural sections in UK newspapers, which in general publish much less in cultural sections as became apparent before.

Out of the other three artivists, Jafar Panahi stands out most obviously. Articles published on Jafar Panahi display higher median scores for political content in each country than for artistic content even though they are published much more often in cultural sections in each country. For Jafar Panahi, therefore, these numbers suggest that art journalists attribute both artistic status and societal impact in terms of primarily discussing the political activism of the artist.

US newspapers have been found to show little interest in foreign news and foreign artists (Janssen, Kuipers & Verboord, 2008). In our findings, however, US newspapers appear to be particularly interested in three non-US cases. US newspapers display a strong interest in Chinese visual artist Ai Weiwei, Iranian filmmaker Jafar Panahi and Russian punk protest group Pussy Riot. These artists are primarily engaged in activist practices aimed at their respective governments and each have been legally prosecuted. The international interest of US newspapers, therefore, appears to be primarily geopolitically oriented. Artivists

operating in or acting against governments with which the US maintains a challenging political relationship, therefore appear particularly interesting to US newspapers.

This geopolitical dimension is visible somewhat similarly among Dutch newspapers. This could, however, be explained by the generally strong international orientation of Dutch media in their coverage of art (Janssen, 2010). UK newspapers, in contrast, remain quite nationally oriented: almost half (43.2%) of all collected newspaper articles from UK newspapers involve UK artist Banksy.

3.5 Discussion

The differences in how newspapers cover artivists are indicative of how artistic status and societal impact are attributed. First, particularly for quality newspapers, newspaper coverage on artivists in cultural sections focuses primarily on artistic content while newspaper coverage on artivists in non-cultural sections focuses primarily on political content. This implies that art journalists, as cultural intermediaries who select and evaluate artists (Kuipers, Janssen & Verboord, 2008), discuss the artivist cases principally in an artistic context and therefore attribute artistic status to the artivist cases by devoting newspaper content to them in cultural sections. Quality newspaper coverage of artivism in non-cultural sections displays an opposite pattern by focusing primarily on political content. This contrast is indicative of the double-edged sword of social engagement for artists: art journalists give little weight to the political context of artivists in comparison to the artistic context, while regular news journalists display little recognition of the art of artivism.

At the same time, the mere observation that artivists receive at least as much coverage within cultural as within non-cultural newspaper sections suggests that artivists enjoy artistic status and societal impact simultaneously. What is separated is the artistic and political attention: art journalists who write primarily for cultural newspaper sections attribute artistic status by primarily discussing the art of artivists while other

newspaper journalists attribute societal impact by primarily discussing the political activism of artivists. What this suggests is that the artistic evaluation of artivists includes little attention to social engagement and activism. Notions such as the social turn in the arts (Bishop, 2012), therefore, primarily explain the prevalence of socially engagement throughout the arts, but remain less useful in explaining the evaluation of socially engaged art.

These findings, furthermore, have implications for the national characterizations of art fields. Quite often the US art field is seen to be very much oriented towards popular culture and entertainment as the arts are left to market demands much more strongly than is the case in the Netherlands and the UK (Caust, 2010; Chartrand & McCaughey, 1989; Gray, 2007). Yet the findings in this chapter suggest that US newspapers devote much more artistic and political attention to artivism than is visible in the Netherlands and the UK, even though in the US artistic status is strongly dependent on box office returns and public arts funding is framed strongly in economic terms (Strom & Cook, 2004). In this line of reasoning, the societal position of the arts, particularly from the perspective of public funding, does not appear to be a strong predictor for the way in which artforms that bridge art and activism are perceived within the broader society. Even though the Dutch and UK government strongly emphasize the societal role of the arts, newspaper coverage of artivism in both countries still strongly revolves around artistic content. To that extent, it can be argued that even though Dutch and UK cultural policies stimulate artistic projects that are focused on for example social cohesion, the arts in both countries are still viewed primarily through an artistic lens.

The role of newspapers in today's digital age, however, should not be taken for granted. News production often follows waves of public attention (Wolfsfeld, 2001), which means that attention to one newsworthy topic is rapidly followed by attention to another. Newspaper attention, in that sense, is only a limited measure of societal impact. Instead, more longitudinal analyses could indicate how attention to social

engagement in the arts has changed over time. Newspapers have furthermore seen considerable declines in their subscriptions (Thurman, 2013) as people increasingly consume news through social media. A considerable part of social media content, however, is related to headline news (Kwak, Lee, Park & Moon, 2010) and online readership of newspapers is seen to increase with social media presence (Hong, 2012). As internet-enabled mobile devices have made it easy for news media platforms to digitalize traditional journalism content (Wolf & Schnauber, 2015), online news consumption is perceived to revolve closely around the webpages of typical mainstream news outlets people also fall back on for their offline news consumption (Flaxman, Goel & Rao, 2016). Artivists, as measured through newspaper coverage, therefore does seem to matter, even though they do not always appear to be seen as both artists and activists at the same time.

Footnotes

1 Newspaper article in dataset: New York Times; April 20, 2012; Weekend Desk, Inside Art; 1010 words.
2 Newspaper article in dataset: New York Times; June 22, 2012; Foreign Desk; 426 words.
3 Circulation numbers over 2015 including print and digital subscriptions, retrieved from De Volkskrant, 2017.
4 Circulation numbers over 2019 including only print subscriptions, retrieved from Newsworks, 2020.
5 Circulation numbers over 2013 including only print subscriptions, retrieved from Newsgeography, 2013.
6 Python was used for data cleaning and data analysis; RStudio for generating results. See Appendix B for the Python code that was used.
7 A full overview of both dictionaries is provided in Appendix C.
8 Some caution should be added here as the two groups that are compared vary greatly in size.

CHAPTER 4
ARTIVIST RECEPTION ON TWITTER

4.1 Introduction

"My definition of art has always been the same. It is about freedom of expression, a new way of communication. It is never about exhibiting in museums or about hanging it on the wall. Art should live in the heart of the people. […] I don't think anybody can separate art from politics. The intention to separate art from politics is itself a very political intention" (Der Spiegel, 2011).

This quote by Ai Weiwei highlights how problematic artivists find it to separate art and politics. In their evaluation among cultural intermediaries and within newspapers, however, art and politics so far appear to overlap much less. Furthermore, beyond the confines of the art field, newspapers are not the end of the line. They are read and fuel public opinion and further discussion in society. One important dimension in the reception of artivism, therefore, is still missing and often overlooked in research into (social engagement in) the arts: the role of media audiences. By receiving news media coverage, the art and activism of artivists gain attention within the broader society.

The aim of this chapter is to shed light on the degree and type of attention media audiences give to artivists by focusing on social media.

Platforms such as Twitter afford everyday political discussions among media audiences, often strongly in relation to news media content (Wilkinson & Thelwall, 2012). They maintain an infrastructure that allows their users to openly exchange ideas and views that are relevant to politics in an everyday fashion (Vromen, Xenos & Loader, 2015). Two million Twitter messages – or tweets – have therefore been collected and analyzed by employing topic modeling and semantic network analysis.

4.2 Twitter

Social media platforms have come to constitute communicative spaces that afford ordinary people in society to engage in politics through everyday political talk (Vromen, Xenos & Loader, 2015) by sharing ideas, reiterating statements and reacting to news and to other users. The content on social media platforms, therefore, provides insight into how people talk about political issues. In this way, studying audience attention to artivists on social media allows us to study the degree in which and how social media audiences discuss the art and activism of artivists.

Twitter, in particular, provides us with an empirical window to study the audience attention to – and acceptance of artivists. Twitter is a microblogging service that facilitates the continuous and quick dissemination of short bursts of information (tweets), allowing its users to publicly engage in conversation with others and share their views and interests (Hogan, 2010). This takes place by posting tweets, which are short bursts of information of a maximum of 140 characters before and 280 characters after November 2017. Apart from news media platforms, politicians, celebrities or even companies, most Twitter users are ordinary people, the majority of whom being below thirty years of age (Sloan, Morgan, Burnap & William, 2015) and originating from populous areas (Mislove, Lehmann, Ahn Onnela & Rosenquist, 2011). Furthermore, the default privacy setting of Twitter accounts is public so that most views that users express on the platform are publicly available and invite many others to react (boyd, Golder & Lotan, 2010).

Based on a large-scale study of Twitter content from several countries, Wilkinson and Thelwall (2012) show that a considerable part of tweets is related to news events and politics. Moreover, Twitter is used actively during election campaigns (Larsson & Moe, 2011) and serves as an important campaigning tool for politicians (Enli & Skogerbø, 2013). As such, Twitter facilitates spreading knowledge about politics (Howard & Hussain, 2011) and affords its users to engage in politics through participating in everyday political discussions. Even though connective social media platforms such as Twitter are highly characterized by their users reproducing and repurposing meaning (Mortensen, 2017), the Twittersphere constitutes a communicative space where a fairly large proportion of ordinary people in society openly exchange ideas that are relevant to politics in an everyday fashion. Twitter, to this extent, allows us to study (online) everyday communicative processes through which the broader public discuss artivists and their activist practices.

4.3 Research design

4.3.1 Data

Data was collected from Twitter by manually scraping[1] all English-language tweets that contained the names of the respective cases. By opting for a five-year period (2010-2015), multiple – instead of one in particular – (media) events are included for each artivist case in the data. Data preparation consisted of several steps. First, a database was built consisting of verified Twitter accounts such as news platforms, celebrities, journalists and politicians. Verified Twitter accounts often signify a commercial motive as Twitter introduced these to certify more famous people (Marwick & boyd, 2011). As the focus in this chapter is on ordinary users, all tweets by the accounts in this database were deleted from the dataset. Second, Twitter users that accounted for one percent or more of the total annual tweets on one case were marked as potential spam accounts. All tweets of accounts that included a large number[2] of

identical tweets were deleted. Third, tweets shorter than three words were removed as they are difficult to interpret meaningfully. For the remaining 2,201,286 tweets, words that bear low meaning[3] as well as all links and emoji's were deleted in order to strengthen the topic model (DiMaggio, Nag & Blei, 2013). Because of the sheer size of the dataset, inexactitudes such as messy spelling can, for a large part, be rendered irrelevant for the outcome (Mayer-Schonberger & Cukier, 2013).

4.3.2 Method

Methods like topic modeling (TM) and semantic network analysis (SNA) serve as helpful tools to uncover meaningful themes within large datasets of textual documents. TM produces groups of words – topics – that are associated by their frequent occurrence together. They convey the dominant latent themes within texts. The strength of TM is that it assumes that the meaning of words emerges from their use in the contexts of other words (Mohr & Bogdanov, 2013). This means that, within all the text in the data, if particular unique words occur several times in varying semantic contexts they will appear in multiple topics to different degrees. One potential weakness of TM, however, is that the researcher has to tell the algorithm how many topics there are in the data. Assessing the right number of topics is a time-consuming process of trying different numbers until some degree of saturation and stability is reached where no new themes seem to emerge when requesting more topics.

The output of TM was used to conduct a SNA. Methods like SNA, too, build on the assumption that the meaning of words emerges from their semantic contexts (Dreiger, 2013) and, as shown in previous research (Weij & Berkers, 2017), strengthens the interpretation and visualization of textual data. Since TM includes each word in the dataset in one of the topics, I can assess the relationship between topics. By setting SNA up in this way, I do not assess the relationship between individual words, which would be similar to TM. Rather, I analyze the relationship between groups of words that appear together frequently.

Combining TM and SNA, therefore, uniquely enables me to discern major themes at a higher level of abstraction, by identifying clusters of topics that are semantically related, while still maintaining an eye for semantic nuances within these broader themes by identifying individual topics.

For this study, each individual tweet is treated as a textual document. The Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) algorithm provided in the Mallet toolkit was first used. LDA is a topic model algorithm that provides a specified number of topics and estimates how each textual document in the dataset exhibits these topics (DiMaggio, Nag & Blei, 2013). The program Gephi was then used to conduct a semantic network analysis. The nodes in the semantic network graph represent the topics from our model. The ties between topics represent the relationship between two given topics, calculated as follows:

$$w(x,z) = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \frac{x_i z_i}{x_i + z_i}$$

where n represents the total amount of unique words occurring both in topics x and z; x_i represents the amount of occurrences of word i in topic x and z_i represents the amount of occurrences of word i in topic z. As such, the weight of the tie between two given topics is high not only when the topics have many words in common but also when the amount of occurrences of those words is similar in both topics. Conversely, for example, if two topics only share one word that appears 1,000 times in the data and is included in topic x 999 times and only 1 time in topic z, then that word is, semantically speaking, much more important for the interpretation of the first topic. In this case, these two topics will exhibit a weak tie in the network graph, only to become stronger if they have more unique words in common and if the occurrences of those words are more balanced between the two topics.

I then used Gephi's modularity algorithm to assess and visualize whether some topics are more highly interconnected than others. Not all

topics have to yield meaningful interpretations (DiMaggio, Nag & Blei, 2013), however. For each cluster of topics, therefore, I will go into those topics that are substantively meaningful and exhibit the most interesting ties with other topics in the network graph. The analysis is subsequently based on two outputs: (1) the topic solution that consists of the collections of words that occur together frequently and (2) the textual documents that exhibit the topic most highly according to probability scores, providing qualitative ground for our interpretation of topics.

4.4 Results

Table 4.1 breaks down the collected tweets per case. We can see that Ai Weiwei, Banksy and Pussy Riot together account for 98.91% of all the collected tweets. Explaining why specific cases receive more media attention than other is beyond the scope of this paper. Yet, one important factor that likely influences the degree of Twitter attention given to artivists is the degree of news media attention they receive. This is supported by the findings from the previous chapter, as these three cases score high on news media coverage. We know from other studies that mainstream news media content constitutes a considerable part of Twitter content (Rogstad, 2016). Unsurprisingly, Twitter attention to celebrity artivists eclipses other artivists.

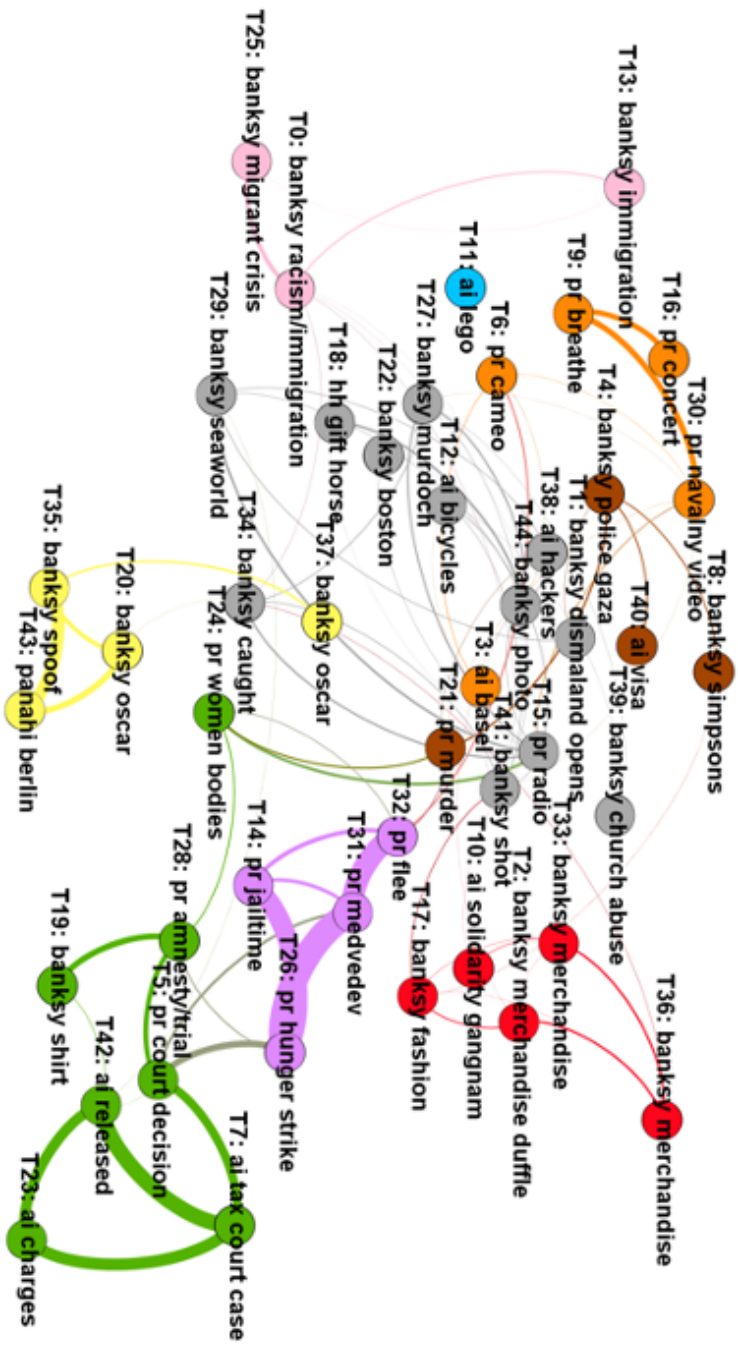
After preparing and filtering the data, 45 topics were requested as more topics did not bring up any new themes and less topics resulted in certain themes being overshadowed by others. All the relationships between topics were then calculated and uploaded into Gephi. After filtering out the weakest ties, rendering the network graph more comprehensible, nine topic clusters emerged from Gephi's modularity algorithm (scoring a relatively strong 0.582, meaning that the topics in each cluster are relatively well interconnected as opposed to the others). The network graph is presented in Figure 4.1, in which each cluster is uniquely colored and the graph layout is plotted according to Gephi's Force Atlas algorithm.

Table 4.1: Data descriptives.

Case	Tweets	Percentage
Ai Weiwei	325,932	14,81%
Banksy	1,383,095	62,83%
Hans Haacke	2,938	.13%
Jonas Staal	20,683	.94%
Jafar Panahi	417	.02%
Pussy Riot	468,221	21.27%
Totaal	*2,201,286*	*100%*

After preparing and filtering the data, 45 topics were requested as more topics did not bring up any new themes and less topics resulted in certain themes being overshadowed by others. All the relationships between topics were then calculated and uploaded into Gephi. After filtering out the weakest ties, rendering the network graph more comprehensible, nine topic clusters emerged from Gephi's modularity algorithm (scoring a relatively strong 0.582, meaning that the topics in each cluster are relatively well interconnected as opposed to the others). The network graph is presented in Figure 4.1, in which each cluster is uniquely colored and the graph layout is plotted according to Gephi's Force Atlas algorithm.

