

ENACTING CHANGE SURVEY RESPONSE

For information on the Enacting Change Survey Project, facilitated by Joanna Rees, see the NAEA Women's Caucus website at <http://naeawc.net/activism.html>

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1. *What is your educational background and where did you complete your Ph.D.? If you have not completed your Ph.D. please provide information on your highest level of education.*

In 1978, I received a B.F.A. with an emphasis in painting and minor in printmaking from the Kansas City Art Institute. I received a M.S. in Art Education with an emphasis in Cultural Services in 1989, and a Ph.D. in Art Education from the University of Oregon in 1993. With regards to my informal education, it is often women in my life who have informed, guided, mentored, and advised me.

When my sons were two and four years of age, in 1986, I began graduate school in art education, in which motherhood in academia was another kind of education. When I started in academia there were no policies to support dual positions as parent and scholar/teacher, but also there were no rules to restrict either since it was perceived as a non-issue with few mothers in academia. I went into territories that were completely male-dominated, and brought my children with me. I would take my two sons to the architecture computer lab at the ages of 2 and 4 years old while I worked on my doctoral research using the sophisticated computer programs, where they played with technologies like AutoCAD, and taught me a playful attitude toward technology that is still part of my work today.

In terms of my education and motherhood, I learned how to combine these areas. My master's thesis had to do with an issue of the lack of art education in my first-born son's school, where I developed a community-based curriculum with and for the school district.

My youngest son was still not in school—so he accompanied me and participated when I taught art in K-6, and at teacher in-services. I took my kids with me and they learned how to be in these spaces. I learned about the absurdness of cultural assumptions regarding separating people according to age groups for achieving a better or more productive society. I felt it was important for my children to be a part of my life, and I a part of their life. Even when I was breastfeeding, I would put a blanket over my shoulder and walk around breastfeeding, while I was teaching art. I viewed having a baby as a normal part of my life. Some might want the kind of space that maternity-leaves and child-care centers provide, while others may wish to include their children in their world of teaching, artmaking, and research—as I did. I found it much more difficult with the kind of attention that is needed for your children at ages 12-16, as the role of motherhood at this stage is at odds with being successful in academia.

For women in their 50s, in academia, the care-giving issue often concerns parent care. My father passed in 1998, and my mother came close to death in 2007. Parent care often is assumed by the daughter, which was the case for me, for years. I had been dealing with this since 1998, and I am a fortunate to have an elder brother who since 2007 cares for my mother with the 24/7 care that is required. It is time-consuming, and very emotionally, financially, and physically taxing to take care of an aging parent. It seems, in retrospect, that children are much easier, than a parent, to parent. Today, there are more workplace resources for the early years of motherhood. Many people don't know that some institutions offer leave for dependent care of parents. But at what point, and with what consequences do you just stop your career and publications? As a field, in terms of professional development, we need to look at what these policies are, where they exist, and who uses them with what consequence to their career and self-esteem.

The distinction between teaching, research, artmaking, and motherhood has never been clearly defined for me. I balanced graduate studies, and later a career in higher education, with motherhood, artmaking, research, and teaching by combining these areas. Truly combined so that it is hard to discern in any given hour if what I am doing is as a teacher,

researcher, mother/daughter, or artist. I have a drive to find and use my strengths—to live fully by contributing in a positive way to the world.

2. *What are your current research interests and contributions to art education?*

I am writing “Including Difference: A Communitarian Approach in Art Education to the ‘Least Restrictive Environment’ Law” with Michelle Kraft who is in Texas. We have half of the chapters completed. I am working on a chapter right now called, *Empowered by Difference*.

I am also writing, with Martina Paatela-Nieminen from Finland, an article based on 3 semesters of teaching collaborations. The article is tentatively called, *Critical Action Research of Intercultural Art Collaborations*. I finished the first full-draft of it yesterday.

In July, I wrote a chapter on critical action research activism for an upcoming NAEA book.

This past year I have seen several works published or soon to be published. I will just list them to give an idea of my current work within the year.

