Mentor's Introduction

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Linda Willis Fisher's paper does not argue for or against Discipline Based Art Education or the many advocations from national and state agencies, and from prominent art educators for changes in public school art programs. Her paper is an objective assessment based on a stratified random sample of the kinds of changes currently taking place in college and university art education programs that prepare elementary and secondary art teachers. Linda has utilized her extensive experience as a public school art teacher, and curriculum designer for the State of North Dakota, and her doctoral research at Illinois State University in preparation of a survey of the kinds of changes currently taking place in university art education programs to prepare art teachers to instruct art history, art criticism, aesthetics, and art production in the schools. Ms. Fisher's paper is based on the assumption that changes in the content of college and university art education methodology courses will affect changes in public school art programs. While this paper is a preliminary report of her ongoing research, Ms. Fisher's review of the literature established that there is very little information about what art teacher preparation programs in public and private institutions of varying sizes are doing to prepare future art teachers to present content in the four areas of art. In addition to providing that information, her study will also give some indication of the importance that university art educators attribute to the advocated content changes. Based on the care that Ms. Fisher has taken in defining the problem and objectives of her survey and analyzing and interpreting the data that have been collected, the findings of her study should be of considerable value to the field of art education.