Figure 4. 1: Network graph of topic solution



Modularity: 0.582; edge weight filter: 2000; Force Atlas layout.

4.4.1 Topics of state prosecution

The first cluster that stands out in the network graph (green) mainly conveys the reoccurring theme of prosecution (Table 4.2). Five out of the seven topics within this cluster display strong ties and address different aspects of the trial cases against Pussy Riot and Ai Weiwei. Topic 23 loads strongly in tweets that address charges laid against Ai Weiwei and his response to it (see Table 4.2). Twitter users that posted these tweets share news articles (e.g. Reuters) and stress that the artist has been harassed and has attacked injustices. They thereby frame China's prosecution of Ai Weiwei as being unjust. Following these, the tweets in which Topic 7 is highly present address developments in the tax evasion case that was held against Ai Weiwei in China. They report on the lost court case which resulted in him having to pay a fine in order to settle his case. Topic 42 revolves around reporting that Ai Weiwei has been released on bail for his tax evasion case.

Topic 5 and Topic 28, in turn, address the prosecution that some members of Pussy Riot faced in Russia. Tweets in which these topics load strongly signal court developments and decisions. Similar as with Ai Weiwei, most Twitter users share and retweet tweets by news media platforms that report on this trial case. In contrast to reporting on Ai Weiwei, however, some of the tweets that mention Pussy Riot include the hashtag '#humanrights', thereby more explicitly speaking out against the Pussy Riot prosecution than is visible for Ai Weiwei. Additionally, our data show that Pussy Riot gains celebrity attention as users react directly to, for example, the British comedian Eddie Izzard (Topic 28). This has undoubtedly contributed to further attention on Twitter, although celebrity status in itself is found to be insufficient for political legitimacy (Watts, 2019).

Table 4.2: Topics in green cluster.

Topic 23	weiwei china artist famous detention reuters chinese dissident solitary charges
(21.1%)	*China's Ai Weiwei threatened with bigamy, pornography charges http://reut.rs/M87LNd via @reuters #news*
(18.6%)	*Ai Weiwei attacks injustices in China in magazine article: World-famous artist accuses officials of denying peop... http://bit.ly/oq51yV*
Topic 7	weiwei artist tax million chinese dissident authorities case pay fine
(22.0%)	*Chinese court upholds fine against dissident Ai Weiwei: BEIJING (Reuters) - A Chinese court upheld a $2.4 million tax evasion fine ag...*
(20.8%)	*Chinese dissident ordered to pay back taxes: China ordered dissident has artist Ai Weiwei to pay 15 million yuan... http://bit.ly/w3QJdx*
Topic 42	weiwei artist chinese dissident activist released detained bail wife government
(18.5%)	*Outspoken Chinese Artist/Activist ~ Ai Weiwei ~ Released On Bail http://artpr.org/mnzTMf #outspoken #China #Weiwei #released #bail*
(18.2%)	*Chinese artist released on bail: RENOWNED Chinese artist and activist Ai Weiwei has been released on bail after ... http://bit.ly/kCfKUN*
Topic 5	riot pussy court moscow appeal trial case verdict reuters hearing
(22.4%)	*Court bans Pussy Riot video clips: A Moscow court rules that websites must remove video clips of the Pussy Riot female punk band, two...*
(20.1%)	*UPDATE 4-Russian court adjourns Pussy Riot appeal hearing: Russian believers saw protest as sacrilege. By Maria ... http://bit.ly/QjZCH3*
Topic 28	riot pussy putin amnesty trial russia vladimir release activists punks
(17.9%)	*Pussy Riot punks compare trial to Stalin-era - Russian band, on trial for insulting President Putin, equates hearing...*
(17.9%)	*@eddieizzard Pussy Riot nds yr support-text & stand up for free speech | Blogs |Amnesty International UK http://bit.ly/M8cTmT via @AmnestyUK*

There is little normative judgment to be found in this cluster however. Rather, most tweets remain at the level of signaling and sharing developments of the trial cases as they appeared in the news. As newsworthy events often trickle down to social media platforms (Rogstad, 2016), it is unsurprising that many Twitter users pay attention to these developments in particular. For these Twitter users, however, it is not so much the activism of artivists that matters; they show hardly any support or rejection. Instead, the fact that Twitter users mainly retweet, share and talk about the trial cases shows that they particularly care about the course of the prosecution of Ai Weiwei and Pussy Riot.

The tweets that are clustered together in the second, purple cluster are closely related to the first cluster (Table 4.3). This relationship is established through one relatively strong tie between Topic 5 from the green cluster that discusses prosecution and Topic 26 from the purple cluster that discusses Pussy Riot's experiences in jail. The topics in the purple cluster, in other words, deal more specifically with the experiences of the artivists in relation to their prosecution instead of the prosecution itself.

These topics all display very strong ties among each other and all deal with different developments after two members of Pussy Riot had received their prison sentence. Topic 32 appears mainly in tweets about the two prosecuted Pussy Riot members who fled Russia to outrun their prison sentence. Topic 26, subsequently, loads strongly in tweets that highlight the hunger strike of a jailed Pussy Riot member during her prison sentence. Two of the three highest scoring tweets for this topic report on the supposed 'slave-like' conditions that resulted in the hunger strike protest.

Even though relatively strongly related to the first cluster, no attention to Ai Weiwei's sentence is apparent. In contrast to Ai Weiwei, however, two members of Pussy Riot spent roughly two years in actual prison. Next to being prosecuted, the severity and conditions of the sentence play a key role in the degree of attention that is given to artivists. This further supports the interpretation of the first cluster: the activism of artivists

does not seem to matter for Twitter users, while artivist prosecution and sentence severity more strongly affect when ordinary Twitter users perceive of artivists as political actors. In other words, the perception of artivists as activists, rather than artists, is more strongly dependent on the consequences of the artivists' actions than on the activism itself.

Table 4.3: Topics in purple cluster.

Topic 32	riot pussy russia members freed attacked flee protests putin arrest
(20.8%)	*Two #PussyRiot members flee #Russia to 'recruit foreign #feminists' http://bit.ly/On9bT2 #getaway*
(19.5%)	*Two members of Pussy Riot flee Russia: Women flee country to avoid prosecution for staging protest against Presi... http://aje.me/Pg6gAP*
Topic 26	riot pussy member jailed russian protest hunger strike moscow hospitalized
(23.2%)	*Jailed Pussy Riot member starts hunger strike against Russia prison 'slave labour'*
(19.9%)	*Jailed Pussy Riot Band Member on Hunger Strike To Protest 'Slave-Like' Conditions: A jailed member of the Russ... http://slate.me/14B2QyG*

4.4.2 Topics of artistic recognition

In the third (yellow) cluster, some attention to the artistic side of activist art emerges. The topics in this cluster address the Oscar nomination for Banksy's film Exit through the Gift Shop and the Golden Bear that Jafar Panahi received at the Berlin Film Festival for one of his films that was smuggled out of Iran (see Table 4.4). Yet, most tweets in this cluster merely signal these events. None of them convey personal views as to why the artists are recognized for their artistic products.

When mentioning Banksy in this context, Twitter users highlight Hollywood actor James Franco singing at the Oscars (Topic 37). This is indicative of the attention that is given to popular culture celebrities and popular culture events on Twitter. Such associations with celebrities add to the celebrity status of Banksy too. Twitter users, in other words,

seemingly include Banksy among popular culture celebrities, while not mentioning the artist explicitly in an artistic (or political) context. Only in Topic 20 do Twitter users mention Banksy along with Lucy Walker, who is a British documentary maker notable for producing societally relevant and critical documentaries. This is, however, done in the context of professional recognition rather than of artistic or political content.

Table 4.4: Topics in yellow cluster.

Topic 20	banksy streetart graffiti oscar art street beautiful power walker
(16.6%)	*#SanDiego Oscar Nominees Aren't Afraid Of Banksy: Lucy Walker is more worried about gussying up for the 83... http://tinyurl.com/46sg32p*
(15.7%)	*@RedMojoMama pretty deep film huh.. Did you know that Banksy's film lost out on an oscar to that..*
Topic 37	banksy oscar oscars revealed street graffiti franco industry singing giftshop
(15.7%)	*RT @theinsider Banksy, Franco's singing among Oscar mysteries at The Insider http://bit.ly/hn0XYj*
15.2%)	*Banksy, Franco's singing among Oscar mysteries - Yahoo! News http://yhoo.it/gOpOH1*
Topic 43	panahi film jafar berlin festival director iran iranian filmmaker taxi
(25.5%)	*Iran's Panahi wins Berlin film fest Golden Bear top prize: Iranian dissident director Jafar Panahi won the Gol... http://yhoo.it/1EsQmbv*
(25.1%)	*Iranian filmmaker and dissident Jafar Panahi supports the #IranDeal: https://youtu.be/OIOfF6wKAx8 Seen his "Offside"? It's pretty great.*

In the case of Jafar Panahi (Topic 43), however, Twitter users address the artist as a dissident filmmaker and director, thereby stressing the political context of Panahi in which the artist faced prosecution for his artistic products in his home country Iran. This is further emphasized by the use of the hashtag '#Irandeal', indicating that Jafar Panahi's award winning film cannot be seen separately from its political context in Iran. Yet, from reading the tweets, we do not get any information as to why Panahi is considered a dissident artist in Iran or what this Iran deal means.

This cluster, in other words, illustrates that a particular group of Twitter users signal recognition of artists without going into the broader context and without sharing personal views. Instead of raising pressing political issues in which these artivists are involved or which they themselves convey, these users seem to be interested mostly in sharing how artivists are recognized in their respective art fields. As such, the Twitter attention to Banksy and Jafar Panahi conveys internal rather than external artistic legitimacy, as award nominations signal consensus among inner members of an art world and not necessarily among the general public (Baumann, 2007). At the same time, this shows that not all Twitter users are interested in the political side to artivism, which means that the degree of audience attention in itself does not guarantee societal impact.

4.4.3 Retail activism

The network graph also displays a cluster of weakly tied topics (red) of which the majority pertains to the sale of consumer items derived from Banksy's artworks. Even though Twitter accounts of companies and media platforms were excluded from our dataset, retweets of - and replies to – such accounts do often occur. Topic 17, for example, loads high in tweets that refer to fashion items based specifically on Banksy's Balloon Girl artwork (see Table 4.5). Topic 36 shows up mostly in tweets about laptop decals and stickers with Banksy's famous Molotov Guy artwork.

This cluster, therefore, includes tweets that announce the availability of consumer items with Banksy designs. The use of hashtags like '#fashion' tells us that such items are fashionable and desired. Only in the second highest scoring tweet for Topic 2 do we encounter a normative judgement: by adding the hashtag '#stolen' the user expresses something of a personal view to the practice of commercializing Banksy. However, this particular tweet also includes the statement that this is 'Too funny!', illustrating more of an ironic attitude towards marketing and selling Banksy consumer items.

Table 4.5: Topics in red cluster.

Topic 17	banksy graffiti selling work art streetart street gaza tricked comfortable
(17.1%)	*UKfashion #6: Banksy Ballon Girl with Bus Oyster Card Holder: Banksy Ballon Girl with Bus Oyster Card Holder Ur... http://amzn.to/zzpMAi*
(15.8%)	*UKfashion #7: Banksy Ballon Girl with Bus Oyster Card Holder: Banksy Ballon Girl with Bus Oyster Card Holder Urb... http://amzn.to/JpdFIK*
Topic 36	banksy los angeles works wall opinion sold sticker sells decal
(22.0%)	*banksy molotov guy vinyl decal vinyl macbook laptop decal sticker graphic banksy molotov guy vinyl decal*
(20.8%)	*sales banksy molotov guy vinyl decal vinyl macbook laptop decal sticker graphic buy compare price*
Topic 2	banksy paint graffiti spray social love heart strange stuff rich
(16.3%)	*#handbags BANKSY GANGSTER RAT DUFFLE BAG College Rucksack Gym Beach Backpack Sports: £11.99End Date: Wednesd... http://bit.ly/1q5NnQl*
(16.0%)	*Photo: dufflebagg: Too funny! Love this #stolen #streetart #banksy #shrooms http://tmblr.co/ZrI96ymeyjWy*

Perhaps the attention to Banksy consumer items suggests that there is some interest among consumers to express their taste for the artist Banksy, without relating Banksy's commodified works to the artist's activism. To that extent, the commodification of art into consumer items such as bags and posters fits well into a widespread consumer culture that affords consumers some room for self-expression (Chouliaraki, 2013). Again, however, this type of attention illustrates that a significant proportion of the Twitter users are not interested in the political activism of artivists, suggesting that societal impact for artivists is not necessarily related to their artistic products, their activism or their commercial success.

4.4.4 The damaged art of the refugee crisis

Albeit a rather small cluster (pink), the three topics within this cluster each highlight the geopolitical problem of migrating refugees. The main tweets in each of these topics, however, revolve around a particular project by Banksy in which this political issue is highlighted, even though Pussy Riot and Ai Weiwei both have addressed the refugee crisis in their work during the period of data collection.

Looking more closely at the tweets themselves, it becomes apparent that two out of the three topics mainly address the damaging of Banksy's murals rather than the issue of refugees depicted in these murals. Topic 0 is mainly present in tweets that signal the destruction of Banksy's immigration mural in UK town Clacton-on-Sea (see Table 4.6). Similarly, Topic 13 loads high in tweets that address how the same Banksy mural was scrubbed by local authorities. Even though Twitter users explicitly refer to the mural as confronting racism (Topic 0) and an anti-immigration rhetoric (Topic 13), attention in these tweets mainly goes out to what happened to the artworks instead of what they stand for or their role in a current and ongoing geopolitical issue. Only in the case of the third topic in this cluster (Topic 25) there is some room for reflection on the refugee crisis. Some tweets highlight the entrepreneurial spirit of migrants in a Calais migrant camp who charge people to view the Banksy mural of Steve Jobs as a refugee.

By bringing these Banksy murals to attention and relating them, both implicitly and explicitly, to the global crisis of (Syrian) refugees and immigration, Twitter users show that this crisis is a theme that deserves attention. The nature of attention given to Banksy, however, is similar to Pussy Riot and Ai Weiwei in the context of their prosecution. Most tweets on which Banksy's artworks within this topic do not include personal views with regards to refugees and gravitate mostly towards attention to what happened to Banksy's artworks rather than to what these stand for. Yet, the acts of mentioning, spreading and repeating the global refugee crisis tells us it is a theme many Twitter users deem important and newsworthy. Moreover, these tweets indicate that Twitter

users accept Banksy as someone who is allowed to raise awareness for this subject.

Table 4.6: Topics in pink cluster.

Topic 0	banksy tattoo graffiti street sea sharp rebel racism world walls
(17.1%)	*Banksy wanted Clacton-on-Sea to confront #racism instead it confronted him http://gu.com/p/424nx/stw @theguardian*
(17.1%)	*Banksy anti-immigration birds mural in Clacton-on-Sea destroyed http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-essex-29446232 …*
Topic 13	mural london wall auction banksy removed painted artwork destroyed immigration
(20.8%)	*Whoops: Banksy mural scrubbed: A local council scrubs a Banksy mural highlighting anti-immigration rhetoric of... http://bit.ly/YSI65J*
(19.2%)	*Racist' Banksy mural destroyed: A Banksy mural showing a group of pigeons holding anti-immigration banners is destroyed after a comp…*
Topic 25	banksy jobs steve refugee calais refugees migrant camp crisis syrian
(22.5%)	*#news Calais migrants charging people to view Banksy mural of Apple's Steve Jobs: In an entrepreneurial spirit… http://tnoticias.mooo.com/BzT*
(21.7%)	*Banksy does Steve Jobs in Jungle migrant camp in Calais reminding us Apple's hero was son of Syrian migrants #c4news*

4.4.5 The 'other'-category: signaling individual projects by the artivists.

The remaining clusters (orange, blue, grey and brown) consist of topics that do not seem to convey any clearly related themes[4]. In the largest cluster in the network graph (grey), in particular, several topics are grouped together even though they convey very different themes on the individual topic level. In contrast, the smallest cluster (blue) consists of only one topic pertaining to Ai Weiwei's Lego project. The topics in both these clusters do not exhibit any strong and noteworthy ties. They pertain mostly to smaller projects relating to the cases in our sample, such as Ai Weiwei's bicycle project (Topic 12), Hans Haacke's gift horse (Topic 18)

and Banksy's Dismaland (Topic 1). Likewise, the remaining two clusters (orange and brown) consist of seemingly unrelated projects. In the one (orange), topics that pertain to Pussy Riot are clustered together. Yet the topics in this cluster only share that they each (except one) deal with different Pussy Riot projects. The other cluster (brown) covers projects by different cases without any clear relation between them. This suggests that these clusters constitute a residual category consisting of topics that gain less interest.

4.5 Discussion

The findings in this chapter indicate that the attention that artivists receive on Twitter has little to do with the political cause they respectively aim to advance. Instead, the majority of attention to – and interest in – artivism on Twitter can be characterized as focusing on consequences rather than content. Specifically, this entails a strong emphasis on state prosecution, media-centric artistic recognition and consumerism. The findings above demonstrate to a considerable extent that Twitter users focus mainly on newsworthy and media-centric events (similar to Rogstad, 2016). In other words, artivists appear to achieve societal impact not for their activism but primarily for the consequences of their activism.

These findings provide an important contribution to studies that indicate how matters of social engagement and activism increasingly permeate the arts. The artivists in our sample indeed receive little attention for their art other than when recognition by the inner members of an art field (Baumann, 2007) is emphasized. Instead, artivists primarily receive attention for social rather than artistic matters as others have pointed out (e.g. Bishop, 2012). Even more so, the Twitter users in the sample rarely mention art and political activism together. They discuss the artivists as either artists, for example through the topic of artistic recognition, or as political actors, for example through the topic of state

prosecution. As such, the social change that artivists seek (Danko, 2018) is strikingly lost in the process.

