



NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION WOMEN'S CAUCUS

SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 2011 **Educational Agents for Positive Change** **All Welcome to Attend!**

10:00 AM-11:50 AM at Sheraton Cedar, 3rd Fl
Board Meeting: Educational Agents For Positive Change
Karen Keifer-Boyd, Elizabeth Delacruz, Joanna Rees, Sheri Klein

Welcome: This is an open invitation to join Women Caucus Board members to learn how to develop personal stories as political actions for positive change using techniques of autoethnography, narrative inquiry, and arts-based research.

The meeting begins with highlights from the year as members receive and refer to the 2011 Annual NAEA Women's Caucus President's Report and 2011 WC Exhibition Catalog. This document is a resource on strategies to develop personal stories as political actions for positive change. We will use it as reference during the session as each is invited to share stories of concerns, ideas, and solutions in relation to the WC mission of educational agents for positive change. This resource developed by Sheri Klein, Elizabeth Delacruz and Karen Keifer-Boyd is also linked to the research section of the WC website at <http://naeawc.net/research.html>

Focus: Strategies for how to develop personal stories as political actions for positive change

- Sheri Klein: *Personal Points of Departure, Where to Begin?* (autoethnography)
- Elizabeth Delacruz: *Authentic, Holistic, Empowerment: Whose Subjectivity?* (narrative inquiry)
- Karen Keifer-Boyd: *Shared Experiences, So What?* (arts-based research)

NAEA WOMEN'S CAUCUS OFFICIAL POSITION STATEMENT

The National Art Education Association's Women's Caucus exists to eradicate gender discrimination in all areas of art education, to support women art educators in their professional endeavors, and to educate the general public about the contributions of women in the arts.

We believe that *all* women and men, girls and boys, must have equal freedom and opportunity to participate in and benefit from the arts and teaching professions. Educational practices which encourage gender stereotyping in the practice of the arts and or which do not provide equal exposure to the contributions of women artists and art educators perpetuate negative gender attitudes and social patterns. Such practices maintain women in positions of limited power, achievement, and aspiration, *and negatively affect all members of society.*

We recognize that the present problems of women's roles in the art education profession are part of the problems of women's roles in contemporary society in general. Identifying areas of discrimination and implementing solutions are difficult tasks; yet the profession of art education will be strengthened by the full participation of all its members. It is the responsibility of the National Art Education Association's Women's Caucus to facilitate the removal of existing gender barriers and to help establish a genuine parity for women educators within the profession.

As we work toward goals of equity for women, we also support a viable system which will provide parity for people of color and differently abled individuals.

**Personal Points of Departure:
Points of Departure for Auto-ethnography as a Path for Positive Change: Where to Begin?**
Sheri Klein, Ph.D. Professor/UW-Stout

- Auto-ethnography “works toward communitas, where we might speak together of our experiences, find community of spirit....balm for our sorrows, and solace in reaching out to those in need” (Ellis, p. 230).
- Auto-ethnography is “a species of narrative inquiry that has blossomed in reaction to the excesses and limitations of theory-driven, empiricist social science” (Bochner in Ellis, 2009, p. 147).
- Where.... difficult questions can be raised, such as, “How might I use my role as teacher to disrupt oppressive racist, sexist, and classist systems?” (Knight, 2007, p. 27)
- and where...
- “writing difficult stories is a gift to ourselves” (Ellis, 2009, p. 317)
- “words matter and writing toward the moment when the point of creating auto-ethnographic texts is to change the world” (Holman-Jones, 2005, 766)
- “writing stories about our ‘texts’ is thus a way of making sense and changing our lives” (Richardson, 1997, p. 5).