Keifer-Boyd, K. (forthcoming 2009). Masquerading the immateriality of materiality. In R. W. Sweeny (Ed.), *Digital Visual Culture: Interactions and Intersections in 21st Century Art Education*. Reston, VA: The National Art Education Association.

Keifer-Boyd, K. (forthcoming 2009). CyberNet activist art pedagogy. In A. Arnold, A. Kuo, E. Delacruz & M. Parsons (Eds.), *G.L.O.B.A.L.I.Z.A.T.I.O.N, Art, and Education*. Reston, VA: The National Art Education Association.

Keifer-Boyd, K. (2009). Computer games: Art in the 21st century. In L. Santaella (Ed. & Trans.), *Mapa do jogo [Maps for playing: The cultural relevance of games]* (pp. 123-136). São Paulo, Brazil: Cengage Learning Edições Ltda [Portuguese]

Keifer-Boyd, K. (2009). Identity as masquerade visual culture (Choi, Ok-Hee, Trans.). *Journal of Research in Art & Education*, 10(1), 133-158. [English & Korean]

Keifer-Boyd, K., Emme, M., & jagodzinski, j. (2008). *InCITE/InSIGHT/InSITE: Journal of Social Theory in Art Education, The First 25 Years*. Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.

Smith-Shank—Keifer-Boyd (2009). Wrinkles in visual culture: Hyphen-UnPress. *Visual Arts Research*, 35(1), 52-65.

Another issue I am interested, is bringing feminist pedagogy into the online learning environment. The greatest barrier to this project is working within a higher education institution, which views online education as profitable, and thus supports profitable initiatives over sound pedagogical initiatives. This interest of feminist pedagogy in online art education continues from the project I worked on with Judy Chicago described in my 2007 *Studies* article, *From Content to Form: Judy Chicago's Pedagogy with Reflections by Judy Chicago*. Judy has inspired me to revise, revise, revise to publish excellent work without losing site of my goals, and to have great perseverance in working toward social justice. I asked Judy Chicago in 2001 if she thought feminist pedagogy was possible in the online environment. At that time she thought probably not, and remembers this conversation when she asked me at NAEA, in 2009, if I was interested in working with her to bring feminist pedagogy involved in *The Dinner Party Curriculum* into an online teaching space. I have started on this project with Judy Chicago, Marilyn Stewart and others, and greatly value Judy's cut-to-the-chase critique and thoughtful listening to my ideas. I grow immensely in this process as I further my work in this area of feminist pedagogy in art education in an online environment.

3. *Could you describe your leadership style?*

My leadership style is based in participatory democracy, and involves collaboration and listening to different perspectives. I am empathetic and sensitive to injustices and speak out or work to figure out a way to change a negative situation. This integrity comes across to many students and colleagues. While some in power are threatened by a fear of usurped power, I seek win-win approaches in which power is revealed, negotiated, and shared. I care about others, and help others to identify and achieve their potential. I have collaborated with many people and find collaboration an invigorating process in which we energize each other to create something that neither of us could have done alone.

4. *Could you describe your teaching pedagogy?*

I enjoy travel and immersion in cultures different from my own. I have had the opportunity to teach students from many different countries. I had the opportunity to teach and research in Finland from August to December 2006, with the support of a Fulbright Scholars Research and Teaching award. From this experience, I learned the importance of students exploring their own language for cross-cultural understanding. In teaching at the University of Art & Design Helsinki, I recognized that Finnish cultural knowledge was the Finnish students' expertise (not mine), yet could be mined by me as a cross-cultural teaching strategy. When we are immersed in our culture we often do not see or examine our language for how it reflects beliefs, values, and expectations of shared histories and experiences. Since I was outside my home language and culture, yet teaching in English to groups of all Finnish students, and one group of students from Uganda, Lithuanian, Germany, and Estonia, I was very aware that my examples and explanations needed to be relevant to their lives. References to practices, places, popular culture, terms, sayings, and people that might help illuminate a concept could quickly complicate it when that reference needed lengthy explanation, which tended to lose sight of the main purpose for use of the reference. However, I found that I could turn this around so that students provide the references as explanations for a concept that I am introducing. Since I ask that their reference come from their own language in the process of explaining to me, they also become aware of the knowledge and beliefs of their culture embedded in their language.

