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mentor's introduction

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Theresa Marché's interests in the world around her are intriguing and varied. An avid conchologist (a collector of shells and mollusks), scuba diver, canoe paddler, and scientific observer of the natural world, she brings her talents for thorough and in-depth investigation to this case study about change in art education programs in one Pennsylvania school district. Her canoe trip traverses waters of both the romantic/expressive stream of artistic self-expression advocated by Lowenfeld and the scientific/rational stream popularized by advocates of discipline-based art education.

Her own personal journeys in the tributaries of these streams shed light on how theory and practice in art programs were affected in this school district. Using historiography as a method of data gathering and analysis enabled her to travel uncharted waters and map her own story through recollections of those who participated in the lived experiences of art education praxis in this school district. She also used archival, public, and personal documents to mark her course. All these sources of data have been synthesized, analyzed, and interpreted with the same care she takes to categorize the shells she has collected from streams, rivers, and oceans throughout the world. Her passion for covering the entire territory, down to the last minute mollusk, is evident in this case study.

Theresa Marché is a recipient of a Getty Fellowship that enabled her to travel to Pennsylvania on numerous occasions to delve through many archives and memories of those in leadership roles and those who practiced art teaching at elementary through secondary levels. Her conclusions about how through time theories in art education were or were not implemented in classroom practice, are yet to be garnered. Once categorized and explained, these conclusions should add greatly to how theory affects classroom practice in a particular school district. Generalizations from this study should be far reaching for those who are "up the creek without a paddle" attempting to understand the relation between theory and practice in art education programs in their own school districts.