Auto-ethnography allows for:

- looking to the “personal, concrete, and mundane details of experience as a window to understanding the relationships between self and other or between individual and community” (Holman-Jones, 2005, 766).
- enacting on the need to make “critical, political, and personal sense” (Spry, 2001, 711) of one’s lived experiences in ways that allow for the integration and unfolding of “personal, professional, and political voice” (Spry, 2001, 721)
- ‘reclaiming selves lost through trauma’ and ‘to speak of events that may have silenced us’ (Etherington, 2004, p. 147).
- moving “back and forth between theory and personal narrative” (Ellis, 2009, p. 234).
- More importantly, auto-ethnography can “reveal personal problems as public issues, to make possible collective identity and collective solutions” (Richardson, 1997, p. 34)
- Talking about the often taboo subjects of pain, grief, loss, depression, etc. in academia

Points of Departure: Awareness

- Self-awareness is necessary for breaking one’s silence and moving toward public disclosure of one’s personal and professional struggles that can no longer remain private.
- Richardson’s (1997) questions are relevant: What do we write about? How do we write it? And for whom do we write it? (p.12).
- One must determine that the benefits of disclosure outweigh the need to remain silent, and that writing is a matter of personal urgency, and agency that outweighs one’s fears of criticism, alienation, and stigmatization.

Point of Departure: Accessing Memory

Memory of events can be accessed through journals, records, photographs, digital recordings, memorandum, etc. and talking with key players in the events of one’s life. Asking key players to respond to your account of events is what is called “meta-auto-ethnography.”

Points of Departure: Using journals

Keeping journals of events and dreams can be a source for writing and interpreting events.

Points of Departure: Using Arts-based approaches

Arts-based research approaches include telling a story in any number of combinations that include images (diagrams, photographs, drawings, paintings, etc), writing/text (short story, narrative, poetry, screenplay) and through live performance, or through music or dance.

Arts-based approaches can bridge “the artist-self and the researcher-self” (Leavy, 2009, p. 2).

Making visual works: Create drawings, collages, photographs, videos, etc. and integrate them into narratives.

Sound, dance, movement, and performance

Using the voice and body forms of expression and representation. For excellent examples and resources for arts-based approaches see Leavy (2009) and Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegmund (2008).

Using collections of artifacts

Collected images, such as, photographs, souvenirs, letters, cards, etc. can trigger thoughts, memories, and stories.

Reading, Collecting, and Writing Poetry

Writing poetry is a liberating experience; it shakes up linear thinking. Keep a poetry journal. Integrate your poems into your stories. Collect poems that resonate with you.

Points of Departure: Using dreams

Dreams contain a great reservoir of images and feelings.

Keeping a dream journal can facilitate the integration of dreams into auto-ethnography.

Departures After the Gathering

- “writing stories about our ‘texts’ is thus a way of making sense and changing our lives” (Richardson, 1997, p. 5).
- “setting a scene, telling a story, weaving intricate connections among life and art, experience and theory, evocation and explanation... Witnessing experience and testifying about power without foreclosure” (Holman-Jones, 2005, p. 766).
- “my stories feature dramatic plotlines, scenes, dialogue and character development... literary tropes help make these stories more engaging and evocative” (Ellis, 2009, p. 15)
- “writing auto-ethnographies well produces survivor tales for the writer and for those who read them” (Ellis, 2009, p. 17). Example: *The Freedom Writers Diary*
- Stories may also include fiction (novels, novellas, graphic narratives) based on life experiences.

Infusing theory into your auto-ethnography

Auto-ethnography infuses theory and literature from our respective fields that are woven into the auto-ethnographic text at junctures that the auto-ethnographer determines are necessary and relevant.

Using the Graphic Narrative Format

See the graphic narratives by Aline Kominsky-Crumb, Lynda Barry, and Julie Doucet. These address roles and experiences as women and as artists.

The comic-book style format and use of mixed media (Barry) provides examples for those who are inclined to create more visual-based auto-ethnographies.

Holman-Jones (2005, 784) reminds us to “Create disturbances. Value texts that “mean to provoke, to raise questions, [and] to implicate” authors and audiences, texts that create disturbances (Hughes &

Román, 1998, p. 9 in Holman-Jones, 2005).

Try using a graphic narrative format to tell your stories—and create disturbances!