At the core of my teaching I believe the following: That complex concepts are best taught by engaging in carefully designed activities. These activities require learners to physically "act out" the concepts, creating a first-hand experience of the idea, followed by dialogue, reflection, and internalization. Second, I believe in teaching through modeling. I practice pedagogically the concepts I am teaching. Third, I believe that, in a participatory democracy, viewers must actively create the meanings of their visual culture. By making communicative images, we internalize the principles that drive making visual meaning. I often employ self and peer critique and believe that formative assessment is important to transformative learning. In my teaching, assessment is built into the learning process. I

believe that narrative grading feedback is much more helpful to students' growth than a numeric grade, and therefore it is worth the time to provide specific feedback to each student. I guide students to develop projects that focus on meaningful content to them. In this way, I facilitate life-long learning, and societal and self-critique.

5. *What are your contributions to Women's Caucus and women's issues in art education?*

I have been a member of the WC since I attended/presented at my first NAEA conference in Kansas City in the late 1980s. Since then I have annually attended the WC business meetings, joined discussions, and participated in other WC sessions and events. I was honored with the NAEA WC Kathy Connors Teaching Award in 2005.

The anthology, *NAEA Women's Caucus Award Autobiographical Addresses: 1975-2010*, was begun in 2006 with Dr. Maryl Fletcher De Jong, who invited me to work with her to conceptualize and develop this project. However, her struggle with cancer and the effects of chemotherapy took a toll on her energy to further the project, and my time was diverted to other projects with a Fulbright in 2006 in Finland, the failing health of my mother in 2007, and other things. I told her that on my sabbatical in fall 2009 and spring 2010, that I would have time to work on the book and that it would be a priority. She was pleased. Maryl passed away on August 8, 2009. I am dedicated to complete the anthology. It will include award acceptance speeches contributed by National Art Education Association's (NAEA) Women's Caucus award recipients. For many, the annual Women's Caucus Awards night is a highlight of the NAEA conference. We learn about our colleagues' lives, including their early formations of identity and unexpected life events in relation to their careers as art educators in personable, often humorous, and deeply moving narrative presentations.

In Spring 2007, President-elect: Read Diket called me to ask if I would accept her nomination for me as Women's Caucus president-elect, and my first response was I am a bit too overloaded in that I was trying to take a mentor's advice to say no to service to give myself more time for research and artmaking, for life in general. However, by the time I

finished that hour conversation with Read—we talked about rejuvenating the Women’s Caucus, and how feminist is perceived by women art educators today—I came up with the *lobby session* idea, as a space outside the conference catalogue for this kind of conversation. The idea excited me, and I convinced myself to accept the nomination and go fully into this important leadership role should I become elected, which I was. In 2008, I called the first WC lobby session “Vote 2008: What Should a Feminist Do?” This year in 2009 at NAEA, I built on the first year issues that were raised, and I called it, “Enacting Change: What Can We Learn from Each Other?” I have worked to facilitate what has come out of the Lobby Sessions including a Feminist Wikipedia action plan, and a history and activism area of the WC website.

6. *Could you describe your current identity as a woman and art educator?*

Many women undergraduates and graduates have looked to me as a role model and mentor, and have stayed in touch for many years—even two twins from age 8, who were my students in Oregon, and are now adults, with one recently receiving a Ph.D. Now that we have email, it is almost daily that a former student emails me to share something with me, or to ask me advice. Sometimes, I have not seen or heard from them for years and something happens that they write me from Egypt, Taiwan, Brazil—often from many places I have never been. Colleagues and former students send me drafts of manuscripts for critical feedback, which I do at a steady stream. So my identity is as mentor, collaborator, and instigator.