By focusing so strongly on the consequences of art activism, artivism affords Twitter users to display solidarity with the suffering artivist. This contributes to research that suggests that Western media audiences seek to display solidarity as a form of cosmopolitan self-expression (Chouliaraki, 2013). Twitter, as a social media platform, lends itself greatly for such practices of self-expression (Hogan, 2012) and Pussy Riot and Ai Weiwei especially constitute the cosmopolitan 'other' as they originate from countries that score relatively low on indicators of freedom (Freedom House, 2016). This form of solidarity, however, extends only as far as mainstream news media attention goes. The other artivist who suffered state repression – Jafar Panahi – remains largely invisible in the topic model, which means that the display of solidarity by Twitter users follows widespread news media attention before the actual suffering artivist.

And yet, both popularity and the lack thereof among the broader public, at least as far as this public extends to Twitter users, result in little attention for the artivists and their causes. Highly popular artivists such as Banksy, Pussy Riot and Ai Weiwei see their political agenda being overshadowed by attention that barely scratches the surface of their causes, while the less well-known artivists such as Jafar Panahi, Jonas Staal and Hans Haacke receive virtually no attention on Twitter at all. Audience attention, then, takes the form of a Matthew Effect for artivists: attention leads to more attention. Yet, societal impact for artivists in terms of attention comes at the great cost of their activist intent being largely ignored.

These conclusions, however, should be taken with some caution. Even though it's a strength of Twitter that it provides an empirical window to study everyday discussions by the broader public, the conclusions mentioned here only extend, strictly speaking, to the Twittersphere. Secondly, and due in part to the rather short nature of tweets, Twitter users remain mostly at the level of signaling particular events in their

tweets. By doing so, however, for example by signaling Pussy Riot's conviction, Twitter users imply that they support the artivists. Throughout both its strengths and weaknesses, Twitter constitutes a communicative space through which people in contemporary democracies actively engage with politics (Vromen, Xenos and Loader, 2015). For artivists to achieve any impact beyond the art field, receiving attention on platforms such as Twitter is indispensable, even though this means that attention by social media users remains somewhat superficial and fails to explicitly recognize the activism of artivists.

Finally, by combining topic modelling and semantic network analysis I have been able to study a rather large dataset of textual content while also providing qualitative microscopes within these data (Bail, 2014). These methods, therefore, bridge the methodological polarization between quantitative and qualitative analysis (Tinati et al., 2014) and help to better study meaning structures. Admittedly, the analysis is somewhat biased towards frequently-occurring textual content in the data. Therefore, it falls short to trace out smaller differences within themes as well those artivists who have received considerably less attention. Yet, the disproportionate amount of attention to Ai Weiwei, Banksy and Pussy Riot shows that Twitter users mainly focus on that which is popular, trending and widely debated in society.

Footnotes

1 Manual scraping by loading and copy-pasting all tweets on an artivist case for consecutive periods on a web page proved to be the least time-consuming option. Most API's for Twitter do not allow to collect all historical tweets, which was necessary in order to collect tweets from 2010 until 2015. After copying and pasting the tweets, Python was used to clean the data from all information that was not part of the actual tweets.
2 I assessed potential spam accounts individually and manually, without one strict rule to enforce upon all potential spam accounts as they can vary greatly in numbers and percentages.
3 Words like (demonstrative) pronouns occur often in the data while they do not convey or add much meaning and are therefore excluded from the data.
4 Not all topics in the topic model allow for meaningful interpretation. In line with DiMaggio, Nag and Blei (2013: 582), I consider topic modelling like a lens through which to view large datasets. Although no topic solution is perfect, the researcher should look for the most optimal topic model through the data can be viewed most clearly.

CHAPTER 5
CELEBRITY RECEPTION OF ARTIVISM

5.1 Introduction

It is a complex question to ask whether Ai Weiwei's art installation of 14.000 life jackets worn primarily by Syrian refugees had any impact on the flow of refugees into Europe or on how European countries dealt with refugees. Through such politically motivated artistic expressions, however, artivists influence public opinion and fuel debates about pressing political or societal matters. In line with Tunali's (2017) argument, therefore, instead of focusing on immediate effects of politically engaged art, it is perhaps much more feasible to examine the way in which artivism becomes an arena for political discussion by engaging with social issues. Any artist could address political or societal issues, but change is only possible when they are heard and discussed.

This chapter, therefore, studies discussions about artivists to gauge the degree and type of attention they generate in a specific sub-sphere of the media realm: celebrity attention. More specifically, for this chapter I have collected tweets by popular culture celebrities, who take centre stage in the media realm to such an extent that people in contemporary democracies increasingly engage with politics through mediagenic celebrities (Wheeler, 2013). Celebrities are able to raise political and societal issues otherwise overlooked (Thrall et al., 2008). The central

question throughout this chapter, therefore, is how and to what extent celebrities from different backgrounds discuss artivism on Twitter.

5.2 Performing celebrity on Twitter

Popular culture celebrities take centre stage in the media realm and therefore enjoy a lot of attention in the broader society. By giving attention to some and ignoring other artivists, they too perform the role of gatekeeper in deciding which types of political activism and which types of artistic expression require more attention within society. Celebrity attention to artivism, therefore, constitutes a suitable measure to assess the degree in which artivists are heard for their political activism. The concept of celebrity, however, is less a set of characteristics than it is a set of practices that give media visibility (Marwick & boyd, 2011). This is perhaps most clearly visible by pointing out that all celebrities are famous while not all famous people are celebrities. As Turner (2016: 85) puts it, celebrity can be based on nothing more than the achievement of visibility itself. Celebrity, therefore, is primarily characterized by a set of practices through which people carefully develop a persona that is to be consumed by others (Hearn & Schoenhoff, 2016). These practices mainly entail the construction of a public self, the maintenance of a fan base and the performance of intimacy and authenticity (Marwick & boyd, 2011: 140).

Social media constitute suitable platforms through which celebrity practices can be performed. Many celebrities actively use social media platforms to present their public selves (Thomas, 2014), to interact with their fan base (Marwick, 2016) and generally to command the attention of an audience (Page, 2012). In this way, celebrities can maintain an intimate relationship with large fan bases by generating personal media content (Marwick, 2016) and construct what Marshall (2010) refers to as a 'public private self.' Celebrities can pick up their mobile devices to post more or less anything they want to share on social media at any time of the day (or hire staff to do this for them), without having to wait for

someone to interview them on camera. Social media presences for contemporary celebrities, therefore, can be considered almost a requirement (Giles, 2018).

Social media outlets, therefore, constitute well-suited platforms through which celebrities maintain and retain visibility. This is particularly true for Twitter, where users share their views and interests and engage in conversation with others (Hogan, 2010). However, the relationship between Twitter users, expressed in terms of followers and followees, is non-reciprocal (Page, 2012): the followee is not required to subscribe to all its followers. Celebrities can therefore maintain a substantive follower base without having to follow thousands of Twitter users themselves. This makes celebrity tweets follow a one-way stream mostly: celebrities post tweets and many other users view these tweets without the celebrity being required to view the tweets from other users. Furthermore, other users can engage with celebrity tweets by replying to them, liking them, or reiterating them through so-called retweets.

Additionally, platforms such as Twitter constitute communicative spaces for everyday political talk (Vromen, Xenos & Loader, 2015). Twitter, then, allows celebrities to engage in politics on an everyday level, which I understand as a form of latent political participation in line with Ekman and Amnå (2012). Twitter, therefore, further enables me to empirically study the visibility of artivists in the media realm by analyzing the extent in which celebrities discuss such artists on Twitter on an everyday level to perform their own celebrity and how others engage with celebrity tweets on artivism.

5.2.1 Celebrity practice

Popular culture celebrities often carefully separate between their professional artistic occupation and their political or activist practices to protect their artistic career (Roussel & Lechaux, 2010). Whenever they engage in politics, they do so not as a popular culture artist but as someone who represents mass popular culture audiences (Daley, 2013). Therefore, it is likely that celebrity artists avoid professional association

with artivists and focus predominantly on the artivists' activism when they give attention to artivism. Hypothesis 1 therefore states that c*elebrity tweets on artivism emphasize the political content more strongly than the artistic content*. There is little research distinguishing between celebrities from different fields and industries (e.g. film, music, tv, etc.) so there is little ground to expect particular differences between celebrity types and celebrity profiles, which therefore will be addressed exploratively.

Celebrities, furthermore, differ greatly in terms of visibility and wield different levels of star power (Thrall et al., 2008) and celebrity capital (Driessens, 2012). At the core of both these concepts, it is primarily media visibility that allow us to view celebrity as a 'deserved glory' (Marshall, 1997) that is assigned to some and withheld for others. Media visibility, then, allows us to differentiate between celebrity profiles. First, since celebrities operate in highly professionalized fields, they are greatly dependent on cooperation with others (Roussel & Lechaux, 2010), particularly when they are still crafting their public self (Marwick & boyd, 2011). Hence, lower profile celebrities, those who possess lesser media visibility, are likely to shy away from controversy if it could affect their careers negatively, informing the second hypothesis: *in their tweets on artivism, low-profile celebrity tweets on artivism focus less strongly on political content than high-profile celebrity tweets*.

Second, celebrities who generate more media attention and hence have more media visibility are likely to generate more attention among the general public. Of course, by enjoying more visibility it is likely that their tweets will be viewed by a larger audience. It does not follow, however, that this automatically results in larger audience engagement through likes and retweets. The third hypothesis, therefore, states that *tweets on artivism by high-profile celebrities generate more audience engagement than tweets on artivism by low-profile celebrities*.

Celebrities, in turn, are influential on different levels. They are perceived to have a potentially strong influence on young people (Loader, Vromen & Xenos, 2016), public opinion (Jackson & Darrow, 2005) and

social movements (Meyer & Gamson, 1995). Budabin (2015: 401), in referring to this political potential of celebrities, frames them as 'norm entrepreneurs', who promote and frame political issues through media appearances in a way that resonates well with broader audiences. Their influence as norm entrepreneurs, however, is of course not only dependent on their star power, but also dependent on the political issues they involve themselves in. Celebrity involvement seems to be accepted more in political issues that are perceived to be of little importance (Becker, 2013) and are considered as 'soft' issues (Huliaras & Tzifakis, 2010). Causes that lead to unquestionable public support are much more appealing to celebrities than controversial causes as celebrities tend to carefully avoid being too political and endangering their careers (Tsaliki, Frangonikolopoulos & Huliaras, 2011). These issues enjoy a great deal of attention and allow people in society to display solidarity as a form of self-expression (Chouliaraki, 2013). The more politically inclined celebrities, therefore, are likely to generate more attention, assuming that a strong focus on the politics of artivism leads to controversy which is expressed through increased attention to the celebrity through engagement in terms of for example likes and retweets. This informs the fourth hypothesis: c*elebrity tweets that include more activist content generate more engagement*. Again, celebrities can be differentiated along several axes, but these will be addressed exploratively.

5.3 Research design

5.3.1 Data

In this study the omitted tweets from the dataset of Chapter 4 are utilized by extracting all tweets by verified Twitter accounts. In an age of pervasive and ubiquitous social media platforms, however, it has become increasingly difficult to distinguish between celebrities and non-celebrities. Turner (2006) points to a 'demotic turn' that signals an increased visibility of ordinary people in the media realm. Social media,

in particular, afford ordinary users to treat their followers and friends as fans, a practice commonly referred to as 'micro-celebrity' (Marwick & boyd, 2011). Turner (2016), similarly, writes about the 'DIY celebrity' who is able to gather an extensive following without the need of traditional gatekeepers in the mainstream media industry. This trend is perhaps best illustrated by the phenomena of social media influencers (Khamis, Ang & Welling, 2017) and the 'Instafamous' social media user. As for the latter, Instagram users have attained mass audiences similar in size as the audiences of television programs or networks (Marwick, 2015). To address this issue, tweets by celebrities were filtered through several steps, based on visibility beyond Twitter as a key factor that distinguishes celebrities from non-celebrities.

First, all tweets by organizational Twitter accounts, such as news media platforms who are active on Twitter, were omitted manually. From the remaining data, the number of followers is used as a proxy to omit all the non-celebrities since on Twitter visibility begins with one's followers. It remains virtually impossible, however, to pinpoint exactly what the minimum required number of followers is for someone to be referred to as a celebrity. Still, I decided on 250,000 followers to distinguish celebrities from non-celebrities. Even though this cut-off point seems somewhat arbitrary, I decided on it by manually trying different cut-offs. Lowering the threshold of 250,000 followers results in the inclusion of many Twitter users who seem to be relatively unknown beyond social media and increasing the threshold throws out some well-known celebrities who are simply less active on Twitter.

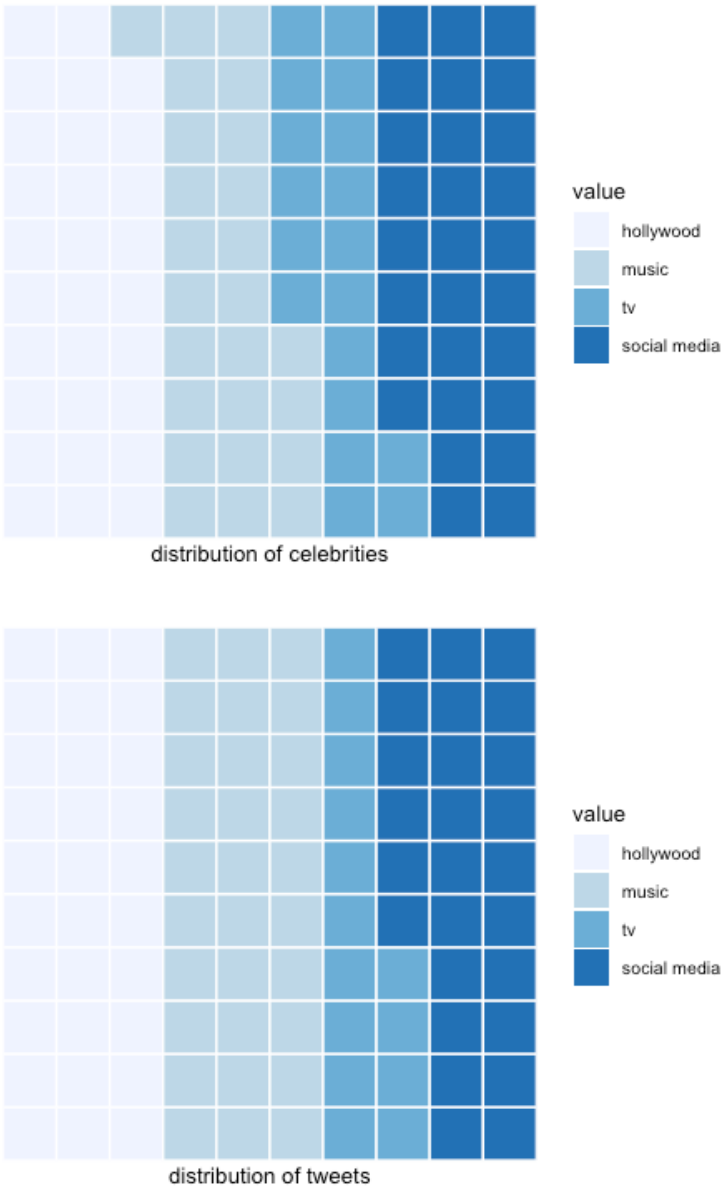
For the remaining Twitter accounts and tweets, I differentiated between *industry celebrities* and *online celebrities* in line with Turner (2016). The former category consists of celebrities known for their established position in the entertainment industries, such as music artists and Hollywood actors. Each of the remaining accounts of celebrities was therefore categorized inductively according to the industry in which the celebrities operate. For this I initially used their Twitter profiles and used a Google search when it was unclear from their profile how the

celebrities defined themselves. In some cases, celebrities referred to themselves as, for example, both comedians and Hollywood actors. For these cases, I checked the first page of a Google search on the name of the celebrity and categorized the celebrity according to whichever category prevailed. From all the industry celebrity types, then, I included the four largest categories as the smaller categories were considerably smaller which would make statistical analysis more unbalanced. This way, the dataset comprises of 324 celebrity profiles, accounting for 818 tweets in total, the latter constituting the research units, of which the relative distribution is visible in Figure 5.1.

5.3.2 Measures

These celebrity categories, then, inform the variable of celebrity type. First, the category of *Hollywood celebrities* typically includes actors such as Tom Cruise or Mia Farrow but also includes well-known others that are involved in the production of movies or TV series other than through acting, such as famous directors. *Music celebrities*, second, are those who are involved in the production of music and include famous musicians and producers, such as Snoop Dogg. The category of *TV celebrities*, third, consists of celebrities that are involved in TV programs, such as talk shows, news broadcasting shows or reality TV and include celebrities such as Piers Morgan or Martha Stewart. Finally, a fourth celebrity type was established, including *social media celebrities*. This category is somewhat exceptional as it consists perhaps of the newest form of celebrity. Nonetheless, these celebrities are often highly influential on social media and have gathered an extensive follower base in the online sphere. They include social media influencers, bloggers, YouTube vloggers, or those who have become famous through platforms such as Twitter or Instagram. This category includes celebrities such as Perez Hilton.

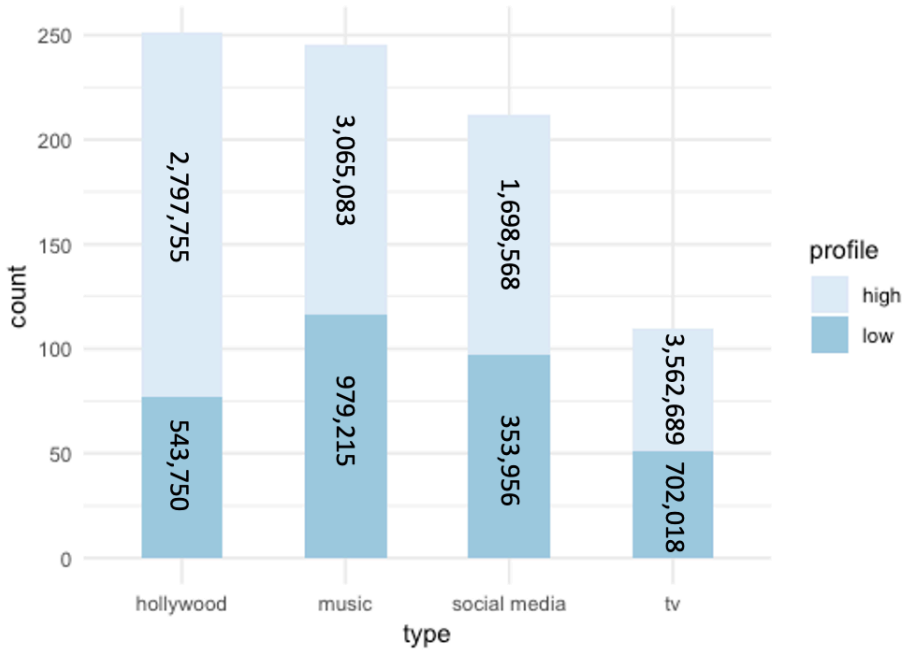
Figure 5.1: Celebrity type and tweets distribution.