Publishing

Consider these journals:

Feminist Teacher

International Journal of Education and the Arts

International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography

Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy

Power and Education

Qualitative Inquiry

Studies in Art Education

Symbolic Interaction

Visual Culture and Gender



Image: "In it/Outside of It" (2008) oil pastel on paper, Sheri Klein

Further Considerations

As Ellis (2009, p. 316) reminds us "sometimes we might need to write but not publish the stories of our lives." If publishing is not a factor, consider sharing your work with 'critical readers,' and trusted colleagues who can provide you with feedback-and support. Read other auto-ethnographic tales (see reference/resources) to expand your understanding of the different approaches to writing auto-ethnography.

References/Resources

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- Check, E. (2006). My working class roots in an academic warzone: Creating space to grieve and honor. *Journal of Cultural Research in Art Education*, 24, 23-35.
- Crumb, A. K. (2007). *Need more love*. London: MQ Publications.
- Doucet, J. (1999). *My New York diary*. Montreal: Drawn & Quarterly.
- Ellis, C. (2009). *Revisions: Autoethnographic reflections on life and work*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Publishers.
- Recommended chapters: Introduction, Part Four: *Doing Ethnography as a Social Project*; Ch. 13: *Writing Revision and Researching Ethically*.
- Ellis, C., & Bochner, A.P.(2000). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity: Researcher as subject. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 733–768). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Etherington, K. (2004). *Becoming a reflexive researcher: Using ourselves in research*. London: Kingsley.
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- Knight, W. B. (2007). Entangled social realities: Race, class and gender a triple threat to the academic achievement of Black females. *Visual Culture & Gender*, 2, 24-38.
- Leavy, P. (2009). *Method meets art: Arts-based research practice*. New York: Guilford Press. Recommended chapters: 2 (narrative inquiry), 3 (poetry), and 7 (visual arts).
- Miller, D. M. (2008). Shades of gray: An autoethnographic study of race in the academy. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 21(4), 347-373.
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- Williams, J. (2006). The post-welfare state university. *American Literary History*, 190-214.

Rituals of Research in the Storytelling Mode: Narrative Research as a Form of Authentic Inquiry, a Holistic Engagement, and Empowerment

Elizabeth M. Delacruz, Ph.D. Professor/University of Illinois

All human communications are a form of storytelling about some aspect of the world. Communications scholar Walter Fisher defines storytelling, or *narration*, as symbolic action, words, or deeds, that have sequence and meaning for those who live, create, or interpret them (1987). Stories, embedded as they are in myths, imagery, and rituals, embody the cultural histories and aspirations of social groups and solidify communitarian values (Campbell, 1949). Stories provide external order, a cultural script, and lasting evidence of aspects of life that are inherently fleeting and often intangible. Cultural anthropologist Ellen Dissanayake observes that when enriched and expressed in heightened and evocative ways, our rituals of interhuman communication *make special* that which we value most and want to share (2003). These rituals bind us to one another in a live *lived together*. In our mutual search for knowledge, our stories show us another way of seeing and understanding.

Our rituals of interhuman communication include *rituals of research* practiced in various governmental, scientific, commercial, and educational institutions. Long understood as a systematic search for knowledge and understanding, *research* has always been a form of story telling. Like stories, research is shaped by human aspirations, grounded in particular cultural and historical context, and shared within and across communities of inquiry. Firmly aligned with a post-positivistic stance, *narrative research* has emerged in the later part of the last century as both a new and an old form of inquiry, borrowing and blending ancient oral traditions and cultural history writing with post-Marxist critical qualitative inquiry methods. Now applied across a wide variety of contemporary disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, narrative inquiry and writing (also referred to as *narratology*) may include biography and autobiography, life writing, phenomenology, introspection, life stories, autoethnography, memory-writing, ethnopsychology, narrative interviews, portraiture, self-portraiture, a/r/tography, ethnohistory, revisionist and feminist histories, case study, oral history, and folklore (Casey, 1995-1996; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990).