7. *How has this identity changed and grown over time?*

I have gone through and received early tenure and promotion at two different universities. I received early tenure and full professor rank together in 2006. I have served on promotion and tenure committees at two universities (The Pennsylvania State University and Texas Tech University), and served as external reviewer for several art educators at

the juncture of consideration for the rank of associate professor and tenure in art education, and to full professor. Yet, I have needed the intervention of affirmative action, and the support of other women, to help me through some difficult times in academia.

8. *Have you ever felt held back or discriminated against because of your gender?*

Yes, many times, but I don't give up. My mother taught me, "when there's a will, there's a way." I have found this to be true for me.

I have had many experiences, right up to the present, in which the initial assumption by students and faculty who do not know me assume I am a student, or the secretary, or the assistant, even though I am full professor, head of the art education program, and in age past the half century marker. For example, in meeting with a dean, the dean came out of his office and looked around, and then started to go back until I stopped him to state that I was the professor he was to meet. Oh, he shrugged, I thought you were a student. How did his way of (not) seeing me impact our meeting?

I found I needed to do 3 times the service, and publish 3 times as much to work through discrimination, and I have had to deal with a lack of respect for women professors in general that male colleagues have not had to be concerned.

9. *Have you seen other professionals in the field discriminated against in educational workplaces?*

Yes, and I have stood up against the discrimination and found myself attacked. My advice for tenure track faculty that might prove beneficial in helping them achieve promotion and tenure is to develop a support network within the university and beyond to help get through difficult times. Share your concerns in confidence with someone you trust and ask for advice, and ask this person to accompany you to key meetings to serve as witness. Keep careful documentation and ask for or make sure to have all meeting records, decisions, and policies in written form. Write up what transpired at meetings and provide to the people at the meeting and ask for their confirmation that what is written was the content of the meeting. Unsubstantiated charges against faculty who are in the promotion and tenure (P & T) process that seem unrelated to P & T, and may even seem minor, can be trumped up and verbally repeated or included in annual reviews to the point that it is assumed to be true and used against the faculty member. Documentation to prove otherwise is essential. Contest untrue statements in annual reviews and make sure that statements are deleted from the review letter with the reviewer's signature that an error was corrected in the newly dated and revised review letter. Further, make sure your publication, service, and teaching record is outstanding, especially your research publication record should be equal or greater than others' granted tenure and promotion. Ask to see dossier and curriculum vitas of those who recently received P & T.

10. *What changes would you like to enact in art education?*

In the 1980s, I worked for the Council for Human Rights in Latin America in Oregon and created art lessons about social justice. My courses continue to connect to real-world issues, with student work presented in real-world contexts. Students in my courses have utilized the highly visible and political venue of parades, community gardens, sidewalks, posters, murals, and the Internet to present their ideas to a specific community. My classroom settings have included shopping malls, playa lakes, and other natural environments, festivals, city centers, and a range of public spaces.

With the East/West Foundation and the University of Oregon's Continuing Education program, I facilitated a cross-cultural art experience amongst families from Hong Kong and Oregon. Having worked both inside and outside the public school system, I have found that grouping by age is not the best condition for learning. I have taught professionals (lawyers, doctors, etc.), elderly grandparents, adolescents, and five-year olds in the same course, which included field trips to artist studios (e.g., glass blowers, wood carvers) and other sites (e.g., marine biology center, fish hatchery, dunes).

From the intergenerational and cross-cultural teaching experiences I have had, I recognize that we learn by teaching, so I set up situations in which students teach each other. Each individual has strengths, and having a range of ages in a teaching setting is an ideal way to foster learning.

My future dream for public school art education is that classes are not organized by time or grouped by age, and that alphanumeric grades are obsolete. Instead, public schools are learning centers in which students select where to go and how long to stay. All K-12 graduates are given an equal lump sum of money upon graduation. Graduation is determined with an evaluation, based on criteria set by the student and experts in the areas of student interest, of an e-multimedia portfolio that reflects students' learning and thinking.

Reference

Keifer-Boyd, K. (2007). From content to form: Judy Chicago's pedagogy with reflections by Judy Chicago. *Studies in Art Education: A Journal of Issues and Research in Art Education*, 48(2), 133-153.