Next, I differentiate between celebrities with higher and lower visibility by combining several indicators pointing towards the variable of *celebrity profile*. For this, I took inspiration primarily from Thrall et al. (2008: 367) and their variable of 'star power', which they use to rate celebrities according to their presence in news stories and the amount of hits of a Google search for the celebrity name. A Google search was conducted on each industry celebrity name and several binary indicators were used based on the first page of the search results. It was established whether or not (1=yes; 0=not) the first page of a Google search displayed (1) Google's conventional 'top stories' about the celebrity, (2) a Google profile on the celebrity, (3) the IMDB page[1] or a Youtube video[2] of the celebrity, (4) a Wikipedia page of the celebrity and (5) a link to a news article on the celebrity. These indicators together already provided, at face value, a good way for distinguishing between different degrees of celebrity. Yet, another indicator was included for which the celebrity name plus the word "celebrity" was entered in a Google search to assess on the first page of the search results (6) whether or not the celebrity was referred to as indeed a celebrity. High-profile celebrities scored 1 for at least five out of six indicators and low-profile celebrities scored 1 for less than five indicators.

For social media celebrities, these indicators did not seem to work properly. For this category, therefore, their profile was assessed based solely on the number of followers they have, as that is perhaps the most prevailing indicator for fame on social media platforms. Two equally large groups were distinguished based on the distribution of followers among social media celebrities. This resulted in high-profile social media celebrities having 509,049 followers or more and low-profile social media celebrities having less than 509,049 followers (but more than 250,000). Overall, the variable of celebrity profile is somewhat validated by the average number of followers as this number is considerably higher for high-profile celebrities as is visible in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2: Celebrity profiles and mean followers within bars.



Next, and similar to the study in Chapter 3, I distinguish between *artistic* and *political content* of celebrity tweets by composing two dictionaries based on all unique words in the dataset[3]. Artistically oriented words were added manually to the artistic content dictionary while politically oriented words were added manually to the political content dictionary (see Table 5.1 for a small excerpt). No inter-coder reliability was calculated due to only one coder being involved. Intra-coder reliability was calculated with a five-month interval (Cohen's kappa equals to .079). Both dictionaries were fed into a Python code[4] to provide scores for each tweet that represent the degree of artistic content and political content within a tweet respectively. Each score represents the number of words from the dictionaries found within each tweet. The upside of this is that the coding procedure is conducted by a computer program, which makes matters of reliability largely irrelevant. The downside, however, is that a computerized analysis is only as valid as it is designed to be. Working

with just a selection of words on the basis of which each celebrity tweet is analysed for its focus on both artistic and political content means that there is little room for nuance and some words that pertain to either arts or politics or perhaps even both are inevitably overlooked. This is, however, a matter of degree. Even though the two dictionaries will surely not be exhaustive in including all words that pertain, respectively, to arts and activism and even though the distinction between art and politics not as black and white as suggested here, the dictionaries are large enough so that variance in the resulting scores for artistic and political content are meaningful. The greater the difference between the scores for artistic and political content, the clearer is their difference on content focus of an individual tweet.

Table 5.1: Example words used for artistic and political content dictionaries.

Artistic content	**Political content**
actor	abuse
album	activism
art	activist
artist	advocacy
artwork	ambassador
…	…

Finally, the nature of the data that was collected allows me to analyse different degrees of engagement with each celebrity tweet, and hence each artivist by proxy, could receive. *Engagement with celebrity tweets* was measured through three indicators. First, I analyse the amount of likes celebrity tweets on artivism receive, as a generally positive form of engagement. Second, I look at the retweets that each celebrity tweet generated. Retweets signify ongoing discussions which could mean both

a positive and a negative reaction to the celebrity. Third, I analyse the number of replies to each celebrity tweet. The more replies a tweet receives, the more discussion it has triggered, although the amount of replies in itself does not say much about the content of any triggered discussion. Taken together, these three indicators of engagement indicate the degree in which celebrities generate attention among the general public of Twitter users.

5.3.3 Method of analysis

Many of these variables provide count data, which means that most of the data is severely skewed. Similar to Chapter 3, therefore, non-parametric statistical testing was primarily employed to analyse how different groups of celebrities differ from each other in terms of the content focus of their tweets and the degree of engagement their tweets generated. More specifically, RStudio was used to conduct Wilcoxon rank-sum tests and Kruskal-Wallis tests. Descriptive statistics are given when needed and when providing more nuance to the statistical tests.

5.4 Results

5.4.1 Art versus politics among celebrity types

The first hypothesis can be tested by using simple descriptive statistics. Celebrity tweets on artivism are expected to display a stronger focus on political content than on artistic content and this indeed seems to be the case. The mean score for artistic content over all tweets when controlled for word count is .09, while that for political content is .16. These are relative scores taking into account the length of each tweet, which means that on average of all words in a tweet 9% pertains to artistic content and 16% to political content. This difference seems rather small and tells us that a considerable proportion of all tweets does not contain many of the words in our art and politics dictionaries. With an average word count of

15.7 words, however, tweets contain on average 2.5 word that pertains to politics and 1.4 words that pertain to art.

Simple mean scores, however, paint a very limited picture. Distinguishing between celebrity types allows for more thorough statistical analysis, making more interesting differences visible. Since the scores for artistic and political content do not display normal distributions, a non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis rank-sum test was conducted to compare between tweets by Hollywood, music, TV and social media celebrities, supplemented with a post-hoc Dunn test to further investigate which celebrity types are significantly different from each other exactly. As is visible from Table 5.2, the Kruskall-Wallis tests for both artistic and political content shows that indeed there are differences between celebrity types based on ranked median scores for both artistic and political content. A post-hoc Dunn test, next, shows that the only significant difference for artistic content is found between Hollywood celebrities on the one hand and the other celebrity types on the other hand.

The Kruskal-Wallis test indicates statistically significant differences for both artistic and political content among celebrity tweets. The post-hoc Dunn test further shows that two groups can be discerned. Hollywood and music celebrities both exhibit relatively high scores for political content in their tweets and do not appear to be significantly different from each other. TV and social media celebrities, in contrast, exhibit relatively low scores for political content and, similarly, do not differ among each other statistically for artistic content even though their median scores are not the same. The latter two, in other words, appear to be much less interested in the activism of artivism than Hollywood and music celebrities are. These findings furthermore suggest that the stronger attention to political content by Hollywood and music celebrities results in part in lesser attention to the art of artivism. This makes sense since tweets can only be so long and therefore display a very limited number of different frames (Wilkinson & Thelwall, 2012). Furthermore, this suggests that Hollywood and music celebrities are less likely to avoid

politics than TV and social media celebrities are, which is often seen to be a threat to the popular culture celebrities' career (Tsaliki, Frangonikolopoulos & Huliaras, 2011).

Table 5.2: Kruskal-Wallis rank-sum tests for artistic (top) and political (below) content by celebrity type.

	Kruskal-Wallis rank-sum test	**Post-hoc Dunn test**		
	Median	Music celebrities	TV celebrities	Social-Media celebrities
Hollywood celebrities (n=251)	.5** 2*	* ns	* *	* **
Music celebrities (n=245)	1** 2*		ns *	ns *
TV celebrities (n=110)	1* 1*			ns ns
Social media celebrities (n=212)	1* .5*			

Adjusted p-values: $p < .1$ = *; $p < .05$ = **; $p < .01$ = ***

Hypothesis 1, therefore, is partly confirmed. Hollywood and music celebrities indeed emphasize political content more strongly than artistic content, while TV and social media celebrities do not exhibit any difference. Of course, both Hollywood and music celebrities have a long history of political engagement and are likely to be interested in the societal concerns that our artivist cases address. In music, we can point to various well-known musicians who time and again attempt to raise awareness for a variety of issues. Some of the usual suspects, such as

Bono, Bob Geldoff and Madonna are known to have raised awareness for poverty in the Global South, gender equality and human rights issues (Partzsch, 2015). Similarly, Hollywood celebrity artists have often presented themselves as the white knights (Roussel & Lechaux, 2010), who become the public spokespersons for certain causes and protests.

A large part of the differences, however, could be due to celebrity profile. To conduct a non-parametric statistical test between just two groups, low-profile and high-profile celebrities, Wilcoxon rank-sum tests were employed, which similarly maintains as its null hypothesis that two populations are the same with regards to a particular characteristic. If the null hypothesis can be rejected for low-profile and high-profile celebrities on the basis of first their scores for artistic content and second their scores for political content, it can be concluded that the two groups differ with regards to these two variables.

Table 5.3 displays the results of the Wilcoxon rank-sum tests and tells us that the null hypothesis can indeed be rejected: the two groups differ for both their scores for artistic and political content. The median scores indicate that indeed on average high-profile celebrities are much more likely to address the politics of the artivist cases. Low-profile celebrity tweets display the same median score for artistic and political content. This confirms the second hypothesis.

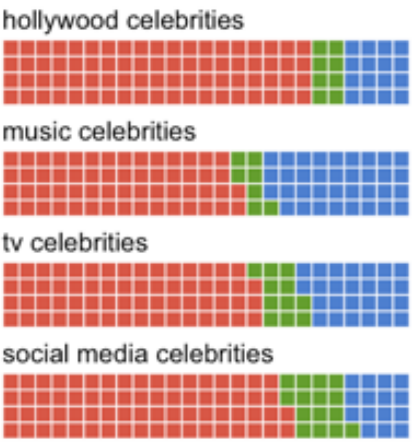
Of course, the data and these findings exclude the motivation of celebrities to tweet what they have tweeted about the artivist cases. The differences between high-profile and low-profile celebrities, however, are considerable. It is therefore likely that the latter, when they tweet about artivists, aim to display interest and potential support while remaining careful not to overtly engage with the activism of artivists such as Ai Weiwei, Banksy or Pussy Riot. Indeed, considering the effort celebrities put into crafting their celebrity image (Marwick & boyd, 2011), low-profile celebrities are indeed expected to be much more careful than high-profile celebrities who generally have already attained the star power (Thrall et al., 2008) to easily maneuver into the field of politics and address more explicit political issues in relation to artivism.

Table 5.3: Wilcoxon rank-sum tests for content by celebrity profile.

	Artistic content Median	**Political content Median**	**Average length in words**
Low-profile celebrities	1*	1***	13.3
High-profile celebrities	1.5*	2***	17.2

The artivist cases on which the data were collected, however, can influence the results discussed just now. The trio of Ai Weiwei, Banksy and Pussy Riot vastly dominate the data. This could perhaps be explained by pointing out that artivists who themselves already enjoy a high degree of media attention, do not require much introduction when celebrities tweet about them. Within Twitter's technological infrastructure, tweets are relatively short and do not allow for lengthy elaboration which might be needed when celebrities give attention to lesser known artivist cases. Furthermore, Ai Weiwei has made several documentaries and covered the global musical hit Gangnam Style, relating him much closer to Hollywood and music celebrities than to TV and social media celebrities. Banksy, in turn, has been linked to the Hollywood movie industry for his mockumentary Exit through the Gift Shop, which received an Oscar nomination back in 2011. As a punk music protest collective, Pussy Riot relies strongly on music in its artivist practices and can therefore be linked much more strongly to music celebrities. Figure 5.3 partly confirms this genre-specific attention. Hollywood celebrities tweet mostly about Banksy. Music celebrities, in turn, show particularly much interest in Pussy Riot. TV and social media celebrities, in turn, do not necessarily relate to any specific artistic genre and therefore are potentially capable of more freely engaging with a wider variety of artivists.

Figure 5.3: Distribution of artivists in tweets by celebrity types (Red = Banksy; green = Ai Weiwei; blue = Pussy Riot).



Still, out of all artivists, Banksy by far enjoys the most attention from each celebrity type. This is in accordance with the findings from the previous chapter, in which well over sixty percent of all tweets were devoted to Banksy. In comparison to Ai Weiwei and Pussy Riot, who each experienced legal repercussion and whose political activism is aimed more specifically at the government and at government officials, Banksy's artivism takes a more general focus on pressing global issues. Banksy might therefore be much more appealing to celebrities, in order to avoid being considered too political (Tsaliki, Frangonikolopoulos & Huliaras, 2011).

5.4.2 Celebrity Twitter practices and engagement

Apart from the content focus of celebrities, tweets generate attention in terms of likes, retweets and replies. It is expected that celebrity tweets that score higher for political content generate more engagement in general. Since the number of likes, retweets and replies neither display normal distributions, a non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis rank-sum test is again preferred. To differentiate between tweets that score higher for

political content, I divide the data into four groups. First, the group of celebrity tweets on artivism that display none of the politically oriented words in our political content dictionary as Group 1. Group 2 exhibits only one politically oriented word, Group 3 contains 2 politically oriented words and finally Group 4 contains 3 or more politically oriented words. Table 5.4 details the results of the Kruskal-Wallis tests where I compared these four groups for the number of likes (top), retweets (middle) and replies (bottom).

Table 5.4: Kruskal-Wallis rank-sum tests for likes (top), retweets (middle) and replies (bottom) by political content groups.

	Kruskal-Wallis rank-sum test		**Post-hoc Dunn test**		
	Median	Mean	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Group 1 (n=351) political content = 0	6^{ns}	58.8	ns	ns	ns
	7**	37.8	ns	ns	ns
	1***	9.5	ns	***	**
Group 2 (n=196) political content = 1	7^{ns}	58.4		ns	ns
	8**	73.2		*	*
	1***	10.5		**	**
Group 3 (n=169) political content = 2	12^{ns}	52.4			ns
	15**	105.5			*
	2***	13.7			*
Group 4 (n=102) political content > 2	4^{ns}	32.8			
	9**	82.0			
	2***	11.6			

Adjusted p-values: $p < .1$: *; $p < .05$: **; $p < .01$: ***

As we can see in Table 5.4, the four groups do not appear to differ significantly from each other for the number of likes generated. This means that a stronger focus on the politics of artivism does not necessarily result in more likes. This is already interesting since out of the three forms of engagement Twitter users can choose, likes reflect most clearly a form of positive and supportive attention.

The groups do differ, however, for the number of retweets and replies generated. When it comes to engagement through the number of retweets and replies, Group 3 stands out and differs significantly from Group 2 and 4. Both the median and mean scores for retweets of Group 3 are significantly higher than the other groups. In the case of replies, this is true for Group 3 in comparison to each of the other three groups. These findings suggest that tweets that are more strongly politically oriented generate significantly more retweets and replies up until a certain point, after which more focus on political content results in less retweets and replies. Hypothesis 4 can therefore be partly accepted. If it is indeed the case that an increased focus on the politics of artivism results in more engagement up until a point where a further increase in political content leads to a reduction in engagement, then perhaps tweets that display a focus on the politics of artivism most strongly, which is roughly 12% of all tweets, are perceived to be too controversial for the general public of Twitter users to engage with. Furthermore, Hypothesis 4 can be strongly supported for retweets and replies, but rejected for likes.

Within Twitter's infrastructure of liking and retweeting, there are no clear ways to express one's negative feelings towards tweets by others. It could therefore be the case that users refrain from engaging with controversial celebrity tweets rather than to dislike them in some way. We do see, however, that celebrity tweets on artivism that are more political content-wise score somewhat higher for the number of replies generated. Out of the three types of engagement possible, replies constitute the only way to display disagreement or rejection. Yet, we do not know how general Twitter users replied so any claim on this part would be speculative. In terms of engaging in conversation with others (Hogan, 2010), however, replies constitute a very suitable tool and afford general Twitter users not just to reply to celebrities but to start engaging in discussion. In a sense, a stronger focus on political content for celebrity tweets seems to create at least to some extent an arena for further political discussions and political participation (Tunali, 2017).

Even though these findings already allow us to partly confirm our fourth hypothesis, there is more to be said for engagement. In Table 5.5 we can see that high-profile celebrities clearly generate more engagement except for the number of replies, confirming Hypothesis 3. A Wilcoxon rank-sum test shows that the median scores for likes and retweets for low-profile celebrities are 4 and 9 and for high-profile celebrities 9 and 10 respectively. This difference is furthermore confirmed by the differences in mean scores. This is of course expected since high-profile celebrities enjoy more visibility in general (Driessens, 2012), which is reflected in their higher number of Twitter followers. It is likely that you generate more engagement on Twitter when you have more followers. Furthermore, it follows from the observation that celebrities represent mass popular culture audiences (Daley, 2013), that high-profile audiences indeed maintain a larger following and fanbase than low-profile celebrities and hence more easily generate engagement among their following.

Table 5.5: Wilcoxon rank-sum tests for likes (top), retweets (middle) and replies (bottom) by celebrity profile.

	Engagement	
	Median	Mean
Low-profile celebrities	4***	32.1
	5***	36.9
	1^{ns}	4.1
High-profile celebrities	9***	63.3
	10***	75.9
	1^{ns}	5.8

Adjusted p-values: $p < .1$: *; $p < .05$: **; $p < .01$: ***

Although there was no theoretical ground to formulate expectations with regards to the different celebrity types in our data and the level of engagement they generate for their tweets, there are interesting differences on this level that further inform the explanations of the above

findings. Table 5.6 details the results of a Kruskal-Wallis rank-sum test that compares the engagement for Hollywood, music, TV and social media celebrity tweets on artivism. The groups differ significantly in the number of likes and retweets their tweets have generated. There is no statistical ground, however, to claim that one of the celebrity types generates more or less replies.