Values Underlying Narrative Research: Like much of contemporary qualitative research, narrative research embraces, in varying degrees:

- rejection of the ideology of scientism with its canons of objectivity; abandonment of the search for a grand totalizing narrative
- creative blending of cultural, existential, political, and postmodern perspectives
- reliance on a variety of naturalistic documentary, data collection, and inquiry strategies
- desire to excavate and illuminate hidden or marginalized aspects of human experience
- heightened attention to the multi-dimensional contexts in which experience is grounded
- interest in social interactions; concern for unequal power relations
- acknowledgement of the importance of the conscious subjectivity of the researcher
- privileging of the voice of the researcher and/or the subjects/participants as co-narrators
- writings convey the holistic qualities of experience
- use of evocative language, poetic devices, and metaphoric thinking
- attention to the literary quality of the writing itself

Narrative Research in Education: Narrative research in education now encompasses a vast range of genres and interests. These include studies of teachers' lives, studies of teachers thinking', teachers' stories, classroom stories, school ethnographies, curriculum studies, educational criticism, critical race studies, feminist critiques, teacher-student collaborative inquiries, teachers' critical autoethnographies,

and teachers' phenomenological investigations into the nature and meaning of their work. **Primary data** for narrative research in education include first hand experiences, memories, personal diaries, observational field notes, journal records, interview transcripts, photographs, audio and video recordings, stories and observations shared by others, letters, autobiographical writings, and a plethora of school documents such as curriculum frameworks, mission statements, evaluation plans and instruments, lesson plans, instructional handouts, newsletters, books, advertisements, web sites, parental and community member communications, all kinds of student artifacts and productions...in other words, just about anything associated with teaching and learning institutions, people, and contexts.

Narrative research is **authentic** in that it neither manipulates the natural setting nor obscures or marginalizes the voice of the researcher. It is **holistic** in that it holds in highest regard the embeddedness of both the actors and the acts of inquiry in their multilayered network of interhuman relationships. It is **empowering** insofar as it brings to the foreground a critical consciousness of the hidden consequences of inequalities within these interhuman relationships, both giving voice and conferring agency to the subjects of the story.

Some of my favorites writings that privilege both “the story” and “critical understandings” include Robert Coles' *Their Eyes Meeting the World* (1995), George Dennison *The Lives of Children* (1999), Carole Gilligan's *In a Different Voice* (1982), Madeline Grumet's *Bitter Milk* (1988), Jonathon Kozol's *Savage Inequalities* (1992), Vivian Paley's *White Teacher* (2000), and Neil Postman's & Charles Weingartner's *Teaching as a Subversive Activity* (1971).

My own narrative writings, published as research include: “Telling Stories and Making Special: Portfolios, Sketchbooks, and Scrapbooks,” with Sandy Bales and published in *Art Education* (2009); “Visual arts: Technology Pedagogy as Cultural Citizenship.” *Ubiquitous Learning*. B. Cope and M. Kalantzis (Eds.) University of Illinois Press (2009); “Acts of Engagement,” in M. Buffington & S. Wilson (Eds.), *Practice Theory: Seeing the power of teacher researchers* (forthcoming); and “Entrepreneurial Strategies for Advancing Public Engagement as a Form of University-Sanctioned Professional Activity in the New Creative Economy,” in *The International Journal of Education & the Arts* (forthcoming).

References for the Narrative Inquiry Section

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Shared Experiences, So What? (arts-based research)

Arts-based Strategies and Resources for Personal Stories as Political Actions for Positive Change

