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Mentor's Introduction

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mentor's introduction

Yvonne Gaudelius

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In her dissertation research Peg Speirs has engaged in a truly remarkable study. Using an expanded definition of art education to examine what feminist pedagogy might mean for the teaching of art, Peg explored ways in which we might understand and frame the question "what is feminist art education?" She has carried out a study that will add significantly to the body of knowledge in the intersection of art education and feminism.

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Peg conducted her research through a series of interviews. What has made her research particularly rich is the fact that her expanded definition moved her study beyond traditional boundaries of art education and gave her the opportunity to include those practitioners who focus on studio teaching at the college level as well as individuals who would more traditionally be thought of as art educators. What is especially impressive is the range of people that Peg interviewed for her study. Many of those involved are "household names" in the artworld (for example, Judy Chicago, Faith Wilding, Suzanne Lacy, and Amelia Mesa-Baines) and have been involved in feminism, artmaking, and the teaching of art since the late 1960s and early 1970s. In addition, Peg interviewed well-known and respected feminist art educators who have written on feminist pedagogy in order to examine the ways in which the field of art education has created and responded to developments in feminist theory from a variety of disciplines. This movement between women who practiced feminist art education in a variety of positions and through a number of different identities, enabled Peg to see the richness of feminist art education. Through her research she has been able to capture a sense of the intangible nature of feminist art education and presents her readers with a vision of the importance and relevance of feminism for all forms of art education. I congratulate you, Peg, on the challenging work that you have undertaken and am thrilled to have been a part of it. Thanks for all that you have given to me

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