Table 5.6: Kruskal-Wallis rank-sum test for likes (top), retweets (middle) and replies (bottom) by celebrity type.

	Kruskal-Wallis rank-sum test		**Post-hoc Dunn test**		
	Median	Mean	Music celebrities	TV celebrities	Social media celebrities
Hollywood celebrities (n=251)	9***	80.2	**	ns	***
	8***	52.1	ns	***	***
	2ns	14.5	ns	ns	ns
Music celebrities (n=245)	5***	41.3		*	ns
	9***	50.9		ns	*
	1ns	7.5		ns	ns
TV celebrities (n=110)	15***	68.8			***
	13***	88.7			***
	2ns	18.1			ns
Social media celebrities (n=212)	4***	38.1			
	3***	23.8			
	1ns	4.6			

Adjusted p-values: p < .1: *; p < .05: **; p < .01: ***

Two groups stand out. First, what is striking on this level of analysis is the relatively high number of likes and retweets generated by TV celebrity tweets in comparison to the other celebrity types. It is difficult to explain this, but since the group of TV celebrities contains primarily those involved in talk shows and news broadcasting their tweets might

generally be related more strongly to news and newsworthy information and therefore generate more engagement. Second, even though social media celebrities generate audiences that are similar in size to the audiences that traditional popular culture celebrities have (Marwick, 2015), their tweets on artivism generate little attention in comparison to the other three celebrity types. Seen in this light, even though social media celebrities constitute a new group of celebrities, our data suggests that general Twitter users seem to engage significantly less with this category of celebrities. Perhaps the most obvious explanation for this is that social media celebrities' star power has worth particularly on media platforms in which they can engage in micro-celebrity practices (Marwick & boyd, 2011), such as Instagram. Their star power somewhat diminishes in the realm of media in general, particularly in comparison to for example Hollywood celebrities to the extent that the general public engages less with social media celebrities.

5.5 Discussion

Looking at the degree and type of attention that artivists generate by celebrities, there is some evidence to argue that celebrities are eager to raise attention to the activism of artivism, through the political content of their tweets. This should, however, be nuanced on several levels. For Hollywood and music celebrity artists, the content focus within their tweets is more strongly on politics than is the case for TV and social media celebrities. In line with this, some celebrities seem to stay close to their respective professional fields. In relative terms, Pussy Riot enjoyed the most attention from music celebrities, while Banksy, as a street artist nominated for an Academy Award, receives most attention from Hollywood celebrities. Such genre-specific attention follows unsurprisingly for Hollywood and music celebrities and is less applicable to TV and social media celebrities who in general are distanced more from the field of art. Furthermore, these findings go particularly for tweets by high-profile celebrities. They represent mass popular culture

audiences (Daley, 2013) and have attained such star power (Thrall et al., 2008) that they are less likely to endanger their career by raising pressing political and societal issues (Roussel & Lechaux, 2010) through the prism of artivism. Where other studies suggest that celebrities often raise attention to issues that are not on the agenda of politicians (Loader, Vromen & Xenos, 2016) or increase the visibility of issues otherwise overlooked (Thrall et al., 2008), the findings in this chapter suggest that when it comes to artivism, celebrities stay close to their respective fields and differ significantly in their degree of celebrity if we understand celebrity to be a practice rather than a category of people (Marwick & boyd, 2011).

Furthermore, by analyzing the level of audience engagement that celebrity tweets on artivism have generated, I analysed the extent to which artivism functions as an arena for political participation (Tunali, 2017) on a different level. The more political content within tweets, the more engagement they generate, which means that ordinary Twitter users engage in political discussions through celebrity tweets on artivism. This does not only make celebrities constitute an alternative avenue for people to engage with politics (Wheeler, 2013), but artivism as well. With regards to generating attention, similarly, artivism receives most attention when framed and discussed within a political rather than artistic context. Future research, however, should point out more concretely and qualitatively how others engaged with artivism, the societal issues that artivists raise and whether we can speak of an influence on public opinion (Jackson & Darrow, 2005) more generally. Indeed, Thrall et al. (2008) demonstrate that politically involved celebrities do not automatically receive sustained attention, which could mean that attention to artivism by and through celebrities is short-lasting.

Some reflections and critical notes, however, are required. The distinction between low-profile and high-profile celebrities has proven to be insightful. Overall high-profile celebrities have tweeted about artivists more than low-profile celebrities. This, of course, can be an artifact of the operationalization. As the motives behind their tweets remains unknown,

it cannot be fully claimed, for example, that low-profile celebrity tweets contain less political content because they have a greater fear of damaging their career and fanbase than high-profile celebrities do. The same can be said for the measurement of the content of celebrity tweets. Since words often have ambiguous meaning, depending strongly on the context in which they are used, the validity of the variables of artistic and political content remains somewhat debatable. The point, however, is not to decide whether or not a single tweet is primarily framed artistically or politically, but to analyze the likeliness and degree in which tweets address the arts and politics of artivism. The higher a scores for political or artistic content, the more likely and extensively it is focused on politics or arts respectively. Nonetheless, qualitative studies could provide more in-depth knowledge about how tweets are framed and what the motives behind tweets are.

Furthermore, even though the findings in this chapter have been insightful with regards to the category of social media celebrities, more research is needed in how they engage in practices generally associated with celebrities, such as presenting a public self (Thomas, 2014) and maintaining a fanbase (Marwick, 2016). What is referred to as social media celebrities is perhaps closely related to what other scholars refer to as social media influencers. These are social media users that have relatively large numbers of followers and translate this 'celebrity capital' into economic benefit through advertisers and marketers that capitalize on the social media influencers' audiences (Khamis, Ang and Welling, 2017). Yet they generate significantly less engagement on Twitter than other celebrities do, which begs the question to what extent social media celebrities have any influence as social media influencers. Perhaps the data in this chapter suggest most strongly that when social media influencers tweet about artivism and tread the field of politics, their influence is considerably lower than that of traditional industry celebrities such as Hollywood actors and musicians, at least in terms of being liked and inducing further discussions through replies or retweets.

Footnotes

1 The IMDB website functions as an important database for the movie industry, where a vast majority of actors, directors and other core personnel in the movie industry are listed for virtually all produced and released movie. Hence, being featured on the IMDB website serves as an important proxy to determine whether a Hollywood celebrity is acknowledged in the field.
2 YouTube constitutes a suitable proxy for acknowledgement for musicians and TV celebrities. YouTube is actively used as a substitute for TV and music broadcasting to such an extent that many programs that appear on TV and many music numbers that are produced also appear on YouTube in order to draw sufficient viewers and listeners. The more views one receives on YouTube, the more likely it is that it appears on a Google search page based on the celebrity's name.
3 See Appendix D for a full overview of both dictionaries.
4 The Python code that was used is similar to that in Appendix B.

CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

Recently, UK artist Banksy has moved from depicting the current global migrant crisis through his well-known street art to acting on it by funding a migrant rescue boat in the Mediterranean Sea. The artist claimed to have used money that was made from his earlier artworks about the migrant crisis to finance the purchase of the ship out of moral conviction (Tondo & Stierl, 2020). The vessel itself is run by an all-female activist group experienced in rescue missions and features Banksy's trademark street art in purple and black graffiti paint. To date, it has rescued over 200 migrants and is still sailing the Mediterranean Sea in search for more to rescue. As such, this new Banksy project is both an art and humanitarian project at the same time. It is not just an artwork that can be observed in a museum – at least not yet. Nor is it merely a humanitarian project when Banksy's signature art is all over it so plainly. At the same time, however, while some of his previous artworks primarily raised attention to the current migrant crisis, this one is used to the advantage of migrants more directly. Whereas his artworks can easily be ignored by the larger public, this one will keep saving migrants even if no one is paying attention. Of course, the artist could have simply financed a rescue boat without associating his name with it. Then again, it might

have received less media coverage and hence the global migrant crisis might have received less attention. It seems as though the boat needed to be an artwork for it to achieve more impact.

This recent art project of Banksy, therefore, is a perfect illustration of the complex position in which artivists find themselves. They aim to achieve societal change, but often attempt to do so through a mode of artistic expression. To study this phenomenon of artivism, I have analyzed the reception of artivism within the fields of art, news media and social media. I have attempted to answer the main research question through four empirical studies in which I compare three domains of artivist reception: within the art field, within the media realm and among media audiences.

Internal to the field of art, I have demonstrated how for some curators artistic criteria do not appear to play an important role in attributing artistic status to artivists. For them, art and social engagement are inseparable and they believe that societal change can be achieved through socially engaged art (chapter 2). Within newspaper coverage (chapter 3), however, quality newspapers appear to differentiate between the art and activism of artivism by covering artivists in cultural sections when they are primarily artistically evaluated and in non-cultural sections when they are discussed in a political context. This differentiation is much less visible within popular newspapers, while the latter furthermore appear less artistically and politically oriented in their coverage of artivism overall. Among media audiences (chapter 4), artivists appear to enjoy attention that predominantly involves a focus on the consequences that artivists have faced for their activism rather than their activist cause. The analysis of popular culture celebrity engagement with artivism (chapter 5), finally, shows that celebrities are primarily interested in the activism of artivists and that more political content in celebrity tweets on artivist cases results in more engagement by media audiences. While in the previous chapters I have already attempted to reflect on my findings, these studies offer several theoretical insights, along with possible

avenues for future research, when considered together. I will further elaborate on these below.

6.2 Return to representation

Although historically it can be argued that the field of visual arts came to define itself as relatively autonomous with its own status markers, today there appears to be a strong voice within the arts that perceives of the field of visual arts as an important avenue for social engagement. If a social turn in the arts is characterized by the arts being increasingly evaluated on the basis of social and ethical criteria (Bishop, 2012), then it could be argued that there is indeed some empirical support for this hypothesis. Where others have spoken of eroding boundaries between art and everyday life when extra-aesthetic elements become increasingly pronounced in the arts (e.g. Bishop, 2012; 2014), however, I would additionally argue that the boundaries between the field of visual art and the broader society in particular become blurred. Quite a few curators interviewed for chapter 2 appeared reluctant to follow dominant aesthetic considerations and instead give precedence to social criteria in their evaluation of art. According to De Duve (2019), this constitutes a counter-ideological approach: exclusively aesthetic considerations are explicitly rejected in favor of criteria of social engagement. This approach suggests that the arts become heteronomous in the Bourdieusian sense that criteria external to the arts become more important (Bourdieu, 1993) and that the field of art is not a strictly autonomous or societally isolated sphere but one that bears the same inequalities that can be seen in society in general. In contrast to Bourdieu's findings, however, heteronomy here is found in the role of social engagement in the arts, rather than of economic factors. In other words, by countering inequalities in the arts inequalities in the broader society are expected to be tackled too.

The evaluative practices of curators with regards to social engagement in general and artivism in particular, furthermore, concern social and

ethical criteria that especially seem to pertain to representation. While representation in previous centuries was visible through artists who came to view themselves as the 'cultural deputies' of the court (De Duve, 2019: 69), representation among the visual arts today is visible through its fragmentation into art movements that represent particular and often underrepresented or even oppressed social groups, such as feminist art, black art, community art and similar movements. This representation of the underrepresented can therefore be seen as primarily a social rather than artistic discourse in line with Bishop's (2012) distinction and perhaps constitutes the contours of a new artistic paradigm or schism in which artistic expression becomes a means to a more socially oriented goal. Within such a paradigm, artistic status depends in part on criteria in social, ethical and political activist terms. Throughout their practices of categorizing artistic products, producers and practices (Lamont & Molnár, 2002), however, not all curators draw similar boundaries with regards to whether and what type of social engagement is accepted in the arts. While some curators strongly maintain an artistic discourse and consider social engagement to be reserved for non-artistic practices, others consider it a requirement for contemporary artists to be socially engaged.

In the introduction I emphasized how socially engaged artistic practices, such as artivism, present a puzzle: they appear to follow their own logic, yet seek to achieve societal change through their focus on social engagement. This puzzle, then, can be explained by pointing to a strong voice within the arts for social engagement, in particular in relation to representation. From the perspective of the art field, those curators who applaud social engagement contend that by maintaining strictly artistic evaluative criteria social inequalities are reproduced. For them it is up to artists and themselves as cultural intermediaries to achieve societal change through art. Through representative art, underrepresented social groups gain a voice within the arts and this in turn is seen to give those groups a voice in society in general.

Ultimately, however, there is also a strong national element to representation as an artistic paradigm. In the end, representation comes down to the social groups who socially engaged artists in general and artivists in particular aim and claim to represent. Particularly in the West, what constitutes a minority group differs from country to country (e.g. Berkers, Janssen & Verboord, 2011). Indicatively, for example, US curators strongly displayed a curatorial attitude that is accepting of social engagement especially when it involves African-American minorities. Representation, therefore, further emphasizes the heteronomy of contemporary art within a national context particularly: it is never solely dependent on the evaluation practices of cultural intermediaries but ultimately depends on whether and how the claim of representation finds resonance within the broader society. As such, representation requires from the artist not a strictly aesthetic mode of artistic expression or exclusively artistic discourse. Rather, it requires from the artist a certain practice to speak for particular social groups and thereby to be heard by them and accepted in the broader society to speak on their behalf.

Along the same line, there is a strong geopolitical element to representation. Particularly beyond the art field, representation could explain why so much news media and media audience attention go out to prosecuted artivists and the prosecution of artivists. Ai Weiwei, Pussy Riot and Jafar Panahi each represent the oppressed through the very state prosecution they have faced. For others, a 'symbolic coup' (Roussel & Lechaux, 2010: 22) might be needed to achieve representation: just like popular culture celebrities who equate their audience to a constituency they claim to represent (Watts, 2019), artivists address a pressing societal issue and seek representation among those they believe to have been wronged. Indicatively, Banksy has used the earnings he made for artworks that addressed to global migrant crisis to finance a rescue boat. Other artivists, in contrast, might have exposed wrongdoing but lack the representation when they, for example, quickly move from one societal issue to another throughout their artistic careers.

6.3 Media and media audience attention

This search for representation, however, is less visible within the newspaper coverage of artivism. In part, of course, this is the result of the way newspaper articles were coded. Instead, however, newspapers can be seen to somewhat reproduce the view of art as primarily preoccupied with itself, by separating their attention to the art and activism of artivism. In cultural newspaper sections, artivists are discussed primarily in an artistic context, while in non-cultural sections artivists are discussed primarily in a political context. Even more so, this contrast between the art and activism of artivism is most clearly visible in quality newspapers, while the latter also cover artivists much more often in cultural sections than popular newspapers do. This is particularly interesting when we consider art journalists who write for the cultural sections of newspapers to be cultural intermediaries (Kuipers, Janssen & Verboord, 2008). To that extent, the field of visual arts is treated as a separate sphere that follows its own autonomous logic and therefore deserves separated attention. Since news media such as newspapers are powerful in determining what is societally relevant (Champagne, 2005; Esser & Strömbäck, 2014), they appear to play an important role in reproducing the view of the arts as a separate, relatively autonomous sphere.

Taking news media attention and media audience attention as a measure for societal impact, then, requires some nuance. From analyzing the media audience attention to artivism on a large scale, it has become clear that some artivists enjoy much more attention than others and that the political activism of artivists finds little resonance. In case of the latter observation, media audiences appeared much more interested in the prosecution of some of the artivist cases in comparison to their respective activist causes. This is in part the result of news media practice as news media strongly determine what is considered societally relevant (Esser & Strömbäck, 2014) and thereby strongly influence social media attention (Wilkinson & Thelwall, 2012). Indeed, it is unsurprising that those artivists who received much newspaper coverage also appeared to enjoy

a lot of attention from Twitter users. At minimum, then, news media can be seen to work as a filter in that audience attention is primarily limited to certain artivists and to certain aspects of those artivists.

It is important to emphasize that news media in general and the journalists who produce news in particular operate as gatekeepers (Vos, 2009) in that they reject some bits of information, while selecting others to become news. Not only do they selectively cover information about artivists, they selectively cover some and ignore others. As such, news media attention brings massive exposure among the broader audience to some artivists and much less to others. This selective news consumption is further catalyzed because news media are sensitive to content that attracts most readers as their business model depends strongly on engagement with audiences (Batsell, 2015). Perhaps, then, a social turn in the arts through a return to representation is visible within news media primarily in the extent of coverage in quantitative rather than qualitative terms. The number of articles devoted to particularly Ai Weiwei and Pussy Riot, in comparison to the other artivists, suggests that those who represent the oppressed indeed enjoy much more audience engagement.

This parallel that can be drawn between newspaper coverage and Twitter attention is furthermore interesting in light of what others have referred to as a news gap (Boczkowski & Mitchelstein, 2013). The gap between what journalists consider important (i.e. hard news) and what media audiences desire (i.e. soft news) appears to lead to a watered-down coverage of artivists. Covering an artivist practice by for example Ai Weiwei on the global refugee crisis demands much more reflection from the audience than covering the aesthetics of it or covering his prosecution in China. News production that is focused on soft news or easy-to-read controversy tends to lead to the most audience engagement, while increased audience engagement in turn tends to push news producers to produce even more soft news.

Perhaps this has been particularly visible among popular culture celebrities, who give virtually no attention to Hans Haacke, Jonas Staal and Jafar Panahi and by far appear to have been mostly interested in

Banksy. As such, celebrities too function as gatekeepers for artivism. In contrast to news media, however, celebrities appear much less interested in the art of artivism. Perhaps the attention to artivists by celebrities is primarily informed by the latter performing their celebrity status and the practice of maintaining their star power. As gatekeepers, then, celebrities can be seen to give attention to those artivists and those artivist causes that ultimately are instrumental in their celebrity performance, for example by sticking close to their respective professional fields.

The attribution of societal impact to artivism, then, seems to depend on the type of news that can be produced about particular artivists. Indeed, news media attention can be seen to provide artivists with a way to engage the broader society and to be heard for their activism. At the same time, news media engage in gatekeeping practices and impose a filter: when artivists enjoy news coverage, their respective activist causes are at minimum communicated in a very limited way and at worst neglected entirely in favor of soft news. For artivists, this means that societal impact through media (including celebrities) and media audience attention comes at the cost of their activist cause.