Karen Keifer-Boyd, Ph.D. Professor/Penn State University

While arts-based research in and of itself is not necessarily a feminist, critical, or postcolonial approach to research, there are several underlying values that create the potential to “excavate the recurrent patterns of inequity and oppression, as well as the acts of transformation and activism” (Villaverdi, 2008, p. 123). A social justice approach to arts-based research involves continual critical reflexivity in response to injustice. Arts-based research from this perspective aligns with feminist art activism that (a) *responsibly listens* to subalterns' voices and entangled histories; (b) *bears witness* and reveals power structures that control people, cultural narratives, and hegemonic worldviews; (c) *stops traffic* of harmful activities and products; and (d) *envisions* what bell hooks (2000) describes as:

a world of participatory economics grounded in communalism and social democracy, a world without discrimination based on race or gender, a world where recognition of mutuality and interdependency would be the dominant ethos, a global ecological vision of how the planet can survive and how everyone on it can have access to peace and well-being. (p. 110)

Voice in this context refers to “claiming or owning one’s voice” in an arts-based research process “through which ideas, emotions, and experiences are critically analyzed and made public, not for the sake of disclosure in and of itself but for the furthering of collective knowledge production” (Villaverdi, 2008, p. 122). Arts-based research, as social justice activist approaches such as ecofeminist and cyberfeminist work, examines gender inequalities manifested in different forms of privilege and oppression, and exposes the pervasiveness of gender entangled with race and class in structuring social life.

Strategies:

- continual critical reflexivity in response to injustice
- Social justice arts-based research is critical *action* research, with the ACTION emphasized as a palimpsest, or a continuous layered process. Palimpsest, in this arts-based action research sense, can be interpreted as a process metaphor in that it is an action or practice of scraping off layers, and rewriting, yet eventually the past is revealed or re-emerges through the present text/art in various densities of visibility. Palimpsest is a contemporary art process based in theories of intertextuality, and a process-action approach to social justice arts-based research.
- **Arts-based research, in which art is contiguous with insight involves extensive research conducted by artists to create their work.** An art inquiry process that involves transformative identity politics as a historical, dialogical relational process of making meaning; and as a process of remaking meaning are two approaches to palimpsest re-searched, re-creations of personal and social histories.

Relational Process of Making Meaning: “When I identify with you, I am reconstituting myself, my identity, through traveling to your world; through coming to know you, by listening to, witnessing your experience, I am expanding myself to include my relation to you. But rather than assimilating you into myself, assuming sameness, or simply incorporating your difference

without change to myself, I am opening my self to learning about and recognizing you: I cannot do this without changing who I am. And because this process changes our relationship to each other, it also changes you—more so, of course, if the process of identification goes both ways.” (Weir, 2008, p. 125).

- Arts-based inquiry is a reconstitution of self in the act of learning about lives in which the **personal is understood and contextualized as political**. Political, here, refers to agency in the dismantling of power and privilege hierarchies through a communicative arts practice.
- **Relating the histories of systemic socio-institutional practice** to one’s personal experience is *seeing* that the *personal is political*.
- When studio art practice involves creativity and imagination it can be a form of research to develop theory or understandings about life situations. This type of arts-based research, in which art is contiguous with imagination, is based on **dialogue and mutual learning**.
- Use artmaking as a means to reflect on how our own understandings of self are both **informed and misinformed** by many complex discourses in the world, such as history, politics, power, culture, worldviews, feminism, silences, and technology.
- **Arts-embodiment arts-based research**, through direct experience with art, is a multisensory way of exploring ideas or concepts that promote human dignity through subversive renderings of difference that dislodge hatred of self and others.
- **Arts-embodiment is a way to understand subjectivity**. As subject, exert presence through making visible absence—that which is unmarked by societal inscriptions. Interventions in cultural marking by artists are productive in exposing what is unmarked, as well as, what is absent from portrayals of humanity. What do your actions reveal about how you know the world?
- Processes of conducting qualitative research and of creating art share a visible **commitment to choice**. This commitment arises from exploration, risk-taking, ethical questions, awareness of decisions and options, and continual questioning of methodology, interpretations, and aesthetics in reference to completeness, rules and principles of a context, and appearance.

References:

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Excerpts above and strategies from: Keifer-Boyd, K. (forthcoming 2011). Arts-based research as social justice activism: Insight, inquiry, imagination, embodiment, relationality. *International Review of Qualitative Research*, 5(1), 32-58.