Here too, however, there is a strong geopolitical dimension visible within newspaper coverage. In comparison to Dutch and UK newspapers, US newspapers appeared to be particularly interested in Chinese visual artist Ai Weiwei, Iranian filmmaker Jafar Panahi and Russian punk protest group Pussy Riot, each of which concerns an artivist from a non-democratic country with which the US maintains challenging international relations. The international interest of US newspapers, therefore, is not only more politically oriented in its content but also appears to be more geopolitically oriented in its focus on artivist cases than could be said for Dutch and UK newspapers. In part, this can be explained by how social engagement through representation similarly appeared to be more prevalent among US curators. At the same time, however, societal impact for artivism beyond the confines of (national) art fields seems to be sensitive to geopolitical relationships: while curators strongly refer to representation within a national context, news

media coverage and media audience attention are much more internationally oriented.

6.4 Critical reflection and future research

Some critical reflections about this study seem appropriate. Furthermore, there is much room for future research beyond the scope of this study. First, studying the role of social engagement in the arts requires a better understanding of the types of political activism that are more accepted than others in terms of both form and content. In an era of global protest movements and increased polarization, the selective news media and media audience attention to artivism might do little more than reproduce, in line with Rancière's (2009) argument, existing problematic societal values, tensions between social groups and geopolitical relationships. In that sense, there is much to gain for political scientists, media scholars and cultural sociologists from engaging with research from each other's respective disciplines. With this dissertation I have shown that the topic of artivism touches upon each of these disciplines and that its role in society as an artistic and socially engaged practice can only be understood through interdisciplinary research. Further systematic and interdisciplinary case-based research, therefore, could provide further valuable insight into our understanding of how activism is viewed in relation to the arts and therefore into how the arts as a field is representative of the broader society in general.

Second, newspapers in general are often seen to play an important role in the legitimation of art and in shaping public opinion (Champagne, 2005; Purhonen, Heikkilä & Hazir, 2017). Such generalizing theories, however, fail to take into account the differentiated approach to the arts within newspapers. From a cultural sociology perspective, therefore, it is important to consider the extent to which the art journalists who work for newspapers reproduce the image of the arts as an autonomous field that requires coverage in separate sections primarily devoted to coverage of art in its own artistic context. Their role as cultural intermediary and

journalist places them in two different fields and considering the extent to which news media shape public opinion (Champagne, 2005), this double position of art journalists requires a systematic understanding of the role and effect of news consumption and news production in relation to the arts. Particularly in relation to artivism, news media coverage and audience attention are required to be studied in tandem to fully understand how artivists reach the broader society through the field of media. For example, such a study would need to take into account how the selective news production and consumption of artivism results in filter bubbles (Pariser, 2011) in which the ideological positions of consumers remain unchallenged when only certain types of artivism enjoy media coverage in terms of both form and content.

Third, this research topic furthermore has a lot to gain from a more longitudinal approach. If it can indeed be said that the arts increasingly returns to representation, albeit this time particularly of those who face inequality rather than of societal elites (e.g. De Duve, 2019), then a strong empirical basis is required on which this development can be grounded and one that is contrasted more clearly with the previously dominant paradigm of abstract art. This avenue of research requires a more longitudinal empirical analysis of the art field in the broader sense: changes in artistic practices, changes in intermediary practices, changes in museum practices, changes in cultural policies and so on. Existing research into this topic is still strongly theoretical and conceptual of nature. More in-depth longitudinal studies into how social engagement came to permeate the art field provides further insight into how practices of artistic production, distribution, reception and consumption have changed over recent years. This will additionally benefit policy makers in gaining knowledge of how current practices within the arts relate to existing cultural policies. This dissertation offers a point of departure for future research into this direction, by demonstrating the role of social engagement in the arts and the constraints that artists might face in receiving attention in the broader society.

Fourth, an important shortcoming of the research into the media audience reception of artivism through a large-scale analysis of Twitter has been the lack of systematic geographical metadata for each collected tweet. It would be very interesting to further analyze differences in audience reception in relation to geographical location. Given the cross-national differences in the newspaper coverage of artivism, it is likely that the reception of artivism among media audiences differs strongly on a cross-national level. This is especially valuable when we consider that even though the art field is affected by globalization (Quemin, 2006), strong national differences are visible with regards to contemporary practices of socially engaged art. Further research into this aspect, however, requires a different approach to data collection that overcomes at least one of two important hurdles. Collecting demographic information on Twitter users requires either an advanced technological understanding of Twitter's API infrastructure that is generally reserved for those in the field of computer science or those with the financial means to buy the required data through a data broker that is more common in a commercial environment.

In relation to this, finally, there is much to gain for sociologists of culture to utilize computational methods and the vast quantities of available online data to study the arts in more general terms. Although there surely are limitations to this, as I have addressed in the previous chapters, the combination of computational methods and large datasets offers several methodological and epistemological advantages. The availability of large amounts of quantitative and qualitative data enables researchers to bridge the traditional divide between quantitative and qualitative research. Particularly promising for sociologists of culture, for example, large-scale analysis of textual documents such as the analysis of newspaper coverage and social media messages in this dissertation enables research into many evaluative and boundary-drawing processes while maintaining qualitative depth and generalizability (e.g. Roose et al., 2018). The "theory-rich and methods poor" (DiMaggio, Nag & Blei, 2013: 571) sociology of culture risks losing its grip on the ever-changing

social reality empirically if it fails to jump on the bandwagon of computational research. The same applies to the research topic central in this dissertation: artivism emerged in an increasingly globalized and digitalized society and can only be understood when different data points are brought together. Because there is so much to gain on this level for sociologists of culture, I hope that this dissertation provides at least a small contribution in that direction and demonstrates that computational methods are readily accessible for social scientists if they want to.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Standard EUR informed Consent Form

Project Title and version	Geopolitics of artivism: Comparing the attribution of societal impact and artistic qualities in the Western reception of art activists from democratic and authoritarian regimes.
Name of Principal Investigator	Frank Weij
Name of Organisation	Erasmus University Rotterdam: Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication
Name of Sponsor	NWO (De Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek)
Purpose of the Study	This research is being conducted by Frank Weij. I am inviting you to participate in this research project about the way in which cultural intermediaries attribute artistic legitimacy to artists who combine political concerns or activist action with artistic production. The purpose of this research project is to further investigate the relationship between art and politics.
Procedures	You will participate in an interview lasting approximately one to two hours. The interview will be recorded using a sound recording device or software. You will be asked questions about your role as a cultural intermediary and your views on politically and societally engaged or activist artists. Sample questions include: “How would you describe your role at your organization?“ and “How do you feel about artists who incorporate political protests or activism into their artworks?”

Potential and anticipated Risks and Discomforts	There are no obvious physical, legal or economic risks associated with participating in this study. You do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. Your participation is voluntary and you are free to discontinue your participation at any time.
Potential Benefits	Participation in this study does not guarantee any beneficial results to you. The broader goal of this research is to further develop the research area that deals with the relationship between art and politics. This can potentially be of interest for policy makers and various actors working in the cultural sector both internationally and in the Netherlands.
Sharing the results	After transcribing the interviews, a transcript will be send to you for approval. This provides you with the opportunity to correct factual errors and to withdraw or rephrase particular statements. After approval, the interview transcripts will be used for further analysis and development of research output. The research findings will be shared more broadly through publications and conferences.
Confidentiality	Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. No personally identifiable information will be reported in any research product. Moreover, only trained research staff will have access to your responses. Within these restrictions, results of this study will be made available to you upon request. As indicated above, this research project involves making audio recordings of interviews with you. Transcribed segments from the audio recordings may be used in published forms (e.g., journal articles and book chapters). In the case of publication, pseudonyms will be used. The audio recordings, forms, and other documents created or collected as part of this study will be stored in a secure location in the researchers' offices or on the researchers password-protected computers and will be destroyed within ten years of the initiation of the study.

Right to Withdraw and Questions	Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalised or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify. If you decide to stop taking part in the study, if you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or if you need to report an injury related to the research, please contact the primary investigator: Frank Weij, MSc weij@eshcc.eur.nl Erasmus University Rotterdam Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication Department of Arts and Culture Studies
Statement of Consent	Your signature indicates that you are at least 18 years of age; you have read this consent form or have had it read to you; your questions have been answered to your satisfaction and you voluntarily agree that you will participate in this research study. You will receive a copy of this signed consent form. You have been given the guarantee that this research project has been reviewed and approved by the ESHCC Ethics Review Committee. For research problems or any other question regarding the research project, you can contact the Data Protection Officer of Erasmus University, Marlon Domingus, MA (fg@eur.nl). If you agree to participate, please sign your name below.

Audio recording (if applicable)	I consent to have my interview audio recorded □ yes □ no	
Secondary use (if applicable)	I consent to have anonymised data be used for secondary analysis □ yes □ no	
Signature and Date	NAME PARTICIPANT:	NAME PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:
	SIGNATURE	SIGNATURE
	DATE	DATE

Appendix B

Python code

```
import tkinter as tk
import sys
import os
import re
from collections import Counter

########## to consider before running ##########

"""
For cleaner check:
- block 4: JOURNAL-CODE is not always given.
- block 6: change artist
"""

class ExampleApp(tk.Tk):

    def __init__(self):
        tk.Tk.__init__(self)
        toolbar = tk.Frame(self)
        toolbar.pack(side="top", fill="x")
        b1 = tk.Button(self, text="cleaner", command=self.cleaner)
        b2 = tk.Button(self, text="print text", command=self.print_text)
        b3 = tk.Button(self, text="appearances", command=self.appearances)
        b4 = tk.Button(self, text="content analysis",command=
          self.content_analysis)
        b5 = tk.Button(self, text="artist presence", command=self.presence)
        b6 = tk.Button(self, text="import ready", command=self.import_ready)
        b1.pack(in_=toolbar, side="top", fill="both")
        b2.pack(in_=toolbar, side="top", fill="both")
```

```
    b3.pack(in_=toolbar, side="top", fill="both")
    b4.pack(in_=toolbar, side="top", fill="both")
    b5.pack(in_=toolbar, side="top", fill="both")
    b6.pack(in_=toolbar, side="top", fill="both")
    self.text = tk.Text(self, wrap="word")
    self.text.pack(side="top", fill="both", expand=True)
    self.text.tag_configure("stderr", foreground="#b22222")

    sys.stdout = TextRedirector(self.text, "stdout")
    sys.stderr = TextRedirector(self.text, "stderr")


def cleaner(self):
    #block1: join the lines
    one = open("…/start.txt", "r")
    two = open("…/1.txt", "w")
    with open("…/start.txt") as one:
        print(" ".join(line.strip() for line in one), sep = "", file=two)
    one.close()
    two.close()

    #block 2: add <start>
    one = open("…/1.txt", "r")
    two = open("…/2.txt", "w")
    for line in one:
        line0 = line.replace("DOCUMENTAIRE", "documentaire")
        line1=line0.replace("DOCUMENTS", "\n<start><1>")
        line2 = line1.replace("DOCUMENT", "\n<start><1>")
        print(line2, file=two)
    one.close()
    two.close()
```

```
#block 3: remove redundent lines
one = open("…/2.txt", "r")
two = open("…/3.txt", "w")
for line in one:
    if line.startswith("<start>"):
        print(line, end="", file=two)
    else:
        continue
one.close()
two.close()

#block 4: remove redundent articles
one = open("…/3.txt", "r")
two = open("…/4.txt", "w")
for line in one:
    if "LENGTH: " in line:
        print(line, file=two)
    else:
        continue
one.close()
two.close()

#block 5: remove non-paged articles
one = open(…/4.txt", "r")
two = open("…/5.txt", "w")
for line in one:
    text = line[line.find("SECTION: ")+9:line.find("LENGTH:")]
    if "Blz." in text:
        print(line, end="", file=two)
    elif "Pg." in text:
        print(line, end="", file=two)
    else:
        continue
```

```
one.close()
two.close()

#block 5: add page numbers
one = open("…/5.txt", "r")
two = open("…/6.txt", "w")
for line in one:
    text = line[line.find("SECTION: "):line.find("LENGTH:")]
    text2 = text[text.find(";"):]
    text3 = text2.replace("Pg.", "Blz.")
    text4 = text3[text3.find("Blz."):]
    text5 = text4.replace(",", " ")
    text6 = text5.replace("Blz. ", "")
    text7 = text6.replace("A", "")
    text8 = text7.replace("C", "")
    text9 = text8.replace("B", "")
    text10 = text9.replace("D", "")
    text11 = text10.replace("E", "")
    text12 = text11.replace("T", "")
    text13 = text12.replace("Q", "")
    text14 = text13.replace("F", "")
    text15 = text14.replace("G", "")
    text16 = text15.replace("W", "")
    if len(text16.split()) == 1:
        print("<page>", text16, line, end="", file=two)
    elif len(text6.split()) == 0:
        print("<page>0", line, end="", file=two)
one.close()
two.close()


#block 6: newspaper names
one = open("…/6.txt", "r")
```

```
two = open("…7.txt", "w")
for line in one:
    newspaper = line[line.find("<1>")+3:line.find("20")]
    if "Algemeen Dagblad" in newspaper:
        newspaper2 = "algemeen dagblad"
        line1 = line.replace("Algemeen Dagblad", " ")
    elif "Daily Mirror" in newspaper:
        newspaper2 = "daily mirror"
        line1 = line.replace("Daily Mirror", " ")
    elif "Daily Star" in newspaper:
        newspaper2 = "daily star"
        line1 = line.replace("Daily Star", " ")
    elif "Daily Telegraph" in newspaper:
        newspaper2 = "daily telegraph"
        line1 = line.replace("Daily Telegraph", " ")
    elif "Evening Standard" in newspaper:
        newspaper2 = "evening standard"
        line1 = line.replace("Evening Standard", " ")
    elif "NRC" in newspaper:
        newspaper2 = "NRC"
        line1 = line.replace("NRC", " ")
    elif "Daily News" in newspaper:
        newspaper2 = "daily news"
        line1 = line.replace("Daily News", " ")
    elif "New York Times" in newspaper:
        newspaper2 = "new york times"
        line1 = line.replace("New York Times", " ")
    elif "Telegraaf" in newspaper:
        newspaper2 = "telegraaf"
        line1 = line.replace("Telegraaf", " ")
    elif "USA TODAY" in newspaper:
        newspaper2 = "usa today"
        line1 = line.replace("USA TODAY", " ")
```

```
    elif "Volkskrant" in newspaper:
        newspaper2 = "volkskrant"
        line1 = line.replace("Volkskrant", " ")
    elif "Washington Post" in newspaper:
        newspaper2 = "washington post"
        line1 = line.replace("Washington Post", " ")
    print("<newspaper>", newspaper2, line1, end="", file=two)
one.close()
two.close()


#block 7: isolate headline
one = open("…/7.txt", "r")
two = open("…/8.txt", "w")
for line in one:
    newspaper = line[line.find("<newspaper>"):line.find("<start>")+7]
    text = line[line.find("<1>"):line.find("SECTION:")]
    text2 = text.lower()
    text3 = text2.replace("maandag", "<dag>")
    text4 = text3.replace("monday", "<dag>")
    text5 = text4.replace("dinsdag", "<dag>")
    text6 = text5.replace("tuesday", "<dag>")
    text7 = text6.replace("woensdag", "<dag>")
    text8 = text7.replace("wednesday", "<dag>")
    text9 = text8.replace("donderdag", "<dag>")
    text10 = text9.replace("thursday", "<dag>")
    text11 = text10.replace("vrijdag", "<dag>")
    text12 = text11.replace("friday", "<dag>")
    text13 = text12.replace("zaterdag", "<dag>")
    text14 = text13.replace("saturday", "<dag>")
    text15 = text14.replace("zondag", "<dag>")
    text16 = text15.replace("sunday", "<dag>")
    text16 = text15.replace("sunday", "<dag>")
```

```
    text17 = text16[text16.find("<dag>")+5:]
    rest = line[line.find("SECTION:"):]
    print(newspaper, text17, rest, end="", file=two)
one.close()
two.close()


#block 9: break into sections
one = open("…/8.txt", "r")
two = open("…/9.txt", "w")
for line in one:
    if "LENGTH:" in line:
        newspaper = line[line.find("<newspaper> ")+12:line.find(" <start>")]
        headline = line[line.find("<start> ")+8:line.find(" SECTION:")]
        if "national edition" in headline:
            if "byline:" in headline:
                headline1 = headline[headline.find("national edition”)
                  +16:headline.find("byline:")]
            else:
                headline1 = headline[headline.find("national edition”)
                  +16:headline.find("SECTION:")]
        elif "byline:" in headline:
            headline1 = headline[:headline.find("byline:")]
        else:
            headline1 = headline
        headline2 = headline1.replace("  ", " ")
        headline3 = headline2.replace(";", "")
        headline4 = headline3.replace("edition 1", "")
        headline5 = headline4.replace("sports final edition", "")
        headline6 = headline5.replace("sports final replate edition", "")
        headline7 = headline6.replace("late edition - final", "")
        headline8 = headline7.replace("final edition", "")
        headline9 = headline8.replace("every edition", "")
```

```
headline10 = headline9.replace("regional edition", "")
headline11 = headline10.replace("suburban edition", "")
section = line[line.find("SECTION: ")+9:line.find(" LENGTH:")]
section2 = section.lower()
section3 = section2.replace(";", "")
section4 = section3.replace("blz.", "pg.")
section5 = section4[:section4.find("pg.")]
length = line[line.find("LENGTH:")+7:line.find(" woorden")]
text = line[line.find("LENGTH: ")+8:line.find("LOAD-DATE")]
text1 = " ".join(text.split()[2:])
text2 = text1.replace("," " ")
text3 = text2.replace("." " ")
text4 = text3.replace("-" " ")
text5 = text4.replace("!", " ")
text6 = text5.replace("?", " ")
text7 = text6.replace(":", " ")
text8 = text7.replace(";", " ")
text9 = text8.replace("_", " ")
text10 = text9.replace("\#", " ")
text11 = text10.replace("&", " ")
text12 = text11.replace("\'", " ")
text13 = text12.replace("\"", " ")
text14 = text13.replace("(", " ")
text15 = text14.replace(")", " ")
text16 = text15.lower()
year = line[line.find("LOAD-DATE: ")+11:]
year2 = year.split()[2]
if "Januari" in year:
    month = "january"
elif "January" in year:
    month = "january"
elif "Februari" in year:
    month = "februari"
```

```
elif "February" in year:
    month = "februari"
elif "Maart" in year:
    month = "march"
elif "March" in year:
    month = "march"
elif "April" in year:
    month = "april"
elif "Mei" in year:
    month = "may"
elif "May" in year:
    month = "may"
elif "Juni" in year:
    month = "june"
elif "June" in year:
    month = "june"
elif "Juli" in year:
    month = "july"
elif "july" in year:
    month = "july"
elif "Augustus" in year:
    month = "august"
elif "August" in year:
    month = "august"
elif "Sepember" in year:
    month = "september"
elif "Oktober" in year:
    month = "october"
elif "October" in year:
    month = "october"
elif "November" in year:
    month = "november"
elif "December" in year:
```

```
            month = "december"
        pubtype = line[line.find("PUBLICATION-TYPE: "):line.find("
            JOURNAL-CODE:")]
        pubtype2 = pubtype[pubtype.find("PUBLICATION-TYPE: “)
            +18:pubtype.find(" Copyright")]
        pubtype3 = pubtype2.lower()
        print("<newspaper>", newspaper, "<head>", headline11, "<section>",
            section5, "<length>", length,"<date>", year2, " ", month, "<type>",
            pubtype3, "<text>", text16, sep="", end="\n", file=two)
one.close()
two.close()


#Block 8: remove duplicate headlines
one = open("…/9.txt", "r")
two = open("…/10.txt", "w")
headlines = set()
for line in one:
    text = line[line.find("<head> ")+7:line.find("<section>")]
    if text in headlines:
        continue
    else:
        print(line, end="", file=two)
        headlines.add(text)
one.close()
two.close()

#block 9: remove duplicate texts
one = open("…/Desktop/10.txt", "r")
two = open("…/clean.txt", "w")
texts = set()
for line in one:
    text = line[line.find("<text>")+6:]
```

```
        if text in texts:
            continue
        else:
            print(line, end="", file=two)
            texts.add(text)
    one.close()
    two.close()


    #block10: line count
    one = open("…/clean.txt", "r")
    lines = one.readlines()
    count = len(lines)
    one.close()
    print(count)
    os.remove("…/1.txt")
    os.remove("…/2.txt")
    os.remove("…/3.txt")
    os.remove("…/4.txt")
    os.remove("…/5.txt")
    os.remove("…/6.txt")
    os.remove("…/7.txt")
    os.remove("…8.txt")
    os.remove("…/9.txt")
    os.remove("…/10.txt")
    print("done cleaning")


def print_text(self):
    #prints the text to compile the dictionaries
    one = open("…/clean.txt", "r")
    two = open("…/text.txt", "w")
```

```
    for line in one:
        line1 = line[line.find("<text>"):]
        print(line1, end="\n", file=two)
    one.close()
    two.close()
    print("printed")


def appearances(self):
    #add artist name and number it appears in the text
    one = open("…/clean.txt", "r")
    two = open("…/cleanv1.txt", "w")
    for line in one:
        text = line[line.find("<text>"):]
        countweiwei = text.count("weiwei")
        countbanksy = text.count("banksy")
        counthaacke = text.count("haacke")
        countpanahi = text.count("panahi")
        countjonas = text.count("jonas")
        countpr = text.count("pussy riot")
        headline = line[line.find("<head>")+6:line.find("<section>")]
        countpr = text.count("pussy riot")
        print("<countweiwei>", countweiwei, "<countbanksy>", countbanksy,
              "<counthaacke>", counthaacke, "<countpanahi>", countpanahi,
              "<countjonas>", countjonas, "<countpr>", countpr, line,
              sep="", end="", file=two)
    one.close()
    two.close()
    os.remove("…/clean.txt")
    print("appearances done")
```

```
def content_analysis(self):
    #uses two dictionaries to count how often artistic and political words
      appear in text
    one = open("…/cleanv1.txt", "r")
    art = open("… /art.txt", "r")
    pol = open("…/pol.txt", "r")
    two = open("…/cleanv2.txt", "w")
    artwords = art.read().lower()
    artwords1 = artwords.split("\n")
    polwords = pol.read().lower()
    polwords1 = polwords.split("\n")
    for line in one:
        count1 = 0
        count2 = 0
        line1 = line[line.find("<text>"):]
        for word in line1.split(" "):
            if word in artwords1:
                count1 += 1
            elif word in polwords1:
                count2 += 1
        print("<art>", count1, "<pol>", count2, line, sep="", end="", file=two)
    one.close()
    art.close()
    pol.close()
    two.close()
    os.remove("…/cleanv1.txt")
    print("analysis in cleanv2.txt")


def presence(self):
    #uses  dictionaries to count how often the artist is present
    one = open("…/cleanv2.txt", "r")
    weiwei = open("…/weiwei.txt", "r")
```

```
banksy = open("…/banksy.txt", "r")
haacke = open("…/haacke.txt", "r")
panahi = open("…/panahi.txt", "r")
jonas = open("…/jonas.txt", "r")
pr = open("…/pr.txt", "r")
two = open("…/cleanv3.txt", "w")
weiweiwords = weiwei.read().lower()
weiweiwords1 = weiweiwords.split("\n")
banksywords = banksy.read().lower()
banksywords1 = banksywords.split("\n")
haackewords = haacke.read().lower()
haackewords1 = haackewords.split("\n")
panahiwords = panahi.read().lower()
panahiwords1 = panahiwords.split("\n")
jonaswords = jonas.read().lower()
jonaswords1 = jonaswords.split("\n")
prwords = pr.read().lower()
prwords1 = prwords.split("\n")
for line in one:
    count1 = 0
    count2 = 0
    count3 = 0
    count4 = 0
    count5 = 0
    count6 = 0
    line1 = line[line.find("<text>"):]
    for word in line1.split(" "):
        if word in weiweiwords1:
            count1 += 1
        elif word in banksywords1:
            count2 += 1
        elif word in haackewords1:
            count3 += 1
```

```
            elif word in panahiwords1:
                count4 += 1
            elif word in jonaswords1:
                count5 += 1
            elif word in prwords1:
                count6 += 1
        print("<weiweipresence>", count1, "<banksypresence>", count2,
              "<haackepresence>", count3, "<panahipresence>", count4,
              "<jonaspresence>", count5, "<prpresence>", count6, line, sep="",
              end="", file=two)
    one.close()
    weiwei.close()
    banksy.close()
    haacke.close()
    panahi.close()
    jonas.close()
    pr.close()
    two.close()
    os.remove("…/cleanv2.txt")
    print("analysis in cleanv3.txt")


def import_ready(self):
    #make ready for import for excel or rstudio with ; as delimiter
    #uses two dictionaries to count how often artistic and political words
        appear in text
    one = open("…/cleanv5.txt", "r")
    two = open("…/clean_sep.txt", "w")
    print("sectionsrecoded", "weiweipres", "banksypres", "haackepres",
      "panahipres", "jonaspres", "prpres", "art", "pol", "weiwei", "banksy",
      "haacke", "panahi", "jonas", "pr", "newspaper", "page", "headline",
      "section", "length", "date", "type", "text",sep=";", end="\n", file=two)
    for line in one:
        line1 = line.replace("<art>", ";")
```

```
            line2 = line1.replace("<pol>", ";")
            line3 = line2.replace("<countweiwei>", ";")
            line4 = line3.replace("<countbanksy>", ";")
            line5 = line4.replace("<counthaacke>", ";")
            line6 = line5.replace("<countpanahi>", ";")
            line7 = line6.replace("<countjonas>", ";")
            line8 = line7.replace("<countpr>", ";")
            line9 = line8.replace("<newspaper>", ";")
            line10 = line9.replace("<head>", ";")
            line11 = line10.replace("<section>", ";")
            line12 = line11.replace("<length>", ";")
            line13 = line12.replace("<date>", ";")
            line14 = line13.replace("<type>", ";")
            line15 = line14.replace("<text>", ";")
            line16 = line15.replace("<start>", ";")
            line17 = line16.replace("<page>", ";")
            line18 = line17.replace("<weiweipresence>", ";")
            line19 = line18.replace("<banksypresence>", ";")
            line20 = line19.replace("<haackepresence>", ";")
            line21 = line20.replace("<panahipresence>", ";")
            line22 = line21.replace("<jonaspresence>", ";")
            line23 = line22.replace("<prpresence>", ";")
            line24 = line23.replace("<sectionrecoded>", "")
            print(line24, end="", file=two)
        one.close()
        two.close()
        print("import file done")


class TextRedirector(object):
    def __init__(self, widget, tag="stdout"):
        self.widget = widget
        self.tag = tag
```

```
    def write(self, str):
        self.widget.configure(state="normal")
        self.widget.insert("end", str, (self.tag,))
        self.widget.configure(state="disabled")

app = ExampleApp()
app.geometry("630x750")
app.title("data processor")
app.mainloop()
```

Appendix C

Art dictionary

['‘abbemuseum']['abramovic']['abramovich']['abromovitsj']['absurdistische']
['acclaim']['accordeon']['achtergrondmuziek']['acrylverf']['acteerprestaties']
['acterende']['acteur']['acteurs']['acteurscollectief']['acting']['actor']['actresses']
['actrice']['actrices']['aerosmith']['aesthetic']['aesthetically']['aesthetician']
['aestheticization']['aesthetics']['affichemuseum']['affleck']['aficionados']
['agitprop']['aguilera']['airbrush']['akoestiek']['akoestische']['albumhoes']
['albums']['altaarstukken']['amateuracteurs']['amateurfilmer']['amateurkunst']
['amateurkunstenaar']['amateurmuzikanten']['amateurschilderde']['ambacht']
['ambachtelijk']['amsterdammuseum']['amusementspraatprogramma']
['animatiefenomeen']['animatiefilm']['animatiestudio']['annehathaway']['ansari']
['anthem']['anthology']['anthologyfilmarchives']['antiekzaak']['antikunst']
['antiquair']['architect']['architecten']['architectenbureau']['architectenbureaus']
['architectenduo']['architectkunstenaar']['architectonische']['architects']
['architectural']['architecturale']['architecturally']['architecture']['architecturen']
['architectuur']['architectuurinstituut']['architectuurschepping']['architectuurstijl']
['architekten']['architektur']['aronofsky']['art']['artbasel']['artbeijing']['artclown']
['artdirector']['artefacts']['artfinder']['artforms']['artgoing']['arthouse']
['arthousebioscopen']['arthousedrama']['arthousefilm']['arthousepubliek']
['artiest']['artiesten']['artiesteningang']['artisanal']['artisanship']['artist']['artiste']
['artistic']['artistically']['artistiek']['artistieke']['artistiekelingen']['artistieks']
['artistresidence']['artistry']['artists']['artistswanted']['artivist']['artkunstenaar']
['artless']['artlessness']['artlondon']['artmasters']['artnet']['artpotentionals']
['artprize']['artreview']['artrotterdam']['arts']['artsbeat']['artscene']['artschool']
['artsiness']['artsnight']['artvermomming']['artwalking']['artwork']['artworks']
['arty']['asgardian']['atelierbezoek']['atelierbezoeken']['ateliercomplex']
['atelierdubbeloo']['atelierfoto']['ateliergebouw']['ateliermyth']['atelierruimtes']
['ateliers']['atlasarts']['attractiepark']['auction']['auctionable']['auctioned']
['auctioneers']['auctioning']['auctions']['audio']['audiofielen']['audiosculpturen']
['audiovisual']['audiovisuele']['auditioning']['auditions']['auteurs']
['auteurscinema']['authentic']['avantgarde']['avantgardegroep']
['avantgardestromingen']['award']['ballad']['ballet']['balletgezelschap']

['‘balletgezelschappen']['balletpartituur']['balletpositie']['ballets']['balletsterren']
['balletuitvoeringen']['ballonmeisje']['balloons']['ballroom']['bambaataa']
['bandje']['bandleden']['bandleider']['bandlid']['banjo']['banksy']['banksystyle']
['barokensemble']['barokopera']['barokopera']['barrymore']['basel']['basklarinet']
['basklarinettisten']['basquiat']['bassclarinet']['bassist']['basspel']['beckhams']
['beeldcultuur']['beeldenaanzee']['beeldenexpositie']['beeldententoonstelling']
['beeldfascinatie']['beeldhouwer']['beeldhouwkunst']['beeldmakers']
['beeldromans']['beethoven']['benefietconcert']['berlinale']['beschilderd']
['beschilderde']['beschilderen']['bethesda']['beuningen']['beyonce']
['bezoekcijfers']['bezoekersaantal']['bezoekerscapaciteit']['bezoekerscijfers']
['bicycles']['biennale']['biennalle']['biennial']['bienniale']['billboard']
['binnenhuisarchitect']['biokunstwerken']['bioscoop']['bioscoopfilm']
['bioscoophit']['bioscooppubliek']['bioscooprelease']['bioscopen']
['blackmetalband']['bloemetjesdecor']['blomkamp']['blouinartinfo']['bocelli']
['boekenweek']['boekenweekvoorstelling']['boekhandel']['boekhandels']
['boekpresentaties']['boijmans']['bokma']['bollywood']['bollywoodfilms']
['bollywoodfimpjes']['bonham']['bonnefantenmuseum']['bono']['borduren']
['bospop']['bospop']['botticelli']['bourdin']['bouwsteentjes']['bowie']['boymans']
['bracque']['brahms']['breedbeeldformaat']['bricolage']['bristol']
['britishceramicsbiennial']['bronxmuseum']['bronze']['brooklynmuseu']
['brosnan']['bruikleen']['brushstrokes']['brutalist']['bugatti']['buikdans']
['buitenfestival']['buitententoonstelling']['buitenvoorstellingen']['bullock']
['bundeskunsthalle']['buscemi']['bushomeinagraffiti']['buurttheater']['buyers']
['cabaret']['cabaretfestival']['cabaretier']['cabaretiers']['cabaretprogramma']
['caine']['calixto']['calligraphic']['cameraman']['cameramen']
['campbellsoepblikken']['canaveral']['cannes']['canterbury']['canvas']['canvases']
['canvasnew']['canvassed']['canvasses']['caravaggio']['carey']['carnaval']
['carnavalesk']['cartier']['catalogiseren']['cathedral']['catwalkshow']['celebrity']
['centerpiece']['centrepiece']['centrepompidou']['ceramicist']['ceramicists']
['ceramics']['cezanne']['charliesheen']['charlize']['chinafestival']['chinaopera']
['choreograaf']['choreografeert']['choreografen']['choreograferen']['choreografie']
['choreographed']['choreographer']['choreography']['chorus']['choruse']['cineast']
['cineasten']['cinebergen']['‘cinema']['cinemarkt']['cinemas']['cinematheque']
['cinematic']['cinematically']['cinematized']['cinematografische']
['cinematographer']['cinematographers']['cinematography']['cinemax']
['cinephile']['‘cinephilia']['cinetic']['cinetourists']['classicism']

['‘classicistische’']['clubcircuit']['cobain']['cobrabeweging']['cobramuseum']
['coensfilm']['coldplay']['collage']['collagekunstenaars']['collectie']['collecties']
['collectif']['collection']['collectioneurs']['collector']['collectors']
['collegacabaretier']['colourist']['colours']['comedyserie']['comics']['commedia']
['commissioned']['commissioner']['commissioners']['compagnietheater']
['competitiefilm']['componeert']['componist']['componisten']['composer']
['composers']['compositie']['composities']['composition']['compositions']
['conceptualism']['conceptualisme']['conceptualists']['conceptuele']['concert']
['concerten']['concertgebouw']['concertgebouworkest']['concerto']
['concertvleugel']['concertzaal']['concertzalen']['confrontatiekunstenaar']
['connoisseurial']['connoisseurship']['conservator']['conservatoren']
['conservatorship']['conservatory']['constructivisten']['constructivists']
['contactfilm']['contemporain']['contrabas']['corneille']['costner']['costumes']
['cotillard']['courbet']['couture']['creatiefs']['creation']['creative']['creatives']
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['cultklassieke']['cultpersonage']['cultroman']['cultural']['culturally']['culture']
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['‘documenta']['documentairefestival']['documentairefotografie']['documentaries']
['donatello']['doorfilmen']['dordrechtsmuseum']['dorrestijn']['dostoevsky']
['downey']['draaidagen']['drake']['dramaturg']['dramaturgie']['dronekunst']
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['dutchculture']['dwarsfluitspeler']['dylanplaten']['easyart']['ebola']['eccentricity']
['ecclesiastical']['eclectisch']['eclectische']['ecstatic']['edelstenen']
['editorializing']['edvard']['eefjedevisser']['eendagsfestival']
['eenmanskunststroming']['elba']['electro']['electronicaduo']['electropunk']
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['filmmaken']['filmmaker']['filmmakers']['filmmaking']['filmmarkt']

['‘filmmuseum']['filmmuziek']['filmopera']['filmpagina']['filmposter']
['filmpresentaties']['filmprijzenseizoen']['filmproducent']['filmprofessionals']
['filmprogramma']['filmprogrammeur']['filmregisseur']['filmregisseurs']
['filmrollen']['filmschool']['filmset']['filmsite']['filmster']['filmsterren']['filmstrip']
['filmstudio']['filmtheorie']['filmtips']['filmtop']['filmvakblad']
['filmverboekingen']['filmvergunning']['filmvertelling']['filmvoorstellinge']
['filmwereld']['filmwerk']['filmwerken']['fingerpainting']['fingerprinted']
['flamenco']['flamencobiennale']['flamencogitarist']['flamencozanger']['flemish']
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Political dictionary

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Appendix D

Art dictionary

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Political dictionary

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['walmart']['washington']['west']['wikileaks']['withsyria']

SUMMARY IN ENLGISH

Throughout (Western) art history, the visual arts have developed into a distinctive and relatively autonomous societal sphere. As such, the visual arts are primarily governed by a hierarchy of artistic criteria and largely insensitive to criteria unrelated to the arts. More concretely, this means that recognized artists enjoy status on the basis of the artistic (rather than for example economic) value of their work, that is for a large part determined by intermediary art institutions and actors such as art museums, curators, galleries, dealers and critics. More recently, however, several scholars have pointed to social matters increasingly permeating the sphere of visual arts. This is even referred to as a social turn in the arts, in which social and ethical criteria are thought to play an increasingly important role in the evaluation of art. Socially engaged forms of art, such as art activism or *artivism,* are particularly indicative of this development.

If, however, artistic status today is still strongly rooted in autonomous artistic evaluation, then socially engaged artistic practices such as artivism present an interesting puzzle: they appear to follow their own logic, yet seek to achieve societal change through their focus on social engagement. This begs the question how practices such as artivism are evaluated and to what extent they have an impact and enjoy some degree of attention beyond the confines of the relatively autonomous sphere of visual art. The growing body of literature that has come to take shape around social engagement in the visual arts, however, remains incapable of fully explaining these questions for two reasons. First, social engagement in general, and notions such as artivism in particular, often remain problematically broad, ranging from artistic practices that are embedded in – and engage local communities to those that raise and fight against pressing global societal inequalities and human rights issues. Beyond conceptual considerations and anecdotal indications that social engagement is progressively pronounced in the arts, however, it remains unclear under which conditions artistic-activist expressions are accepted.

Second, current empirical studies are primarily preoccupied with the role of social engagement within the arts and often overlook how and to what extent social engagement from visual artists travels beyond the confines of the art sphere. In the end, any form of social engagement requires two parties: one engaging and one being engaged. Few scholars systematically and empirically address the questions as to which types of socially engaged artistic practices achieve acceptance not just in the art sphere but in the broader society.

I have addressed both problems by conducting research into the reception of artivism within and beyond the arts through the following overarching research question:

How are artivists evaluated within the fields of art, news media and social media in a cross-national context?

In order to answer this research question, I have brought together literature from various disciplines. In the first chapter, therefore, I draw on art-historical literature to place social engagement in the arts more elaborately and concretely within an art-historical context. Combining this with sociology of culture literature, second, provides insight into how works of art are produced, consumed and distributed. I have approached the sphere of art as a historically developed field with its own logic and status markers and addressed the practices of classifying objects and actors within this field. This provided theoretical ground on which to study how artistic status is attributed and how distinctions within the arts are made in relation to artivism. Through literature from political sciences, third, I outlined how modes of artistic expression can function as avenues for social and political engagement. In combination with insights from media studies, finally, I theorized more concretely how news media and social media afford different ways of social and political engagement and how news and social media attention have become important for the question of societal impact with regards to the arts.

Empirically, I have conducted four interrelated studies which in the end will be integrated on the level of outcomes. In the first study (chapter 2), I analyzed the evaluation of social engagement in general and artivism in particular within the art field. More concretely, I conducted fifteen in-depth qualitative interviews with curators in the Netherlands, UK and US. The interviews are semi-structured and analyzed through a grounded theory approach to tap into the curators' professional views on – and experiences with different forms and modes of social engagement within the arts. The analysis has shown that three different curatorial attitudes can be discerned with regards to social engagement in the arts. Aesthetics-first curators, first, do not necessarily verbalize a clear and explicit preference or rejection with regards to social engagement in any form, but give preference to aesthetic over social and ethical considerations in their own evaluation of art. Political curators, second, are much more vocal and pronounced in that they would maintain that art and social engagement are inseparable from each other and that art can bring change to society. Acquiescent curators, finally, express an optimistic attitude and willingness towards social engagement in the arts, while remaining reserved in their curatorial practices. It could be argued, therefore, that socially engaged art constitutes a distinct art movement or perhaps genre, roughly defined along the symbolic boundaries that especially the aesthetic and political curators draw.

In the second study (chapter 3), I looked at the newspaper coverage of artivists in terms of both content and magnitude. On the one hand, newspaper coverage plays an important role within the arts as art journalists and art critics, like curators, function as cultural intermediaries who select, evaluate and hence shape the perception of art. On the other hand, newspaper coverage plays an important role in politics as newspapers constitute a principle platform through which information about society is communicated and consumed. Newspaper coverage therefore constitutes a good measure of societal relevance in society when it comes to artivism. More concretely, in this study I conducted a computerized content analysis of over 2,000 newspaper articles from

both quality and popular newspapers from the Netherlands, the UK and the US. The analysis reveals that overall newspapers treat the art and activism of artivism quite separately, by focusing primarily on art in cultural newspaper sections and on politics in non-cultural newspaper sections. Furthermore, there are interesting national differences in that US newspaper are particularly politically oriented in their coverage of artivism. These findings are particularly indicative of how current research into social engagement in the arts take as their point of departure the art field and often overlook how the arts are perceived in the broader society.

In the third study (chapter 4), I analyzed the reception of artivists among the broader public by focusing on media audiences. For the last few years, social media platforms have come to constitute empirical windows to study audience reception on a relatively large scale. The content on social media platforms, therefore, provides insight into how people talk about social issues, such as politics and activism. In this study, therefore, I collected over two million tweets in order to analyze the media audience reception of the artivist cases on a relatively large scale. I employed the method of topic modelling to uncover the most dominant meaningful latent themes within this large dataset of short texts. Furthermore, I combined this topic modelling analysis with semantic network analysis to help visualize and interpret the results. The analysis indicates that media audiences are primarily interested in controversy surrounding artivism, for example in the case of artivist prosecution. The political causes of artivists therefore appear to enjoy little attention, limiting the societal impact of artivists.

In the fourth study (chapter 5), I investigated the extent in which popular culture celebrities engaged with the artivist cases that are central to this dissertation, including their causes. This is interesting because celebrities and their political engagement constitute an important avenue through which people in the broader society engage with pressing societal issues. This fourth study consists of a computerized content analysis of close to a thousand tweets by over three hundred popular

culture celebrities. I have found that the way celebrities talk about artivists differs per type of celebrity. In addition, the more political content celebrities cover in their tweets, the more audience engagement is visible through likes, retweets and replies. As such, celebrities indeed constitute an important avenue through which people in society engage in political discussions in general and with artivism in particular.

Finally, I have aimed to bring these four empirical studies together in chapter 6, by providing a general conclusion and by discussing possibilities for future research. The study of the reception of artivism particularly within the field of art, first, appears to point to the contours of a new artistic paradigm of representation in which artistic expression becomes a means to a more socially oriented goal. While art-historically, representation in the arts often pertained to the representation of societal elites, today representation is primarily visible in relation to underrepresented social groups. By giving a voice to the latter, inequalities in the broader society are expected to be tackled. Second, the selective news production and consumption in relation to artivism constitutes a filter and highlights how news media function as gatekeepers. While news media give considerable attention to some artivists in contrast to others, media audiences appear to largely ignore the activist causes of artivists. The puzzle of artivism, as an artistic practice that appears to follow a strictly artistic logic while seeking societal change, then, can be explained by pointing to how representation of the underrepresented constitutes an important social rather than artistic discourse within the arts. News media and media audience attention provide artivists with societal impact through a gatekeeping and filtering process whereby those who receive media coverage and audience attention see their activist causes largely ignored.

SUMMARY IN DUTCH

In de (westerse) kunstgeschiedenis, de visuele kunsten hebben zich ontwikkeld tot aan relatief gescheiden en autonoom maatschappelijk veld. Als zodanig zijn artistieke beoordelingscriteria bepalend in de kunst. Meer concreet betekent dit dat erkende kunstenaars status genieten op basis van de artistieke waarde van hun werk, welke voor een groot deel wordt bepaald door kunstinstituten en -actoren zoals musea, curatoren, galeries, kunsthandelaars en kunstcritici. Meer recent, echter, wijzen verschillende onderzoekers erop dat sociale beoordelingscriteria in toenemende mate een belangrijke rol in de kunst spelen. Vooral de sociaal betrokken kunstvormen, zoals kunstactivisme – in het Engels ook wel aangeduid met *artivism* – illustreren deze ontwikkeling.

Wanneer, echter, artistieke status vandaag de dag nog sterk geworteld is in autonome artistieke evaluatie, dan vormen sociaal betrokken kunstvormen, zoals artivism, in interessante puzzel: ze lijken een eigen logica te volgen, maar zoeken tegelijkertijd maatschappelijke verandering door hun nadruk op sociale betrokkenheid. Dit roept de vraag op hoe dergelijke kunstvormen worden geëvalueerd en in hoeverre zij een impact hebben en aandacht genieten buiten de relatief autonome kunstwereld. Huidig onderzoek dat zich bezighoudt met de toenemende mate van sociale betrokkenheid in de kunst is echter niet goed in staat in dergelijke vragen te beantwoorden. Ten eerste blijven concepten zoals sociaal betrokken kunst in het algemeen en artivism meer specifiek vaak problematisch breed. Voorbij conceptuele overwegingen en anekdotische indicaties voor sociale betrokkenheid in de kunst, blijft het onduidelijk onder welke voorwaarden kunst-activistische expressies zoals artivism zijn geaccepteerd. Huidige empirische studies, ten tweede, houden zich vooral bezig met de rol van sociale betrokkenheid in de kunst en negeren vaak hoe en in hoeverre sociale betrokkenheid in de kunst buiten de kunstwereld wordt gezien. Uiteindelijk vereist sociale betrokkenheid altijd twee partijen: een partij die betrokken wil zijn en een partij die dient te worden betrokken. Weinig onderzoekers hebben zich

systematisch en empirisch gericht op de vraag welke vorm van sociaal betrokken kunst wordt geaccepteerd en gehoord buiten de kunstwereld in de bredere samenleving.

In dit proefschrift heb ik mij op de twee bovenstaande problemen gericht door onderzoek te doen naar de receptie van artivism binnen en buiten de kunstwereld middels de volgende onderzoeksvraag:

Hoe wordt artivisme geëvalueerd in het veld van de kunst, van nieuwsmedia en van sociale media in een cross-nationale context?

Om deze onderzoeksvraag te kunnen beantwoorden heb ik literatuur van verschillende disciplines samengebracht. In het eerste hoofdstuk pas ik daarom kunsthistorische literatuur toe om sociale betrokkenheid binnen de kunst meer concreet in een kunsthistorische context te plaatsen. Ten tweede heb ik gebruik gemaakt van cultuursociologische literatuur om inzichtelijk te maken hoe kunstwerken worden geproduceerd, geconsumeerd en gedistribueerd. Ik benader de kunstwereld als een historisch ontwikkeld veld met een eigen logica en eigen wijze waarop objecten en actoren worden geclassificeerd en geëvalueerd. Dit biedt een theoretische grondslag om te bestuderen hoe artistieke status wordt toegekend en hoe onderscheid wordt aangebracht binnen het kunstveld met betrekking tot artivism. Hierbij pas ik literatuur uit de politieke wetenschappen toe om uiteen te zetten hoe vormen van artistieke expressie en manier tot sociale en politieke betrokkenheid kunnen zijn. In combinatie met inzichten uit mediastudies, tot slot, heb ik uitgelegd hoe media en sociale media sociale betrokkenheid mogelijk maken en hoe nieuwsberichtgeving en sociale media-aandacht van belang zijn binnen het kunstveld om maatschappelijke impact te bereiken.

Op empirisch vlak heb ik vier studies uitgevoerd. In de eerste studie (hoofdstuk 2) heb ik de evaluatie van sociale betrokkenheid in het algemeen en artivism meer specifiek binnen het kunstveld geanalyseerd. Meer concreet heb ik in deze studie vijftien diepte-interviews afgenomen onder curatoren in Nederland, Engeland en de Verenigde Staten. Deze

interviews zijn geanalyseerd middels een grounded theory benadering om inzicht te verkrijgen in de professionele visie van curatoren op en hun ervaring met verschillende vormen van sociale betrokkenheid binnen de kunsten. De analyse toont aan dat er drie verschillende houdingen zijn te onderscheiden onder curatoren met betrekking tot sociale betrokkenheid. Esthetische curators, ten eerste, vertonen niet noodzakelijk een duidelijke en expliciete voorkeur of afkeur van sociale betrokkenheid in de kunst, maar geven wel voorkeur aan esthetische boven sociale en ethische criteria in hun beoordeling van kunst. Politieke curators, ten tweede, blijken meer uitgesproken in dat ze kunst en sociale betrokkenheid onafscheidelijk van elkaar zijn en dat kunst verandering in de bredere samenleving teweeg kan brengen. De welwillende curators, tot slot, vertonen een optimistische houding en bereidheid tot acceptatie jegens sociale betrokkenheid in de kunst, maar blijven enigszins terughoudend in hun eigen werkzaamheden als curator. Sociaal betrokken kunst lijkt daarom mogelijk een nieuwe kunstbeweging te vormen, grofweg gedefinieerd langs de symbolische grenzen die vooral esthetische en politieke curators trekken.

In de tweede studie (hoofdstuk 3) heb ik gekeken naar dagbladberichtgeving van activistische kunstenaars in termen van inhoud en mate. Aan de ene kant speelt dagbladberichtgeving een belangrijke rol binnen de kunst omdat kunstjournalisten en kunstcritici, net zoals curatoren, kunst selecteren en evalueren en daarom de perceptie van kunst mede vormgeven. Aan de andere kant speelt dagbladberichtgeving een belangrijke rol in politiek omdat kranten een belangrijk platform vormen waarmee informatie over de samenleving wordt gecommuniceerd en geconsumeerd. Via dagbladberichtgeving kan daarom de maatschappelijke relevantie in de bredere samenleving gemeten worden voor wat betreft artivism. Meer concreet houdt dat in dat ik in deze studie een geautomatiseerde inhoudsanalyse heb toegepast op meer dan 2,000 krantenartikelen van zowel kwaliteitskranten als populaire kranten uit Nederland, Engeland en de Verenigde Staten. De analyse heeft laten zien dat dagbladberichtgeving in het algemeen de

kunst en het activisme van artivism als gescheiden behandelt, door vooral in de culturele secties aandacht aan de kunst te geven en vooral in niet-culturele secties aandacht aan het activisme te geven. Daarnaast blijken er nationale verschillen zichtbaar daar waar vooral Amerikaanse kranten politiek georiënteerd blijken in hun berichtgeving over artivism. Deze bevindingen wijzen erop dat huidig onderzoek naar sociale betrokkenheid in de kunst de kunstwereld als vertrekpunt nemen en daarmee vaak de receptie binnen de bredere samenleving over het hoofd zien.

In de derde studie (hoofdstuk 4) heb ik de receptie van artivism geanalyseerd onder het bredere publiek in de samenleving. In de laatste jaren vormen sociale media een belangrijke bron van data om publieksreceptie op grote schaal te analyseren. De inhoud op sociale media geeft daarom inzicht in hoe mensen over bepaalde zaken praten, zoals politiek en activisme. In deze studie heb ik om die reden twee miljoen tweets verzameld om de publieksreceptie van artivism op grote schaal te analyseren. Hierbij heb ik de innovatie methode van topic modeling gebruikt om binnen de tekstuele data de meest dominante en betekenisvolle thema's inzichtelijk te maken. Vervolgens heb ik deze methode gecombineerd met semantische netwerkanalyse om de resultaten beter te visualiseren en zodoende te kunnen interpreteren. Uit de analyse blijkt dat het bredere publiek vooral geïnteresseerd is in controverse rondom artivism, bijvoorbeeld in het geval van vervolging. De politieke doelen van artivists krijgen daarmee weinig aandacht, wat de maatschappelijke impact van artivists sterk beperkt.

In de vierde studie (hoofdstuk 5) heb ik onderzoek gedaan naar de mate waarin beroemdheden binnen de populaire cultuur aandacht hebben gegeven aan artivism. Dit is interessant omdat beroemdheden en hun politieke betrokkenheid een manier vormen waarmee het publiek in de bredere samenleving betrokken kan zijn bij urgente maatschappelijke problemen. Deze vierde studie bestaat uit een geautomatiseerde inhoudsanalyse van circa duizend tweets door ongeveer 300 beroemdheden. De analyse geeft aan dat de manier waarop

beroemdheden over artivists praten erg kan verschillen per type beroemdheid. Daarnaast blijkt een sterkere nadruk op politieke inhoud binnen de tweets van beroemdheden leidt tot meer betrokkenheid onder het bredere publiek middels zogenaamde likes, retweets en replies. Zodoende vormen beroemdheden inderdaad een manier waarop het bredere publiek in het algemeen zich in politieke discussies kan mengen en meer specifiek betrokken kan zijn bij artivism.

Tot slot heb ik de bevindingen van de vier empirische studies bij elkaar gebracht (hoofdstuk 6), waarin ik een algemene conclusie geef en mogelijk toekomstig onderzoek bespreek. De studie naar de receptie van artivism in het kunstveld, ten eerste, lijkt te wijzen naar de contouren van een nieuw kunstparadigma van representatie waarbij artistieke expressie een belangrijk middel tot een meer sociaal georiënteerd doel lijkt te worden beschouwd. Waar vanuit kunsthistorisch perspectief heeft representatie vooral betrekking op maatschappelijke elites, is representatie vandaag vooral zichtbaar met betrekking op ondergerepresenteerde sociale groepen. Door aan de laatste een stem te geven, wordt gepoogd om ongelijkheden binnen de bredere samenleving aan te pakken. De selectieve nieuwsproductie en -consumptie in relatie tot artivism, ten tweede, vormt een filter en toont hoe nieuwsmedia als poortwachters fungeren. De puzzel van artivism, als een artistieke praktijk dat grotendeels een eigen artistieke logica lijkt te volgen en tegelijkertijd maatschappelijke impact nastreeft, kan zodoende worden verklaard door te wijzen op hoe representatie een belangrijk sociaal in plaats van artistiek discours vormt binnen de kunst. Aandacht van nieuwsmedia en mediapubliek geven weliswaar maatschappelijke impact, maar deze wordt zodanig gefilterd dat de artivists die aandacht ontvangen hun activistische zaak grotendeels genegeerd zien worden.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Frank Weij (Rotterdam, 1987) holds a bachelor degree in arts and culture and in philosophy of science and finished his research master degree in sociology of culture, media and the arts at the Erasmus University Rotterdam, including an exchange for six months at Northwestern University in Chicago, US. He conducted his PhD research within the Department of Arts and Culture at the Erasmus University Rotterdam, while his research project was funded by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO). During this period, he has furthermore taught several courses within the field of cultural sociology and published his research in several journals. Currently, Frank Weij is pursuing a career outside of academia as a data analist.